

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION (ACTS OF TERRORISM) AMENDMENT
BILL 2002**

Second Reading

Resumed from 7 November.

HON RAY HALLIGAN (North Metropolitan) [9.38 pm]: Members may be aware that about 12 months ago, because of the acts of terrorism, a further Bill was presented to the Parliament that required certain things. However, it had a sunset clause that provided that the date for its conclusion is 31 December 2003. The Bill before us provides for a final day, other than 31 December 2003, to be prescribed by regulation. That day will of course supersede that date. It is understood that a regulation will be gazetted to provide for the final day to be 31 December 2004. Of course, because it is a regulation, that date could be changed subsequently without amending the principal Act. This is a temporary measure that has been put in place to overcome a number of problems within the workers compensation area. This has been done because many workers compensation contracts could not otherwise have been taken out after 1 January 2003 because there would have been a period in 2004 during which they would effectively not have been covered. That is primarily because the insurance companies would not have been able to obtain any re-insurance. That being so, it is likely that they would have been in breach and those employers would have been uninsured. In May this year the federal Treasurer said that a document was being circulated to the main stakeholders in this area and essentially the federal Government did not want the State Government to be the insurer of last resort for any lengthy period. I do not think there is much to discuss about this legislation. The Opposition supports the Bill.

HON JIM SCOTT (South Metropolitan) [9.40 pm]: The Greens (WA) support this Bill. It is a simple measure, otherwise the sunset clause would have "sunsetted" before the federal Government had got its act together to put in place a national scheme to cover this area. As such, this Bill, which allows a new date to be set by regulation, gives the flexibility to postpone that date long enough for the federal Government to put in place the necessary legislation. It is as simple as that. It is simply a procedural matter and we support it.

HON JOHN FISCHER (Mining and Pastoral) [9.41 pm]: For the reasons put forward by Hon Ray Halligan and Hon Jim Scott, One Nation supports this Bill.

Several members interjected.

HON NICK GRIFFITHS (East Metropolitan - Minister for Racing and Gaming) [9.42 pm]: I did not want to interject on the very earnest interjections that I have been listening to, but I thank Hon Ray Halligan, Hon Jim Scott and Hon John Fischer for their very lucid and comprehensive analysis of the Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Hon Nick Griffiths (Minister for Racing and Gaming), and passed.