

MISUSE OF DRUGS AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [3.59 pm]: This piece of legislation will create border search areas in which police officers will be able to search individuals and vehicles et cetera. I cast my mind back to the days when I worked on the Nullarbor. We were known as the rolling roadblock. When I first got up there, we hit the road and were doing five-day patrols from Eucla heading west towards Norseman. We would stop anything that had a heartbeat—even a cockroach; it did not matter—and investigate. We found countless firearms. I remember that I had seized so many firearms that on one patrol, the officer in charge, Mr Rob Walton, who I think is no longer with us, ordered me not to seize any more, which was like a red rag to a bull. One memorable incident was when we stopped a flatbed truck that was designed to carry heavy machinery. We pulled the driver over and asked him to produce his oversize permits et cetera, and we then looked at the vehicle. At first, everything looked sweet. However, I remember that the driver looked quite nervous. His behaviour tended to draw more attention to himself. I walked around the truck and everything looked in order, for want of a better way of putting it. What drew my attention was a massive tyre in the centre of the back of his truck. It looked like a spare tyre, which one would think every vehicle should have, but it was too large. It did not match any of the other tyres on the vehicle. Something did not look right. When I kicked the tyre, what should have been a hollow noise was exactly the opposite, so I looked further. To cut a long story short, when I removed the tyre from the vehicle and pulled its split ring, I found that it contained about 30 or 40 kilos of compressed cannabis. This gentleman had been filling the tyre full of drugs and putting it on his truck and driving east and west across the country onselling the drugs to pay for his vehicle costs.

These fixed roadblocks will allow police officers to use dogs and whatever technical machinery they might have to search the entry points to this state.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: I will be interested to see how that will work on rail lines. As I have said, 90 per cent of the hard drugs that enter Western Australia enter via air, rail or road. Very few come through our sea entry points. It will also be interesting to see how this will work at our container ports. I believe we have X-ray machines for containers that come off the docks. Is that correct, minister?

Mr P. Papalia: That is not part of this bill. That is done by Australian Border Force.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: Yes. This piece of legislation will enhance our capacity to do that. I will be interested to see how this legislation will work in conjunction with Border Force, the Australian Federal Police and other agencies, particularly with drugs that come across our international borders. I am sure there will be an answer to that somewhere.

This is a good piece of legislation. It will help attack organised crime. We know that outlaw motorcycle gangs control the methamphetamine trade in Western Australia. It is good that this bill will put pressure on them, in addition to all the other smaller pieces of legislation that help to build our attack on these individuals. If we can make their lives in this state so uncomfortable that they will want to leave, I will be in favour of that. I am certain that other members in this room feel the same way. This is a good piece of legislation. It is quite simple. The best pieces of legislation, particularly in the policing environment, are those that are simple, because they seem to work. The legislation provides for accountability, because senior officers have taken the time to conduct a survey of the areas that will be defined as border search areas. I will be interested to see the survey of Warakurna on Great Central Road and how that area will be physically marked out, because that is a pretty lonely and isolated piece of road infrastructure.

If this legislation will be a good method of interdicting the supply of drugs into this state, it will be happy days. That concludes my comments on the bill.

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [4.06 pm]: I rise today to support the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. It is my great honour to have been elected as the member for Carine in March 2021 in the McGowan Labor government in Western Australia. We live in Australia's largest state, with a total land area of 2.5 million square kilometres. Within this colossal area are around 22 sites through which large amounts of freight and consumables can come and go. It is within this framework that a few organised crime groups use these access sites to import illicit drugs into Western Australia. The Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 will introduce amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1981 to create border search areas, or BSAs, with the intention of intercepting and disrupting the entry of illegal substances into this state.

As a proud Western Australian, I understand the importance of keeping our state free from the scourge of organised criminal elements. I am a well-travelled individual and have seen the impacts of illegal drugs such as

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methylamphetamine and heroin on our communities. Organised crime groups, or OCGs, attempt to obtain money and power from vulnerable societies. The societal problems in Mexico, for example, demonstrate that when OCGs get a strong grip on local communities, the values that hold effective communities together crumble. Values such as freedom from duress, the importance of law and order, and the sanctity and safety of children and women all become vulnerable under the influence of these dreadful substances. I note also that the use of violence in the Mexican states has become the norm. The historical root of these problems is found in the supply of methylamphetamine and other illegal substances.

Within the Western Australian context, organised crime groups are attempting to import and distribute illegal drugs in our community for profit and power. As a father, and now as a member of Parliament, I will support the McGowan government's stance in its resistance to these importations. The Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 will go some way to protect Western Australians. When I was elected, I swore to my constituents and neighbours in Carine to uphold law and order and to demonstrate exemplary financial management of my member's allowance when supporting local sporting groups and community organisations.

In June 2020, during the COVID pandemic and associated border closures, water analysis showed a 51 per cent decrease in meth consumption in the metropolitan area, and an even greater decrease in the regions of Western Australia. This staggering side effect of border closures highlighted the effectiveness of the scheme in disrupting drug distribution methods into the state. On Wednesday, 29 March 2023, the Minister for Police, Hon Paul Papalia, MLA, mentioned in his second reading speech that once the border restriction eased, methylamphetamine availability correspondingly increased. These amendments to the 1981 law are a sensible and reasonable attempt by the government to further protect Western Australians. The changes will allow for a test to be taken by police to provide the basis for reasonable grounds of suspicion. It will enable searches and policing activities in 22 public places with the oversight of a police sergeant in his or her role as an officer in charge of an investigation.

The McGowan Labor government is incredibly effective at protecting Western Australians in times of need, and I see a direct correlation to that need within this bill. The bill makes sense to my constituents in the Carine district. I have consulted widely and sought opinions from numerous groups within my electorate about the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. All are overwhelmingly supportive of this bill.

Firstly, I consulted my neighbours in the Carine electorate. Debra and Joel, for example, are an elderly couple who noticed how lovely and quiet the suburbs were along Marmion Avenue and Beach Road when the amount of methylamphetamine had dropped under the McGowan Labor government. Another example of my consultation includes Sarah and Anthony, my other neighbours, who are happy to think that their young daughter will grow up in a safe local environment where the scourge of drug distribution is actively fought against by our law enforcement agencies.

Secondly, I consulted small business owners about the bill before us. Pedro is a local cafe owner in my electorate. He and Sandra, who is a local dentist, support the resistance against organised crime groups. Sandra, one of my local dentists, informed me how methylamphetamine erodes teeth in people and causes irreparable damage to teeth roots and gums.

Thirdly, I consulted my local schools. I discussed the impact of methylamphetamine amongst kindergarten students. Staff informed me that parents who were exposed to this scourge drug had a direct correlation with contact with child protection. I consulted my local primary schools. Staff told me that they found that instead of purchasing school uniforms for children, funds were being used for the consumption of this revolting chemical. Staff also noted malnutrition and the behaviour of children who had that drug in their families in one context or another. Lastly on this point are secondary schools. Staff clearly stated that this drug and its associated impacts have a direct correlation to educational outcomes.

Fourthly, I consulted parents in my electorate about this bill. They are overwhelmingly supportive to think that their children are growing up in an area where this scourge of a chemical is actively fought against. I explained to those parents how the bill will function with its various oversight elements and so on and so forth. They understand. Western Australians are extremely educated and well informed and understand that a firm stand is what we need.

Fifthly, I contacted my electorate's local police stations regarding this bill. One officer in charge was overwhelmingly supportive. He noted the change in behaviour and aggression in people who were under the influence of this drug in certain entertainment areas.

Lastly, I discussed this bill with local sporting groups within my electorate. Overwhelmingly they said, "Paul, go forward with this bill. We are, in a way, fighting this bill ourselves with our sporting groups promoting physical activity and correct and positive behaviour in our children." This is networking based around improvements in this bill.

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The effects of the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 will enhance our community. Methylamphetamine causes social dysfunction for a user when they are either inebriated or attempting to source the drug illegally. We have heard today its impact on the homeless in one shape or another. This drug gravely impacts upon people's ability to source help, and the social disharmony caused by this dreadful drug impacts on the way that parents and caregivers behave. When I worked for the Department for Child Protection, we knew when a child felt abandoned; there are psychological analyses regarding these things. Broadly speaking, for infants through to toddlers and so on, it is called abandonment when parents are under the influence of this godforsaken chemical and their children are suffering. The loss of cognitive control such as psychotic behaviour, physical violence or illogical risk-taking is prevalent and clear with this drug. At a traffic intersection in another electorate, I recently saw a man swinging a baseball bat. He was later found to be under the influence of methylamphetamine.

The social costs of addiction are huge. The loss of self-respect and value for life shown by people when this drug is involved is dreadful. The value a person places on themselves, and that others in the community perceive them to have when this drug is involved is dreadful. We need to help and protect those people going forward, and this bill from the police minister continues that journey.

Society's view of those who have an addiction or an addictive personality can be further assisted if we have greater control of the amount of the drug entering the state. Reducing that amount enables greater chances for rehabilitation. The social cost of addiction continues with the cost to the health system. The cost that methylamphetamine and other illegal drugs cause to the justice system, both through policing and criminal proceedings, must be in the realm of hundreds of millions of dollars. There is a cost to family structures resulting in family breakdown. The impact of this on small towns in regional WA and the impact on families in the metropolitan area is clearly exemplified. It all causes further duress for the children.

