

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES, SUPPORT WORKERS AND FACILITIES

1294. Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the government response to child abuse and family violence in Aboriginal communities.

- (1) Of the 24 more child protection workers promised by the Premier in response to the Gordon report, how many have been appointed?
- (2) Of the number appointed, how many are working in each of the metropolitan, regional and remote locations?
- (3) In which regional and remote locations are those appointed working?
- (4) Of the nine new remote police stations promised, how many have been established and where have they been established?
- (5) Of the 21 more police officers promised for the Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields-Esperance region, how many have been appointed and where are they located?
- (6) Of the eight specialist domestic violence officers promised in regional areas, how many have been appointed and where are they located?
- (7) How many “safe places” for Aboriginal women and children have been created in Aboriginal communities?
- (8) Where are the “safe places” located?
- (9) Of the nine new counselling services promised in regional places for the sexual assault resource centre, how many have been established and where are they located?
- (10) Of the 14 new Aboriginal support workers promised to provide advice and support to Aboriginal children, how many have been appointed and in which police districts are they based?

The PRESIDENT: I give the call to the Leader of the House for what sounded like a 14-part question. However, we were not adding up, were we?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

Mr President, I was adding up and it is, in fact, a 10-part question. It never ceases to amaze me, not so much that honourable members come into the House with 10-part questions in such great detail and expect answers, because that is one thing they are paid to do, but the way in which agencies are able to respond in the time that they do. We all should give great credit to the agencies for the quality of their responses.

Hon Norman Moore: Those that do!

Hon KIM CHANCE: Yes. However, Mr President, it is a very lengthy answer and I seek leave to table the answer and have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated -

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- (1) Two of the 25 new Child Protection workers have been appointed and have commenced work. Eleven other recommendations have been made. Eight positions were readvertised on Saturday 13 September 2003 and two will be readvertised in 2-3 weeks time.

In accordance with the State Government's *Statement of Commitment*, the Department for Community Development engaged with ATSIC Regional Councils in relation to all of the Gordon Inquiry initiatives for which it has responsibility. The pace of these negotiations has been dependent on availability of Councillors and the capacity of Councillors to respond given the number of commitments resulting from the Gordon Inquiry and other Council business priorities.

- (2) The two who have commenced work are based in the Metropolitan area.
- (3) The fifteen advertised Regional or Remote positions are in the following locations:

Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Derby, Broome, Newman, Roebourne, Hedland, Meekatharra, Carnarvon, Geraldton, Norseman, Leonora and two positions in Laverton.

- (4) Establishing multi-function police facilities in remote sites is predicated on up-front negotiations with local communities to confirm both the service delivery strategy to be used and the location of suitable sites for buildings. When those aspects are worked through, and the design brief is completed, it takes 12 - 18 months to establish a multi-function police facility on the ground, depending on the remoteness of the location.

As outlined in the 2003/04 budget, building of the Warburton police station will commence this financial year and it is expected that it will be in operation by the end of December 2004. Planning of the Balgo and Kalumburu police stations will commence this financial year and are expected to be operational by mid 2005, providing there are no unexpected delays in the community negotiation process.

Funding for the building of the Warmun, Bidadanga and Dampier Peninsula police stations is allocated in the 2004/05 budget. Funding for the Jigalong station is allocated in the 2005/06 budget.

- (5) A permanent policing presence in the specified remote locations cannot occur until the new multi-function policing facilities are built and GEHA housing is provided. There are considerable lead times to fulfil these requirements due to the remoteness of the areas concerned and the need for community consultation in determining service delivery strategies and the various building sites.

Although none of the police officers have been appointed to these remote sites to date, the Police Service continues to provide services to the communities concerned through long-distance patrols. Additional effort has been channelled towards increasing both the frequency and duration of these community visits pending the establishment of a permanent policing presence.

- (6) The recruitment of all eight Child Protection & Family Violence officers' positions is on schedule.

Two Child Protection & Family Violence officers have been appointed to regional areas already. One was appointed to the Goldfields-Esperance District based at Kalgoorlie, and the other to the Mid-West Gascoyne District based at Geraldton.

The other six regional positions will be filled once staff selection processes have been completed. Those processes are well advanced, and it is expected that these will be finalised by mid-October 2003.

Given the six week lead time required for transfers, and the three weeks training course that each office will undertake, the Police Service expects that the new Child Protection & Family Violence officers will be in place by late December 2003 or early January 2004.

- (7) With regard to the establishment of safe places, it is occurring under the Safe Places Program. The Department for Community Development is negotiating with the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council Domestic Violence Service east of Warburton to build capacity of local community people to deal with abuse and development of safe places. A Women's group on the Broome Peninsular is exploring ways to ensure children/young people are safe and have a safe place to go to. Community consultations are occurring in Wyndham, Kununurra, Meekatharra, Roebourne, Hedland and the Metropolitan area. Two locations are still being determined through consultation in the South West.

With regard to the process being undertaken by the Department for Community Development see the response to Question 1 in so far as it relates to the *Statement of Commitment*.

- (8) The location of the safe places will be determined through the process described in the response to Question 7.

- (9) Funding was provided to expand existing services at Port Hedland, Mandurah, Bunbury, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie.

Requests for exemption from tender have been developed for \$150,000 (GST exclusive) to provide services to 'at risk' Aboriginal females 13 years of age and over, or those exposed to sexual assault and their families through 5 Sexual Assault Referral Centres in the following regions: Hedland and Pilbara (\$30,000); Mandurah and Peel (\$30,000); Kalgoorlie Boulder and surrounding region (\$30,000); Geraldton and surrounding region (\$30,000); and Bunbury and South West region (\$30,000).

This funding has also been used to expand services offered through regional women's centres through requests for exemption from tender for \$210,000 (GST exclusive) for women's centres to develop a plan of to improve outreach for Aboriginal females and their families exposed to or at risk of sexual abuse and assault. Women's centres are located in Fremantle, Northbridge, Northern Metropolitan area, Gosnells, Mirrabooka, Midland, Rockingham, Geraldton, Goldfields, Hedland, Tom Price, and Bunbury.

(10) Interviews for all fourteen positions are proceeding.
