

“LOCAL CONTENT REPORT: MAY 2011”

Statement by Minister for Commerce

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan — Minister for Commerce) [10.01 am]: Yesterday afternoon I tabled the “Local Content Report: May 2011”. I want to add some brief comments about that report. The report gives an accurate summation of the local industry participation in major resource projects within the state. Although the report illustrates some areas of concern, there are also significant examples of successful adaptation to the current global economic climate. The continuing development of an environment that encourages local content is a high priority of the Liberal–National government. It is a key determinant of the current and future performance of the Western Australian economy.

The Premier and I are finalising the government’s review of the existing local content policy. A new perspective and approach is required to deal with increasingly complex market conditions. Let us face it—we live in an increased globalised economy. The challenge WA faces is how we adapt to ensure our competitiveness. This will not happen through legislated mandates imposed by government. It will happen through government-led dialogue to connect project proponents with local manufacturers. The Department of Commerce is already working closely with major project proponents who are developing high-value resource projects within Western Australia. The dialogue encourages project proponents to engage with locally based manufacturing and service companies on potential opportunities to work on their projects.

The government wants to provide local suppliers with a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in the large resource market. We are developing a new approach to local industry participation, and we are listening to and understanding the concerns of all stakeholders—they have not fallen on deaf ears. I am confident the local industry participation policy review, which I will finalise and release soon, will provide improvements to the capacity utilisation of the state’s manufacturing and service industry.

Consideration of the statement made an order of the day for the next sitting, on motion by **Hon Ed Dermer**.