

LAKE JASPER PROJECT - ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

626. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Minister for Community Development:

- (1) Is the minister aware of allegations of physical and mental abuse at the Lake Jasper Project, including allegations that children were hogtied together to a rope and forced to run behind a car with the threat of being dragged along a gravel road if they fell over?
- (2) Has the report into the Department for Community Development's response to these allegations and its monitoring processes been completed; if not, why not; and, if so, will the minister table a copy of this report?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question.

- (1)-(2) This is clearly a concern to me. These allegations are very grave and I am taking the report very seriously. Questions about restraints were asked in the house last week, and there was an attempt by the opposition to say that the restraining of difficult children was something that had not been highlighted previously. I remind members opposite that the relevant legislation contains definitions of what is to occur when restraints are needed and states that the provisions of the legislation must be strictly adhered to when children have to be restrained. I take very seriously the allegations that have been made. I will consider the report and will ensure that appropriate action is taken. I will also ensure that the department responds appropriately, as it should.