

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
UNIFORM LEGISLATION AND STATUTES REVIEW**

STATUTES (REPEALS) BILL 2016

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2016**

Members

**Hon Kate Doust (Chair)
Hon Phil Edman
Hon Brian Ellis
Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson**

Hearing commenced at 1.31 pm

Ms ADITI VARMA

Assistant Director, Department of Finance, sworn and examined:

Mr ANDREW DOLLING

Director, Economic Reform, Department of Finance, sworn and examined:

Mr DOMINICO FERNANDES

Legal Policy Officer, Department of the Attorney General, sworn and examined:

The CHAIR: First of all, I would like to welcome you to the hearing this afternoon. I will introduce you to the committee members and explain how we are going to work our way through this. This is our first hearing into the Statutes (Repeals) Bill 2016. The committee members we have here today are Hon Brian Ellis and Hon Phil Edman. We also have our research officer, Ms Irina Lobeto-Ortega, and on the conference call, we have Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, so she cannot see you, but she will hear you. We do appreciate you coming in. Whilst this may, on the surface, appear to be a relatively straightforward bill, we have a number of questions that we just need some information to help us work through why these changes are needed before we start to work on our report.

Before we actually get into the questions, we are required to work through some formalities. The first thing we have to do is ask that each of you take either the oath or affirmation, and Lauren has the appropriate paperwork.

[Witnesses took the oath or affirmation.]

The CHAIR: Each of you would have signed a document entitled “Information for Witnesses”. Have you read and understood that document?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIR: These proceedings are being recorded by Hansard. A transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. To assist the committee and Hansard, please quote the full title of any document you refer to during the course of this hearing for the record and also be aware of the microphones and try to talk into them and ensure that you do not cover them with papers or make noise near them. I remind you that your transcript will become a matter for the public record. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today’s proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session. If the committee grants your request, any public or media in attendance will be excluded from the hearing. If you would also please note that until such time as the transcript of your public evidence is finalised, it should not be made public. I advise you that publication or disclosure of the uncorrected transcript of evidence may constitute a contempt of Parliament and may mean that the material published or disclosed is not subject to parliamentary privilege. That is all pretty straightforward. The committee has determined that we have a public hearing. We do not have anyone in attendance today so I do not think that is an issue but if, at any point, you decide that you want to make comments in private, we will work our way through that. However, given the nature of these bills, I do not think we will be at that point.

Do you want to make an opening statement to the committee before we start the questions?

Mr Fernandes: No, that is not necessary from my side.

Mr Dolling: It is not necessary from our side. We will elaborate as the questions come forth. We are happy to do that.

The CHAIR: Sure. We have some general questions and then we will break them down into specific questions about the various parts of the bill that we are dealing with. You would be aware that this committee—not just during this term, but in previous incarnations—has dealt with a number of these types of bills and has provided a couple of reports to the Parliament. We still have another bill of this nature in the upper house at the moment. All the acts included in the bill were identified in 2012 as being potentially obsolete as part of the committee’s inquiry into the statute book. You will recall, and I think we sent you a copy of report 79—quite a significant report. The question we have is: why has it taken so long for legislation to be listed for repeal in this bill?

Ms Varma: In terms of how we have progressed since 2012, it is really that we have taken the matters that were listed in the interim report and taken those as items that can be prioritised for repeal. Then, we went back to the relevant agencies on those legislations to assess the suitability for repeal. Since 2012, quite a few items have, in fact, been repealed and the items that were considered suitable for repeal in this particular bill were the ones that the relevant agencies were able to finalise through their consultation process. It has taken, I suppose, careful consideration in terms of what can potentially be included in this bill and we continue to investigate other matters in the space.

The CHAIR: Okay. Anything else to add on that?

Mr Fernandes: I think in general terms, the repeals part of it has been driven, obviously, by the Repeal Week and I think that bears mentioning.

Ms Varma: That is right.

Mr Fernandes: It is ongoing; I think it is even carrying on this year as well. I think that there needs to be a clear distinction between the Repeal Week repeal bill, which, I think focuses on that particular report that you mentioned and investigating whether those can be repealed or not, as opposed to general omnibus legislation and minor amendments, which are dealt with by my agency. This is, sort of, the agency separation when it comes to those two types of omnibus legislation.

