

POST OFFICES — OPERATING HOURS

863. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the amended opening hours for Australia Post offices in certain parts of the state, initiated as part of our COVID response, and particularly to those outlets that have, for almost two years now, been closed to the public on a Saturday.

- (1) Does the McGowan government agree that our post offices, particularly in rural communities, provide a valuable community hub around which we can build and deliver services during this and any future pandemic?
- (2) Will the Premier commit, in his role as a key member of the national cabinet, to lobby the federal government to rescind the COVID regulations that have allowed post offices to remain closed on a Saturday and encourage the reinstatement of normal operating hours as soon as is reasonably practicable?

The PRESIDENT: Before I give the Leader of the House the call, I was contemplating that. I think the first part of that question seeks an opinion, but I will leave it to the Leader of the House to attempt to provide an answer if one is available.

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

Thank you for the guidance, President. It is the case today that a number of the questions have requested opinions, so members might want to take note of that.

The PRESIDENT: I am alert to that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) Australia Post is a corporate commonwealth entity, and operational decisions regarding the location and timing of its services are a matter for its board or the Australian government. Notwithstanding that, the WA government recognises the importance of post offices, particularly in rural communities, and the role they play as an essential service provider, and it supports any action to improve access to these services.