

AUDITOR GENERAL — HON SUE ELLERY'S COMMENTS

Statement by Member for Roe

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.20 pm]: I place on record my concern regarding comments from the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council regarding the Auditor General. In discussing an Auditor General report considering decisions made by the state government during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hon Sue Ellery implied the Auditor General was sympathetic to COVID deniers. A recent Auditor General report was critical of the state government's \$580 million expenditure on rapid antigen testing kits, which it found lacked clear, considered and coordinated planning or ongoing advice as to the necessity of this expenditure.

While the government may not be pleased with the Auditor General's findings, it does not excuse the comments made by Hon Sue Ellery regarding the Auditor General today, which were nothing short of unprofessional and extraordinary coming from a government minister. While Hon Sue Ellery was careful with her words to avoid outright defaming the Auditor General, her comments were clearly a dog whistle aimed at discrediting the valuable work of the Auditor General and her office. The opposition stands by the report made by the Auditor General, we stand by her continued advocacy without fear or favour and we stand by her criticism of the government in relation to its massive \$580 million over-spend on RATs. This government must retract its slur on the Auditor General and apologise for these spurious remarks.