

Hansard 29th July 2008

POLICE, APY LANDS

Question

The **Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE** (16:41): I have a supplementary question. As the Leader of the Government and a former police minister, given that the problem with planes flying back and forth relates to delays and possible budget blow-outs in housing developments on the lands [APY Lands] for police officers who will be located permanently on the lands, will the minister give an update as to what is happening with respect to permanent housing on the lands?

Answer

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Mineral Resources Development, Minister for Urban Development and Planning, Minister for Small Business) (16:41): It would be wrong for me to give an update. I am no longer the police minister. It was something that was raised—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY: Well, because the honourable member asked me about an issue he addressed with me several weeks ago. Because the honourable member is bringing new material about housing into the debate, I think it is appropriate to refer the question on. Obviously, there are issues in relation to police housing. As I have indicated in this council before the honourable member came here, both the previous and the current federal governments have been very generous in relation to the provision of finance for housing.

As I have indicated previously to the council, there are always difficulties in getting places built on the lands because we have to get approval from the local community—which, in itself, is a time-consuming process—and it is increasingly difficult to get tenderers and builders to remote areas because of the mining boom which is now taking place in this state. We are endeavouring to get the facilities built as soon as possible.

I think the Police Commissioner informed the Budget and Finance Committee that SAPOL is looking at housing in Marla as a temporary measure. The Police Commissioner provided all that information to either the estimates committee or the Budget and Finance Committee. Police housing is one of the big challenges we face. Certainly, there is an adequate budget but the difficulty is, first, getting approval of the APY executive in relation to an agreement to build the housing and, secondly, getting contractors to construct them. Obviously, we all hope it could be done as quickly as possible.