

METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW PANEL — AMALGAMATIONS

184. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Local Government:

I thought I was the one who was hard of hearing in this room, so I will repeat the question I asked previously.

- (1) What has been the cost to date of the review panel chaired by Professor Alan Robson, including the recently released draft report?
- (2) What is the estimated cost to local governments of preparing submissions for the review panel?
- (3) Will the minister categorically rule out forced amalgamations of local government authorities?
- (4) Can the minister reassure local governments in the regions that he will not force any of them to amalgamate, including ruling out legislation forcing the amalgamation of shires by withholding funding?

They are the same questions; will the minister answer them?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members! As some of you may have surmised, it is not a supplementary question in the true sense. In the generous nature in which I always attempt to come into this house, I will give the minister the opportunity to answer some of that question if he chooses to.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI replied:

- (1)–(4) First of all, member for Collie–Preston, the Metropolitan Local Government Review Panel has not completed its task yet. That is number one. Number two, this government has always said that in this term of government there are voluntary amalgamations.