

POLICE — RECRUITMENT

**473. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to the government's pledge to recruit 950 new police officers above attrition.

- (1) Has the total number of police increased in net terms in 2022—yes or no?
- (2) Can the minister guarantee that he will meet this much-hyped 950 figure by 2024, as he originally promised?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for her question.

- (1)–(2) The answer is yes. It has increased but, beyond that, what was committed to was growing the police force by 950 above attrition. That is fully resourced and funded. We will have a crack at it and do everything we can. Right now I can tell members that tomorrow night I will be attending a graduation of 59 officers. It is another one. I go to the academy monthly and often no-one from the opposition is there. Occasionally, the phantom shadow police minister attends, but mostly he does not. Often, the Leader of the Opposition is not represented, but I am there.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am always there. However, the one time I was not there, I had COVID, so the Attorney General attended in my stead. He did a sterling job of delivering a speech on my behalf—not as good as the one that I present, but I was told it was not bad! I can guarantee the member one thing: the police are greater in numbers, better resourced, better equipped in my view and as well led as at any time in the history of this state. We are right behind them, unlike members opposite. Almost every time members ask a question in this place about this portfolio, they take the opportunity to denigrate the performance of the police.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The Nationals WA and the Liberal Party —

Several members interjected.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I know that their representatives are in Carnarvon right now. What they said yesterday about the police was disgraceful. When they come into this place and say that the police are not performing well, they hear it.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** Find a quote where I said that. Find it and read it back. Go on!

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yesterday, members opposite implied that the police were failing in Carnarvon.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** That's your interpretation. That's your political take.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Members cannot say that crime is out of control in Carnarvon and then expect the inference not to be made that the police are not doing their job. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that the police are not doing their job in Carnarvon? If she is saying that, I will go straight from here after question time and ring the Commissioner of Police and say that the National Party is saying that the police are not doing their job in Carnarvon. Do not worry about that because that is what I will say.