

MAGISTRATE - SOUTH WEST GOLDFIELDS

**784. Hon NIGEL HALLETT to the minister representing the Attorney General:**

My question is about magistrates in the south west goldfields.

- (1) In July 2007, the Attorney General announced that the recruitment process for a third magistrate for Kalgoorlie-Boulder would commence forthwith. Can the minister advise -
  - (a) was the Chief Magistrate consulted in the decision-making process to place an additional magistrate at Kalgoorlie; and, if not, why not;
  - (b) an outline of the selection process and advertising details; and
  - (c) the anticipated commencement date of the recommended applicant?
- (2) In June 2007, the Attorney General announced plans for an acting magistrate to spend one week a month in Bunbury to help reduce the backlog at the Magistrates Court. I ask -
  - (a) Has the acting magistrate attended the Bunbury court one week a month as planned during July, August September; and, if not, why not?
  - (b) What are the acting magistrate's scheduled dates to attend the Bunbury court circuit in October and November 2007?
  - (c) What is the current waiting time for the Magistrates Court hearings at the Bunbury and Busselton courts?
  - (d) What plans are in place to further increase the frequency of visits to Bunbury to help reduce this backlog following the commencement of a third magistrate in the goldfields?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)
  - (a) The Chief Magistrate was consulted at all stages of the decision-making process.
  - (b) The position was advertised over the weekends of 7-8 and 14-15 July and called for applications by 27 July 2007. Short-listed candidates were interviewed by the selection panel comprising the Solicitor General, Mr Robert Meadows, QC; the Chief Magistrate, Mr Steven Heath; Judge Julie Wager of the District Court; and Mr Ray Warnes, executive director, court services, on 30 and 31 August. A recommendation has now been made to the Attorney General.
  - (c) It is anticipated that the successful applicant will commence in the office next month.
- (2)
  - (a) The acting magistrate did not attend Bunbury during July and August. During that period, he provided additional judicial resources to Kalgoorlie, Fremantle and Broome during July, and Esperance and Armadale during August.
  - (b) The acting magistrate will be attending Bunbury for the weeks commencing 17 September 2007, 22 October 2007, 19 November 2007 and 17 December 2007.
  - (c) Bunbury, 43 weeks - Busselton 12 weeks. The listing interval in Busselton has been reduced to acceptable levels by assistance two days a week from the metropolitan area. This will continue until the end of this year, in addition to the visits of the acting magistrate.
  - (d) For the remainder of this financial year, the acting magistrate will continue to circuit to Bunbury one week a month.