

**Division 30: Law Reform Commission of Western Australia, \$1 007 000 —**

Ms A.R. Mitchell, Chairman.

Mr C.C. Porter, Attorney General.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The member for Mindarie has a question.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** In last year's committee we had an answer from the Attorney General about ongoing funding of the Coroner's Court on a more permanent basis. That decision was waiting upon a Law Reform Commission paper on the Coroner's Court, which was a process that was instituted by the previous Attorney General. I would be keen to find out where that matter is up to and when we might expect a paper.

[12.40 pm]

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** I can say to the member that I do not think that it could have been put to the Law Reform Commission in any more unequivocal terms that it is an absolute priority. I was informed that the Law Reform Commission contracts drafters for these papers. A drafter was contracted for the Law Reform Commission report. The first draft of that report came back and the overwhelming view of the commissioners was that it was substandard and not fit for purpose. They did not necessarily have to start from scratch, but they were very concerned that they had not been delivered a report of the standard that they would expect pursuant to the contract for writing that they had engaged in. I am informed that that report will be available towards the end of this year, in time to make a decision about the normal budgetary cycle. I cannot give the member any more information.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** For this time next year?

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** Correct.

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I have a follow-up question. Does the Attorney General expect or anticipate that the report delivered then will give him sufficient time to legislate in the thirty-eighth Parliament any legislative aspects of that report?

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** I think, member, that this has gone on for long enough. If that report is not as good as I would hope it to be, it is still my aim to give permanent change to the Coroner's Court baseline funding in next year's budget. I hope very much, after the long wait for both governments, that that report provides me some guidance on what that baseline funding should be and how the office should be structured. But, one way or the other, I am tired of waiting.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer to the issues raised by the Red Tape Reduction Group.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Member for Cannington, I refer you to the *Budget Statements*.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Yes, indeed; I am terribly sorry. I will find the page. I refer to page 365 and the total appropriations provided to deliver services. I am wondering whether the government has asked the Law Reform Commission to examine this issue raised by the Red Tape Reduction Group. I will quote from the group's report, which states —

... the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Western Australia) and the Institute of Public Affairs have revealed that Western Australia is still highly regulated and has poor regulation-making processes.

I am wondering whether the government has referred the issue of "poor regulation-making processes" to the Law Reform Commission.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** No, and an understanding of what the Law Reform Commission does and the types of reports that it has previously been required by government to engage in and has subsequently given over to government explains why. Those reports are about specific areas of legislative reform. I am not doubting that what the member is talking about is a fair complaint and a real issue, but it traverses hundreds of pieces of legislation, and, in my view, the administration and bureaucratic procedures of government are totally ill-suited to a Law Reform Commission report. I have every expectation that if I were to put that on the table for potential Law Reform Commission papers, the Law Reform Commission would respond to me that that was unsuitable. It is just not the right body for it.

**The appropriation was recommended.**