

RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA — TABCORP AND TATTS MERGER

259. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister broadly admits that this merger threatens the value of the TAB, does that mean that the minister is now at odds with Western Australia's principal racing industry authority?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

No, I did not actually say it threatens the value. I said that any assumption that the TAB might have been more valuable because there would be two potential proponents for the purchase of the TAB, were it to be put up for sale, has been eliminated because now there is only one entity that might be interested in it. That is my observation. It does not put me at odds with Racing and Wagering Western Australia. With respect to its view on the overall benefit to the national racing industry, I do not really have a view. In Western Australia there is the suggestion by the Nationals and some other people in the racing community that we should be rushing to sell the TAB; I do not think there is any argument for doing that now. I think we should take our time, look at reform within the industry and assess the TAB as a separate consideration.