

PORT HEDLAND — MAYOR — ALLEGATIONS

**1198. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:**

I refer to recent media reports about the business activities of the Mayor of Port Hedland and the minister's comments in the media, "I do encourage anyone who wishes to come forward to make a formal complaint."

- (1) Is the minister aware of the details outlined in the media reports published in *The Australian* of 13 December regarding the Port Hedland mayor and subsequent media stories?
- (2) Is the minister aware of the formal complaints concerning the matter raised by former mayor Mr Camilo Blanco with the appropriate authorities in November this year?
- (3) What action is the minister taking to investigate the matters raised in those complaints?

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Minister for Local Government is aware of recent media reports containing allegations made against the mayor.
- (2) The Minister for Local Government does not personally investigate or manage the handling of complaints. Specific processes for the making and handling of complaints are set out in the Local Government Act 1995 and in other legislation that applies to all local government elected members. Further, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries advises that due to applicable confidentiality provisions of the Local Government Act 1995 it cannot disclose specific information about individual complaints or complaints about specific elected councillors.
- (3) When a person is concerned about a potential breach of the Local Government Act 1995, they should contact the DLGSC to lodge a complaint in accordance with the act.