

EDUCATION, AQUATIC PROGRAMS**Tuesday, 21 November 2006**

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Emergency Services, representing the Minister for Education and Children's Services, a question about state government funding for aquatic education programs in state schools.

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: In a press release dated 10 October 2006 the minister ruled out changes to swimming programs offered in state schools until the end of term one next year. In her press release, the minister stated:

Teaching children to swim and keep themselves safe in the water is fundamental in a country like Australia and swimming programs will not be cut on my watch. . . aquatics programs will continue until at least the end of term one 2007, but the department is examining the effectiveness of general aquatic activities and their role in day-to-day schooling. . . While these water-based activities are fun and develop skills, it needs to be considered whether they are essential skills that should be taught as part of the school curriculum.

I have been contacted by an aquatics instructor who is concerned that this valuable education program will soon be discontinued. I understand that approximately 200 aquatics instructors are at risk of unemployment, some of whom have worked in the area for more than 25 years. In this year's Budget Statement the Treasurer assured the public sector that there would be no targeted job losses in pursuit of the government's goal to downsize the public sector by 1 600 positions.

Further, the Minister Assisting the Premier on Public Sector Management, was reported in *The Advertiser* of 18 November 2006 as having told the Public Service Association that there would be no redundancies or targeted voluntary separation packages. My questions to the minister are:

1. Is the minister planning to remove funding for the aquatic education programs in state schools?

2. If the Department of Education and Children's Services does remove funding for the aquatic education program in state schools, what plan does the minister have in place for the future employment of aquatic instructors across the state, given that the state government has guaranteed that there would be no redundancies or targeted voluntary separation packages offered to downsize the bureaucracy?

EDUCATION, AQUATIC PROGRAMS**Tuesday, 27th March 2007**

In reply to **Hon. A.L. EVANS** (21 November 2006).

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO: The Minister for Education and Children's Services has provided the following information:

No decision has been made regarding the future of aquatic education programs in South Australian schools.

A review of the aquatics program is being undertaken to determine the role of aquatic programs in the school curriculum and the most effective use of resources in meeting student needs.

Mr Terry Tierney, a former Department of Education and Children's Services principal will lead the review process which is due to be completed in March 2007.

Discussions with stakeholders and consultation with the Australian Education Union will occur prior to any recommendations being finalised.