

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question on notice

16 SEP 2014

Tuesday, 12 August 2014

1408. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

I refer to question on notice No. 951 regarding Ms Bonnie Seela's application to the Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme Western Australia, and I ask:

- (a) regarding the answer to 951(e) 'consultations undertaken by the Taskforce', according to the Taskforce report those scheduled for Balgo, Mulan and Billiluna were cancelled due to flooding, were these consultations re-scheduled and, if so, what were the new dates for the hearings;
- (b) if yes to (a), how many people attended the Balgo, Mulan and Billiluna community consultations;
- (c) regarding the answer to 951(h) requesting a copy of the 'actuarial modelling referred to in the Taskforce Report', and regardless of the fact of whether the model could or could not 'estimate the true value or full impact of any compensation', will the Minister now release the model:
 - (i) if no to (c), why not; and
 - (ii) if yes to (c), when and by what means will this be available; and
- (d) given that the actuarial modelling attempted was found to be inadequate, did the Taskforce try any other methods in order to 'estimate the true value or full impact of any compensation':
 - (i) if no to (d), why not; and
 - (ii) if yes to (d), what were these methods?

(a) No. It should be noted that the community consultations were not the only avenue Aboriginal people had to provide information about their knowledge and experience of Government control of monies. The consultation process was extensively advertised through regional newspapers, community radio stations and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs website. Aboriginal people were also invited to provide information in written or oral forms.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) No.

(i) The Stolen Wages Taskforce used a range of archival and published data to build a database of payments in the review period, in an attempt to undertake actuarial modelling to estimate the true value or full impact of any compensation. Due to the complexity of trust accounts in Western Australia, the significant lack of records and the passage of time, the true value or full impact of any compensation could not be estimated. The ex gratia payment offered was to acknowledge that the practice of stolen wages did occur and not an attempt to repay wages that were withheld.

(ii) Not applicable.

(d) No.

(i) As mentioned in (c)(i), due to the complexity of trust accounts in Western Australia, the significant lack of records and the passage of time, no alternative methods were deemed to have been able to estimate the true value or full impact of any compensation.

(ii) Not applicable.



Minister for Aboriginal Affairs