



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Comcar: Employees**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 22 June 2005**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Wednesday, 22 June 2005  
**Page** 84  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Mr ANDREWS,MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

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**Mr ANDREWS** (Menzies—Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service) (2.59 pm)—Mr Speaker, I seek the indulgence of the chair to add to an answer.

**The SPEAKER**—The minister may proceed.

**Mr ANDREWS**—I was asked a question by the member for Perth about some negotiations between the department of finance, as it is, and Comcar over their collective arrangements. I am advised that the department of finance met with the two relevant unions, the TWU and the CPSU, on 2 June to discuss negotiations of a section LJ collective agreement—that is, one with the unions—and that in the course of those discussions the department of finance gave the unions a list of 10 possible productivity measures that could offset any pay increases that the unions may seek in the negotiations. It is therefore wrong to assert that we were stripping entitlements. The 10 proposals, I am advised, are purely options for the unions to consider and are completely dependent on the size of any wage increase sought by the employees. It is open to the unions, as is usual, to accept or reject some or none or all of the options—they are not final. Indeed, the department of finance has sought for three weeks to arrange a meeting with the unions to get a response to the proposals made at the earlier meeting, on 2 June, and the unions only agreed yesterday to meet on 28 June. This is a beat-up by the Labor Party to portray negotiations as though they were outcomes and to scaremonger about productivity improvements in the absence of referring to any offsetting pay increases.