

Question on Notice
No. 732
Asked on 17 July 2015

MR MCARDLE asked the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (HON C R DICK)—

In relation to a statement to the parliament on 2 June where the Minister stated, in relation to the Wait Time Guarantee, that expenditure of half a billion dollars would require cabinet or Cabinet Budget Review Committee approval, and that ‘the Department of Health has advised my office that there is no record of a \$500m allocation for this program’—

Will the Minister provide a copy of the advice he received saying there was no record of any cabinet or Cabinet Budget Review committee approval?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Caloundra for his question.

It has been 76 days since I asked the Leader of the Opposition to provide the Cabinet documents to support claims he made in the Parliament.

In a Parliamentary debate concerning elective surgery management in Queensland the Member for Southern Downs made a number of claims.

He made claims about the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended for surgery at the change of government and in the same debate he stated that his program:

“was a \$500 million program and it was properly costed; the money was there”
(Hansard 19 May 2015 p671)

This is a very clear, very direct statement.

The Cabinet handbook makes it clear that spending half a billion dollars requires Cabinet approval.

That is why on 2 June I wrote to the Member for Southern Downs formally requesting access to the Cabinet documents which support his claim.

On 14 July 2015 I made a statement to the parliament and tabled the costing spreadsheet for the wait time gimmick. I refer the Member to my statement including the tabled document. The spreadsheet shows the money allocated to the program and the things it was to be spent on.

I again call on the leader of the opposition to release the Cabinet documents.