

WEST COAST DEMERSAL SCALEFISH RESOURCE

823. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Fisheries:

Madam Speaker —

A member interjected.

The SPEAKER: That interjection was disorderly. I would ask for those kinds of interjections to cease.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to phase 2 of the west coast demersal scalefish resource consultation, which closed on 30 September.

- (1) When will the commercial fishing sector, the public of WA and regional communities that rely on demersal fishing finally get direction on the management of the west coast demersal scalefish fishery?
- (2) Will the minister guarantee that any changes will not be forced on the fishing community and related businesses and provide sufficient lead time for them to prepare for any new arrangements that will be set in place?

Mr D.T. PUNCH replied:

I thank the member very much for the question.

- (1)–(2) The science and the issues associated with the demersal scalefish resource are very complex. It is very clear that we are dealing with a species that is in recovery. Making decisions in relation to the future sustainability of that species is incredibly important. I am considering all the submissions that came through from fishers before I make a final decision. The member would probably have far more appreciation of the issues if he had actually bothered to seek a briefing on the science because then he would understand the complexity associated with fisheries management and the importance of the demersal scalefish resource, particularly. I will make a decision in due course, and I will certainly be advising all stakeholders once that decision is made.