

ABUSE OF CHILDREN IN CARE OR PROTECTION OF STATE

3074. Dr E. Constable to the Minister representing the Minister for Child Protection

- (1) How many allegations of abuse of children in the care or protection of the State were received in 2006–2007?
- (2) With reference to (1) how many of the allegations referred to:
 - (a) sexual abuse;
 - (b) physical abuse;
 - (c) emotional abuse;
 - (d) neglect; and
 - (e) other?
- (3) How many substantiated allegations were recorded in 2006–2007?
- (4) With reference to (3) how many of the allegations referred to:
 - (i) sexual abuse;
 - (ii) physical abuse;
 - (iii) emotional abuse;
 - (iv) neglect; and
 - (v) other?
- (5) Who is responsible for investigating allegations of abuse in care and what are their positions and qualifications?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

- (1) 154
- (2)
 - (a) 36
 - (b) 76
 - (c) 30
 - (d) 12
 - (e) Not applicable
- (3) 39
- (4)
 - (i) 7
 - (ii) 22
 - (iii) 8
 - (iv) 2
 - (v) Not applicable.
- (5) The primary responsibility for investigating abuse in care matters sits with the relevant district office. Staff have tertiary qualifications in social work or relevant behavioural sciences. Investigations are normally conducted by two officers - a case manager and where possible a more senior staff member. Serious allegations may also receive a joint response with the WA Police and involve the Specialist Child Interview Unit. Investigations are quality assured in the district by the team leader or district manager. The Department's Duty of Care Unit also quality assures abuse in care notifications and investigations. This unit is also, on a pilot basis with two districts, undertaking direct investigations where a foster carer is involved and where the unit is in the best position to do the investigation. The unit is staffed by professional officers including three senior social work investigator positions.