The CHAIR: I suppose for the committee, it has just been a surprise that given there was such a substantial number of bills identified in report 79—I think more than 150—really, we have had this sort of trickle effect of small repeal bills coming through. I suppose we are just curious about the length of time. If it has already been identified, why does it take so long for a department to work through and make the decision? Why does it take so long? We are looking at four years now.

Mr Dolling: I might add one extra comment, if I can, that might help the committee on this one. Obviously, I cannot comment for why departments may or may not take that period of time. That will be my first opening remark and the second will be that Economic Reform in the Department of Finance and the Minister for Finance’s role in this space has been more recent. In fact, that is a point I would like to emphasise: the government reinvigorated its regulatory reform agenda through its reinvigorated regulatory reform plan, which it launched in 2015 with a policy statement in August 2015. It has led to an increase in the use and expanded use, if you like, of Repeal Week. The first of those expanded opportunities was last year, and this year as well. It is fair to say that that is when our team at the Department of Finance has been actively engaged working with the Attorney General’s office and other agencies. It is in that more recent period that you have had a reinvigorated effort generally in red tape and regulatory reforms of that whole-of-government type, for which many of these bills get picked up on, acknowledging that there obviously was a past process well before, dare I say, my team got involved in these activities. So that is part of why we are seeing a little bit more activity now. I will add that.

[1.40 pm]

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: So you are pretty well saying there was not a priority before; there is now.

Ms Varma: I suppose there is a more dedicated time in Parliament to repealing obsolete legislation, which has obviously then ensured that departments are able to prioritise this work and prepare such bills.

Mr Dolling: Correct. It would be fair to say that when Repeal Day was announced, one of the Premier's objectives there—it is on the record—was to accelerate red tape reduction and enable it, and to have Repeal Day, as it initially started, to be a mechanism for that. So I guess it was identified then at the time by the Premier as a priority—as important. I just would emphasise that our involvement—the Department of Finance involvement—has been more recent than that, with the government reinvigorating its regulatory reform plan, and that certainly is another indication that actually this is definitely a priority, and engaging us to assist.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I suppose the committee has that concern because it has done that report in 2012, identifying the need for the repeal of a lot of the acts, but here we are at the end of this term and there is every chance that even this bill may not get through, so then what happens to that 12 months down the track? It could end up, instead of four years, five or six years before —

The CHAIR: Actually, you could quite possibly have two repeal bills not passed.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: Yes. That is probably not so much your concern, but the priority needs to be increased to get it in a process where these bills do get through. That is the whole aim of what we were on about in the 2012 report.

Mr Dolling: Yes.

Mr Fernandes: From the Department of the Attorney General's eye, we certainly cannot deny that it has taken time—I mean, the facts are clear. But from a departmental side, our hands are always tied when it comes to prioritisation at a later stage. The other thing I would want to mention as well is that although there were substantial numbers of pieces of legislation that were identified some time back in 2012, I think as Finance is going through them, each piece is actually separate and requires its own thought and its own discussion within that particular relevant agency, and it may not be all as simple as they originally thought it was.

Ms Varma: If I may, I can table this summary report that Finance has been working on, which sort of outlines the various sections in acts and regulations that were identified in the interim report, and the work that economic reform within the Department of Finance has been doing around investigating each of those items.

The CHAIR: Are you able to give the committee any indication of when the next statutes review bill will be prepared and how many obsolete statutes would be included in that bill?

Mr Fernandes: At this stage, all that I can say is that, depending on what happens very much with the two bills currently in Parliament, the understanding from a departmental point of view is that there should be another bill again ready for Repeal Week in the following year. That is the general understanding that we have.

Ms Varma: In terms of prioritising the items, we will again be guided by the interim report. As you would see under the second column, which is items under investigation, we will really be focusing on the one item identified under appendix 1 and the 17 items identified under appendix 4 that departments do currently need to consult on further. So we would be prioritising those first because they have already been, I suppose, marked in that sense.

The CHAIR: Did you say that you would continue to use that report number 79 as a template?

Ms Varma: Absolutely. We have been guided by that report to prioritise items, yes.

The CHAIR: The next question we have is: why was the Licensing and Other Authorisations Amendment Bill 2016, currently in the Legislative Assembly, not introduced into the Legislative Council together with this bill?

Ms Varma: Mainly because that is a Minister for Finance-led bill and it does not contain any repeal items in it. It contains items that are aimed at reducing red tape and making other such amendments across four different portfolios. There are no repeal items in that, and in that sense it

was not considered to be a bill led by the Attorney General. It was more a Minister for Finance bill in his capacity as the lead minister for regulatory reform.

