

PUBLIC SECTOR — CONTRACT AND CASUAL WORKERS

589. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing Premier:

I refer to the so-called 200 Fresh Ideas for WA, touted by the McGowan opposition during the election campaign, specifically 194, which states —

Develop criteria to convert contract and casual public sector workers with more than two years' employment in the same role to permanent status.

- (1) Given that the Premier is now abandoning other commitments, allegedly on the basis of the state's financial position—something he was fully aware of before the election when he made his uncosted commitments—and he has identified recurrent public service expenditure as the major burden on the state budget, will he be pursuing this fresh idea?
- (2) If yes to (1), when?
- (3) Given that the Premier's public sector reform purports to be aimed at reducing public sector expenditure, how does he reconcile converting contract and casual staff to permanent staff with creating efficiencies and flexibility?
- (4) Will one of the criteria for permanency be union membership?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

The member is hilarious, even more so when he is not trying!

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

- (1) While I reject the premise of question (1), yes.
- (2) The detail of the policy is currently being worked through.
- (3) The former Minister for Commerce may be aware that the state pays a premium for staff who are contracted through agencies. As such, these two concepts are not mutually exclusive.
- (4) No.