

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ACT

**720. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:**

I refer to the Justices of the Peace Act 2004.

- (1) Is this act currently under review?
- (2) If yes to (1), who is conducting the review, when did it commence and when is it scheduled to be completed?
- (3) If no to (1), when was the last time the act was reviewed?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

- (1)–(3) As a result of the 2009 coronial inquiry findings into the death of Mr Ward—the Ward inquiry—the Department of Justice published a discussion paper in relation to certain functions being undertaken by justices of the peace. In 2020, Chief Magistrate Heath issued a Magistrates Court practice direction, which was effective from 1 August 2020, directing that Magistrates Courts are to be constituted only by legally qualified magistrates. This implemented the most significant element of the reform that related to the Ward inquiry.

This direction was also supported by the McGowan government funding two additional magistrates, ensuring that the Magistrates Court was resourced to take on the additional work. As such, further work associated with this discussion paper has been placed on hold. The department continues to monitor the roles and functions of JPs, ensuring the continued efficiencies of their work. Any further work undertaken in relation to the functions of JPs will be submitted to the Attorney General before making the appropriate recommendations to cabinet.