I remember being outside premises during a previous employment. I had a poignant moment that came to me whilst thinking about this speech today. A young girl of about six years of age ran past me into a home up to her father. She said, "Daddy, please come home with some money. Mummy says we need food." What the child did not know was that the father was chronically addicted to methylamphetamine. That exemplified the breakdown of family connection.

As an economist and a geographer, I can say there is a cost to our society in terms of loss of productivity. In economic terms, having a person's effective contribution to society nullified due to their addiction to meth is an enormous cost to the state. This bill attempts to improve the productivity of the state. I support that.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P. LILBURNE: During my career I have seen the vicious circle of methylamphetamine addiction. The Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 makes logical sense to me and my constituents. The changes proposed to the 1981 law in this amendment bill will build in the correct oversight. These powers will only be able to be used in public places. The border search area sites fit into the definition of these aforementioned public places. These powers will not be able to be exercised at political demonstrations or cultural activities. The scheme will require that the Commissioner of Police provide a written report to the Corruption and Crime Commission every six months detailing the work and activities undertaken by police. That report is required to be tabled in Parliament. There is huge oversight in these amendments. It makes sense.

The scheme also has two mechanisms to ensure that the reforms are effective and necessary. The first is that three years after the reforms have commenced, the scheme will be subject to a review to scrutinise its effectiveness. Secondly, it includes a sunset clause to ensure that after five years the effectiveness of the amendment will be overseen by the Parliament.

I thoroughly support this bill. I thank the Labor government for its direct action to protect our fellow Western Australians and I commend the bill.

MS C.M. COLLINS (Hillarys) [4.25 pm]: I also rise to speak on the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. These are really urgent reforms that will empower the state in our fight against the importation of really harmful substances that can cause addiction and ruin lives. I will briefly go over some of the technical aspects of the bill. As we have previously heard, the amendments will create border search areas to deter the importation of illicit drugs into Western Australia. There are 22 listed border search areas, and they must be activated before powers can be used. The bill provides the Western Australia Police Force with the ability to conduct regular, high-visibility searches of vehicles as well as preliminary drug tests of persons at these locations.

I want to point out a number of really important parts to these amendments. These investigative powers can be used only in a public place, not in a private residence. Activation is set at a limit of 28 days. The powers cannot be exercised during political demonstrations, religious or cultural activities or medical emergencies. As a further safeguard, the Commissioner of Police must provide regular reports to the Corruption and Crime Commission with

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statistics of when these operations were carried out and on the seizures and arrests resulting from this work. This will then be tabled in a report and given to the police minister in Parliament.

These reforms come at a pivotal time for the campaign against harmful drugs and addiction. The measures implemented by governments all over the world during the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the production and trafficking of illegal drugs, so much so that it has created somewhat of a drug drought in many jurisdictions. It has given law enforcement authorities around the world renewed opportunities to try to undo some of the harm created by this trade. We know that the trafficking of illicit drugs relies on freight, and in the case of Australia, on interstate trucking, as well as face-to-face interactions between buyers and sellers. It really is truly remarkable that the hard borders that were introduced into WA back in April 2020 curbed not only the virus, but also the infiltration of drugs into our state. Our hard border, which the opposition so often criticises, not only saved lives and the Western Australia economy, but also decreased the amount of drugs coming in and, in turn, drug-related crime.

We heard from the member for Burns Beach, who is an ex-police officer. He spoke in detail about how the testing of our sewerage system works. We know that this was used by police officers to test for COVID hotspots, but it is also used as a way of measuring usage of drugs. During that COVID period, we found that through the testing of our sewerage system the amount of meth in the metropolitan area went down by 50 per cent, and in some regional areas it went down by up to 73 per cent. Methamphetamine is the most consumed illicit stimulant in Australia. On a national level, the capital cities of South Australia and Western Australia exceed all other states with the highest rates of consumption.

All the way back in September 2020, the Australian Institute of Criminology released a study into the methamphetamine market and the prevalence of use in Perth during the COVID pandemic. As part of this study, it interviewed detainees who were caught with the illicit substance. I want to read some quotes from these detainees. One detainee said —

‘It was fine getting methamphetamine until the coronavirus started. The border restrictions have cut the supply off.’

The institute stated —

Respondents also noted a substantial increase in the average price of methamphetamine ...

One detainee said —

‘The whole drug market has tripled in price because the borders are shut, particularly methamphetamine, as the [intrastate] borders are closed and the drug comes from the north of Western Australia.’

The quality of methamphetamine was also described as poor. Some respondents said dealers were compensating for the scarcity of methamphetamine by adding —

Other substances —

... to the drug: ‘The quality is shocking and dealers are mixing anything they can ... to try and make more.’

Just recently, Australian Federal Police Acting Assistant Commissioner John Tanti said that methamphetamine prices in WA were currently amongst the highest in the country because of the COVID border closure, which helped restrict supply. Wastewater analysis suggested that changes in consumption may be linked to reduced supply of imported substances, with increased use of locally produced drugs. We also saw decreases in cocaine and MDMA consumption.

In this presentation I wanted to focus on the most damaging illegal drug, which of course is methamphetamine. It has been associated with anxiety, mood disturbances, paranoia, hallucinations, delusions and psychosis. As we know, psychosis is a state when the mind loses contact with reality. It can often lead to that increased risk of violence or aggression. Many physical harms are related to this drug.

The McGowan Labor government came out really strong on meth in the lead-up to the 2017 election. It has maintained the pressure every year along the way. We recognise that it is a damaging scourge that requires a bespoke response to treat, rehabilitate and remove from our communities. Our policy settings complement a strong approach against drugs. I am pleased to see that Target 120, the state government’s highly successful early intervention program, is funded until June 2025. This policy has delivered fantastic outcomes since 2018. It is an approach that recognises there is no one-size-fits-all approach to these complex social problems. Early intervention—stepping in early—to prevent long-term harm is key. In fact, Harvard University’s national forum on early childhood policy and programs found that quality early childhood programs can yield a \$4 to \$9 return on every dollar invested. Of course, this is for young children, but we can see how this sort of policy approach can set up a state to succeed. We can contrast this investing in people and treating health problems approach with locking people up, which generally costs around \$290 per inmate per day. Target 120 supports young people and their families to circuit break a pattern of offending and delivers health services to break drug and alcohol addiction. Many people have

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contacted me recently about a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility opening up in the electorate of Hillarys. I want to make my position clear: I will always support facilities that help people through their addictions. I know many people who have suffered for years through addictions. As the local MP for the area, I also have to consider the legitimate concerns of parents living next to the local school who are worried about some of the risks of a private facility opening because they did not have the opportunity for consultation or to comment on conditions on the planning application.

This government absolutely recognises the importance of drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. The WA state government currently funds 13 residential alcohol and other drug treatment services, which provide over 270 residential treatment places. We also recognise the importance of diversity in the mental health and alcohol and other drug treatment sectors. This is a strength. We acknowledge and value the important work of private facilities. Details about the location of drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres are subject to a variety of state planning and local government zoning considerations. But when it comes to private organisations, it is ultimately up to the private operator to determine locations that best balance service delivery with community concern. The same rule applies to every operator. We all truly want the best for the vulnerable people who need to access these AOD services, so it is vital that private organisations delivering these services engage appropriately with all levels of government to ensure an approach that balances service delivery with community interest. We can be really proud of our ongoing commitment to recognise addiction as a health issue rather than a law and order matter. Although previous representatives in this chamber preferred to bang the drum about throwing vulnerable people in prison and then throwing away the keys, we are in the business of treating problems early and giving people a hand back to a productive and happy life. It is better for our communities and it is better for our state. With another \$11 million invested into Target 120, I am sure Western Australia will see a strong return on investment, which will further strengthen not just community safety, but also our economic position.

The methamphetamine action plan was resourced with a \$42 million package to press the advantage against meth addiction and save lives. I will not go into too many details about the meth action plan, but, ultimately, it is there to support individuals and families with safe places, provide more services, deliver evidence-based training and boost education and harm reduction. This is not just a metro-centric approach; major attention was paid to our regional population centres. A total of \$9 million was invested in a comprehensive alcohol and other drug service for the Kimberley, \$20 million was invested in the north west drug and alcohol support program and our police presence was bolstered with a \$21 million resource for the meth border force, which resulted in record seizures and major disruptions of organised crime activities across the state. Ultimately, we have data that shows that in 2001, 11 per cent of people aged 20 to 29 had recently used meth. By 2019, that number had dropped to 2.4 per cent. We are making progress and we are pushing the advantage against the threat of illicit drugs, but we have to keep up the pressure and seek opportunities to strengthen our system to combat the threat and assist victims to get back to healthy independence. The amendments in this bill will be part of that good work.

I thank the police minister and all the hardworking police officers across the state. I commend the bill to the house.

MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston — Parliamentary Secretary) [4.38 pm]: I also rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. I will go through some of the important features of the bill and supplement that with some anecdotal situations that I have encountered in relation to drug misuse within our society. I will first look at the bill itself and the declaration of the border search areas; that is, basically declaring 22 permanent search areas that identify the key locations of entry and egress of illicit substances into Western Australia, which are used for importation or export. Providing police with powers at these locations to detect these drugs and disrupt drug-related activity is very important in Western Australia. The bill will provide the Western Australia Police Force with the ability to conduct regular, high-visibility searches of vehicles and preliminary drug tests of persons at these locations. A preliminary drug test is a non-invasive test conducted using an electronic wand or a drug-detection dog. At this point, I will pause and reflect on the fact that whenever I go through an airport and happen to be accompanied by my children, they say that I must have a particular look about me because I am always stopped and tested. I have not had the pleasure of being tested by the dogs, but police are very thorough in using that opportunity to test as many people as possible. My kids say that the odds of me being tested at the airport are surer than winning Lotto.

The purpose of this bill is to replicate the circumstances in place during the COVID pandemic. I will go through some of the reasons for that shortly. The hard borders that were introduced in April 2020 are believed to have been the main contributing factor in the significant reduction in methamphetamine consumption in Western Australia. I want to highlight in particular the wastewater analysis that the member for Hillarys previously spoke about. The indication was that compared with previous years there was a 51 per cent decrease in meth use in the metropolitan area, a 73 per cent decrease in the Albany area and a 65 per cent decrease in Geraldton. That data is a snapshot of that set of statistics, but I would imagine that those statistics were replicated all around Western Australia and they are a very important feature of this bill.

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In relation to the powers to search people within the border search areas, the changes that this bill will introduce will allow for a positive preliminary drug test to be the basis for reasonable grounds for suspicion. Police would then be able to undertake a basic search. There are existing powers within the legislation, but this bill will expand those powers into the border search areas. This calls to mind one of my favourite television shows, *Border Security: Australia's Front Line*, in which these things happen on a regular basis. I promise I will not go into all the examples from *Border Security*, but certainly there are already —

Mr D.J. Kelly: Great show!

Ms J.L. HANNS: It is a great show.

Certainly, there are already some examples on commercial TV of law enforcement being incredibly successful in stopping the importation of drugs.

It is important to highlight that there will be some limitations on the powers within the border search areas. Those powers will be able to be used only in a public place, as outlined by the member for Hillarys, and those powers cannot be exercised on persons engaging in certain exempt activities such as political demonstrations, religious or cultural activities and medical emergencies.

I listened to the Leader of the Liberal Party outline the opposition's support for this bill, so I thank members opposite for that. People have come out to oppose this bill or have had concerns about it, but there does not seem to be an outrage about the quarantine act and other laws regarding fruit and vegetables within Australia's borders. There does not seem to be any concern about those issues or laws. Therefore, it is very important that, in making these changes with this bill, we put people, families and communities first. I am not opposed to the quarantine laws that we have in place. If it is important to look after our agricultural industry, surely it is vitally important to look after communities, so I place on *Hansard* my support for this bill.

I can give members a firsthand example of the sorts of quarantine laws that exist in Australia. In 2016 my family and I left Collie, went down the southern coast, across the Nullarbor, into South Australia and Victoria, and did a loop back home. We managed to get to an amazing place called Hahndorf in South Australia. If members have not been to Hahndorf, please make yourselves available and put it on your bucket list at some point. Beerenberg farm is located in Hahndorf, and it has a massive strawberry plantation where you can pick as many strawberries as you like, which is very similar to places that exist in other parts of Australia. My kids delighted in picking a full bucket of strawberries at Hahndorf, and we sat and ate as many as we possibly could. We got back in the caravan and went to travel into Victoria from South Australia. We were very shocked, but happy and very supportive, of the fact that we were not allowed to take those strawberries into Victoria. Picture this: the four of us were on the side of the road at the border control stop, eating as many strawberries as we possibly could and feeling quite sad and disheartened that all of our efforts had amounted to sitting at the border trying to stuff ourselves with strawberries. It is fair to say that my kids cannot look at another strawberry, so it was certainly an enlightening experience for everybody, but one that we absolutely supported.

We already have quarantine border checkpoints in Western Australia, and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development operates those services. It is obviously an excellent first line of defence against incursions of unwanted pests, weeds and diseases, which could arrive on freight, cargo or other items being brought in from interstate. Currently, checkpoints at Kununurra and Eucla operate 24 hours a day throughout the year. That goes further to my point that if we are talking about doing the absolute right thing by the agricultural industry by making sure that the agricultural economy in Western Australia remains able to do business as usual because we keep those pests and diseases out, it is absolutely critical that we do the same thing, as I said, for communities and families.

In terms of the locations of the border search areas, I want to highlight—I think the member for Burns Beach went through each of them individually—that the 22 locations take into account entry by sea, so through ports, rail or air. The locations will be distributed in both metropolitan and regional areas. Therefore, as much as possible, the police will be able to undertake the duties that they need to do to make sure that illicit substances are not imported into Western Australia.

The point I would like to make, and the member for Hillarys made this point very clearly in her contribution, is that methamphetamine use in Western Australia dropped unequivocally during the COVID pandemic. An ABC article in 2020 refers to this exact point. It is titled, in part “Methamphetamine-related hospital admissions drop due to coronavirus restrictions”. It states —

The number of ... presentations at WA emergency departments has fallen significantly during COVID-19 ...

Experts believe that supply chain disruptions during the pandemic caused this thing—for want of a better word. The article continues —

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Meth-related hospital attendances were down 29 per cent in April compared with the average numbers seen between January and March.

Further to that, crystal methamphetamine was seized during that time at the border. When we had the restricted border to the eastern states, the methods the WA police used were very significant. During that time, police also seized 12.2 kilograms of methamphetamine, believed to have a street value of \$12 million. In highlighting the scourge of methamphetamine—and it is a scourge—the pandemic highlighted the impact that Western Australia Police Force can have on ensuring that the access and importation of drugs into Western Australia, particularly methamphetamine, can be mitigated.

My sister-in-law works for the Water Corporation and she has the great pleasure of being one of its wastewater treatment analysis specialists, so the analysis of wastewater is particularly exciting for her. I am not sure that too many other people would find as much joy in her role as she does! I remember her saying to me, in respect of the data that was available to the public at that time, that the wastewater samples very clearly demonstrated a drop in the use of methamphetamine during the pandemic.

Adding to that point, I refer to another ABC News article from 29 June 2022 in which it was reported that wastewater analysis had shown that Australia ranked highest amongst more than 20 countries in methamphetamine use. I would love Australia to be a leader in lots of areas, but methamphetamine usage is not something for which I am proud to say we are an international leader. The article states —

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission’s (ACIC) latest report found that in December 2021, methylamphetamine consumption in Australia was the highest per capita when compared with nations in Europe, Asia and Oceania.

Perth was touted in this article as the “new meth capital of Australia”, followed closely by regional New South Wales. When the Western Australian data was analysed, they had to adjust the Y axis because Western Australia’s statistics were so different from the other states of Australia. They had to actually adjust the scale to be able to measure Western Australia’s meth usage. The article continues —

“Organised crime groups have redoubled their efforts to supply the major illicit drug markets as COVID-19 restrictions eased, generating significant illicit revenue, but they continue to face challenges, not least from law enforcement agencies,” Mr Phelan said.

Mr Phelan was the ACIC chief executive. Again, understanding the usage of meth and what we can do as a government to control that usage is incredibly important.

I would also like to highlight a Department of Health report that was released in December 2018 titled *Meth-related emergency department attendances: Report for July to December 2017*. On page 2 there is a summary of meth-related ED attendances for July to December 2017. I reflect on the fact that the previous report and the ABC article referenced Perth as the meth capital of Australia. This is July to December 2017, so it is pre-COVID and also before the rebound of meth usage after the hard borders were lifted. There were 3 369 meth-related attendances at EDs, and of the top three symptoms of people presenting with meth-related complaints, 17 per cent were suicidal as a result of their meth usage. That is the biggest tragedy I could really think of: that people who are in such a critical state of despair through their meth usage have presented at hospital because they actually want to take their own life.

The fact is that a drug like that exists within our society, and we have the ability to control it. The Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 will go a long way towards making those changes. It really makes me very sad that people are presenting at our hospitals with such advanced drug addictions that they are actually considering taking their own lives. Inappropriate behaviour was one of the other top three symptoms of meth usage presentations in our EDs. I certainly have had the experience of being in a hospital when someone is under the influence of drugs while people are trying to receive care, and it is very difficult for both patients and staff. This is a challenge that impacts across a lot of other systems in Western Australia, and I will talk about those shortly.

I referred to the fact that I had been in hospital recently. I know a lot of people managed to go on holiday over the May break.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms J.L. HANNS: I managed to get bitten by a red-back spider, and at four o’clock in the morning I needed emergency treatment at the fabulous Collie Hospital. I turned up to be treated for my red-back spider bite, very unwell. I make a very quick shout-out to anyone who thinks they might need some bug treatments at their house; I highly encourage it, because it was not the most pleasant experience of my life. The bite was on my little toe, and when I was at the hospital they asked, “What is the pain scale?” and I said, “It’s like having a baby out of your toe!” Having been bitten by a red-back spider and having had a baby, I can absolutely vouch for the fact that that was how painful it was, so members should please make sure that they exterminate the red-back spiders in their homes!

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Mr P. Papalia: Come on, maybe your memory's fading!

