

FUNDING TO INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT — COMMENTS BY  
MEMBER FOR PILBARA

**245. Mr J.M. FRANCIS to the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to the outrageous allegations made in this house yesterday —  
Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bassendean!

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** — by the member for Pilbara that additional resources —

*Point of Order*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Mr Speaker, under the rules for questions, standing order 77(1)(b), a question should not contain an imputation. I submit that the question asked by the member for Jandakot does so, and should be ruled out of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not going to rule the question out of order. However, I ask the member for Jandakot to ask that question again in a more appropriate manner.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** My question was directed to the Premier. I refer the Premier to comments made in this house yesterday by the member for Pilbara that the provision of additional resources for the Greens and Independent members of Parliament in this house and in the other house was corrupt and that the Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Mr Peter Conran, was behind the additional resources for political purposes. Can the Premier explain to this house what the current arrangements are and how they came to be?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:**

I read the speech made by the member for Pilbara. As stated in the question asked by the member for Jandakot, the member for Pilbara referred to outrageous allegations. He called me a spineless jelly back, but I can live with that. I can cop that. I will not lose a moment's sleep over that. I have had worse, far worse.

However, Mr Speaker, I took exception to the frequent use of the terms "corrupt", "corrupt allocation of resources", "corrupt decisions" and the continued reference to the Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. That was the content of the member's speech.

The point that the member for Pilbara was referring to was funding by the government to Independent members of Parliament. Yes, this government did take a decision to do that, and I will comment on that.

**Mr T.G. Stephens:** Will you table the advice you got on that?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I am not addressing my comments to the member for Pilbara, and I doubt that I will be bothered by him too much at all in this Parliament.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Girrawheen!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** In 1992 the then Lawrence government provided funding to the five Independent members of Parliament at that time. The previous government provided funding to the Greens party —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland! Thank you.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** On the change of government, one of the first items of correspondence I received was from the Greens asking for additional funding. I also received an approach from the member for Alfred Cove for assistance in drafting legislation and dealing basically with legislative and legal issues. I gave consideration to both of those requests.

**Mr T.G. Stephens:** Did you get any advice?

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Pilbara!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Mr Speaker, quite the contrary, I sought the advice of the head of Premier and Cabinet. I had a discussion with him. We discussed it, as a government, and we decided we would provide additional

funding to the Greens and to each of the Independent members of this house, with the obvious exception of the member for Churchlands, being a minister. I asked the head of Premier and Cabinet to prepare a —

**Mr T.G. Stephens:** Mal Wauchope or the new director general?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Mr Speaker, I think the member for Pilbara made enough problems for senior public servants yesterday.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Pilbara!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I asked the head of Premier and Cabinet to prepare a cabinet submission, which I took to cabinet, and which was agreed to, and the offer of that funding was provided to the Greens, to the member for Alfred Cove and to the member for Kalgoorlie.

The member for Kalgoorlie had not sought funding for that purpose, although he did discuss with me issues about the size of his electorate—as have other members, with some justification. The Greens tend to use that money on a contractual basis to seek legal advice. The member for Alfred Cove has appointed a staff member. To this point, the member for Kalgoorlie has not; I understand he may do so and that is his option.

Several members interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The member for Pilbara commented on corrupt allocation of resources, corrupt decisions, intermingled with references to the head of Premier and Cabinet—indeed, at one stage, naming Mr Peter Conran.

**Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Armadale!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I point out that Mr Peter Conran, the head of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, was not appointed until 28 November 2008. He had absolutely no involvement at all. He was not an employee of the state. The Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet whom I dealt with on this issue was Mr Malcolm Wauchope, a long-term career public servant since 1973 who served both sides of politics. He served Premiers Richard Court, Geoff Gallop, Alan Carpenter and Colin Barnett. He is a person with an impeccable record of bipartisan, professional, independent public service. The member for Pilbara just threw the comments around without any thought about the reputation of Mr Malcolm Wauchope, the person from whom I sought advice and who prepared the cabinet submission on that issue.

The member for Pilbara has form. He has form in his career in the upper house and in this house. He does not do his homework. He walks into this place and, under parliamentary privilege, routinely slurs decent people in our community, and once again he did it.