

SUPREME COURT — NEW BUILDING

1216. Hon Giz Watson to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Attorney General

I refer to the opening address of Law Week made by Hon Chief Justice Wayne Martin on 14 September 2009, and I ask -

- (1) Does the Government plan to invest in a new building for the Supreme Court of Western Australia?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) If yes to (1), when?
- (4) What are the Government's options after the Supreme Court building lease expires in 2016?
- (5) Why did the Government withdraw the forward funding for a new court facility in Carnarvon?
- (6) What is the current state of the courthouses situated in, -
 - (a) Kununurra;
 - (b) Karratha; and
 - (c) Broome?
- (7) What is the Government doing to address the current issues in those courthouses, including, -
 - (a) lack of seating space for magistrates;
 - (b) lack of office space for visiting superior court judges;
 - (c) protection of vulnerable witnesses giving evidence from the accused and other witnesses;
 - (d) safety and security issues, particularly of jurors and judicial officers;
 - (e) adequate waiting areas for witnesses and clients; and
 - (f) inappropriate venues for courthouses, including a 'donga' in Karratha?
- (8) If the answer to (7) is nothing, why not?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN replied:

- (1) The Government has plans to invest in a new building for the Supreme Court of Western Australia. The business case and funding requirements will be considered as part of the overall planning for State Infrastructure. However, given the many competing priorities for infrastructure funding, there is no guarantee that the Supreme Court will be funded in the near future.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Investment in the Supreme Court of Western Australia will occur when funding is available and the business case and other material support the project.
- (4) The State will enter into negotiations with the Lessor to extend the current lease past 2016.
- (5) The forward funding was deferred as part of the capital works audit.
- (6)
 - (a) Kununurra — The fabric of the building is in a reasonable condition.
 - (b) Karratha — The fabric of the building is in a reasonable condition.
 - (c) Broome — The fabric of the building is in a reasonable condition.
- (7) The Department of the Attorney General has prioritised its capital works program for the re-development of the Kununurra Court in 2013/14, Broome Court 2014/15 and Karratha Court 2015/16. These are unfunded projects and business cases are being developed seeking funds to proceed.
 - (a) Chambers or office space is provided at each location for Magistrates.
 - (b) Chambers or office space is provided at each location for visiting Judges.
 - (c) CCTV facilities are in place in all three locations to enable vulnerable witnesses, including children, to give their evidence from a safe, secure location. Victim Support Workers are also available to assist vulnerable witnesses and liaise with security staff to minimise the risk that they will have any unwanted contact with the accused.

- (d) Security and safety is the responsibility of the Department of the Attorney General. Security risk assessments are carried out by the Department and specific issues are addressed by security staff or police.
 - (e) Improving the waiting areas will be addressed with the future redevelopment of Kununurra, Karratha and Broome courthouses.
 - (f) Assessing redevelopment options for each of the areas mentioned will be addressed with the future redevelopment of Kununurra, Karratha and Broome courthouses.
- (8) Not applicable.