

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

7th Assembly

04/10/1995

67. Government Cost Agreement regarding Legal Action Finch v Bell

Mr. BELL to MINISTER for CHIEF MINISTER

QUESTION

1. Has the Northern Territory Government concluded a cost agreement with the plaintiff in respect of the legal action involving Finch v Bell.

If the answer to question 1 is yes:

2. Under which statutory provision does the Chief Minister purport to make payments under the cost agreement to Mr Finch.
3. How was the conflict of interest in relation to Mr Finch resolved with respect to the cost agreement concluded between himself and the Cabinet in which he is a Minister.
4. Will the Chief Minister table any such cost agreement; if not, why not.
5. Is the cost agreement referred to in question 4 in the same terms as that concluded with Dennis Hart.
6. Has the Northern Territory Government paid any monies on this agreement to date; if so, how much.
7. If the answer to question 6 is yes, to whom were those monies paid to under the agreement.
8. If the answer to question 6 is yes, what services were purchased by the Northern Territory Government under that agreement.

ANSWER

Answered on 27/02/96

1. The Northern Territory Government authorised indemnity of the plaintiff's legal costs.
2. The Crown's inherent right to represent a Minister of the Crown.

3. Mr Finch was excluded from Cabinet deliberations on this matter.
4. No. Cabinet decisions are privileged.
5. No. Dennis Hart was not and is not a Minister of the Crown.
6. \$14,902 and an amount of \$18,214 in a related action of Finch v ABC.
7. To Ward Keller and Counsel.
8. Legal services.