

**DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*Statement by Minister for Community Development*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for Community Development)** [2.16 pm]: A team of eminent child protection experts has been recruited to assist in the review of the Department for Community Development. I am pleased that such respected experts in the field have agreed to come on board to help create a template for an overhaul of the department that will firmly entrench child protection as its number one priority. The four highly experienced child protection experts will be joined by Ms Jo Gaines, the assistant secretary of the union that represents DCD staff, to ensure that the reviewer is also mindful of the needs of staff and that they are reflected in the final report. The advisory committee will provide expert advice, analysis, input and support to Ms Prudence Ford in her review of the department. It is expected the review will provide a template for the future of the department, recommending a structural and funding model to ensure that child protection is firmly entrenched as its primary focus. The review will look at cultural and structural issues within the department. It will also ensure that money - including the record \$140 million budget allocation and the additional \$50 million announced last week - is being spent in the key area of child protection. The advisory committee will consist of Gwenn Murray, a Queensland-based child protection expert; Alan McCagh, formerly of the Western Australia Police child protection unit; Darrell Henry, a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Child Protection and the Gordon inquiry and former member of the Child Death Review Committee; Sue Ash, chief executive officer of Care Options, a member of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Child Protection, formerly employed by the Australian Capital Territory Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, former executive director of Wanslea Family Services and past president of the Western Australian Council of Social Service; and Jo Gaines, assistant secretary of the Community and Public Sector Union.

Ms Ford has been asked to report by January 2007, and her report will be made public.

This is yet another example of the Carpenter government's commitment to protecting children. We are ensuring that the Department for Community Development is properly structured and equipped to carry out its core function; that is, the protection of our children.