

STATE BUDGET 2013–14 — CONSUMER PROTECTION

727. Hon KATE DOUST to the Minister for Commerce:

The Minister for Commerce is not here today, so perhaps the minister who normally sits next to him might assist me with the answer to this question.

I refer to the table under “Services and Key Efficiency Indicators” on page 643 of the 2013–14 budget papers.

- (1) Can the minister please outline why there is a reduction target of six in the number of full-time equivalent employees in the Consumer Protection area?
- (2) Does the minister agree that this will have a negative impact on the efficiency indicators for Consumer Protection; and, if not, why not?
- (3) Can the minister please explain why there has been a steady reduction in full-time staff since 2011–12 for Consumer Protection?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I answer on behalf of Hon Michael Mischin. I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The number of full-time equivalent employees shown on page 643 of the 2013–14 budget papers relates to both consumer protection staff and corporate services support staff for Consumer Protection. The reduction recorded between the 2012–13 estimated actual and the 2013–14 budget target is four rather than six. There will be a reduction of full-time equivalent employees in the Consumer Protection division necessary to reflect the implementation of the public sector workforce reform measure.
- (2) The reduction is expected to have minimal impact on service delivery. The reductions are being implemented in areas that have the least impact on service delivery, and Consumer Protection has a continuing focus on increasing efficiency.
- (3) The primary cause for the reduction was the realignment of the budgeted full-time equivalent employee allocation to actual use, associated with the reduction in the full-time equivalent ceiling measure applied across government in 2012–13.