

COLE ROYAL COMMISSION, POLICE SQUAD, RESOURCES, AND WITNESS INTIMIDATION

3092. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services

I refer the Minister to *The West Australian* newspaper, dated 1 May 2004 and the report titled 'Police frame building probe charges' and ask -

- (a) will the Minister investigate the report that 'the police squad, known as the Cole royal commission task force, operates out of the arson squad offices but has few resources...';
- (b) will the Minister take action to improve resources to the squad;
- (c) is the Minister concerned with the report that 'many potential complainants, including big building companies, would not provide statements due to fear of reprisals from the CFMEU'; and
- (d) what action will the Minister take to ensure that potential witnesses will not be intimidated?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

- (a)-(d) The deployment of police resources is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Police. The Police Service has advised that the inquiry team was adequately resourced and completed its inquiries in a thorough and timely manner. The inquiry team was established within the Major Crime Division and appropriate personnel, resources, accommodation, travel and overtime were allocated to the team.

All persons are encouraged to report breaches of criminal law to the police. Police will investigate complaints and make every effort to instigate prosecutions if there is prima facie evidence of offences being committed. Where complaints are received, police will also support witnesses and instigate investigations into and prosecutions of persons who attempt to intimidate or coerce witnesses.