

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, NARROGIN - DORMITORY UPGRADE

760. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to a recent visit to the Western Australian College of Agriculture at Narrogin by the minister's officers to look at the urgent dormitory upgrade required by the college.

- (1) Is the minister aware of the real urgency for the facility upgrade?
- (2) Will the minister give a commitment and time frame to undertake the upgrade?
- (3) Will the minister visit Narrogin in the near future to see the state of the dormitories and ablution block facilities first hand?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The annual government budget is \$3.7 billion. A key component of that is capital infrastructure. Every local member in every electorate holds the view that the priorities of his or her schools are the most important priorities. It is an enormous juggling act to make sure that everybody's priorities are attended to in an orderly fashion. This is why the Department of Education and Training has systems in place to prioritise these projects. Usually an application is made to the district office. That application is actually prioritised next to or in comparison with other priorities within the respective district. Continually asking me or trying to badger me about a particular facility that a member wants -

Hon Robyn McSweeney: It is his job.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: It may well be his job, but I also ask the member to have due consideration for the processes that are in place and for the fact that everybody holds the view that their priority areas are also very important.

Hon Norman Moore: And you know better than anybody else that marginal seats are more important than anything else.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: What I do know is that we have spent more than any government on education and on infrastructure. I also know that no minister has looked after agricultural education more than I have looked after agricultural education.

- (1) Yes. The need to upgrade the residential facilities at the Narrogin campus of the Western Australian College of Agriculture is recognised.
- (2) The required upgrade work will be considered for funding within the forthcoming budget process.
- (3) There is no need for a ministerial visit at this stage. A policy officer from my office accompanied by a departmental officer - I think it was Mal Parr in this case - visited the college on 25 August 2006.