

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY — GOVERNANCE PRACTICES CHANGE

645. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the minister's response last year about other affected mining proposals stemming from the conflict-of-interest decision made by Chief Justice Wayne Martin on the Environmental Protection Authority board and the minister's response to the effect, "No, no, no. As I said, the EPA code of conduct has been tightened up."

- (1) Why did the minister falsely claim that he had already fixed the problem?
- (2) Is it true that the government appointed numerous members to the EPA board knowing that they had a conflict of interest?

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

- (1)–(2) I was hoping that I would get this question. The member for Gosnells has used a very interesting tactic on this matter.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kwinana to order for the first time.

Mr A.P. JACOB: He went straight to ABC Radio today —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the first and second time.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I simply want to answer the question that was put to me. Aspersions about this matter were made very quickly on ABC Radio. I will not go to the particular wording the member used, but he was quick to besmirch and smear individual members of the EPA and imply that the conflict-of-interest matters related to those members. I will tell members a very interesting fact. Of the 25 projects that I have tabled in this place, every one of them that involved a conflict of interest or a perceived apprehension of bias had a conflicted member who was appointed by members opposite—every one of the 25! I do not wish to go into that any further.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for member for West Swan, Cannington and Butler, I call you all to order for the first time.

Mr A.P. JACOB: In fact, the policy change was made by a board of five members who were entirely appointed by members opposite.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr A.P. JACOB: But we did not seek to pursue individual members on this matter. If members opposite want to go there, we can go there. Let us talk about some of the comments from members opposite. First of all, the member for Gosnells pursued a particular member of the Environmental Protection Authority, a member who has not been conflicted in a single one of the proposals. According to Justice Martin's ruling, that member appropriately declared and did not participate at any stage. The member for Gosnells went after that member, the member who was completely not conflicted. Even worse, the member for Gosnells sought to smear one of the most respected and senior public servants in this state. The member for Gosnells sought to smear the Public Sector Commissioner who was appointed as director general to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet under the previous Labor government.

Suspension of Member

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, please leave the chamber.

[The member for Victoria Park left the chamber.]