

LIQUOR RESTRICTIONS IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES — GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

3728. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Mental Health

I refer to the Minister for Racing and Gaming's media statement of 4 August 2010 in relation to liquor restrictions in Aboriginal communities, and ask:

- (a) what extra services falling within the Minister's portfolio, and over and above those in place prior to the establishment of liquor restrictions, will be put in place in these three communities to ensure their underlying problems are addressed;
- (b) what extra services, over and above those in place prior to the establishment of liquor restrictions, have been put in place in the other restricted communities in Western Australia; and
- (c) if no extra services have been put in place, why not?

Dr G.G. JACOBS replied:

- (a) The situation in these communities will be monitored by the Drug and Alcohol Office via the Halls Creek Alcohol Management Group.

If need be, existing services, including the Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service Team will provide additional services on an outreach basis.

Any significant issues will be brought to the attention of the Minister for Mental Health for appropriate consideration.

- (b) No additional alcohol and drug or mental health services have been established in the seven other communities with Section 175 restrictions.
- (c) The communities' needs are being closely monitored by the Fitzroy Crossing Alcohol Management Group, the Halls Creek Alcohol Management Group and local service providers. At this stage there is no available evidence to suggest that there has been a significant increase in demand for alcohol and drug and mental health treatment and support needs in these communities as a result of the restrictions.

It is noted that Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing and surrounding communities are identified as Remote Service Delivery sites under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery. The process of identifying appropriate gaps and service mix (including alcohol and drug and mental health) is underway for these sites.

In the meantime alcohol and drug and mental health services are being provided to these communities as needed by existing services on an outreach basis.