

RESIGNATION OF BRUCE HOBBS - SCIENCE COUNCIL

**203. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:**

I refer to the resignation this week of Dr Hobbs as Chief Scientist. Will the Premier guarantee to this house that the Premier's Science Council will be retained in its present form?

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:**

First, I reiterate all the positive commentary yesterday by the Minister for Science and Innovation towards Dr Hobbs, who as far as I understand - he was not working under my portfolio - did an excellent job. Perhaps I am wearing rose-coloured glasses, but I did not read into the commentary that was reported in *The West Australian* any criticism of the government. I was surprised to read the headline that he and I had been involved in a stoush, when there has never been any exchange of that kind between him and me whatsoever - never - nor with the minister. I wish him well. I understand there are other things that he wants to pursue. I repeat in general terms the remarks made yesterday by the minister about the government's agenda. Yes, we need to nurture and continue to develop improved production techniques and research in our key industries, but we also need to go into other areas, and that is what we are doing. We are investing for the state of Western Australia beyond the resources boom. In relation to Dr Hobbs, that is all I have to say. In relation to the Science Council, we are reforming the way in which we address science and innovation. That is why I have placed a person with ministerial responsibility in charge of science and innovation. We are changing the way we address it. However, that is not a negative commentary on anyone who has been involved in that process - not at all. We have absolutely fantastic people involved in the Science Council, and I want to keep them involved. Yes, we are evolving and changing the way we address policy in science and innovation, and so we should. I have made a virtue of the fact that that is what we are doing, and that is what we will continue to do.