

POLICE, INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2105. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services

I refer the Minister to incidents of recorded crime and the Incident Management System (IMS) now being used by the Western Australian Police Service to record incidents of crime and ask -

- (a) when is it expected that the IMS will allow the recovery of discrete data categories of crime statistics;
- (b) if discrete data relating to time and place of car theft and damage is not currently available to local Police districts, how will the Police districts target incidents of crime in specific locations;
- (c) if discrete data relating to time and place of home and commercial break ins is not currently available to local Police districts, how will the Police districts target incidents of crime in specific locations; and
- (d) if these statistics are not going to be readily available, how reliable are the Police statistics going to be?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

The Western Australia Police Service advise as follows:

- (a) The Police Service advise the Frontline Incident Management System (IMS), currently allows the recording and extraction of discrete data categories.
- (b)-(d) The Police Service advise that when recording incidents on the IMS, officers enter the date, time, address, location and other relevant information about the incident. This information can be extracted for intelligence purposes and local targeted policing strategies. In addition, further crime trend information is available to local police from their District Information Support Centres. These Centres are staffed by crime analysts whose role includes gathering intelligence, performing further analysis of offence/incident reports and identifying local crime patterns and trends.

There are many factors that impact on the reliability and validity of police statistics.

The basis upon which police collect data is primarily to meet operational policing information needs, and not external reporting purposes. As such, a balance is necessary between recording information and the time officers spend 'off the street' entering data.

In striking the balance, the Police Service has decided which data fields must be completed to capture core policing information and which fields are optional. The Police Service has also determined the number of options available for any 'discrete' category. This determination has been made to avoid spending unreasonable 'off street' time entering optional data and scrolling through long lists of possible categories. Importantly, however, the system is sufficiently flexible to enable new options to be created as required.

Therefore while discrete data sets can be and are extracted, it is the policy of the Western Australia Police Service to only externally release quality data. Although mandatory data fields are complete and statistically robust, optional fields may be significantly incomplete and as a result not statistically robust for external reporting, however are still regarded as suitable for police intelligence purposes.