

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — IMPROPER CONDUCT INVESTIGATION

2416. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Agriculture and Food

- (1) Is the Minister aware that in November 2009 a long standing member of staff from his Department was dismissed from his role after allegations of improper conduct?
- (2) Can the Minister confirm that he advised this former employee that an independent investigator would review documents provided directly to the Minister which allege misappropriation of the Department's intellectual property in relation to canola breeding programs?
- (3) Can the Minister please advise of the name, current position, department/company details of the investigator appointed to this inquiry?
- (4) Can the Minister please explain the investigator's status of independence in this case?
- (5) When did this investigation commence?
- (6) When is this investigation due to be completed?
- (7) Will the findings of this investigation be available for public review; and
  - (a) if not, why not?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

- (1) Yes. The former employee raised this in the documents he emailed me in relation to allegations of maladministration.
- (2) Yes. The Minister wrote to the former employee and advised that an independent investigator would be appointed to review his allegations.
- (3) The lead investigator is Mr Jim Zaknich, Senior Investigator, Gold Security Group (International) Pty Ltd. Other specialists will be engaged if, and when required.
- (4) The Department of Treasury and Finance, under the Common Use Arrangement (CUA), provides a list of independent investigators available to Western Australian public authorities. Gold Security Group (International) Pty Ltd were selected from this list.
- (5) Gold Security Group (International) Pty Ltd was engaged on 11 February 2010 to commence the investigation.
- (6) To allow for a complete and thorough examination of the evidence no specific timeframe has been identified
- (7) The findings will be referred to the Ombudsman's Office and/or the Corruption and Crime Commission if required.
  - (a) Not applicable