

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, RESEARCH STATION EMPLOYEES, PAY INCREASE

1306. Hon. C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Education

I refer to the recent State Wage Case and the State Research Station Agricultural Schools and College Workers Award and ask -

- (a) will the Minister advise why the Education Department has not paid workers, under the above award, their increases which were granted on 1 August 2001 by the West Australian Industrial Relations Commission;
- (b) is it correct that the Education Department did not respond to correspondence of the Australian Workers Union (AWU) of 7 June 2001 in respect to this issue;
- (c) if so, why not, and when will the AWU receive a response;
- (d) will the Minister give a commitment to the employees at the Research Stations that they will receive their increase, including back pay before Christmas;
- (e) will the Minister give a commitment to the approximately 80 employees, employed under this award, that they will in the future receive their increases within a period of 21 days from the date of the order of the West Australian Industrial Relations Commission; and
- (f) if not, why not?

Mr CARPENTER replied:

- (a) Checking and adjustments to the payroll were required before the payment could proceed. This has now been attended to and the correct rate of pay will be reflected in the employees' next normal pay on 6 December 2001. All arrears payments will be completed by no later than the Christmas pay run.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) The Department understood that a satisfactory response had been provided in telephone discussions with the author of the correspondence. It will ensure that all such correspondence is responded to in writing in future.
- (d) Refer (a) above.
- (e) No.
- (f) While it is in the interests of both the Department and employees to have wage increases processed promptly, the need to ensure that any such adjustments are accurate and in accordance with formal advice from the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection precludes absolute guarantees to meet very tight timeframes.