

INDIGENOUS RANGER PROGRAM

**225. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to this afternoon's media release, which is headed "State Government welcomes indigenous ranger pledge", the key points of which are —

- A Shorten Labor government will expand the indigenous ranger program and indigenous protected areas in WA
- Commitment means more than 1,550 FTE ranger jobs across Australia

That is not across Western Australia, but across Australia.

- (1) Did the minister approve this media release and its contents?
- (2) Does the minister and his jetsetting, holiday-tripping, slumber-partying colleagues from the Premier down actually believe that the resources of government—in this case the government media office—are there for him to misuse as he sees fit; and are we going to see more of this?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** You've just broken the standing orders because you've just asked him for an opinion.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** All right. Minister, thank you for your assistance there. The Minister for Environment has the call.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank Hon Simon O'Brien for the question. I am very pleased to show my support for the Shorten government's commitment today to expand the Indigenous ranger program across the country. This is a fantastic program and will work in very closely with our state-run Aboriginal ranger program.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Member, you have asked a question, and if you want to hear the response, I encourage you to listen quietly and actively and you might get a response. It does not help Hansard when people are yelling across the chamber.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am very happy to show my support for the Shorten Labor opposition's announcement today that it will expand the Indigenous ranger program across the country. This will be of great benefit to Western Australia. Members in this place would know that we went to the last election with a commitment to expand or create an Aboriginal ranger program in Western Australia. In round one of that program we created about 85 jobs and 80 training positions. The second round of that fund closed last Friday. We received \$40 million worth of applications and we are working through them at the moment.

In relation to the specific questions asked by Hon Simon O'Brien —

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is preposterous.

**Hon Simon O'Brien** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Are we done? One of your colleagues might like to ask a question.