

HUAWEI — STATE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE — ADVICE

**240. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Transport:**

Given that the State Solicitor indicated yesterday that he was very concerned that his office's advice was not sought for a contract of the size and significance of the Public Transport Authority's contract with Huawei, has the minister now sought an explanation from the PTA on why it excluded the State Solicitor's Office from reviewing the Huawei contract; and, if so, what is the explanation?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

Again, I have not seen the uncorrected *Hansard* of that —

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** She was paraphrasing.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So that was not what he said. Was it the *Hansard*?

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** The video is online.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So that was a transcript.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** The video is online.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Was it a transcript?

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** I don't have a transcript.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** As the State Solicitor stated, there is no Treasurer's instruction or Premier's circular that requires State Solicitor's advice for these contracts. Some agencies seek State Solicitor's advice and others do not. That has been the practice. As we discovered from the Perth Children's Hospital contract, seeking State Solicitor's advice does not always reduce the risk to the state. The Public Accounts Committee said in relation to the PCH contract that there were insufficient contractual levers and it was clearly unsatisfactory that the state found itself in that position. I do not know why the State Solicitor said what he said, but he has never raised those issues with me directly and he has not sought a meeting to discuss them. A management team is now in place to make sure that all issues are addressed. I highlight that under the previous government, hundreds of contracts were signed with private legal advice.