

POLICE — DRUG INTERDICTION

**364. Ms M.M. QUIRK to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to the significant work of the Western Australia Police Force during COVID-19 to not only protect Western Australians but also respond to major crashes, homicides and events such as that which occurred recently at the South Hedland shopping centre. Can the minister update the house on the work that the Western Australia Police Force has undertaken during COVID-19 to proactively target those who peddle drugs and misery in our community?

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:**

I thank the member for Girrawheen for her excellent question and her very strong support for our hardworking police officers. One of the things that the state border and intrastate borders have brought about is a reduction in the drug supply into Western Australia. This has meant that the people who use Western Australian roads to bring drugs into our state and peddle them in regional communities have been stopped in their tracks. It has meant that the supply of methamphetamine and other drugs in Western Australia has been significantly curtailed. For those who understand the rules of demand and supply, I am told that the cost of methamphetamine has increased from less than \$3 000 per kilogram to in excess of \$6 000 per kilogram.

A lot of evidence suggests that drug supply into Western Australia, particularly to regional and vulnerable communities, has dramatically decreased. But that has not necessarily stopped people trying, and people have tried other methods. Indeed, one of those is going via the internet and getting the drug posted to them. People have thought that they can hide in the shadows of the dark web. My message to them is that they cannot. They will never know whom they are actually attempting to sell to. Some people are buying quantities for themselves. Other people are buying it to sell on to other people. This is not a program that started during COVID-19; it started pre-COVID. We have had an operation of our drug and firearms squad that has continued from October 2019 through to May 2020 and it has executed some 47 search warrants of private homes. Quite a few parents have been really surprised to see police come and raid their home and go into their child's bedroom to collect the relevant evidence. During this time, some 47 warrants have been executed, and 60 people have been charged with over 213 offences, including 43 offences relating to the sale of illicit drugs. This has been a very successful drug and firearms operation that has targeted those online drug sales. I would like to commend Detective Superintendent Tony Longhorn of the serious and organised crime division and his team. They have seized 1.48 kilograms of MDMA, 162 grams of methamphetamine, 5.89 kilograms of cannabis, 38 grams of cocaine, 356 LSD tabs, eight grams of ketamine, 10 dexamphetamine tablets, and 8.6 grams of psilocybin, which is known as mushrooms. Several mid-level, high-harm drug dealers have been identified during those operations and I commend the police for that excellent work. Side by side with their work with the COVID-19 epidemic, key issues such as drug enforcement have been a clear priority for WA police. However people try to get drugs into our community, they will respond appropriately.