

COMMUNITIES CRISIS LINE

659. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the Communities Crisis Line (Crisis Care, 1800 199 008), and ask:

- (a) How many staff operate the line? Please detail by Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and headcount;
- (b) How many private providers operate the line? Please detail the provider, length of contract and expiry of contract;
- (c) How many calls have been received by year since the line was established;
- (d) How many calls have been received in 2022? Please detail:
  - (i) By region; and
  - (ii) A month by month breakdown;
- (e) What are the hours of operation of the crisis line:
  - (i) What happens to calls outside of those hours of operation;
- (f) Please table the protocol to ensure cases involving children are considered resolved;
- (g) How many calls are redirected from the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) (13 14 50);
- (h) How many calls resulted in:
  - (i) Police intervention; and
  - (ii) A child being relocated to a safe space; and
- (i) Were there any periods since the establishment of the service that the helpline was unattended in hours of operation? Please detail the dates and times when this situation had occurred?

**Ms S.E. Winton replied:**

As at 9 January 2023, the Department of Communities advise:

- (a) 53.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff and 60 employees.
- (b) None.
- (c) The Crisis Care line was established in the 1980s, and previous phone systems did not allow for incoming call data to be tracked. Call volume data has been able to be collected since April 2021.
- (d) 60,883
  - (i) The system does not capture this type of data.
  - (ii) January 2022, 5,197 calls; February 2022, 5,025; March 2022, 6,078; April 2022, 5,094; May 2022, 5,299; June 2022, 4,795; July 2022, 4,619; August 2022, 5,003; September 2022, 5,044; October 2022, 4,871; November 2022, 4,770; and December 2022, 5,088 calls.
- (e) On weekends and public holidays, the crisis line operates 24-hours a day. Monday to Friday it operates from 4:30pm to 8:30am.
  - (i) Calls received outside the hours of operation (i.e., calls received during normal business hours) are managed by the Department of Communities (Communities) Central Intake Team, Statewide Referral and Response Service.
- (f) When Communities receives information that raises concerns about a child's safety, it has a responsibility to consider if further action should be taken. All action taken by Communities must adhere to legislative requirements set out in the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (the Act).

An Interaction Tool is used for all new referrals of concern for a child to assist in determining whether Communities has a further role and helps provide a consistent approach to child protection assessment. The three possible outcomes following assessment are:

- Intake to initial inquiry;
- Intake to Child Safety Investigation;
- No further action.

- (g) Calls redirected from the Translating and Interpreting Services are displayed as ‘withheld’ because of how they are transferred to the line. Calls that display as ‘withheld’ may also include private numbers, so Communities is unable to track how many calls are redirected from the Translating and Interpreting Service.
- (h) (i)–(ii) Information on how many calls resulted in Police intervention and a child being relocated to a safe space is not reported through the ASSIST client database. It would require significant resources to gather this data including a manual review of individual case files.
- (i) Since the establishment of the Crisis Care line, there have been no periods where the helpline was unattended during hours of operation, including during phone/internet outages.