Ms J.L. HANNS: Minister, it was a long time ago, but I am telling you that it never goes away, trust me!

While I was receiving treatment there was a person under the influence of drugs in the room next to me, and it was not a great experience for the staff. My point here is that when people present at hospitals for care—again, I received excellent care—staff should be able to focus on patients who are there because they are extremely unwell, and not necessarily focusing on drug-related ED admissions. If this bill can assist in those sorts of situations, it will go a very long way towards supporting our health system services.

Through my former role as a teacher and deputy school principal over many years in the education system, I have also seen the impact of drug use and abuse within families. The impact on the family supporting the person with the drug addiction is incredibly debilitating for everyone. I acknowledge also the impact of drug abuse on police, because they are sometimes called to intervene in incidents in which someone is under the influence of drugs and is, in the case of hospital admissions, behaving inappropriately in a public place. It requires police resources to deal with those issues. I also think about the circumstances of the paramedics who attend potential overdoses of people under the influence of methamphetamine. That also creates a huge challenge for our paramedics and St John Ambulance volunteers and career crew.

It also impacts on child protection services and right across the community services sector. Often when a family member is in the grip of methamphetamine or other drug or alcohol addiction, there are interventions by child protection staff in terms of supporting family. In the worst case scenarios, children are often removed from the custody of the parents because the situation they are living in has become quite dangerous. Obviously, it impacts on domestic violence and the partners of people who use illicit substances, and the broader social services sector.

I want to talk very briefly about some of the experiences I have had in the education sector. I have seen the impacts that drugs have had on the families of students I have taught. Probably the best example was a man at our local shopping centre who had parked out the front of the shops and was revving the engine of his car. He was quite agitated and, in my opinion, certainly under the influence of drugs. He was revving the car and shouting at his partner who had gone into the shop to purchase some baby formula to feed their children. I knew the parents because they had older children whom I had seen at school. The parents had two of their younger children in the car, one of whom was a toddler and who needed the formula. The two little boys were observing this man's behaviour. He was very erratic and angry. As I said, he was revving the car and yelling at his partner while she was in the shops. She certainly would not have heard him saying, "Hurry up and get back to the car. I need to get some drugs." He was very clearly placing his family and everyone in an unsafe situation. The family was already known to child protection. That incident highlighted to me that the family was not in a great place and that this person really needed support and help. That gets back to the point of the bill through which we will be able to interrupt the supply and importation of drugs. That is aimed at assisting families like that very vulnerable family.

Schools have the ability to offer services and support people. A number of young people are referred to the child protection system when the welfare of the child is at risk. Schools can initiate a concern for the welfare of a particular child or family with the Department of Communities. Schools can refer young people to school psychologists or chaplains or, at Collie Senior High School, to the amazing facility it has called Youth Focus. Youth Focus does a great job of supporting young people in an informal way. The counsellors can chat about their concerns and refer the young people to support agencies to help support those young people and their families.

I will reflect on student attendance. Student attendance can be impacted by drug use in the family. Often, young people stay away from school to care for other family members, whether it is their younger brothers and sisters or a parent who is under the influence of drugs or dealing with drug addiction. I have seen that on far too many occasions. People often buy drugs and use them as a way to feed their addiction and their addictive behaviours, leading to a cycle of poverty. The member for Carine mentioned that often people are not able to afford food. Those families are really the unwitting victims of this particular issue. I look at all those things just in relation to schools and I wonder what resources are being put into schools, hospitals, the police force, child protection and any other community service in our society to help mitigate the impact of drug use and drug addiction on community members. It is very important when we reflect on that issue to consider what else that money could be spent on and what other things could be done with that money to make life better for everyone in our society. I think the member for Burns Beach referred to how many other hospitals and schools that money could build and how many community groups it could support. That is a vital point.

In summary, I would like to say a huge thankyou to our police, healthcare workers, educators, child protection workers and all those people who offer frontline support for families of methamphetamine users and other drug users. It is an incredibly important role and is not underestimated or undervalued, certainly not by me.

I want to leave everyone with this point: if we, as a community, support the quarantine restrictions to protect our agricultural sector and farmers—that is incredibly important and absolutely vital—we should support these changes

in the bill to protect our community, including families and the frontline workers who really bear the brunt of the scourge of drug use within Western Australia. I will draw my comments to a conclusion at that point and I commend the bill to the house.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [5.05 pm]: I rise today to make a contribution to debate on the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. I will start by congratulating the Minister for Police for bringing this bill to the house. It addresses an issue that has been talked about over the last couple of years, which comes off the enormous success we have had in disrupting the illicit drug trade in Western Australia by reason of various COVID-19 pandemic measures that were taken. Having seen the success of those measures in disrupting the illicit drug trade, reasonable minds ultimately turned to the question of whether we could replicate those successes in the future. I am sure that everyone in this chamber can agree that anything the government can do to disrupt the illicit drug trade is extremely valuable. We have heard a number of members today speak about the terrible consequences of the illicit drug trade on our local communities. I am sure that all members have seen constituents who have been affected by the drug trade and illicit drug use. Obviously, in many cases the victims are the users themselves. Their lives are ruined. They fall into a cycle of addiction that controls their life and ruins their finances, their relationships with family and friends and their health, permanently in many cases.

There are other victims of the drug trade as well, and that is the family, friends and colleagues of users. We all know stories of particularly, I think, parents who have been on the receiving end of physical, psychological and financial abuse by their children who might be using drugs because, invariably, to fund the habit, as the addiction takes hold, those people turn to family members. They might turn to crime. I certainly know of stories in my own community of parents and even grandparents who have had items stolen from their house by members of their own family in order to fund their drug addiction. The illicit drug trade affects those users but it also has knock-on effects in our community. It is important that we do what we can to clamp down on it and disrupt that activity.

Another knock-on effect that I want to acknowledge is the pressure the illicit drug trade places on our first responders. I know from my meetings with Cockburn police, for example, that one of the biggest drains on their time in the years prior to the pandemic was dealing with people who had a psychotic episode as a result of methamphetamine use. Restraining those people, accompanying them to a medical facility, supervising them and protecting the medical staff while the user was receiving treatment would, in many cases, take at least one car off the road for just that one incident. In some cases, it took more than one car to address the incident, at least initially. That is a huge drain on resources, because police officers who wait with somebody in hospital might be off the road and unable to patrol for a whole shift. That resource is taken off the roads and is not able to respond to any other crime or suspected crime that has happened in our community. Equally, the resources of paramedics, nurses and doctors are taken up in treating people who present at an emergency department or are apprehended by police and delivered to hospital with very serious episodes as a result of amphetamine use. Their safety is also put at risk, because people who are having psychotic episodes can be incredibly violent and aggressive. I am thankful that I cannot think of a recent case that I have read about like that, but I remember a period prior to the pandemic when it was not uncommon to read an article in the news about a paramedic, nurse or other allied health professional having been assaulted or verbally abused by someone who was having either a psychotic episode or a withdrawal episode as a result of their dependence on methamphetamine. The point I want to take from that is that this government is to be commended for moving very quickly after the peak of the pandemic had passed to put in place measures that allow our incredibly professional and capable police force to take measures at the border to continue to disrupt the illicit drug trade in the way that it was disrupted during the pandemic.

In reflecting on that, I want to make the point that the disruption that COVID-19 restrictions caused the illicit drug trade was actually predicted by some academics very early in the pandemic. I refer to an editorial piece by Paul Dietze and Amy Peacock in the May 2020 edition of *Drug and Alcohol Review*, volume 39, pages 297 to 300, entitled “Illicit drug use and harms in Australia in the context of COVID-19 and associated restrictions: Anticipated consequences and initial responses”. May 2020 seems like a lifetime ago, but that was very early in the pandemic. I was in the United Kingdom in March 2020, when the COVID-19 situation started to look quite serious. That was when I jumped on a flight home. I am thankful that I did so because I might very well not have been serving in this place had I waited another week or two in the UK because I would not have been able to get a flight home.

As a light-hearted aside, I remember that I was flying Qatar Airways home from the UK and had given myself a few days to pack up my flat in London. I thought to myself: “What could possibly change in a matter of three or four days?” It turned out at that point of the pandemic in March 2020 that a lot could change in three or four days! It was around that time that airlines were cancelling flights and countries were closing borders. As each day went by, I got more and more anxious. About a day or two before I was due to fly out from the UK, the CEO of Qatar Airways came out in the media and said that this was all a hoax and that it was some sort of conspiracy to disrupt the global aviation industry. I have to say that I have never been so thankful for a COVID conspiracist as I was in that moment, because I thought to myself: “At least Qatar Airways will continue to fly for another couple of days while this

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lunatic's still in charge. Because he thinks it's a conspiracy, he'll keep the planes moving, so I'll be able to get out of the country!" Sure enough, I did get out of the country. I think it was only a few days after I arrived that the board or something of Qatar Airways intervened and the CEO had to announce that COVID-19 was a serious matter and the airline would be cancelling and reducing flights and the like. That cut in for Qatar a little later than it did for other airlines. I think his position was ridiculous, but I admit I was thankful for it at the time!

This article was published in May 2020, so very early in the pandemic—only a couple of months after I had got back to Australia—and contained some statements about the anticipated consequences of COVID-19 restrictions.

