

BUILDING MANAGEMENT AND WORKS — FRAUDULENT STATUTORY DECLARATIONS

786. Hon KATE DOUST to the Minister for Finance:

I refer the minister to the article in *The Australian* of 16 October 2012 that seven builders had been referred to WA Police for signing suspected fraudulent statutory declarations.

- (1) On what date did Building Management and Works initiate an inquiry into the builders' signing of statutory declarations BMW believed to be fraudulent?
- (2) On what date did the government refer this matter of suspected fraudulent statutory declarations to the police?
- (3) Will the minister name the companies associated with the signing of suspected fraudulent statutory declarations; and, if not, why not?
- (4) Did BMW withhold any payment claims from these head contractors with suspected fraudulent statutory declarations; and, if yes, how much money was withheld?
- (5) If no to (4) —
 - (a) how much money was released to the head contractors; and
 - (b) why did BMW release moneys when it suspected that the statutory declarations were fraudulent?

The PRESIDENT: Before I give the call to the Minister for Finance, could I just note, for the information of the stranger in the President's gallery, that we do not permit exchanges over the Bar of the chamber.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question today. I understand that this question is intended to supersede a question that the member gave notice of yesterday, in similar terms.

Hon Kate Doust: No. That is another question. It is an entirely different question.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Perhaps that has caused the confusion, then, but we will sort that out. In relation to the question that the member has just asked —

- (1) Building Management and Works first investigated statutory declarations in December 2010. This information was passed to an administrator to further investigate and pass on to WA Police. The Department of Finance investigates the legitimacy of statutory declarations immediately on receipt of allegations of non-payment by subcontractors or upon the appointment of either an administrator or liquidator.
- (2) This and a number of other suspected fraudulent statutory declarations were referred on 20 August 2012.
- (3) No. These matters need to be properly investigated by the police.
- (4) Payments were withheld from some, but not all, of the seven head contractors. The total amount of the payments withheld was approximately \$1.39 million. Payments were also suspended by operation of the contract where the department took over works from the head contractor.
- (5) Not applicable.