

POLICE DOG — GERALDTON

**424. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing Minister for Police:**

My question is in regard to the invaluable presence of working police dogs in deterring and discouraging unlawful behaviour in large regional centres.

- (1) Is the minister aware that the canine kennels at Geraldton Police Station have remained empty for the past six months?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that this is due to a new requirement that police dogs are now also required to have drug detection capabilities?
- (3) If yes to (2), why was the previous dog skilled in deterring and discouraging unlawful behaviour not retained at Geraldton until it could be replaced by another dog?
- (4) When will Geraldton police have their dog returned or replaced?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

- (1) The Geraldton police dog is kennelled at home with his handler and the kennels at Geraldton Police Station are not normally used to house the police dog. This is normal practice. The Geraldton police dog handler was on leave for the period 15 December 2018 to 18 February 2019. During this period, the Geraldton police dog was kennelled at the Maylands canine section, which is normal practice.

In February 2019, the Geraldton police dog and handler were assessed by the canine training section and did not meet the required standard for deployment. The Geraldton police dog was returned to the canine section for retraining. The Geraldton police dog handler was transferred from Geraldton on compassionate grounds on 8 April 2019. This transfer occurred one year prior to the officer's scheduled replacement date.

- (2) The canine section is in the process of training a replacement canine. The Geraldton police dog will be replaced by a dual-purpose canine in accordance with the current deployment model for regional Western Australia. The WA Police Force canine section continues to support the midwest–Gascoyne district by deploying canine resources as required.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The Geraldton and midwest–Gascoyne canine will be trained and in place by October 2019.