

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY — OFFICE OF SHARED SERVICES

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

I refer to the commission of inquiry into “decision-making processes, risks, and contract terms” of selected projects that the Premier claims were mismanaged and that he claims will “recommend safeguards to [that] happening again”.

- (1) Given that the Office of Shared Services, initiated by the Labor government in 2003, commenced in 2005 and was inherited by the Barnett Government in 2008, and which had cost the taxpayer almost \$360 million more than its original \$82 million price by the time it was wound up, rather than saving \$54 million a year, fits the criteria of a dealing that has “exposed taxpayers to hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs and contributed to WA’s record state debt”, why is that project not being examined in the interests of “high-level scrutiny, transparency and accountability”?
- (2) Does the Premier believe that nothing is to be learned from that example, and that it can and will form the model for his government’s future projects and their management?
- (3) Is that another example of incompetence in decision-making and implementation of projects by the then Labor government, and of ministers of that government who are now part of the McGowan cabinet, and which have contributed to the state debt, that is too politically embarrassing to be investigated?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I advise that I have been provided with a copy of the question and answer recently asked by Hon Michael Mischin. The answer reads —

- (1)–(3) As the honourable member notes, the commission of inquiry is to prevent the financial deterioration that occurred under the previous Barnett government from happening again. The deterioration is represented by debt rising from \$3.6 billion when the Barnett government took office, to being \$33.2 billion this financial year in the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*, projected to reach \$41.1 billion at the end of the forward estimates, with three consecutive years of deficits. As such, the current list of 26 projects and contracts from the then Barnett Liberal–National government is the appropriate focus for the commission of inquiry.