

FREEDOM FROM FEAR CAMPAIGN

46. Mr R.F. JOHNSON to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth:

I refer the minister to her statement on an ABC radio program on the morning of 16 August that, based on a report by NFO-Donovan Research Pty Ltd, the award-winning freedom from fear domestic violence advertising campaign was being cancelled because it was not working and was not engaging men in regional Western Australia.

- (1) How does the minister reconcile her comments with those of Dr Rob Donovan, the co-author of the report, who said that the campaign had been one of the most successful programs ever and that rural men were responding to the campaign?
- (2) On what basis did the minister issue a media statement on the afternoon of 16 August stating that no decision had been made to axe the freedom from fear television and radio commercials?
- (3) Does the minister agree with Dr Donovan that she had some of the research findings confused, or is she simply not on top of her portfolio?

Ms S.M. McHALE replied:

- (1)-(3) I thank the member for his question. During the ABC radio interview, I made it clear on a number of occasions that the freedom from fear campaign had not been axed. I spoke with Liam Bartlett on the Thursday prior to the interview and went through with him the events of the previous few days, so Liam was clear that my position was that the freedom from fear campaign had not been axed. I was happy to be interviewed by ABC radio on the Friday morning, having explained to Liam the reality of the situation. In my media statement, I made it clear that the freedom from fear campaign had not been axed. I do not know how to say that more clearly. I explained to Liam that no advertising space had been booked at that time. As I have indicated, in the past few years there have been a number of occasions when advertising schedules have not been pre-booked; it is not evidence that the campaign has been axed. I will make it clear for opposition members, who either have a problem in hearing what I am saying or, more likely, refuse to listen. I will say it one more time for the benefit of those who refuse to listen: the freedom from fear campaign has not been axed.