

*Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People — Second Report —
“Review of Selected Reports by the Commissioner for Children and Young People: Changing priorities
in the post-Blaxell environment”*

Resumed from 10 April.

Motion

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I move —

That the report be noted.

I commend this report to the house. The committee, of which I am a member, does not produce many reports, but when it does, they are quite carefully worded and well thought through, and this report is no exception. In this report we have focused on three reports put out by the Commissioner for Children and Young People. The first is the annual report for 2012–13 and the other two are “Speaking Out” reports, of which the commission has done several over the years it has been in existence. The two we are particularly interested in here are “Speaking Out About Disability: The views of Western Australian children and young people with disability” and “Speaking Out About Living in Regional and Remote WA: The views of Western Australian children and young people”. Both of those reports make very entertaining and informative reading. They are done in the style of direct reportage of the children’s comments. The study into regional and remote WA was the one that I was particularly interested in, being a regional member. It makes very entertaining reading. There are 150 000 children living outside the metropolitan area in Western Australia, and children living in the regions in country towns and remote areas are no different from children anywhere else in the country or indeed the world. They talk about how much they would like their school not to exist. They talk about how much they value their families and their friends, and what they like and dislike about their towns. Mostly they want more skate parks, fewer days at school, more days in the sun and better swimming pools. There are no surprises here but it is a very worthwhile production to have all these comments together in one place.

That leads me to a point I want to make on the findings of this report, which is that the committee would like to see some tracking of the use of the research done by the commission, particularly in government policy development. It is worth looking at the findings; there are only five of them. I just draw them to the attention of honourable members. They are all at page (v) of the report. The first concerns a statutory review that is currently being undertaken by the Attorney General into the Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006, and I will have more to say about that in a moment. The second acknowledges the summary provided in the annual report.

Committee interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 2857.]

Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 4.30 pm