

**ABORIGINAL CORPORATIONS AND CHARITABLE TRUSTS — GOVERNANCE**

*Statement*

**HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West)** [8.57 pm]: I will be brief. I was not going to speak tonight, but I just want to make a comment on what Hon Robin Chapple talked about tonight. This is an area that I have previously spoken to the Attorney General about on many occasions over about four years. I have had a meeting with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs virtually every six months on this issue. In fact, my first meeting on this issue was on my second day of Parliament with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in the former Parliament. It is a topic that I am passionate about. The things that Hon Robin Chapple spoke about are common sense, and there are things that this government can do. I really hope that this government takes on this issue. This is an area that the government can get its teeth into and make the changes that will make things a lot better. Aboriginal trusts, in many cases, have been mismanaged for many, many years. When we look at the way the public responds to that and the way the media writes about it, we can see that it causes damage across the board in Aboriginal affairs, in the relationships between the greater population and Indigenous people, and in the stereotypes that come from those conversations, especially through the newspapers and television. This is something that the government needs to look at. It is costing Aboriginal people, this state, and the people of Western Australia and Australia billions of dollars. It is allowing less than honest people to get involved in that industry and make hay with the loopholes in the law when it comes to trusts. For instance, directors of a trust can actually advise their members to invest in companies that they happen to be directors of; that is one of the loopholes, and there are many others.

I have taken up this discussion with an honourable member from the Nationals WA who has been talking about this in the lower house, and I will continue to have discussions with those people even after I am no longer a member, and I know Robin will as well. I just want to plead with the government: please look into this, and please support the Attorney General and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs—who happens to be in this house—to really get into this and try to make the changes that are needed.