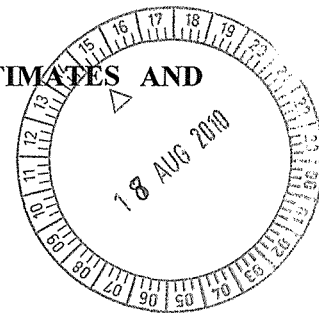


SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Monday, 16 August 2010

Department for Communities

1. *Additional Question No 1: Hon Alison Xamon asked – Page 719, dot point 9, Carers -*
 - 1.1 What policies and programs are being developed to support young carers?

Answer:

The Department for Communities is responding to the issue of support to young carers via the following initiatives:

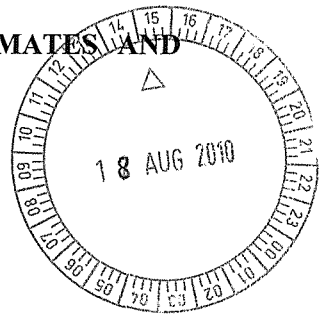
1. Providing funding of \$200,000 to CarersWA to undertake a two year pilot project which will support young carers in the school system. The project commenced on 1 July 2010. The identified issue is the lack of understanding and support for young carers in the educational system. The aim of the project is to; increase awareness amongst school staff of the challenges facing young carers and provide additional support within the school setting; provide relevant support to young carers; and, increase young carers awareness of and links to community support services. The project is supported by a reference group with representatives from Carers WA, Department of Education, and Department for Communities.
2. The Young Carers Social Networking Project aims to support and facilitate a peer network of young carers 18–25 years over a 12 month period to: improve their mental health and wellbeing; increase access to social opportunities; promote activities; and increase opportunities to mentor and support other young carers. Funding of \$25,000 has been allocated to Carers WA.
3. In partnership, The Western Australian Association for Mental Health and the Department for Communities are delivering a project with funding of \$25,000 to support young carers of people with a mental illness in the 13–17 year age group. Young people involved in the project will develop an appropriate and appealing social network system for this group which faces major issues of social isolation.
4. Also in partnership with The Western Australian Association for Mental Health and the Department for Communities are analysing a body of existing national and international literature relating to effective support programs for young carers to identify programs that would suit the Western Australian context for future attention.
5. The Department for Communities has provided \$23,000 to YMCA Big Brother Big Sister to extend their mentoring program to an additional 25–30 young carers and young people with disabilities. The funding will allow young people who are already on their waiting list to be matched with appropriate mentors and for resources to be developed to support the mentoring of young carers and young people with disabilities in the future.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. J. Greeney'.

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Monday, 16 August 2010

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Additional Question No 2: Hon Alison Xamon asked – Please provide some detail on these changes, for example, what might now be defined as a “concern” rather than a “breach”?

Answer:

Background

The Child Care Licensing Compliance and Enforcement Strategy aims to encourage and promote efforts by licensed services to comply with the legislation, and also to ensure that action is taken against services when serious incidents of non-compliance occur, or when there is continuing failure, by the service, to comply with the legislation. As part of the strategy to promote and encourage compliance while maintaining a strong but flexible enforcement regime CCLSU has developed a more sophisticated IT system known as REALM, which allows for a differentiation between concerns and breaches.

Concerns

Concerns are incidents of non-compliance where the matter needs to be drawn to the attention of the licensee (supervising officer) and the problem rectified, but where it is not appropriate or necessary to record a breach of the legislation against the child care service.

Licensing Officers record non-compliance as a concern (rather than as an alleged breach) only where and when ALL of the following circumstances are present:

- the non-compliance relates to a contravention of the regulations and not to a provision of the Act
- the risk to a child’s health, safety or wellbeing is, or was, low or negligible
- the incident or matter is/was isolated and it (or a similar matter) has not been recorded as a substantiated breach or had 3 previous concerns of the same regulations in the previous two years
- the non-compliance does not result from a deliberate avoidance of responsibilities on the part of the licensee or supervising officer.

If all the above conditions are met, and there are no other circumstances influencing the situation, the Licensing Officer should record an incident of non-compliance as a concern.

Alleged breaches

Non-compliance with a provision of the Act and any incidence of non-compliance with the regulations that does not come within the parameters of a concern, must be treated as an alleged breach and recorded as such. Where an investigation discloses a serious breach of the legislation, appropriate sanction by way of administrative action (written warnings, adding of licence conditions), prosecution, notice of intention to suspend a licence, immediate suspension or immediate cancellation of a licence are all sanctions that would be considered.

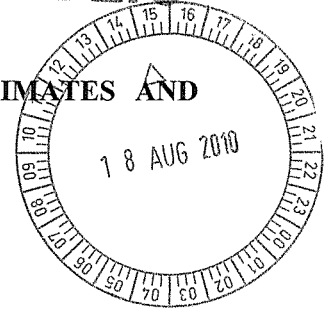
Examples are:

1. A Child Care Centre operating in the Eastern suburbs in the Perth metropolitan area. A complaint from a parent was received via telephone on 17 November 2009 that the service appeared under staffed on that day. This was recorded as a concern but following a spot visit on 19 November the centre was found not to be compliant with staff/child ratios at the time of this visit, and subsequently a breach was recorded under regulation 81 of the Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006. It was evident to the licensing officers that the service knew about the understaffing, which is the responsibility of the licensee, and no action was taken by the licensee despite the initial notification. This matter was rectified immediately by the licensee once contacted by CCLSU. This service had no recent previous history of non-compliance under regulation 81.
2. A Child Care Centre operating in the Southern Suburbs of the Perth metropolitan area. At a routine licensing visit, it was found that a service was identified as not having enrolment forms for several children who were in attendance at the time of this visit. Regulations 67 of Child Care Services (Child Care) Regulations 2006, requires the licensee to keep an enrolment form for each child that attends. On its own this would be recorded as a concern however the REALM data base showed that the service has had previous concerns recorded against it for not having enrolment forms. In this case the concern was then escalated to an alleged breach and subsequently recorded as a substantiated breach of regulation 67. Following a letter requesting compliance and warning of the consequences of the non compliance, the licensee put in procedures to ensure the continuing compliance with this regulation.



