

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT — GOVERNANCE

616. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

On behalf of the member for Cottesloe, I acknowledge the year 11 students from John XXIII College in the visitors' gallery today.

I refer to the inexplicable resignation of the entire board of the Western Australian Institute of Sport and the minister's comments to the media yesterday that bringing WAIS back in-house might be an option to ensure there is a clear line of transparency and responsibility.

- (1) Does the minister have confidence in the past and existing governance of WAIS?
- (2) Have there not been clear lines of transparency and responsibility to date at WAIS?
- (3) Is the minister sure that circumventing due process with overnight appointments of an all-male board is the best footing to start on for any hope of change?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I am very happy to answer the question, but before I answer the question, I acknowledge the Sandover Medal winner, East Perth's Hamish Brayshaw, who was announced on Monday night. Congratulations to Hamish. I also acknowledge Courtney Bruce from West Coast Fever who will not continue for Fever next year. Courtney Bruce made a tremendous contribution to West Coast Fever.

- (1)–(3) As the member is aware, the Western Australian Institute of Sport is an interesting entity. It is an incorporated body funded by government. That arrangement was established many years ago when WAIS was established. It is an interesting model, because it means that although government funds it, and in fact ministers continue to appoint its members, the fact that it is an incorporated body means that it operates differently from a statutory body or other entities.

My comments yesterday were absolutely true. It is something that should be considered. The member asked me whether that should be considered; I think it should be in the considerations around the ongoing governance and operations of WAIS into the future. I am very pleased and very happy that Dr Neale Fong has been appointed by the cabinet to chair WAIS, along with Darren Foster, Gary Dreibergs and Fabian Ross, joining Jennifer McGrath as the department representative, thus creating a quorum.

The process that led to the resignations was a frustrating one. WAIS operates as an incorporated body, and the body was responsible for the ongoing oversight of WAIS, with the operational side being, of course, conducted by the CEO and the staff.

We have been going through a very important process and a very important report that came out last year about some gymnasts. One commitment I made to the gymnasts, including when I made an apology in this Parliament in April last year, was that there would be a restorative process. Sadly, and frustratingly for me, that process was not able to be progressed as quickly as I wanted. Part of that challenge was some concerns of the outgoing board. I refer to the members of the outgoing board. I appreciate their work and I thank Priya Cooper, who I think did a tremendous job as chair. I am not critical of them, but they made a decision that they were not able to continue to serve as board members. I might say that they are not paid board members. There is no remuneration for the board members, except for the chair, who I think receives something around \$5 000 to \$8 000 for their service.

I needed to move swiftly, and I appreciate the cabinet's support in installing those members I have highlighted, all of whom are very experienced and I think are very eager to make a contribution and to offer their services. They join Jennifer McGrath. As I said yesterday in an interview with Nadia Mitsopoulos on the ABC, my intention is to add further members to that. Of course, I want more of those members to be female, and I will make some further announcements about that in due course and as soon as is practical.

We have to make sure that WAIS provides the services to the athletes and the high performance as it should. I think it is about time that we actually get things on track. That is what I am focused on. I think Dr Fong and the new board and those who will be co-opted in the near future are well positioned to do that. They will have my support and the support of the department.