

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT — REVIEW — TOPIC FORUMS

3323. Mr A. Krsticevic to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the topic forums held during July, to prepare discussion papers for phase two of the Local Government Act Review, and ask:

- (a) Why were the forums only held during working hours;
- (b) Why were the forums only held during school holidays;
- (c) What alternative arrangements were made for individuals to contribute to the topic forums, who were unable to attend due to work or family commitments;
- (d) What criteria was utilised to select the participants;
- (e) Please provide details of how many participants attended each session and their names;
- (f) What was done to ensure individuals who were located in regional areas were able to contribute to this process; and
- (g) How many individuals, from which regional locations contributed to the topic forums?

**Mr D.A. Templeman replied:**

- (a) A number of factors were considered in determining the timing. It was decided that many of the people that would have the expertise and experience in the relevant topic would be attending in their work capacity. In addition, the length and nature of the forums was not conducive to evening sessions.
- (b) While the impact of the school holidays was considered, most of the population continues to operate as normal during this time. Options were made available to make a contribution other than through in-person attendance.
- (c) Individuals who were unable to attend a particular forum, including remotely, were invited to provide their input through a survey or by email.
- (d) Participants were expected to demonstrate experience working directly with the topic and a desire to positively shape the future of local government. Nominees were asked to state why they wanted to participate and selection was made initially on the response to this question. Consideration was then also given to ensuring a diversity of viewpoints and backgrounds, including regional spread.
- (e) Actual attendees:
  - Integrated Planning and Reporting (16)
  - Elections (10)
  - Rates and charges (11)
  - Financial management (procurement) (10)
  - Financial management (general) (11)
  - Local laws (14)
  - Administrative efficiencies (12)
  - Beneficial enterprises (council controlled organisations) (11)
  - Consultation and engagement (14)
- (f) Participants were able to attend in person, through the Department's network of regional offices or by Skype. Financial assistance was also available to allow participants from regional areas to attend in person.
- (g) There were 26 participants from regional areas.