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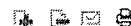
Additional Question No 3: Hon Alison Xamon asked – Why was the Child Care Licensing Scheme deferred?

Answer:

The Treasurer announced in the 2009 State Budget that licence fees would be introduced for child care services. This decision was subsequently revoked due to the proposal to introduce a new national system, including licence fees, from 1 January 2012.

A copy of the relevant information from the Department for Communities' website is at Attachment 1.

R. McSweeney



Child Care

- Child Care Licensing
- Child Care Centre Licence
- Family Day Care Licence
- Outside School Hours Care Licence
- Outside School Hours Family Day Care Licence
- Licensing Fees
- Child Care Licence Applicant Assessments
- Enforcement Actions
- Child Care Options
- Babysitters
- Creche
- Legislation
- Qualifications
- Working with Children Check
- Children's Services Officers
- News

Children & Families

[Early Years](#)[Integrated Service Development](#)[Parenting WA](#)[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families](#)

Licensing Fees

Related Resources

Minister revokes planned childcare licensing fees

Community Services Minister Robyn McSweeney today revoked a planned 2009-10 State Budget measure, that sought to introduce new licensing fees payable by 1,492 Western Australian childcare providers from January 1, 2010.

Following a Federal Government plan to introduce a national childcare licensing fee system in 2012, Mrs McSweeney has withdrawn the implementation of the new licensing fee system in WA.

"I am pleased that following my discussions with the Treasurer, the State Government will no longer be introducing childcare licensing fees in WA," she said.

"As WA childcare services are licensed for a period of three years, the introduction of the proposed State childcare licensing fees would potentially cause an overlap for a large number of childcare services with the introduction of a new national licensing system.

"I indicated to the Treasurer that childcare providers should not be subjected to entering into a new State licensing system only to have a Federal uniform system come into force in two years' time.

"Since this budgetary measure was announced, there has been rapid development through the Council of Australian Governments of the National Quality Standards regarding a new national integrated licensing and accreditation system proposed to be introduced on January 1, 2012."

The Minister acknowledged many providers were preparing for the introduction of the proposed licensing fees and would directly inform the sector of the decision.

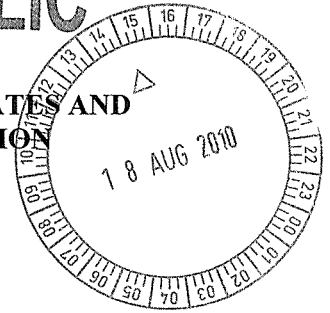
Updated: Tuesday, 1 December 2009

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SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
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Tuesday, 20 July 2010

Department for Communities

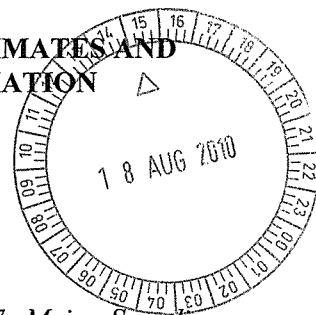
*Additional Question No 4: Hon Alison Xamon asked – Page 724, second table, line item 8 –
4.1 What impact is the reduction of funding to the Western Australia Family Foundation
expected to have?*

Answer: The reduction in funding to WAFF will have no impact on any of the
department's grant programs or recurrent funding agreements.

R McEwen

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Tuesday, 20 July 2010

Department for Communities

Additional Question No 5: Hon Linda Savage MLC asked – Page 717, Major Spending Changes that refers to 'Additional Indexation to Community Sector Organisations' and ask –

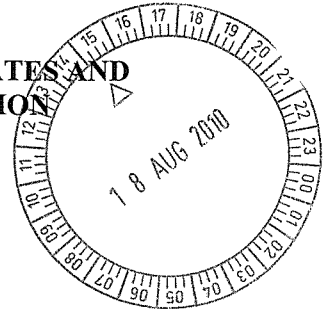
- 5.1 *Does the 'additional indexation' referred to, mean that there will be an increase in payments over and above the increase that existing indexation would provide for?*
- 5.2 *If yes what formula or calculation is being used to calculate the 'additional indexation'?*

Answer: No

R McGovern

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Tuesday, 20 July 2010

Department for Communities

Additional Question No 6: Hon Linda Savage asked – I refer to p719, dot point 6 and the issue of economic security for women as an increasing concern and ask -

6.1 *What action is the Minister and the Department for Communities taking to address this concern?*

Answer:

The Government is approaching this in a multi-pronged way:

1. By identifying priority areas for government, private and not-for-profit sectors through the contribution of women at the recent Women's Advisory Council Symposium with its focus on economic security
2. By informing policy makers and planners in the government and private sectors through research and information provided in the *Women's Report Card: Measuring Women's Progress 2009 Update*
3. By contributing to national policy work on pay equity
4. By providing direct practical assistance through the Women's Information Service and the Women's Services Directory.

R. M. G. Sweeney