The CHAIR: Even though it does not have a repeal element, our committee has the capacity to look at bills that have minor amendments, as we do with the obsolete acts. I suppose our concern was that perhaps if it had come into our house, we could have dealt with both of these bills at the same time.

Ms Varma: Sure. My understanding is that, first, the amendments carried in that bill are not necessarily minor in nature because they do entail changes in government policy, so in that sense they would not necessarily align with the omnibus bill, for which there is a Premier's Circular, and that was really the reason why it has been carried by the Minister for Finance as a red tape reduction bill.

Mr Fernandes: I can add to that and say that Aditi is quite correct. If it was a minor amendments-only bill, the procedure there would have been for the Minister for Finance to refer that to the Attorney General for inclusion in his omnibus legislation, which would have been part of many other pieces of legislation that require amendment and would have to wait for priority when that gets done, as opposed to bringing it in as his own bill.

The CHAIR: Aside from waiting for Repeal Week once a year, and you have indicated that things are progressing or speeding up in terms of how these things are managed, what other options have been looked at to actually manage this process differently or better, given there are a range of other options available in either other states or other countries?

Mr Dolling: I am very happy to address some of the broader regulatory reforms opportunities that we have considered as a department and then talk about the ones that relate particularly to the AG because of that point of distinction. We have been looking at regulatory reform and encouraging reform and encouraging agencies to think about red tape reduction, but also more substantive regulatory reforms, which is part of what our role is under the reinvigorated reg reform plan. For the committee's benefit, that plan has four key elements. One is the Repeal Week communication and engagement element. Another element is red tape reduction. The third element is regulatory reform of a substantial nature, which could be, for example, on-demand transport reform et cetera. The other element is good practice, new regulatory development, which captures the regulatory gatekeeping unit's functions et cetera. Within that space, we have been increasingly building up our ability to support agencies in their thinking of regulatory reform and red tape reduction. We have been holding a series of training programs. We have been trying to update and improve our fact sheets such that we can support the sort of culture and capability to have ongoing, ultimately, agency-led reforms and improvements, whether it is to the legislative statute book or whether it is a policy change or whether it is a red tape reduction or an obsolete-type amendment. All of those are captured in the sort of things we are trying to encourage.

We have developed some tools to help agencies—assessment tools and different sorts of ways in which we can help agencies with that. We have been liaising with the commonwealth and have been able to attain their regulatory burden measurement tool, which is more about how you measure the benefits of any particular change so then governments and agencies can get a better handle on the size of the benefits, “Yes, it is worthwhile implementing this scheme because the benefits are large” et cetera. There is another tool that we have been trying to do, if you like, from a whole-of-government perspective to elevate and reinvigorate what actually happens on the ground in terms of regulatory reform and red tape reduction, always recognising that sense that our role is as an agent for change and as a supporter in that whole-of-government position, with our minister, the Minister for Finance, being the lead minister for the whole-of-government regulatory reform, and then ultimately the agencies of course and ministers being responsible for their own pieces of legislation and ultimately advancing that with our assistance if sought. That might be my overarching comment

about that. We are trying to test things and get things better through the regulatory development stages.

[1.50 pm]

Mr Fernandes: On our side, obviously, we have got less of a general-type approach. We are more on the hands-on side, the Parliamentary Counsel sitting with the Department of the Attorney General. I was just having a read again of the Attorney General's response to the committee on their last report. The committee did allude to some of the other jurisdictions and the kinds of processes they have put in place. I suppose, in general terms, currently we will stick to the government's official response, which is, essentially, that the procedure in terms of which agency is responsible, that, to me, is not really the issue. That seems to still work okay. It is the prioritisation that we discussed earlier that is perhaps relevant there. It is possible, I suppose, that in future we could look at mechanisms that perhaps involve Parliamentary Counsel more in some way, particularly with regard to legislation, perhaps, that has not been proclaimed and might be still on the statute book. I think that certainly is a discussion that government should have. That may be a way of alleviating the priority issue in Parliament.

The CHAIR: Our committee is quite happy to continue that discussion with government.

Mr Fernandes: Yes.

The CHAIR: The other thing we wanted to know was what sort of system have you put in place to communicate with other departments and agencies to work through the processes and to make sure there is improved timeliness or to actually move these things along?