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Attorney General; sotto voce, please.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Thank you, Acting Speaker.

The authors state as follows in the article —

There is good reason to expect major interruptions to illegal drug supply internationally and in Australia. Key drugs such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and 3,4-Methylenedioxy methamphetamine (MDMA) are typically detected at the Australian border via seizures related to air transport (85–99% of seizure numbers for the key drugs listed).

They then went on to say —

Restrictions on air passenger transport will not only impact drugs imported by passengers but passenger crafts also carry freight and mail, meaning that reduced air travel will have direct impacts across these supply routes.

As early as May 2020, we had experts predicting that because the vast majority of drugs like heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine and MDMA are typically transported into Australia via international air travel, the restrictions on air passenger travel into Australia would have a significant downward effect on supply. As things have shown, that prediction proved to be true.

The authors also observed that there were abrupt changes to heroin supply in late 2000 and early 2001 and that the disruption to heroin in that period should provide clues to the effect of restrictions on movement during the COVID-19 pandemic. They noted —

The heroin 'drought' or shortage at the beginning of 2001 was characterised by plummeting purity and availability, producing a major increase in the purity-adjusted price of the drug.

That prediction was very much borne out by what the member for Hillarys said just two speakers ago. The member for Hillarys made some observations from looking at the research that showed that there had been a reduction in the quality or purity of drugs available in the Australian market, a reduction in the size of the supply and a significant increase in cost as well. All the things the member for Hillarys noted had occurred over the last couple of years were predicted very early in the pandemic by these experts. The authors made a further observation later in the editorial when they specifically said —

Supply chains to people who use drugs may be disrupted by COVID-19 restrictions. Physical distancing measures, restrictions on gatherings of people and increased police powers and numbers may all affect the way drug markets operate.

What I want to tease out from that is that it was not only the reduction in international air travel that disrupted the illicit drug trade during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the increased resourcing and powers we gave to police during that period. People would remember that we had police stationed at the state borders to monitor people coming in and out of the state and making sure that they had things like their G2G PASS and a valid reason to enter the state. In some cases, what had been a valid reason to enter the state became an invalid reason for a period because we were in a period of significant restrictions and lockdown. The point is that there were two disruptions to the illicit drug trade. The first was the reduction in the number of air passengers and flights into the country and Western Australia, and the second was the disruption caused by the increased police presence at border areas and the increased powers we gave police to question people about their reasons to come into the state and screen people as they came into the state. Both those things had the impact of disrupting the illicit drug trade into Western Australia.

I want to make the point that that is reflected in the data that has been referred to by other speakers. I note again that in June 2020, a matter of months after the pandemic had started and restrictions had been put in place, and only a month after this article had been published in *Drug and Alcohol Review*, wastewater analysis showed a 51 per cent reduction in methamphetamine consumption in metropolitan Perth, a 73 per cent reduction in Albany and a 65 per cent reduction in Geraldton. It is hard to fathom that reduction in the supply of illicit drugs. Probably the only huge reduction in drug use that we have seen outside of that was the disruption to the international heroin

trade that occurred in late 2000 and early 2001 as a result of focused pressure from law enforcement agencies. That shows that the COVID-19 restrictions had the unintended, but welcome, consequence of disrupting illicit drug supply and use in Western Australia. The predictions in that research have been borne out in what occurred in Western Australia at that time.

I make the point also that that was not specific to the Western Australian experience. The literature shows that other jurisdictions that implemented strict border restrictions and searches during the pandemic also experienced significant disruptions to their local drug markets. I refer specifically to Singapore. I refer to an article entitled “Effects of COVID-19 on Substance Use in Singapore” by Ho Teck Tan, Boon Ceng Chai and Yit Shiang Lui. The article is published in *Substance abuse: Research and treatment*, volume 15, papers 1 to 7. The researchers make the observation that heroin had traditionally been brought into Singapore by land, no doubt mainly from Malaysia, and amphetamine had been brought in mainly by air. As a result of the border restrictions that were applied in Singapore, which were similar to the restrictions that were applied in Western Australia, the heroin and amphetamine trade had to move to maritime routes instead.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: That is proof that drug suppliers had to change their methods and also their business model. The researchers noted that in some cases, people flew drones from Malaysia to deliver drugs into Singapore, or hid drugs in fruit such as papayas that were brought across the border. In many ways, Western Australia is fortunate, because it is very hard to fly a drone from another country into Western Australia. We also have strong biosecurity laws for fruit and vegetables. Therefore, we would be more likely to detect the concealment of drugs through those methods. The evidence from across Western Australia and the world is that the COVID-19 restrictions had the unintended, but welcome, consequence of disrupting the international illicit drug supply.

I want to make two quick observations. The first is that the researchers in the Australian paper that I have just referenced refer to the fact that after the disruption to the heroin market that occurred in the early 2000s, the market recovered quite quickly. If we do not take steps such as those outlined in this bill, the illicit drug trade in Western Australia is likely to snap back quite quickly. We cannot rely on the flow-on effect from the COVID-19 restrictions to continue. The suppliers of illicit drugs are aggressive marketers of their products. It is incredibly important that we continue to do what we can to disrupt these markets.

The second observation is that the researchers found that the rates of use and harm did not immediately return to those observed in the late 1990s. The market snapped back, but the rates of use and harm did not. That is significant, because it shows that any disruption that we can cause to the supply of illicit drugs will have a flow-on effect to the use and harm caused by illicit drugs. If we can disrupt the trade now, we can disrupt use and harm over a longer period.

I now want to draw attention to a point that I do not think other members have spoken about in the same way. That is the need for the police to have a reasonable suspicion in order to undertake a basic search of a vehicle or person entering Western Australia. Our police officers on the front line are always called upon to make judgements and exercise discretion in their duties. They are very well trained and professional in exercising that judgement and discretion. However, they are often called upon to make those judgement calls in very fluid situations. That can lead to problems down the track. For example, if an officer believed in the moment that they had a reasonable suspicion, but a court looked at that retrospectively with the benefit of hindsight and said that a reasonable suspicion did not exist, that might invalidate the search and the evidence that was discovered and result in an unsuccessful prosecution. We need to put laws and processes in place to protect our officers by ensuring that any judgements they might make in the course of their duties will be safe. As I have said, although our police are highly trained and professional in making judgements, some of the techniques that they have to rely upon in the course of performing their duties might be unsafe.

I refer to another article entitled “Between a Hunch and a Hard Place: Making Suspicion Reasonable at the Canadian Border”. This article is about how the Canadian border police exercise judgement around reasonable suspicion. The article makes the point that sometimes the methods that are relied upon to ground reasonable suspicion are hit or miss. Officers might rely on body language, such as whether a person has a rigid jaw or cannot move their neck freely, or their eye movements telegraph uneasiness. There might also be verbal indicators, such as answers given in an agitated manner or in an incoherent or belligerent way. These can all be indicators that a person is doing something suspicious. However, it might also be because the person is nervous, or because of cultural differences in the way people respond to situations when they are put under police observation. The article makes the point also that the matters that are relied upon to ground reasonable suspicion may sometimes be ruled by a court to be unsafe, and that may invalidate the whole process.

One feature of this bill that I really like is that it will allow the police to do regular high-visibility vehicle searches and preliminary non-invasive drug tests through the use of a drug wand or drug-detection dog. The great thing about that is that if an officer were to use an electronic wand or a drug-detection dog and get a positive from that, that would

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provide a firm foundation for that officer to say that they have reasonable suspicion to then continue and undertake a basic search. It will have the effect of making reasonable suspicion a more objective measure, which will then give our police officers more confidence in the job that they are doing on the borders to disrupt the illicit drug supply.

In closing, I again congratulate the Minister for Police and the government for moving very quickly to deal with this issue to take the positive lessons we learnt from COVID-19 restrictions and apply them going forward. I suspect we are probably the first state in the country to be doing this—police minister?

Mr P. Papalia: Yes.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: We are leading the nation in disrupting the illicit drug supply. It is something that this government and the Minister for Police should be commended for. I commend the bill to the house.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [5.30 pm] — in reply: I thank all members for their contributions. They universally support the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023 and its intent. I will reflect a little on each of the contributions.

The member for Vasse spoke first. I acknowledge her fulsome support for the Western Australia Police Force. I echo her thanks to the Commissioner of Police's staff and my staff who provided briefings to the opposition and crossbench. Clearly, that had a positive outcome and they provided them with most of the information they were seeking. The member for Vasse made the observation that she has a couple of questions that we might pursue during consideration in detail, including what might be the trigger for activating the border search areas and questions about resourcing. I am happy to pursue those later. She also noted in her contribution, as did other members, the oversight and statutory review measures in this legislation to ensure that we guard against overreach or unnecessary impact on civil liberties. I appreciate that acknowledgement. A considerable effort has been made to ensure that we satisfy and give people comfort around those concerns.

The member for Burns Beach then spoke in an entertaining fashion, as he often does, delivering anecdotes from his personal experience of his long policing career as it pertained to his encounters with illicit drug trade coming across the borders into Western Australia. I love how when he begins to tell a story, regardless of what the subject is, I am always a little on edge because I am unsure of where he is going with regard to what he might have eaten or been confronted with when he opened a container in a vehicle or something of that description. This time he was on message and nowhere near as confronting in those terms, but he gave some interesting insight into the locations that criminals had hidden illicit drugs that he was able to identify and locate.

