

GST DISTRIBUTION — PREMIER'S COMMENTS

**359. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer to the Premier's recent comments that the Prime Minister could, if he wished, fix the inequity in Western Australia's share of GST "within 24 hours".

- (1) What is the mechanism by which the Prime Minister could do so within 24 hours?
- (2) When since the election has the Premier discussed with the leader of the federal opposition, Mr Bill Shorten, the issue of improving WA's GST share, and when was the last time that he did so?
- (3) What commitment has Mr Shorten made to the Premier to fix the inequity in WA's GST share should he become Prime Minister?
- (4) Since the state election has the Premier discussed with any Labor member of federal Parliament the issue of improving WA's GST share?
- (5) If yes to (4), have any made a commitment to improving WA's GST share; and, if so, who has made that commitment and what precisely was that commitment?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The mechanism that the Premier is referring to is the federal government's ability to determine what each state's GST distribution is. As the member should be well aware, the Commonwealth Grants Commission only makes recommendations to the federal Treasurer on that distribution. In the words of commission chair Greg Smith in November 2016 —

"The CGC's role is to make recommendations to the Commonwealth Treasurer on how to share out GST revenue among the States consistent with terms of reference," ...

"The Treasurer is responsible for determining each State's share."

As such, the federal Liberal government is in the position to reject the unfair distributions recommended by the commission, but chooses not to do so. This is not a new development in the debate on the GST distribution. If the honourable member would care to examine his own party's submission, written by his current and former parliamentary leaders, he would see that on page 3 it makes mention of the same mechanism.

- (2)–(5) The Premier is focused on achieving a positive outcome for Western Australia on the GST distribution as soon as possible with the government currently in power at the federal level. The Premier will continue to fight for a better GST share for Western Australia and will engage, and has engaged, with anyone who will assist, whether that is the federal opposition, Western Australian business, or anyone else.