

FRANCIS BURT LAW EDUCATION PROGRAMME

951. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the Department of Education's advice to the Law Society of Western Australia that it will cease funding the Francis Burt Law Education Programme from 1 July 2019.

- (1) Given that with the passage of the Duties Amendment (Additional Duties for Foreign Persons) Bill 2018 the McGowan government will have an additional \$123 million in revenue over the next four years, more than it requires to freeze TAFE fees, will the minister undertake to ensure the reinstatement of the modest \$110 000 sought for the continuation of this important legal education program?
- (2) If the funding is not provided, what does the minister understand to be the fate of the program; and, so that she may make a reasoned, rather than a difficult or hard decision regarding funding, what steps has she taken to find out?
- (3) What steps has the minister taken to date to restore funding to the program; and, if none, why not?
- (4) What steps will the minister be taking to restore funding or support to the program and to provide certainty regarding its future?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- (1) This question is another example of the strategy of the Liberal–National government that led to the catastrophic financial position of this state by spending the same money many times over. To answer: the agreement between the Law Society of Western Australia and the Department of Education expires on 30 June 2019.
- (2) The Law Society of Western Australia was notified by letter in December 2017 that the agreement would not be renewed at its conclusion, thus allowing 18 months for the Law Society to seek alternative sources of funding for its programs or to adjust the services it provides. Department officers have met with and provided information to the law society that may assist it to identify alternative sources of funding. The decision to review the Department of Education's external funding agreements was done in support of budget repair measures to return the state budget to surplus in 2021.
- (3)–(4) The decision to cease funding to the program will remain. As advised on 11 October 2018, should the Law Society secure alternative funding to cover the salary cost of a teacher, the Department of Education would be willing to investigate the possibility of a teacher secondment.