

PORT HEDLAND PORT AUTHORITY, MR IAN WILLIAMS

2070. Mr L. Graham to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure

With regard to the appointment of Mr Ian Williams to the Port Hedland Port Authority, I ask-

- (a) precisely what does the Minister mean when she refers to the required 'skill sets';
- (b) on what date did these 'skill sets' become a pre requisite for appointment to chair a Port Authority Board;
- (c) what caused the Minister to change the appointment processes to require appointees to have these 'skill sets';
- (d) how did the Minister determine that Mr Williams had these 'skill sets';
- (e) how many other people were assessed for similar 'skill sets';
- (f) in which of the 'skill sets' were the other people deficient;
- (g) what was the process for comparing the 'skill sets';
- (h) on what date did the Minister publicly advertise for people with these 'skill sets' to express an interest in possible appointment;
- (i) what was the process used by the Minister to determine that there was no person in Port Hedland who had the required 'skill sets'; and
- (j) which of these essential 'skill sets' does the Minister have?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN replied:

- (a)-(j) Ports are major commercial enterprise with a key role to play in driving regional and state trade. It is required to negotiate with multi-national companies and set a strategic course for the future.

In my view, this requires a high level of skill and experience in corporate and financial affairs. A small business background does not generally provide these skill sets and experience.

Port Authorities play a critical role in the economic well-being and prosperity of the State and the regions. However, they are increasingly involved in national and international markets and trade. The appointment of people with significant national and international commercial experience will be critical in this environment.

Mr Williams has wide executive experience and his appointment will ensure the port benefits from his skills in strategic development, corporate governance and business networks.

I am delighted that people of this calibre and experience are prepared to take on these important positions, despite the relatively modest remuneration.

However, I recognise the importance of local knowledge and port authority boards will continue to be principally drawn from local people. Indeed these local business appointees benefit greatly from working with Chairs of Mr Williams' experience.