Mr Fernandes: On our side, it is dealing, at this stage, with minor amendments. It is a case of the Department of the Attorney General just coordinating it through the Premier's Circular. Essentially, all the various agencies are well aware of our role, and, should they have a minor amendment, that gets put through to me.

The CHAIR: So they come to you?

Mr Fernandes: To me—and my name is on the circular. They come through to me. Once I have a number of required amendments, then that gets put together as an instruction to draft a bill in that regard. It is very different to the repeal process.

The CHAIR: How does it work with the Department of Finance? Do they come to you and say, "We have got this piece of legislation that needs to be repealed", or do you set —

Ms Varma: It is a two-pronged approach. There is our regular liaison with agencies, where we go and talk to them about red tape and regulatory reform, and through that process we become aware of items that are on their reform agenda, which may include repeals or may as well include red tape reduction items. That is how the Statutes (Repeals) Bill and the Licensing and Other Authorisations Amendment Bill came about. At the same time, as an example, when the government wrapped up Repeal Week last year, the Minister for Finance also sent out a memo to his colleagues asking for items for repeal and red tape reduction for this year. So there is a bit of that two-pronged approach that we are following.

Mr Dolling: I might just add to that if I can. Another thing that is, if you like, institutionalised, organised or structured is that the government has agreed to introduce red tape champions across agencies, so supporting that liaison point that Aditi made in terms of us being proactive and having a system in place that tries to extract the most amount of good ideas as possible, as well as relying on them coming to us. So it is two-pronged, but we do have red tape champions and we hold red tape champion forums from time to time as part of that earlier conversation I had about how do we actually really implement an action—the government's plan to reinvigorate regulatory reform—and that is one of them. I think it is quite effective and it has helped us get on the pitch, if you like, with

agencies and lift their consciousness of our existence to support the other options available through the AG.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I am a bit heartened from what I am hearing, but is it a bit of suck-and-see since 2015? It sounds like you are getting a system in place, and it could be done better. There seems to me to be—I am a bit simplistic, I suppose—a bit of confusion between “red tape” and “obsolete” and how we progress both of them together. Am I right in thinking—after listening to what you are saying—that you expect the process to be streamlined and smoother and faster as you move into the next few years?

Mr Dolling: From my point of view, I would imagine that. We are constantly trying to improve our practice and delivery for government, so we will continue to do that, and as people become red tape champions and they get more used to their role and it is their second time or third time through—obviously people change, so it is not quite as easy as what I just said, but it helps. I do envisage that will be useful. Aditi and I, once Repeal Week is over, will do some reflection work and best practice—how do we improve the program and its operation from the point of view of our responsibilities? We will do that. One of the advantages is that by Repeal Week being a little bit earlier than it was last year, we have a little bit more time, which is good. We can start some useful agency liaison before Christmas, for example. We hit Christmas pretty quickly after Repeal Week in November last year. To answer your point, yes, I think we will do that continuous improvement. Do I anticipate and hope? Yes. Do I, obviously, decide? No. But we will try.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: As the chair mentioned earlier, perhaps there is a possibility of seeing how other countries get through their obsolete laws.

Mr Dolling: Yes. We can certainly look at that as part of our investigation.

The CHAIR: Is Repeal Week during November again this year?

Mr Dolling: No, it is actually this week.

Ms Varma: It is actually this week.

Mr Dolling: In fact, it properly has just been launched.

The CHAIR: Okay.

Mr Dolling: Yes. It is this week, actually.

The CHAIR: So is there another bill that will be tabled this week?

Ms Varma: Do you mean in terms of repeal?

The CHAIR: Yes—a repeal bill.

Ms Varma: No, there will not be. The plan this week, as was informed to us by the government, was that they would introduce the Statutes Repeal Bill and the Licensing and Other Authorisations Amendment Bill earlier—it happened in September this year—with the aim to debate it during Repeal Week. That is what we were informed. Whether it happens or not, that is really parliamentary business.

The CHAIR: I think, in the Assembly, the licensing one is listed, but whether they get to them or not, who knows?

Mr Dolling: Correct.

The CHAIR: The repeal bill is not listed—the earlier one is not listed for us.

Ms Varma: Okay.

The CHAIR: Sorry to bring that little bit of disappointment to you.

Ms Varma: Fair enough. That is parliamentary business.

