

POLICE — EQUIPMENT

389. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Minister for Police:

My question is to the brilliant Minister for Police. I refer to the responsible financial management of the McGowan Labor government that has enabled it to provide more resources for police in their efforts to drive down crime in our suburbs. Can the minister update the house on how the provision of stab-proof ballistic armour and new handheld mobile smart devices will support our police officers in the important jobs they do to keep our communities safe?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Armadale for his question and for the adjective, which I heard some people snigger at. A lot has already been delivered in the member for Armadale's electorate in terms of policing. We have rolled out the 24-hour police station, we have moved along with the new police and court complex—the development approval was given just a couple of weeks ago. We are about to go out to tender and the first sod will be turned for that complex very shortly. Of course, the Commissioner of Police has designated for the first time a single policing district for Armadale and its surrounds, which has meant a real increased focus for you.

In addition, the McGowan government's great financial management means that we will be able to roll out for police officers things that they have needed for years. We will be able to take them out of the Dark Ages and provide them with the protective equipment that they require. We have allocated over \$15 million for personal-issue multi-threat body armour. The vests will be not only stab-proof, but also be able to withstand other forms of threat, and be personal issue for our frontline officers.

In addition, there is a significant commitment of nearly \$35 million for, again, personal-issue mobile devices. This will help to keep our police officers safer, number one, but it will also save a lot of police time and repeat work. Officers tell me they have to go out to crime scenes and go out to see victims. They take notes and then do the work all over again when they get back to the station whilst they sit down at a computer to type the information in. This will mean that that information can be uploaded instantaneously. It will also mean that they can receive photos of victims, potential suspects and the like on-scene. They will not have to go back to the station or have someone have to bring that out to them. This will provide for much greater efficiency. It should have been rolled out a long time ago. The average parking inspector has a handheld device to key in details. Waiters and waitresses in restaurants and bars have handheld devices to put orders through to the kitchen. But our police officers were very much left in the Dark Ages, and a \$35 million investment by our government will help to take them forward to the modern era and bring them up to the same standard as police officers around Australia—because every other police force around Australia and New Zealand has progressed on this, and it was just Western Australia, thanks to the former government, that was left behind.

In concluding, I note our nearly \$250 million commitment towards fighting the methamphetamine scourge. Over \$125 million of that funding has gone to police and we are seeing the dividends. Just today I announced that police had seized some 59 kilograms of methamphetamine in a recent raid. That takes the total for this financial year up to about 300 kilos. I remind members that that 59 kilos that was destined to be distributed in Western Australia equates to 590 000 hits of methamphetamine. That is what our organised crime squad and meth border force have taken out of the community. I congratulate the commissioner and our hardworking officers who have had such an outstanding result.