He also reflected on the fact that between August 2021 and August 2022, something like 14.2 tonnes of illicit drugs were consumed in Australia. In WA, it was 1.123 tonnes in that period alone, which is quite extraordinary. I am not sure where the reference was from, but it sounds correct based on some of the intercepts and busts that have been effected by the Western Australia Police Force in recent times. He gave a really interesting and detailed description of the sewage testing process that I had not heard before. I was not aware that he had witnessed that. He was able to enlighten the house about how that process takes place. He also reflected on the need to collaborate with other agencies, as did other members during their contributions.

The member for Carine spoke about sewage testing results, confirming an over 50 per cent reduction in meth consumption in Western Australia during border closures. Again, he spoke from personal experience regarding the harmful, horrific impact of the consumption of illicit drugs generally in Western Australia, particularly methylamphetamine, and told of his consultation across his electorate for this legislation, which I appreciate. Again, there is fairly universal support for the measures being proposed, as would probably any measures with a positive impact on reducing methylamphetamine consumption or import into Western Australia. When we talk to people in the community, everyone is aware of the harmful impact to some extent, whether they have personally witnessed the consequences of methylamphetamine use, but everyone, to some extent, is aware of its harm in Western Australia. That was reflected in the member for Carine's community consultation. Being a teacher, he obviously talked to other educators and school communities, and everyone sadly recognises that often one of the first indicators of meth consumption in a household is the child at school. That can be the first external indicator that there is a problem of that nature in a home. It would be a child, who, as the member indicated, would be suffering from malnutrition, showing clear signs of neglect or exhibiting behavioural problems as a consequence of what they are enduring at home. That is not a surprise and it is reflective of just about anyone we would ask in the community, particularly teachers and educators. They would see it very starkly; educators in my electorate do as well. The member spoke of talking to his local police officer in charge and he confirmed the challenges associated in dealing with meth-affected individuals firsthand, as did the member for Burns Beach, who told us of the challenges that confront our officers as they encounter people who are under the effects of methamphetamine. It is frightening.

The member for Hillarys—there is no shortage of former teachers in the house—reflected on the oversight measures and commended those. That was good to hear. She spoke of the effectiveness of the hard borders and

the consequent reduction in crime. Clearly, as a result of sewage testing and other measures, we saw an impact on methylamphetamine consumption in the state, but there was a concurrent reduction in crime. Obviously, not all of that can be attributed to just the border measures, but a large amount undoubtedly can be. That is the motivation. I think everyone understands that simple suggestion that, if we can, we should try to achieve some degree of replication of that impact—the effect at the time. The member for Hillarys also expressed, like everybody, concerns about the high prevalence of methylamphetamine use in Western Australia. She quoted the observation that the price of meth tripled under the closed borders. Later, I will refer to a bulletin from the Australian Institute of Criminology that confirms that; I suspect that is where that information originated from. It is true that that occurred. The member for Hillarys also quoted Acting Assistant Commissioner John Tanti of the Australian Federal Police, who stated that the price of meth in WA was among the highest in the country. I think we all know that; it motivates the people who seek to bring the product into the state because it is such a good market and therefore is a very attractive place to sell. But one impact at the time of the border closures was that as a consequence of disrupting the supply, the price of meth went up. In this case, that was a good thing, because it confirmed to us that there was less of it around—it was less available—and, as a consequence, supply and demand dictated that the price increase. That price increase was another confirmation that the supply of meth had been reduced, along with the testing of the sewers. That alongside the reduction in presentation to hospitals and crime showed that the closure of the borders was an incredible initiative. It was another benefit, apart from protecting us from COVID.

The member for Hillarys also reflected on meth-induced psychosis and all the consequential and collateral damage that is caused when people who are suffering from psychosis are encountered by first responders, subsequently attend hospitals or even meet people in the community.

I very much enjoyed the contribution of the member for Collie–Preston. She initially focused on the safeguards, as a number of members have today, and raised comparisons with the search powers for fruit and vegetables at the borders compared with our capacity to search for illicit drugs. This observation has been made by the Premier, quite famously, who talked about being able to search for apples, oranges and bananas at the border, but not being able to search for cocaine, heroin and methylamphetamine. I think that the member for Collie–Preston’s stories were more interesting than the Premier’s, particularly the great strawberry border tragedy that her family endured, whereby they picked strawberries in South Australia and were then compelled to consume them all at the Victorian border. That was interesting. I was not aware that Victoria is so serious about its border protection measures for the security of its agricultural industry. That again starkly illustrates the weakness in our ability to search for illicit drugs. Quite reasonably, people accept that we should be able to search for pests coming into the state that might threaten our agricultural industry, and they willingly concede to being searched to protect the state from those sorts of threats. I think almost universally—not entirely—Western Australians would agree that it is just as reasonable to suggest that we should search for illicit drugs, particularly as we are all very focused on the methylamphetamine threat.

The member gave a firsthand anecdote about having suffered a red-back spider bite and encountering someone who was under the influence of illicit drugs. Did you know that it was methamphetamine induced?

Ms J.L. Hanns: No, I wasn’t sure, but something like that.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It was probably a combination of things. Sadly, it is frequently reported that our emergency department staff regularly confront psychotic-type behaviour induced by illicit drugs, often combined with alcohol. Whether mental illness is associated before or after the event is questionable, but it is something that all our hospital emergency departments have to confront. The member’s story just confirmed the likelihood of it happening. I do not know how long she was there for her red-back spider bite. What do they do for it?

Ms J.L. Hanns: I think drugs. Good drugs.

Mr P. PAPALIA: When I interjected during the member’s contribution, I would never go near suggesting that childbirth is not painful; I was suggesting that the member must have forgotten how painful childbirth was if she was elevating the red-back spider bite to that level of pain.

Ms J.L. Hanns: Minister, you never forget!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am frightened of red-back spiders now! The member has concerned me greatly. I will be watching out for them.

As always, the member for Cockburn made a very well informed contribution. I think his statement at the start that reasonable minds would turn to measures that might replicate the impact of the COVID borders on the meth trade says it all. I think that it is reasonable, and it is good that the Western Australia Police Force has come to it so rapidly and immediately. In fact, we were still in the middle of the COVID pandemic when the former and current Commissioners of Police came to the Premier, the Attorney General and me to ask us to deliver powers that would attempt to replicate the impact of the border measures during COVID. That was in March 2021, when the pandemic was still ongoing. We have delivered on a couple of those measures. The powers under the consorting legislation

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were the first and then we made an amendment to the Firearms Act last year, which created, amongst other things, firearm prohibition orders. This is the third in the suite of measures that have been requested by police. In many respects, it is probably the one that will most closely seek to replicate what happened, because it will create 22 border search areas. All the major sea, port, road and rail entry points to the state will be covered off by this legislation, and, with luck, we hope we will have at least a measure of a similar effect. Even a small proportion of the impact that was experienced or witnessed during 2020 would be extraordinary.

As the member for Cockburn confirmed in his contribution, the impact on the illicit heroin trade that was seen in 2001 subsequently eroded over time. That is happening now with meth. Fortunately, it has not got back up to the level that we suffered from just prior to COVID—it has not got anywhere near that—but it is gradually returning. It is elastic, as the member indicated, and in the absence of us taking these measures, in all likelihood we would return to those sorts of levels before too long. Like many others, the member for Cockburn spoke of the wideranging impacts of illicit drugs on family members. I think all of us as members of Parliament have encountered the tragic situation of parents, grandparents and children of addicted people who are at the very front line of the harmful use of illicit drugs, particularly methylamphetamine, because it is such a harmful product. It hurts people. It hurts the person using the drug, but they invariably hurt the people closest to them and then the wider community. Anything we can do to reduce that pain, reduce the flow of meth into the state and give people the chance of avoiding falling foul of the trade in the first place would be a good thing.

I enjoyed the member for Cockburn's story of his escape from the United Kingdom via Qatar Airways and the CEO who was a COVID conspiracist. It is good that he was there. He hung on and kept the airline flying just long enough for the member for Cockburn to return to Western Australia and deliver to this place such a wonderful contributing member.

There are a couple of things I will refer to. Everyone, particularly the members for Hillarys and Cockburn but others as well, made reference in their contributions to the impact of the closure of the borders. One of my advisers has handed me an Australian Institute of Criminology statistical bulletin from back in September 2020, which is immediately post this impact, and probably, at this point, it did not even have anywhere near the amount of data that is now available to confirm the full extent of the impact of the borders. But it was interesting because even in September 2020, it was publishing this bulletin titled "COVID-19 pandemic constricts methamphetamine supply in Perth". The abstract states —

This study examines the methamphetamine market and prevalence of methamphetamine use in Perth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from the Drug Use Monitoring in Australia program indicate that 38 percent ... of Perth police detainees interviewed between April and June 2020 reported recent methamphetamine use—a significantly lower rate than in January–February 2020. Detainees who used methamphetamine did so on a median of five days in the past month—significantly less often than in previous years ...

When the median was about 15, and the median was 16 in January to February 2020. It continues —

Detainees also reported a threefold increase in the price of methamphetamine (from \$30 to \$100 per point), and significant declines in methamphetamine availability and quality.

