Question on Notice

No. 767

Asked on Thursday, 11 May 2006

Mr MCARDLE asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mrs Lavarch) -

QUESTION:
With reference to the Public Trust Office -

(1) Will she advise the number of deceased estates currently administered by the office in which a sum of money is required to be invested and during the lifetime of a beneficiary, the beneficiary is to receive the interest component thereof, the capital to be disposed of upon the death of the beneficiary or some other event?

(2) What is the investment policy of the Public Trust Office with respect to the capital component so as to ensure the beneficiary receives the maximum interest payment possible?

(3) How often is the investment strategy reviewed and by which organisation?

(4) If the interest component derived from the investment is to vary due to a change in the investment strategy, what communication process exists to prewarn the recipient of the variation and what steps does the office take to notify the Department of Social Security or other Commonwealth body that pays a benefit to the beneficiary, of the change in income to be received?

ANSWER:

(1) As at 30 April 2006, the Public Trust Office was administering 173 deceased estates requiring the investment of funds and payment of the income to beneficiaries during their lifetime.

(2) The Public Trust Office is under a legal duty to act impartially as between the life tenant and the beneficiaries in remainder.

The investment policy of the Public Trust Office in these matters is to invest trust funds in accordance with professional advice that complies with the *Trusts Act 1973*.

(3) The investment strategy is reviewed annually in consultation with QIC (formerly called Queensland Investment Corporation).

(4) The Public Trust Office communicates regularly with life tenants.

The return on such trust funds fluctuates with market forces and it is not possible for the Public Trust Office to advise of returns in advance.

The Public Trust Office provides details of the actual income received to the life tenants so that they can notify the Department of Social Security or other Commonwealth body that pays them a benefit.

The Public Trust Office has no legislative authority, and privacy considerations prevent the release of this information to the Department of Social Security or other Commonwealth body that pays a benefit to the beneficiary. ends