

CHILD PROTECTION — INAPPROPRIATE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

**345. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to the arrangements made by the Minister for Child Protection's department last month to place a child in a home with two convicted sex offenders.

- (1) When did the minister become aware of the placement?
- (2) Did the minister agree with the local magistrate that the placement was inappropriate?
- (3) If so, when was the child removed from that home?
- (4) Where has the child been placed since his removal?
- (5) If no to (2), will other children be placed in the home with two convicted sex offenders if similar circumstances arise in the future?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(5) Without notice, I cannot give the date, so I am unable to give her the precise date on which I became aware of this matter. I was certainly informed of it and had knowledge about the situation.

When I was given the information on why this decision had been made and the circumstances surrounding it, and the weighing up of the considerations of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support that needed to take place, I concurred fully with the department's decision. I concur with the comments made by the director general of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support that it was a really difficult situation and that it was trying to find the best possible outcome for the child in those processes, with the main objective being reunification with the mother. I have had ongoing updates and briefing notes about how this has unfolded and I know that that child has subsequently moved away from the placement to another placement.

**Hon Sally Talbot:** Back to his mother?

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** I believe that was happening, but unless I am brought up to date right now, I could not tell the member whether that child is with the mother. I know a bit of work was happening to bring the mother and child together, and most people were hopeful that that would occur. If the member wants more detailed information on that —

**Hon Sally Talbot:** Would you still place children with two convicted sex offenders?

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** Let me say again that the situation put in place by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support is one I support, and it was on the basis of all of the issues, all of the considerations that needed to take place and all of the safeguards put in place for that child in that placement at the time. I was fully aware of that and I supported it.