

PERTH MARKET AUTHORITY — MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD —
CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1454. Hon KATE DOUST to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

- (1) Did the minister request the Premier to remove from him all responsibility for the Perth Market Act 1926; and, if no, why not?
- (2) Why did the minister never make a public announcement of his conflict?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) No. As Minister for Agriculture and Food, I am responsible for the Perth Market Act. Under the act, the minister is responsible for ensuring the day-to-day operations of Market City, and I have complied with this requirement. This has had nothing to do with the sale of the asset.

On 2 July this year, as soon as I became aware of a potential conflict of interest, I notified Peter Conran, the director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, in writing about a potential conflict of interest. I advised him that my son was the director of a company arranging finance for a bidder for Market City. He informed me about the actions that I was required to take to deal with this potential conflict of interest. I was then advised by Peter Conran that I had met my obligations under the Ministerial Code of Conduct by declaring this possible conflict of interest. Since then, I have excluded myself from cabinet discussions and any other discussion about the sale of this asset, and referred all questions on this matter to the Treasury.

- (2) The advice my office received was that it would not be in the interest of any particular bidders to disclose information publicly that might disadvantage them.

Distinguished Visitor — Hon Murray Nixon

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): At this juncture, I welcome Hon Murray Nixon, former member of the Legislative Council, to the President's gallery. Welcome, Murray.