

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE, ANSWER REFUSAL BY MINISTERS IN THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY

1247. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Leader of the House:

What is the Leader of the House's explanation for the refusal by ministers from the other House to answer on a Friday sitting day questions without notice of which some notice is given unless they have been delivered by noon on a Thursday sitting day; and will the Leader of the House rectify this situation?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

If members were to assess the question on the basis of precisely the words that were used, they might think it is an inappropriate question and is referring to an action taken in another House. Clearly it is not. The question is quite proper. In fact, it relates to answers that are sought from ministers in the other House as represented by ministers in this House. This matter was raised with me by ministers in the Legislative Assembly when this House first contemplated sitting on Fridays. The point was made to me that ministers in the other House might have booked programs that would require them to be outside Perth on a Friday, and they were concerned that they would not be able to sign off on, or properly research, answers to questions that might be given notice of only on the Friday. They were keen to be able to provide answers on a Friday and so not disadvantage or disappoint members of the Legislative Council who sought such answers, but they asked whether those questions could come in concurrently with the Thursday question time deadline. I think members would generally understand that ministers frequently have to be out and about outside of Perth on a Friday, because that is the only day of the week that is available -

Hon Barry House: As do some country members of this place.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Indeed. I was certainly happy to accede to their request. I think it is a reasonable proposition that if questions are required to be answered on a Friday, the Government will bend over backwards to provide those answers, but we ask members to put in those questions in time for the Thursday deadline.