

RESOURCES SECTOR — LOCAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

7. Hon JON FORD to the Minister for Commerce:

I draw the minister's attention to the ongoing Western Australian resource sector growth.

- (1) What policies and/or strategies does the minister have in place to maximise opportunities for local Western Australian and Australian businesses to participate in the massive increase in investment to the resource sector in Western Australia?
- (2) How does the government measure outcome success or otherwise in regards to these policies and strategies?
- (3) Does the government have any specific targets for local business participation in regards to WA resource sector growth and what are they?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

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

- (1)–(3) The Western Australian economy is growing and maturing in an increasingly globalised environment. The government does not believe in mandating levels of local content because that will drive up the cost of major projects, seeing jobs and projects exported overseas. However, the Western Australian government is interested in providing support to those willing to change the focus of their businesses in a way that makes them competitive. Local content provisions currently require major proponents to provide “full, fair and reasonable” opportunity for local companies to bid and supply the work. Although discussions are held between project proponents and government regarding opportunities for local business participation, specific targets are not imposed. Improving levels of local content means improving transparency around reporting local content levels in major projects and ensuring that suppliers and proponents appreciate each other's requirement and capacities. The government will continue to focus on this over the coming weeks and months. This government continues to encourage increased constructive engagement by local and national businesses and the expanding resources industry with the aim of ensuring our local industries can continue to grow and prosper.