The CHAIR: That is not the committee's issue, unfortunately, as much as we would love to debate a bill that we have done some work on.

In the next couple of areas of questions, there might be some repetition as we go through, but they are dealing with the different elements. We are looking at the Coal Industry Tribunal of Western Australia Act 1992. This act was identified in the committee's report in 2012—the inquiry into the form and content of the statute book—as being possibly obsolete but requiring further investigation. Why has it taken four years for an internal review to be completed to determine if the act is obsolete?

Ms Varma: Like we said, it is really through the prioritisation given to this act and, indeed, the remaining acts as well, because of Repeal Week, that this year it was placed on the agenda of the Department of Commerce and that they were able to investigate it further before saying, "Yes; all ready to go for repeal."

Mr Dolling: That earlier period is harder for us to comment on as to why it may or may not have got legs, if that makes sense.

The CHAIR: The next question is around the same act. The explanatory memorandum for the bill refers to two coalmining employers in Western Australia that are covered by the commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009. Can you tell us who these two employers are?

Ms Varma: Yes, it is Premier Coal, which is owned by Yancoal Australia Ltd, and Griffin Coal, owned by Lanco Infratech Ltd.

The CHAIR: Did you consult with them when considering the repeal of the Coal Industry Tribunal of Western Australia Act 1992?

Ms Varma: Not that I am aware of. The Department of Finance definitely did not initiate that consultation. As far as I am aware, the Department of Commerce did not specifically go and consult with these two parties. However, this particular act, I think, was part of a green bill, which was the labour relations legislation amendment and repeal bill, which was, I think, a green bill in 2012. Through that process, comments may have been received, but as far as I am aware, no comments were received and no objections were raised to the repeal of this bill.

The CHAIR: Okay.

Ms Varma: I think the matters that are covered under this bill were superseded by the Fair Work Act 2009, so in that sense there are no remaining rights or remedies under that act.

[2.00 pm]

The CHAIR: Thank you for that. We now move on to the Labour Relations Reform Act 2002. Again, a similar question: the act was also identified in the committee's report in 2012 as being possibly obsolete but requiring further investigation. Again, we ask the question: why has it taken four years to determine if this act is obsolete?

Ms Varma: It is really is the same answer.

Mr Dolling: Yes; unfortunately, it is probably the same answer from the Department of Finance's perspective that we have not really been engaged in this until 2015.

The CHAIR: The explanatory memorandum refers to this act as having completed its stated purpose. Can you confirm that there are any employees in WA still regulated by state workplace agreements, and what inquiries were made to investigate this?

Ms Varma: Again, there are no remaining employee contracts that are regulated under that act. I think all the provisions of that act were amending provisions and they had fulfilled their purpose. There was section 100, which was preserved to take into account statutory contracts of employment; however, I think at that time the intention was to ensure that employees were not disadvantaged as a result of workplace agreements being phased out in 2003. However, since then,

workplace agreements have been repealed for over 13 years; therefore, it is understood that statutory contracts of employment in fact have not existed for 13 years and all of the employees would now be covered by more modern awards and agreements.

The CHAIR: The final part to that is: can you confirm that no individuals will be adversely affected by the repeal of this act?

Ms Varma: No.

The CHAIR: The next part is the Spear-Guns Control Act 1955. Again, the same sort of question; this act was identified in 2012 as being possibly obsolete, but it has not been proposed for repeal until 2016. Can you enlighten us as to why it has taken so long?

Mr Dolling: Unfortunately, I do not think we can, again.

The CHAIR: Again, that is the Department of Commerce?

Ms Varma: This is a Department of Police and a Department of Fisheries act. The provisions of that act are now adequately covered under the more modern Weapons Act 1999, which is administered by the Department of Police. Item 16 of schedule 2 of the Weapons Regulations 1999 provides that a spear gun is a controlled weapon, which basically means that police can stop you and ask you why you may be carrying a controlled weapon, unless you have a lawful reasonable for that.

The CHAIR: One would hope that they would do that, yes.

Ms Varma: Yes, and we believe that they need to.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: Especially if they are dressed up like a clown.

The CHAIR: Only in Point Peron, Phil.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: It is happening everywhere, Kate.

Ms Varma: I live near that area, so it has been a bit spooky.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: Yes, we are trying to sort that out.

