

SCHOOL BUS CONTRACTS, TENDERS

468. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Racing and Gaming representing the Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure
- (1) Has the Minister received correspondence from school bus operators concerned about the Government's move to offer current school bus contracts for tender?
  - (2) Does the Government intend to fulfil its election commitment that school bus services remain in local communities?
  - (3) How does the Government intend to ensure that its election commitment that contracts are not unilaterally altered and the investments by contractors into school buses will be taken into account in any negotiations?
  - (4) What contractual conditions are in place to ensure that a large bus contractor cannot gain control of a significant proportion of the school bus routes?
  - (5) What steps will the Government take to ensure a balance is kept between lower costs of bus services and the safety of students?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS replied:

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. The new contract tenure which will be for a period of up to 25 years addresses these issues.
4. The tendering process will give preference to the Government Buy Local Policy and previous experience of local operators.
5. Existing contracts specify the standards and safety requirements of school bus services. There will be no change to the standards or safety requirements. The government in tendering these services in the future will ensure it continues to achieve value for money for the community.