

CORAL BAY WASTEWATER SCHEME, APPROVAL TO WAIVE PUBLIC TENDER

55. Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the approval to waive public tender granted to the Water Corporation strategic projects branch for the \$4.3 million construction of sewerage facilities at Coral Bay, which states that, considering the political and environmental focus of the proposed wastewater scheme for Coral Bay, the corporation needs to reduce the risk and exposure to adverse publicity and criticism that could arise.

- (1) Given the Government's supposed commitment to local content, does the Premier concede that many local companies in the mid west have missed out on the opportunity to tender as a result of the Water Corporation's failure to open the tender to the public?
- (2) As a matter of principle, does the Premier condone the waiving of tenders on major contracts solely to avoid negative political fallout?
- (3) Given that ordinary government contracts above \$50 000 must be put to public tender unless the circumstances are exceptional, will he concede this is a blatant abuse of process?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

This issue is being pursued by the Water Corporation, which is not subject to my ministerial involvement. I request the member put the question on notice so that I can give him an appropriate answer.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I ask the member to put the question on notice and he will get a proper answer. I find it somewhat amusing that the member asks me a particular question when he knows that I am not in a position to give him a proper answer. I will seek the information and get him a proper answer.