

POPULATION GROWTH

957. Hon CHARLES SMITH to the minister representing the Minister for Planning:

I refer to recent calls by the Premier of New South Wales for a special meeting of the Council of Australian Governments to be devoted to the issues of population growth and immigration. As the minister will be aware, Australia has the fastest rate of population growth among major developed countries, at nearly nine times the European Union average. This rapid growth is being driven by the largest per capita immigration intake in the world. I also refer to the population pressures predicted to be mounting on Perth.

- (1) Does the state government support the current population trajectory that will see Perth more than double its population in less than three decades?
- (2) Does the state government have a plan to finance and build the necessary infrastructure to accommodate this extraordinary population growth?
- (3) Does the state government support a special COAG meeting on population?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage estimates that approximately 3.5 million people will live in the Perth and Peel regions by 2050.
- (2) The government released the Perth and Peel@3.5million suite of documents to provide strategic guidance to agencies and departments on planning matters, including infrastructure investment. The government is committed to and working to deliver a strong infrastructure program through Metronet.
- (3)–(4) The state government is open to engaging with the federal government and other states on any issues deemed to be of national importance. However, issues of the Council of Australian Governments' agenda rest primarily with the Prime Minister and the Premier.