

SAFER WA

**455. Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS to the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to the Office of Crime Prevention report "New Structures for Crime Prevention in Western Australia", which recommends that the State Government transfer partial responsibility for Safer WA to local government. I ask -

- (1) Why is there no mention in the report of a corresponding transfer of funds to local government?
- (2) Is the Premier aware that the Western Australian Local Government Association has advised in its response to the report that it will not support an initiative that seeks to transfer the responsibility for policing to local government?
- (3) Is the Premier aware that the Commissioner of Police stated at the October 2002 Safer WA annual conference that a similar attempt in New Zealand to transfer responsibility to local government was a complete failure?
- (4) Why is the Government attempting to shift policing costs to local government in the face of evidence that this approach has failed elsewhere?

**Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:**

- (1)-(4) This is yet again a question based on a false assumption. The assumption behind this question is that the Government of Western Australia has a plan to shift the costs of crime prevention and the responsibility for crime prevention to local government. Nothing could be further from the truth. As members know, many Safer WA committees have good partnerships with local government. Indeed, in my area there is a very good partnership between the local Safer WA committee and the local government. It meets at the council offices, the mayor is involved, and the council provides a good platform from which the local community can discuss these issues. This is the type of partnership that the Government has in mind, because the major stakeholder in many of our local communities is the local government.

There will be no change to the amount of funding for crime prevention in Western Australia. We want some good strategies to emerge from our local communities so that we can bring about a reduction in crime throughout Western Australia. It is clear that the Opposition is trying to beat up some concerns within local government about this issue.

Several members interjected.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: We are seeing the old tactics of the conservatives! Members opposite never deal with an issue on its merit because they lack the intellectual capacity to do so. It is as simple as that. They do not deal with the substance of this issue; rather, they play politics with it. That is the way the Opposition works within the Western Australian political system. That is why members opposite have nothing to say about a range of issues. That is why, when they were in government, they swept under the carpet issues such as police corruption, child abuse in Aboriginal communities and our future water supplies. We now have a Government that wants to raise these issues and find real solutions. Our strategy to improve the delivery of crime prevention policies is part of that new approach to government.