

COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES — APPOINTMENT

Statement by Minister for Corrective Services

MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Corrective Services) [2.01 pm]: I am delighted to inform the house that a short time ago I announced the appointment of a new Commissioner of Corrective Services. James McMahon, DSC, DSM, is a 24-year Australian Army veteran, business executive, management consultant and West Coast Eagles board member. The job of DCS commissioner represents one of the most demanding leadership challenges in the public sector, but I am confident James McMahon has the credentials to successfully meet those challenges. As a former commanding officer of Australia's elite Special Air Service Regiment, Mr McMahon is an outstanding choice as commissioner and he will bring crucial qualities to the role. James McMahon's career has been characterised by leadership, courage and integrity, and an ability to bring about organisational change, which is very much needed at DCS. As well as his distinguished military background, Mr McMahon has significant experience in the corporate sector, advising businesses in strategy, risk and personnel management. Mr McMahon has a proven track record as a leader who delivers results. His decision to take the job reflects not only a commitment to the community, but also a vote of confidence in the government's approach to corrective services. The Liberal–National government has made a commitment to bring about cultural, organisational and management reform within DCS and I firmly believe the new commissioner can deliver that reform.

James McMahon is a highly decorated military veteran. During deployments with the SASR to East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and the Distinguished Service Cross. Mr McMahon is also a recipient of the Sword of Honour and the Governor General's Medal. He spent most of his military service with the SASR before being appointed the regiment's commanding officer. After leaving the regiment, Mr McMahon worked in the business sector, applying the discipline, knowledge and leadership skills learned from his service with one of the world's best special forces units. He joined Azure Capital in 2007 as chief operating officer and later established Chauvel Group. In 2007 he was appointed as a non-executive director of the West Coast Eagles and is currently the Eagles' deputy chairman. James McMahon will start work as DCS commissioner on 30 October. I am sure all members will wish him well.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant contribution made by Heather Harker, who has served as acting commissioner since April. Her assistance during this time has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated.