

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION

*Fourteenth Report — “Inquiry into the Jurisdiction and Operation of the State Administrative Tribunal” —
Tabling*

Hon Ken Baston presented the fourteenth report of the Standing Committee on Legislation, “Inquiry into the Jurisdiction and Operation of the State Administrative Tribunal”, and on his motion it was resolved —

That the report do lie upon the table and be printed.

[See paper 791.]

Statement by Chairman

HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral) [4.08 pm] — by leave: On 7 June 2007 the inquiry into the jurisdiction and operation of the State Administrative Tribunal was referred by the house to the Standing Committee on Legislation pursuant to section 173 of the State Administrative Tribunal Act 2004. The prorogation of Parliament on 7 August 2008 for the 2008 state election brought about a premature end to the committee’s inquiry. However, the house re-referred the inquiry to the committee on 11 November 2008. The committee received 99 submissions, held 13 public hearings involving 22 witnesses, and conducted a site visit to the tribunal’s premises. The committee also received a large amount of written evidence.

The Standing Committee on Legislation found the State Administrative Tribunal to be operating efficiently and effectively, and it was of the view that the positive result was due to the considerable efforts and dedication of the members and staff of the tribunal. In particular, the committee acknowledged the initiatives, work and leadership of Hon Justice Michael Barker, who served as the inaugural president of the tribunal.

The committee made 25 findings and 60 recommendations relating to the jurisdiction and operation of the tribunal. Most notably, the committee recommended that the government provide adequate resources to relocate the tribunal to another permanent location as soon as practicable after expiry of the lease for the tribunal’s current premises. The committee noted that any increase in the jurisdiction of the tribunal should be accompanied by a commensurate increase in resources. Accordingly, the committee recommended the development of a funding model for the tribunal as soon as practicable. The committee encourages the government to note its finding and to accept and address its recommendations. I thank the staff who put so much time and effort into this report, particularly Denise Wong, the legal advisory officer, and Mark Warner, the committee clerk.