Ms Varma: Indeed, for this particular act, WA Police, the Department of Fisheries and certain local governments were also consulted because in the original Spear-Guns Control Act a provision says that the Governor can proclaim an area as prohibited for the use of spear guns. Those areas fell under the cities of Busselton, Belmont, Stirling, Mosman Park, Peppermint Grove and Melville. All of these local councils were consulted and none of them had any objections to the repeal of this act.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that. The next part we move on to is the Western Australian Marine (Sea Dumping) Act 1981. In 2012, the marine safety business unit of the Department of Transport advised the committee that the sea dumping act has no force and that repeal of this statute would not have any foreseeable adverse effect as the commonwealth sea dumping act would continue to apply. However, this repeal should not be done without consideration as to whether the state government wishes to pursue a declaration under the commonwealth act. Can you confirm that the government still has no intention of pursuing a declaration under the commonwealth act to apply the state act to the coastal waters of WA?

Ms Varma: Yes, that is indeed the case. In fact, the legal advice that we received from the State Solicitor's Office says, indeed, that the commonwealth minister would only make a declaration if the minister was satisfied that the state law gives effect to the protocol. The key operating word here is "protocol", because the protocol is the 1996 protocol to the dumping convention, but not the convention itself. The sea dumping act gives effect only to the dumping convention and not to the protocol. That is the reason why a declaration has never been made and cannot be made under the

WA sea dumping act. For all effects and purposes it is really only the commonwealth act that will apply in this space.

The CHAIR: The last area of questioning is around a word that I am not too sure how to pronounce—escheat. Where is the lawyer in the room?

Ms Varma: I really have no idea. I am not sure how to pronounce it.

Mr Dolling: I tend to go by “forfeiture” because I know that word.

The CHAIR: Yes, I am not too sure. That the sounds quite polite.

Mr Fernandes: “Escheat”, and I say that with great authority.

The CHAIR: Good, thank you. Repeal of Escheat and forfeiture of real and personal property (1834) (Imp): are you able to provide us with a list of all modern legislation which deals with the transfer and forfeiture of real and personal property to the Crown or the state when a person dies without an heir?

Ms Varma: I will endeavour to do so. Section 1 of this particular act relates to the construction of terms, which from the State Solicitor’s advice, does not affect any other legislation. Section 2 refers to trust deeds or mortgages over land of persons that die without an heir. This section does not have any relevance any longer in light of the Trustee Ordinance 1854 act. However, that act was also ultimately repealed following the introduction of the Trustees Act 1962, so that particular section is now superseded by the Trustees Act 1962. Section 3 relates to lands vested in a trustee cannot be escheated, I believe.

The CHAIR: Perhaps one thing that your unit might want to look at is modern use of language. If none of us can pronounce that word, maybe we need to find something that is more appropriate to our time.

Mr Fernandes: We can add that to the criteria.

Ms Varma: That could well indeed be a reason to repeal that act, because none of us can understand what it means. Apparently it means reverting the land back to the state or back to the Crown in this case. That particular section of the act is now superseded by the WA Criminal Code. Then section 4 identifies to whom the provisions of the act shall extend. This is now obsolete in light of the new Trustees Act 1962. Section 5 states that the act does not prevent the escheat of any beneficial interest. This matter is now dealt with under the Administration Act 1903. Section 6 outlines the circumstances where the land will become subject to the control of the Court of Chancery. This section is no longer relevant as it only deals with matters prior to the passing of the act in 1834. In a sense, they are, I suppose, transitional provisions that have fulfilled their relevance.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that. The last question I have is in relation to division 4 of the bill, which deals with consequential amendments to the Workers’ Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981. Are you able to explain to us what that amendment actually was?

Ms Varma: As far as I am aware, it only relates to those sections that will no longer be relevant because they refer to the repeal act. However, if I may, I could potentially take that on notice and come back to you with a more confirmed answer. That is my understanding of it, but I would prefer to confirm it and come back to you if that is possible.

The CHAIR: That would be very helpful, thank you.

We certainly appreciate the information you have provided us today, and that will help better inform us as we pull together our report to, hopefully, table before we rise and see whether or not this bill gets through the Parliament before we finish. We will do our best in that regard.

I thank you very much for your time. Is there anything you need to say before we finish up?

Mr Dolling: No.

Mr Fernandes: All good, thank you very much.

Mr Dolling. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for your time. That was obviously a well-prepped session on your part.

Hearing concluded at 2.09 pm
