

WENDY BEARFOOT

**1021. Hon SUE ELLERY to the Attorney General:**

I refer to the coronial inquest into the tragic death of Department of Environment and Conservation firefighter Wendy Bearfoot, the considerable public interest in an open examination of the incident and the circumstances that a number of emergency volunteers and firefighter personnel are increasingly reluctant to expose themselves to undue risk.

- (1) Has the Attorney General made or will he make a request to the coroner to expedite the inquest?
- (2) Will the Attorney General consider providing additional resources to the coroner to enable that to occur?
- (3) If no to (1) or (2), what is the estimated time before this inquest can be held?

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN replied:**

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

- (1) Firefighter Wendy Bearfoot died on 1 November 2012 at Royal Perth Hospital as a result of injuries received fighting a fire at a pine plantation at Kalgan on 12 October 2012. The cause of the fire and the circumstances surrounding the death are currently under investigation by the Western Australia Police arson squad and Albany detectives. It will be some time before police inquiries are completed and a report is provided to the State Coroner. Until that occurs, the State Coroner is unable to make any decision on the conduct of an inquest.
- (2) The Coroner's Court has sufficient resources to hold an inquest if necessary.
- (3) Refer to the answers to questions (1) and (2).