

EXCLUSIVE

WA TO GET MEGA UNI

JOE SPAGNOLO
Political Editor

The Cook Government is forging ahead with a controversial plan to merge three of WA's four public universities, appointing an expert panel to drive a business case.

In the biggest shake-up to the State's higher education sector since the founding of the University of Western Australia more a century ago, the plan being pursued would see UWA, Curtin and Murdoch merged into one with a centralised administration.

The Sunday Times can reveal the Cook Government has recruited some of the State's most influential and respected identities to be part of a steering committee.

Fortescue deputy chair Mark Barnaba, burns specialist Fiona Wood, former WA chief scientist Peter Klinken and West

Coast Eagles chair Elizabeth Gaines are part of the committee appointed to oversee the business case, which is expected to be completed by mid-next year.

Under the plan, the current UWA, Curtin and Murdoch Perth-based campuses — as well as their regional facilities — would remain. But the campuses would be run by one administration, with a name yet to be determined.

"It would be one university and, therefore, would have a chancellor and a vice-chancellor and a senate. The name of the new university will be tested and critiqued by the business case and the steering committee," Tertiary and International Education Minister Tony Buti said.

Dr Buti said the mergers would not be a takeover of Curtin and Murdoch by UWA.

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MEXICO MURDERS

Guilty verdict is cold comfort

MATT ZIS

The heartbroken parents of slain Perth brothers Callum and Jake Robinson say a Mexican court's guilty finding against the men who murdered their sons is an important step towards justice, but will never amount to bringing their boys back.

Three men were on Friday convicted of murdering the Perth-raised brothers and their American friend Carter Rhoad during a surfing trip to Mexico two years ago. Mexican prosecutors are seeking sentences of up to 150 years.

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