

GERALDTON PORT — BERTHING DELAYS

553. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to reports in the *Geraldton Guardian* dated 22 June regarding the forced offshore anchorage of ships seeking to load and unload at Geraldton port.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that a number of ships were unable to dock in June; and, if so, why?
- (2) How long were ships required to anchor offshore?
- (3) What holding costs were incurred because of delays in entering Geraldton port?
- (4) Does the minister support a recommendation from New Zealand-based MetOcean Solutions Ltd to extend the existing 170 metre-long breakwater by 350 metres, thereby providing an approximate 50 per cent reduction in swell wave heights and a 30 per cent reduction in long wave heights within the harbour?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

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

- (1) Berthing delays due to surge in Geraldton harbour were experienced on 2 and 3 June 2011, and in the period from 15 to 21 June 2011.
- (2) These berthing delays had the following durations: 2 June, 16 hours; 3 June, seven hours; 15 to 21 June, 144 hours.
- (3) The liability for delay and demurrage costs is determined by contract terms between the relevant parties—shipowner, charterer, cargo owner and/or exporter. Such commercial information is not supplied to the government or to the Geraldton Port Authority.
- (4) This report from MetOcean Solutions has identified, by mathematical modelling, that a 350-metre breakwater extension will reduce loads on mooring lines by 40 per cent. However, the modelling did not consider the consequential effects on the surrounding beaches, or the amenity impacts on the community. Until further investigations are completed, the project is fully costed and its feasibility assessed, it is premature to support the initiative.