

YOUTH SUICIDE — UNIT 18, CASUARINA PRISON

849. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Corrective Services:

I have a supplementary question. Given that almost 18 months has elapsed since the unit 18 facility was established, what will it take for the minister to listen to every credible expert in youth justice who strongly believes that this facility must be closed?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

In May, there was a riot during which 25 per cent of the buildings at Banksia Hill were burnt down. It caused \$30 million worth of damage. Prior to that, a significant amount of work had been done to create secure facilities potentially capable of housing this small cohort. They are not there anymore. It is just necessary for us to house them. It is the only housing that is suitable at the moment for this small cohort. Today there are 11. There are 69 in Banksia Hill. The 69 in Banksia Hill are getting eight to nine hours out of their cells every day, and are going to school, exercising and getting rehabilitation. The unit 18 cohort are receiving more hours than they were a couple of weeks ago. It is our intention that we keep on improving and they get more hours out of cell and we continue to provide them with the best possible intervention we can, but it must be done in a safe fashion, and the only suitable facility available at the moment is unit 18.