

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS — CONSIDERATION

Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Hon Max Trenorden) in the chair.

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs — Sixteenth Report — “Municipal Waste Management in Western Australia” — Motion

Resumed from 31 March on the following motion moved by Hon Kate Doust —

That the report be noted.

Question put and passed.

Australian Training Awards — Statement by Minister for Training

Resumed from 27 November 2008.

Consideration of statement lapsed.

Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations — Twenty-first Report — “Report on the Inquiry into Public Sector Expenditure”

Resumed from 19 May 2009.

Motion

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I move —

That the report be noted.

I also seek adjournment of consideration of this report until the next sitting of the house. My reason for doing that is that the Leader of the Opposition has had to leave on urgent parliamentary business and is unable to be in the chamber and I know that she was keen to make some comments on this report as the Chair of the subcommittee that did that report.

Consideration of report adjourned, on motion by Hon Kate Doust.

Esperance — Lead Contamination Clean-up — Statement by Minister for Transport

Resumed from 3 December 2008.

Motion

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I move —

That the statement be noted.

Obviously, we have a great deal of concern in relation to what happened in Esperance. It is still an ongoing problem. The issues pertaining to this matter seem to move further into the biosphere by way of transportation via various invertebrates that are now being consumed by the birds. What we are noticing is quite interesting. Instead of the lead being carried in the feather systems of birds, it is now being carried in the gut. We are therefore seeing a significant migration of the contamination further up the food chain.

We have also recently discovered that there is evidence of manganese now being identified within the community. Although we are concerned that this might be coming from the lead, it now appears that it may be coming from fertiliser passing through the community. I therefore do not believe that the issue is over and done with. I believe that we have a fair way to go in determining the eventual outcome of the lead pollution in the region. I hope the Minister for Transport will give further consideration to the eventual outcome in that area.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I am more than happy to respond to the member if he wishes. It is not clear to me, though, what he actually wants me to respond to.

Hon Robin Chapple: We are just putting it on the record.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: In that case I will limit my response to these observations.

The government has continued to work to address some outstanding issues that relate to the lead contamination that occurred in Esperance. As the member knows, we have pursued that policy vigorously because we felt that it was essential that the government do the right thing by the people of Esperance.

Because I think you, Mr Deputy Chairman, are entertaining just a brief debate on the general subject after my statement in the early days of December last year, I am pleased to report that the consultative mechanisms involved in the actual clean-up operation—the actual doing of the operation—are very well established indeed. I am very pleased with how they are going. A number of community members have been actively concerned, are

possibly contributing to the longer term debate about impacts in the community and are on board with the consultative group. I recall a meeting at their office in Esperance and how pleased I was to find that everyone was talking with one voice and that there was—from the government representatives through to the community representatives and anyone else—general agreement that it was all going in the right direction and in the right way. That is reflective of the statement that I gave on 3 December.

I give a commitment, though, to Hon Robin Chapple and to the chamber that the government is determined to see this matter through. Perhaps the remarks of the member just now are best entertained by a substantive motion in their own right because they go a bit beyond the statement I made last December into other related matters that concern Esperance. Any member is welcome to invite me to stand again, of course. However, unless any member needs any more information right now, I will leave my remarks at that and agree with the view that my statement be noted.

Question put and passed.