

DHARMIC PTY LTD — INDUSTRIAL HEMP TRIAL — FRAUD INVESTIGATION

**524. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to the alleged fraudulent activity by Mr Donald Khoo regarding an industrial hemp trial and the minister's answer to question without notice 767 in the other place that the Department of Agriculture and Food undertook to fully cooperate with the major fraud squad investigation.

- (1) Can he confirm that this investigation cannot continue unless his department makes a formal complaint?
- (2) Has the department refused to make that complaint, thereby thwarting this investigation?
- (3) Given his knowledge of possible fraudulent documents being presented to the department, why has the minister and his department refused to cooperate with the investigation?

**Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. I am certainly very aware of this issue. It is not an issue that is running hot at the minute, hence my knowledge of some of the detail is a little light. I certainly remember responding to questions on notice that came through. Through all the responses the Department of Agriculture and Food took and the discussions it had with my office, I was comfortable with the role it played and the compliance it had with any formal responsibilities in respect to legal requirements it had. A range of accusations were taken up from a range of fronts. I am cautious to make specific comment because of the nature of the claims that were there. I have no concerns about my confidence in the Department of Agriculture and Food and its compliance with any formal responsibilities it had in respect to any investigations around that particular issue.