

AUDITOR GENERAL AMENDMENT BILL 2022 — INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

975. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Treasurer:

Happy Thursday. I refer to the Treasurer's media release on October 19 announcing the introduction of the Auditor General Amendment Bill 2022.

- (1) What sensitive information will be available to the Auditor General under the bill that cannot be further disclosed to the Western Australian community?
- (2) Will the Legislative Council be able to question all the data that underpins the opinions given by the Auditor General?
- (3) If no to (2), what data will be kept secret?
- (4) How is the Auditor General expected to give an audit report based on information like cabinet documents that cannot be justified through publication?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Treasurer.

Noting that this bill is yet to be debated by the Parliament and that members will have the opportunity to consider the bill as part of the committee process, the answer is as follows.

- (1) The proposed framework to deal with highly sensitive information is extensively set out in the second reading speech, the bill and the explanatory memorandum.
- (2) The Legislative Council will be able to question all the data that underpins the opinions given by the Auditor General in the way that it currently can.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Once any highly sensitive information is provided to the Auditor General, the information may be fully utilised as part of any audit, including informing any audit findings or opinions. However, the information itself may not be further disclosed by the Auditor General in a public report. For example, Auditors General have regularly been given access to cabinet documents under successive governments for the purposes of conducting their functions and have provided audit reports without the publication of this sensitive information. This will continue.