This was from an official document generated by the Australian Institute of Criminology in late 2020. It is extraordinary. It garnered everyone's attention. In the document—I will read one other part—there was this observation —

... the Western Australian Government (2020) declared a state of emergency on 16 March 2020, followed by bans on international travel (19 March), interstate travel (5 April) and intrastate travel (31 March). Given Western Australia's geographic remoteness from other states and countries, these border closures had the potential to disrupt the methamphetamine market in a manner similar to the 2001 heroin drought.

That is what the member for Cockburn referred to. He was right. It was quite dramatic. It was a threefold increase, confirmed by that document—and as the member for Hillarys suggested. There was also a massive reduction in presentations at hospitals for meth-related harm, and, quite extraordinarily, there was an exceptional reduction in crime. I think, overall, there was 40 per cent or around 41 per cent reduction in crime. That is something the likes of which the former Commissioner of Police, who is now Governor, His Excellency Chris Dawson, AC, referred to as something he had never seen in his entire policing career, which is quite extensive. This is an incredible achievement and something that is well worth attempting to replicate.

My adviser has given me a *Government Gazette* notice from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. It is the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 gazetting of designated inspection points. This does not entirely replicate what we are doing with this bill in terms of creating border superiors, but it is pretty close. A lot of them are replicated, which, again, raises the obvious question: why can we have border search areas right around the state for the likes of apples, oranges and bananas, yet, until now, we have not been able to do the same thing for illicit drugs? What we are doing here is a good thing. I look forward to the rapid passage

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of this legislation through this place and on through the other place so that we can get these powers to the police as soon as possible to attempt to replicate what happened in 2020.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Leave denied to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement —

Ms L. METTAM: I note that the act will come into operation the day after assent. Is it the minister's intention to progress this bill through the Legislative Council sooner rather than later; and, if so, how soon after assent does the minister anticipate that the border search areas will be established?

Mr P. PAPALIA: We are going in the normal course through both houses, so after it passes this place, it will progress to the upper house in the normal manner. Therefore, there will not be any unusual practice there. The intent, obviously, is that we want to get it through as fast as we can. There is no regulation drafting obligation around this, so once it passes, gets assent and comes into effect, essentially the powers will be available and I hope police will then employ them as soon as they can.

Ms L. METTAM: Does the minister have an expectation, or has the Western Australia Police Force advised the minister, of where the first border search areas may be?

Mr P. PAPALIA: No. I do not anticipate that that will happen until they receive intelligence that determines the likely sites. Clearly, we would not necessarily want that to be a public announcement. Once we pass this legislation, the good thing is that criminals seeking to import illicit drugs into Western Australia will not know when any of these 22 sites are active. They can be active at very short notice. An inspector can initiate them initially, and we have an inspector 24/7 in the State Operations Command Centre—so that would meet that obligation. Then, within 24 hours, a superintendent must provide the ratification of it. That is a good thing because a deterrence effect will be there and it will afford the police a practical power.

Ms L. METTAM: I want to further clarify. I am not suggesting that this information would be made public, but is the minister aware of how soon this provision may be utilised and where these areas may be? I appreciate that the minister says it is not information that would be made public, given the nature of what we are trying to achieve here, but does minister already have some knowledge about the need to implement these BSAs in certain areas?

Mr P. PAPALIA: There is nothing specific at this time. The serious and organised crime division will be conducting the planning and preparation necessary to employ these powers as soon as they are required. Everything about these powers will be driven by intelligence. The intelligence of this moment may not indicate where the search areas will be activated, but once the powers are passed, once the law is passed, intelligence will indicate the site, and the good thing is police will be able to respond rapidly. By the time we pass this law, the serious and organised crime division will be ready to act on it. There will be no delay after the passage of the bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 3 amended —

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to the definitions of “drug detection device”, “drug detection dog” and “preliminary drug detection test”, which have been moved to section 3 from section 20A. Was there any advice to the government to move these definitions?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The reason they are in part 4A at the moment is that they are only applicable to that part of the act that empowered police to authorise premise search areas and vehicle search areas. They were only relevant to that part of the act. Now, they will be relevant to the entire act, so they have been moved to the front.

Ms L. METTAM: Further to that, in moving those definitions from section 20A to section 3, why has the government put the definition of “border search area” in section 20N(1) and not in section 3?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is just a drafting requirement. The definition of “border search area” is here, with a reference to section 20N(1), so it refers back to that. It is relevant to new schedule 6A, which refers to maps and other matters. It is just a drafting thing. It is not because we wanted to do it. We are doing what the drafters tell us to do.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5 put and passed.

Clause 6: Part 4B inserted —

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to section 20N that establishes border search areas as those described in schedule 6A, division 1. Can the minister outline the basis for which those 22 search areas would be determined for this legislation?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Firstly, in most cases they are the primary entry points. They are the major ports, airports, rail arrival sites and road entry points. Also, some of those locations have a history of illicit drug seizures, which would indicate they are a preferred location for entry.

Ms L. METTAM: Were they proposed by Western Australia Police Force or did other agencies make recommendations?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It was all Western Australia Police Force.

Ms L. METTAM: Were any more than the 22 BSAs proposed? Were some proposed and rejected; and, if so, where were they?

Mr P. PAPALIA: No.

Ms L. METTAM: Can the minister outline how the new BSAs would be established? For example, under the bill, would the establishment of a new BSA require the approval of the Attorney General as well?

Mr P. PAPALIA: There is a range of criteria in the bill for establishing a new BSA or modifying a current one. Yes, such a move would require the approval of the Attorney General and it would also require me to consult with other ministers who might be affected. Were it to be a port, it would obviously be the Minister for Ports. It would potentially be the Minister for Transport if it was a road entry point or something of that nature. Other ministers with portfolios that might be impacted by a new or changed search area would be consulted, even if it is not so obvious as an entry point. If there was some impact on another portfolio, we would have to consult.

Ms L. METTAM: Can the minister give me an understanding of how that process would take place? Does it mean WAPOL would make a recommendation of a new BSA to the police minister, the police minister would seek approval from the AG and then the matter would go to the Governor, or is it a different process to that?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The Western Australia Police Force would have to provide the minister with information that would satisfy the requirements under proposed section 20N(8). The minister would have to be satisfied, based on information provided by the police, that it is appropriate to seek to adjust or create a new border search area. The minister would also then be required to get the approval of the Attorney General and go to other ministers as necessary before seeking approval from the Governor to make an order to adjust a BSA or to create a new one.

Ms L. METTAM: I thank the minister. I think we may have already touched on this: will the Attorney General just be a rubber stamp, or can the minister foresee any scenarios in which the minister seeks approval from the Attorney General to establish a new BSA but the Attorney General opposes it?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Clearly, the power is there for the Attorney General to reject or not approve. Normally, the Attorney General might seek advice and guidance from the Solicitor-General or perhaps the State Solicitor, but absolutely the Attorney General could reject the whole idea, in which case it would have to be reconsidered. But that power is there, and the obligation is on the Minister for Police to seek approval from the Attorney General before progressing.

Ms L. METTAM: The opposition certainly endorses the fact that there is this greater level of scrutiny over these powers. Given the Attorney General's power to approve or not approve a BSA, has any consideration been given to including in the legislation reasons why the Attorney General might approve or not approve a recommendation for a new BSA? Has any thought been given to providing a framework around that?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Not really, because any one instance might be different from another. We would not predict what the advice would be from the Solicitor-General or the State Solicitor, and the Attorney General's potential reasons for objecting would be based on that advice. We have not considered that. Clearly, there are matters that ministers must satisfy themselves of before they even go to the Attorney General. The Attorney General can then consider it. The intent was to provide an extra safety measure around oversight and prevention of overreach or unnecessary impact on people's freedoms. Having the Attorney General play that role is reasonable, I think. There was not any consideration given to listing reasons why he or she might object.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7: Section 23 amended —

Ms L. METTAM: Sorry, my next question was actually part of clause 6.

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The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife): I am sure that if you were to ask the question when I put the question that clause 7 do stand as printed, the minister could indulge you with an answer.

Ms L. METTAM: My apologies; I was looking at proposed section 20P, which is under clause 6. I note that under proposed section 20P, an authorised officer may authorise as many other persons to assist in exercising a power under division 3 as are reasonably necessary in the circumstances. I also note that those persons do not need to be police officers. Can the minister provide an example in which a civilian might be authorised to assist police officers and in which the civilian will be protected from liability for their actions whilst assisting police officers?

Mr P. PAPALIA: That provision mirrors the existing provision under proposed section 20E, but that aside, the type of person might be, for example, officers from other agencies such as the Australian Border Force; police officers from other jurisdictions, such as the Australian Federal Police; or ChemCentre analysts—people of that nature.

Ms L. METTAM: Further question?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Yes, if we can just pause for a moment.

While the last question was being answered, I looked through clause 6 and realised that it runs for several pages from proposed section 20P onwards. Does the member know how many more questions she has that relate to clause 6?

