

ELECTRONIC CONVEYANCING

819. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the answer to my question of 7 November 2017 concerning the mandated implementation of e-conveyancing for all mortgage, discharge of mortgage, and refinance transactions in Western Australia from 1 December 2017.

- (1) How does the minister's answer provided yesterday that "nil" additional charges would be borne by users of PEXA's platform reconcile with the conveyancing industry's view that approximately \$220 of unavoidable new fees will be charged to users and split between buyers and sellers?
- (2) How does the minister's answer yesterday reconcile with the pricing schedule publicly available on the PEXA website?
- (3) Can the minister confirm that people engaging in mortgage, discharge of mortgage and refinance transactions will be liable for both the schedule of gazetted fees and charges levied by Landgate and those to be charged by PEXA?
- (4) If yes to (3), what advantage is gained by the consumer as a consequence of the rushed implementation of this monopolistic conveyance system from which the consumer cannot opt out?
- (5) Noting that the state government is a part owner of PEXA, if there is an efficiency gain to be realised from the mandated utilisation of this e-conveyancing system, why is the government not passing these savings through to the consumer through reduced fees and charges?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

This is a reform that was initiated by the previous government and inherited by the current government.

- (1)–(2) The fees replace a series of costs in the paper-based system. In many cases the PEXA fee is less than the fees that settlement agents would pay in a paper-based transaction.
- (3) It is confirmed, but in the context outlined in the answer to question (1).
- (4) The property buyer or seller benefits from electronic conveyancing in three ways—security, certainty of settlement and faster finalisation. This implementation is not rushed. Electronic conveyancing has been mooted since the 1980s and formally agreed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2008. The first transaction went through in June 2014 and the Registrar of Titles announced the move to requiring eligible documents be lodged electronically in May 2016.
- (5) The greatest efficiencies offered by electronic conveyancing are to those involved in property settlement. The state benefits by the greater security and accuracy of the land titles register.