

POLICE OFFICERS, PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

1155. Mr O'GORMAN to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

In today's *The West Australian* the President of the Police Union (WA), Mr Mike Dean, reflecting on the concerns of Western Australian police officers, called for tighter controls on access to police officers' personal information, including home addresses, on the transport licensing databases. Can the minister reassure our State's police officers and their families that their privacy will be protected?

Mrs ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question and for his support of police officers in this State. As members would be aware, concerns of this nature have been expressed previously. It is not the first time that these types of questions have been raised about officers involved in Operation Zircon. Members may recall that confidential information from the Department of Transport's databases was released to members of outlaw motorcycle gangs. At that time I made it clear that it was unacceptable and called for greater controls on access to database information. I advise the House that I will sit down with the Commissioner of Police this afternoon to work out how best this can be done. My understanding is that we can protect information contained in these databases and enhance the personal safety of our police officers. I am particularly concerned about our senior detectives, who tackle some of the worst and most dangerous criminals in this State. However, I am concerned for all police officers and their families. On that basis, I advise the Police Union (WA) and the public of Western Australia that this is an issue we will take very seriously. We want to protect our police officers, and we want their private information to remain confidential. It is unacceptable that front-line police officers striving to combat organised crime are exposed to unnecessary risk. I will work with both the Commissioner of Police and the licensing authority to ensure that we do our best to protect the privacy, safety and security of our police officers and their families.