

AT-RISK YOUTH — NEW SERVICE PROVIDERS

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

I refer to the provision of services to youth at risk.

- (1) Is there a process to apply as a new service provider?
- (2) If yes to (1), what is that process?
- (3) How does the department calculate the need for such services?

**Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY replied:**

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

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Department for Child Protection works in partnership with the community services sector to deliver a range of services to provide for the protection and care of children and young people, and to support at-risk individuals and families in resolving crises. The department distributes funding to the not-for-profit sector through direct negotiation with an existing funded service provider to repurchase the current service or for new funding and services; by public invitation to submit a request for proposal—RFP—tender or expression of interest; or by direct negotiation with a sole service provider, if it can be demonstrated that no other service provider exists that could provide the service or there are strategic considerations to negotiate directly with a particular agency.

The RFP tender or the EOI process is used in the following circumstances: when new funding is available and an open tender process is required, when an existing service provider is unable or unwilling to continue as a service provider, or when a range of possible service responses is invited and there is a service agreement to be awarded. The amount funded is unique for each service and dependent on the specifications of the service.

In order to be eligible to receive funding organisations must meet a range of eligibility and selection criteria consistent with the government's funding and purchasing community services policy.

- (3) The department's contract planning process encompasses reviewing and prioritising the local mix of services to determine whether existing services are still a priority. The department conducts a range of forums to seek input from the community services sector regarding services.

The department has participated in the Economic Audit Committee process and the development of a new collaboration for community policy is intended to provide a clear framework for the procurement relationship between government and the community sector.