

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice

31 OCT 2013

Wednesday, 18 September 2013

331. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

With regard to the Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme WA, I ask:

- (a) is the Minister aware of the claim of Mr Norman Cox from Yiyili Community in the Kimberley, whose application to the WA Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme was refused because the stations where he worked were outside the scope of the scheme;
- (b) if yes to (a), and based on Mr Cox's own testament, does the Minister consider he was unfairly treated at the four stations: Louisa Downs, Go Go, Cherabun and Fossil Downs where he worked between the years 1948 and 1975;
- (c) is the Minister aware that Mr Cox considers the decision to refuse his application for stolen wages and the subsequent refusal to address his appeals and submissions as unjust and discriminatory;
- (d) if yes to (c), does the Minister consider he has a responsibility to address this obvious impasse;
- (e) if no to (d), why not;
- (f) if yes to (d), what action will the Minister now take;
- (g) does the Minister accept that the establishment of the Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme raised the hopes of all Aboriginal people who were unpaid for the work they did, including former station workers, and that to exclude them from the scheme is both discriminatory and unfair;
- (h) given the large number of former station workers who were denied their wages over a considerable length of time in the Kimberley and elsewhere, will the Minister now consider reviewing the Stolen Wages Scheme and creating a new scheme aimed at addressing the inequities; and
- (i) if no to (h), why not?

Answer

- (a) Yes.
- (b) I accept that Mr Cox considers that he was unfairly treated.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) No.
- (e) The State Government's response to the issue of stolen wages was largely based on advice from the Stolen Wages Taskforce, which found that station workers' incomes were not controlled directly by Government and consequently, fall outside the scope of the Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme.
- (f) Not applicable.
- (g) No.
- (h) No.
- (i) Refer to (e).



Minister for Aboriginal Affairs