

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS — REGIONAL COUNCILS

3029. Mr D.A. Templeman to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the government's process of local government amalgamations in the metropolitan area, and the recent denial of a merger of four regional councils by the Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB), and ask:

- (a) why were these councils denied a merger that they have been collaboratively working towards for two years; and
- (b) if willing councils are deemed unsuitable for amalgamation why are you pursuing the amalgamation of unwilling metropolitan councils?

Mr A.J. Simpson replied:

- (a) There were a number of reasons given by the LGAB for not recommending amalgamation of Tammin, Cunderdin, Quairading and York. In carrying out a formal inquiry, the LGAB is required to consider submissions made to it under clause 4(2)(c) of Schedule 2.1 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and have regard, where applicable, to the following factors:

- community of interest;
- physical and topographic features;
- demographic trends;
- economic factors;
- the history of the area;
- transport and communication;
- matters affecting the viability of local governments; and
- the effective delivery of local government services.

The LGAB may also take into account any other matter that it considers relevant as part of its inquiry.

The LGAB's report on the proposal is clear that it took all of these matters into consideration.

Once the LGAB has recommended that a proposal be rejected, the Act provides that I can only accept the LGAB's recommendation.

See LGAB report tabled the 25 February 2014 (tabled paper number 1246) for information.

- (b) Thirty-eight different proposals for boundary change were submitted to the LGAB for its consideration. Only 12 of these were from the State Government. It is up to the LGAB to consider the factors that are relevant in making its recommendations to me. Any action concerning metropolitan councils will be dependent on the recommendations of the LGAB.