

EDUCATION AND TRAINING — CAMP SCHOOLS

4394. Mr D.T. Redman to the minister representing the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the McGowan Government's decision to privatise six of the State Government owned Camp schools, and ask:

- (a) can the Minister confirm Fairbridge has processes in place and is sufficiently organised to ensure any camp bookings for 2019 will progress and be managed to the standards expected of the Government;
- (b) can the Minister confirm that booking numbers into the camp schools for 2019 are significantly down on the current year;
- (c) is the Minister aware of what schools have not booked for 2019 and by extension what those schools are doing to meet their extra curricular needs;
- (d) can the Minister confirm whether the Education Department is monitoring the performance of Fairbridge as it carries out its undertakings to Government, even in these early transition stages;
- (e) is the Minister aware that one option being actively considered for managing staffing for the camp schools into the new year is bussing staff into the sites from Fairbridge:
 - (i) does the Minister consider this suggested strategy for staffing the sites sufficient to meet the expectations of the Government agreement with Fairbridge;
- (f) did the Government include any "buy local" responsibilities in the agreement struck with Fairbridge, and if so what are they;
- (g) is the Minister aware that many small schools that attend the camp schools have small student numbers and therefore would be disadvantaged if minimum numbers were set for camp attendance; and
- (h) is the Minister aware of minimum numbers being set for any school group attending a camp school from 2019?

Mr P. Papalia replied:

I don't accept the premise of the question.

- (a) Fairbridge has a central booking system specifically designed for hospitality and customised for schools' camping. All bookings received since the implementation period have been entered into the system and confirmed back to the clients.
- (b) The majority of bookings received for the first half of 2019 are in line with expectations; some have exceeded last year's bookings while others are below expectations.
- (c) To answer this question for all schools would require a survey to be completed by all schools. This has not been undertaken. While some schools plan for camps as part of their learning program, not all do. Many schools achieve similar outcomes through other means, including incursions, excursions, short stays, school-based programs and use other sites for their camps.
- (d) The terms and conditions of the lease agreement require Fairbridge (lessee) to provide the following information to the Department on an annual basis:
 - details of the number of Department of Education schools and students attending the campsite;
 - rates charged to Department of Education schools and students; and
 - such other information as the Lessor may reasonably require.The Department is liaising regularly with Fairbridge during the transition phase to ensure that the changeover to Fairbridge occurs smoothly.
- (e) Fairbridge was selected to operate the six camp schools. The agreement ensures students will continue to have access at an affordable price. The way the camps are managed and operated is a matter for Fairbridge as the new operators.
 - (i) N/A.
- (f) Fairbridge was provided with a list of all local suppliers used by the Department for each campsite.
- (g)–(h) Fairbridge has confirmed that minimum numbers have not been set for any campsite. Small schools will not be disadvantaged.