

FINANCE — LIQUID WASTE ROUTINE MAINTENANCE SERVICE TENDERS

1728. Hon Steve Martin to the Minister for Finance:

I refer to liquid waste routine maintenance services and the practice of placing tenders for this and like work on the Tenders WA website, and I ask:

- (a) why were liquid waste routine maintenance services in Bunbury recently not advertised on the Tenders WA website as per normal;
- (b) has the government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy prevented the listing of this work on Tenders WA for a competitive tenders process as is usually the case;
- (c) are tenders from Aboriginal businesses given preferential treatment over other small contractors because of the procurement policy,;
- (d) if yes to (c), how;
- (e) how are operators which usually get work through the tenders process now able to access work if Tenders WA is now not being used;
- (f) how many routine maintenance contracts are currently in effect across the State:
 - (i) how many of these contribute towards targets in the Aboriginal Procurement Policy; and
- (g) does work contracted out to an Aboriginal business and then subcontracted by them to another business count towards the targets listed in the procurement policy?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) The Department of Finance identified an opportunity to procure directly from a registered Aboriginal business, consistent with the State Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy and Western Australian Procurement Rules.
- (b) No. Where a government agency chooses to engage directly with a business in accordance with the Western Australian Procurement Rules (such as registered Aboriginal businesses), there is no requirement to advertise the procurement on Tenders WA. These businesses can be appointed directly as long as value for money is demonstrated.
- (c) The Aboriginal Procurement Policy mandates targets for government agencies to award contracts to registered Aboriginal businesses, recognising the broader social and economic benefits that can be achieved. This is consistent with the approach taken by other jurisdictions, as well as broader 'closing the gap' measures.
- (d) Not applicable.
- (e)-(f) The Western Australian Procurement Rules require government agencies to advertise all procurements valued over \$250,000 on Tenders WA, with few exceptions. In 2022-23, the Department of Finance awarded 59 routine maintenance contracts. Five contracts were awarded to Aboriginal businesses.
- (g) Reporting under the Aboriginal Procurement Policy reflects the legal entity that enters into the contract with the relevant government agency.