Ms L. METTAM: Quite a few.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Yes. I have taken some advice: clause 6 has been put and I would have been prepared to entertain a couple of questions about clause 6, but I cannot really set a precedent of allowing members to ask lots of questions on a clause that has already been put. The only way to deal with this would be, once we have finished consideration in detail, to move a motion for reconsideration and to come back to clause 6. If the member is okay with that, we will move on now to the question that clause 7 do stand as printed. Does the member have any questions in relation to clause 7?

Ms L. METTAM: No, the next question is on clause 10.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 put and passed.

Clause 10: Schedule 6A inserted —

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to border search areas and the plans of BSAs under division 2. Can the minister explain how the boundaries for those BSAs were arrived at, given that they are unique boundaries? Is there the potential for a person of interest to be at a BSA location but also just outside a boundary as well?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The Western Australia Police Force is attempting to have the least possible impact in terms of geography, yet also enable a safe search operation. In some cases, boundaries might be elongated so that vehicles do not bank up in a dangerous position and people are not put into a place where they might create a hazard. That is the motivation. That is why they are all strange shapes in different locations. But the intent is to have as little impact on the wider community as possible but still enable a safe search operation.

Ms L. METTAM: Given the specificity of these boundaries, how would authorised officers be resourced to ensure that they are operating within these specific boundaries?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It will be through GPS. They will use modern technology, which is now, fortunately, available to everybody, and they can be very precise with the boundary and the edges or the points of the boundary. The member will see that proposed schedule 6A gives the latitude and longitude of every point on each search area.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 11: Section 3 amended —

Ms L. METTAM: This is a quick question before we go back to clause 6. Will the definitions of “controlled precursor”, “drug detection device” and “preliminary drug detection test” need to be moved from section 3(1) to section 20A? I know that we touched on this. Not that we are opposed to these changes, but will it change the materiality of the act if clauses 11 and 12 are not progressed?

Mr P. PAPALIA: That refers to the title at the top of this page, “Amendments commencing 5 years after Royal Assent”, so this is a sunset clause. In effect, if we do not renew the powers, it will revert to the original version of the act. That will move those definitions back to where they were prior to this amendment being made.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 12 to 17 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Reconsideration in Detail — Motion

On motion by **Ms L. Mettam (Leader of the Liberal Party)**, resolved —

That the bill be reconsidered in detail for the further consideration of clause 6.

Reconsideration in Detail

Clause 6: Part 4B inserted —

Ms L. METTAM: I thank the minister and the government for their support. I had a distraction that meant I lost my spot.

Mr P. Papalia: Not a drama.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to clause 6 and proposed section 20Q, “Use of force”. This new section will allow for a person to use such force as is reasonably necessary to exercise the power and to overcome any resistance. Does this provision to use such force as is reasonably necessary also apply to a person assisting an authorised officer provided by proposed section 20P?

Mr P. PAPANIA: No, it does not, member. Those people providing assistance when exercising powers are not authorised to exercise that power. It is only authorised officers.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to proposed section 20R, “Authorised officers and BSA authorisations”. Under proposed subsection (2), a BSA authorisation has effect for the period stated in the notice but no longer than 28 days. I am interested in how 28 days was arrived at and whether there is anything stopping an issuing officer to re-authorise a BSA for another 28 days straight after, and then another? Can it be extended?

Mr P. PAPANIA: Essentially, the 28 days was arrived at through experience indicating that the current 14 days for the vehicle search areas under the current act are not long enough to enable the type of operations that the police want to achieve. But it is true that the police could reapply for a subsequent 28-day extension. The 28-day time frame is twice the current limit, but it is for no specific reason other than 14 days has been deemed not long enough and 28 days will be more effective.

Ms L. METTAM: Does the minister have advice on how often BSAs would be activated or how many would be activated at any one time?

Mr P. PAPANIA: No. We would not say the second part because it would be an operational matter determined by the relevant divisions and, ultimately, under the authority of the commissioner, but operational intelligence would dictate where and when they were activated and the commissioner would ensure that resourcing is available to meet the demand, whatever the number is. But we would not want anyone to know, because the intent here is that at any time, any one of these 22, if not all of them, could be active as part of a deterrent effect.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to proposed section 20S, “Exercise of powers under Division”, and proposed subsection (2), which provides that the powers under this division could not be exercised in relation to a person participating in the listed activities. How would one demonstrate or prove they are engaging in any of those listed activities to be considered outside the scope of the division?

Mr P. PAPANIA: To some extent, it will be a judgement call by the senior officer who initiates this operation. Most of the time it will be self-evident whether the people engaged in whatever activity is listed are doing that. That aside, ultimately, it will be an operational matter and a judgement call will be made by the relevant officer. These protections are not in the current act. They were added to afford people in this place and in the community some comfort that we were not engaged in any overreach or unnecessary and excessive incursions on people’s liberties.

Ms L. METTAM: Could, for example, a person put a sign on their vehicle stating that they were of a particular religion and they would be precluded from these provisions? I understand that is how some people got around the helmet laws when they first came in.

Mr P. PAPANIA: Again, it will be a judgement call by the operational commander. I suggest that would not be the most effective technique for someone who was seeking to bring a large quantity of illicit drugs or money to pay for that type of purchase into the state. If they were relying on their ability to deflect the police’s attention by having a sign around their neck, they might be in a bit of trouble! In the end, these are new protections. They are intended to afford people comfort that the police will not engage in overreach, and the provisions will provide some protection against that. Ultimately, the actual application of the determination of whether people are engaged in those types of activities will be a decision made by operational command.

Ms L. METTAM: Does the minister have any idea of any other activities that might be prescribed by regulations that will be encapsulated in proposed section 20S?

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Mr P. PAPALIA: No. It was done as an additional measure to ensure that if we have not anticipated all the likely activities that should be protected and we discover another one, we will be able to accommodate that without having to change the act.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to proposed section 20T(2) and proposed section 20U. Can the minister indicate what a reasonable period is when a person or vehicle may be detained for an authorised officer to do a preliminary drug-detection test?

Mr P. PAPALIA: The preliminary drug-detection test could take a matter of only seconds or, at worst, a minute, depending on the nature of it. Obviously, a dog would be very quick but a wand test could take between eight seconds and one minute. However, if a vehicle was searched, it could take longer. Again, it is difficult to quantify because of the nature of the vehicle such as its size or shape, the complexity of the search and whether the vehicle had compartments that might make it more complex. That would take longer, obviously. It is a bit difficult to specify.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to proposed section 20U. I have one more question on this proposed section because the other question referred to it. Will it be a requirement that if a vehicle is to be moved, it must remain within the boundary of the relevant border search area?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Yes, that is correct. It must remain within the BSA. It can be removed to a public place, but it must remain within the relevant BSA.

Ms L. METTAM: Can the minister advise whether this proposed section will apply if a person in a vehicle is asked to stop but refuses and continues to drive, exits the boundary of the BSA and then pulls over? Which provision in proposed section 20V will proposed section 20W address?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Under proposed section 20W, in division 4, it will be an offence to fail to comply with a requirement of an authorised officer. They would breach that provision. Nothing in this bill will remove the powers of police under other laws. Powers under the Criminal Investigation Act enable the police to arrest someone who has taken that type of action.

Ms L. METTAM: I note that the penalty under this proposed section and proposed section 20B is a fine of up to \$3 000 or a term of imprisonment of up to three years, or both. Can the minister advise how this penalty was determined, and can he indicate what penalties for other breaches of the law this is comparable with?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is a penalty under proposed section 20W, but it is consistent with other offences in sections 5, 8, 20J, 25(2) and 29. They all have the same penalty for failing to comply.

Ms L. METTAM: This is probably not significant, but under proposed section 20X(1), the Commissioner of Police must furnish a report on the operation of division 3 as soon as practicable after 30 June and 31 December. Is there a reason the actual time limit was not applied—for example, as soon as practicable but within 42 days after 30 June and 31 December?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is consistent with the six-monthly reporting obligations under the Criminal Investigation (Covert Powers) Act 2012. The time frames to which the member referred are a consistent practice. There is a requirement under section 37 of the Criminal Investigation (Covert Powers) Act for the chief officer to report. It is the same thing. We have just used the same reporting regime.

Clause put and passed.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife): That concludes reconsideration in detail.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Third Reading

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [6.42 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [6.42 pm]: I rise to make a very brief contribution to the third reading debate of the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Bill 2023. I again thank the minister and his advisers for their thorough and expansive explanations during the consideration in detail process and, in particular, for allowing for us to deal with clause 6 again. As I stated during the second reading debate, I understand that this bill was a recommendation of the Western Australia Police Force. We certainly support what this bill seeks to achieve in trying to stem the tide of illicit drugs coming into Western Australia. These efforts of WA police, who already undertake an extraordinary job to protect Western Australians, have the support of the opposition. That is why we believe that this is a sensible measure. Sensible precautions will also be put in place to review and oversight the legislation. We certainly support its passage to the upper house and support those on the front line, who I understand value what this bill represents in their efforts to curb the use of illicit drugs in Western Australia.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 9 May 2023]

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MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [6.45 pm] — in reply: I thank the member for her contribution and all members for their support of the bill. It is not unexpected but reassuring to hear the universal support for not just these powers that we hope to afford the Western Australia Police Force, but also the people who are doing the hard yards out there on the streets on behalf of all of us. I look forward to getting these powers to the Western Australia Police Force as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 6.45 pm
