

CHILD PROTECTION — CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE — ROEBOURNE

**223. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Child Protection:**

Given the minister's answers in the Legislative Council that she is receiving regular updates about whether any of the 184 innocent victims of child abuse in Roebourne are living with an accused or convicted paedophile, can the minister assure the Western Australian public that none of these children is residing with any of these dangerous paedophiles?

**Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

I am not sure how many questions I have answered along these lines, but I will continue to give assurances to the WA public, but importantly the public of the west Pilbara, that we have child safety firmly in our sights. We are doing everything that we can to coordinate the efforts of child protection workers, police, community service organisations and the community with a view to maximising child safety. We will continue to do that. We are also putting together a plan that I imagine we will get to talk about in detail in the debate on the matter of public interest coming up after question time. The plan tries to ensure that there are community efforts and activities on the ground to address a range of different gaps in existing services—for instance, supported safe houses and night shelters for men and increasing youth activities and the like. We are continuing to do that and we have done that largely in response to demands from the community, which says that these are some of the gaps on the ground in Roebourne and in the west Pilbara. We will continue to do that.

The opposition is obsessed with asking the government to give an unequivocal guarantee that no accused or convicted perpetrator will ever reside with a child. I wish I could give that guarantee across the state. Roebourne and the west Pilbara and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse show us that child safety is everyone's responsibility. It is the police's responsibility. It is Child Protection's responsibility. It is a community responsibility. We want to build up the community's understanding of where children are vulnerable to make sure that there is no time when children are left unprotected. That is our priority. We have worked on that from the beginning and we will continue to work on it.