

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

Division 47: Police Service, \$554 354 000 -

Hon Jon Ford, Deputy Chairman.

Hon N.D. Griffiths, Minister for Racing and Gaming, representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

Mr B. Brennan, Acting Commissioner of Police.

Mr K. Porter, Deputy Commissioner, Administration.

Mr J. Butcher, Director of Finance.

Mr J. Frame, Director, Human Resources.

Mr A. Taylor, Director, Asset Management.

Mr G. Lienert, Assistant Commissioner, Professional Standards.

Mr G. Castlehow, Acting Superintendent, Strategic Information Management.

Hon PETER FOSS: At page 758 of the *Budget Statements* there is reference to the increasing trend in the number of motor vehicle thefts. Can some indication be given about the nature of the thefts and which types of cars are susceptible? Has the fitting of immobilisers had any effect on whether cars are stolen? I also note that the Police Service is a member of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council and that South Australia has had success in reducing the number of motor vehicle thefts. Is the Police Service planning to implement any ideas emanating from the council?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I am advised that there has been an increase in the number of reported motor vehicle thefts due to a number of factors including offenders taking vehicle keys during burglaries, older vehicles not being fitted with immobilisers, vehicles left unlocked in public places and - in the metropolitan region - offenders stealing vehicles when they would otherwise be misbehaving on the public transport system. The phraseology is the "displacement" of offenders from one area of offending to another. The Police Service has improved clearance rates through crime pattern analysis utilising the Insight computer system to target hot spots and recidivists. The Police Service is also employing improved forensic measures in examining crime scenes. It is anticipated that the effect of these measures will provide a reduction in overall offending rates.

Mr BRENNAN: Through the theft reduction council several things have been examined. One is the rebirthing of motor vehicles. It is an extremely worrying trend across Australia, as is the proliferation of vehicle chop shops. Vehicles are stolen, cut into segments, remade and given a compliance plate that suits the purpose. There has been a lot of that type of activity. One initiative is to examine the registration of vehicles that are wrecked. Compliance plates should not be left on vehicles and it is proposed to keep a register of wrecked vehicles so that compliance plates are taken out of the system and cannot be applied to a rebirthed car.

[2.10 pm]

Hon PETER FOSS: It is rather like having to hand back registration plates.

Mr BRENNAN: It is similar to that. Another system being used by manufacturers is to spray a series of microdots on almost every component of a motor vehicle. The microdots are not visible to the naked eye but show up when treated with a particular type of lamp. If a significant component were cut off a vehicle, it would be almost impossible to eradicate the microdots; therefore, it is a very good method. Systems such as that are being examined. The trade in stolen vehicles between States is also being examined. Quite a lot of things are being done.

Hon PETER FOSS: Part of my question asked about the extent to which vehicles fitted with immobilisers were either the target of or avoided in motor vehicle thefts? Following on that question, why was the immobiliser subsidy scheme discontinued and what effect have immobilisers had on motor vehicle thefts?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The Government ended the immobiliser subsidy as part of its reprioritisation of expenditure. The police budget is a very healthy area of expenditure. The widespread scheme to fit immobilisers was successful and continues to be successful. Acting Commissioner Brennan is in a position to expand on the extent to which immobilisers were fitted and matters of that kind.

Mr BRENNAN: Without a doubt the immobiliser scheme was very effective. There is no question that it had a marked effect on motor vehicle theft in this State. As the member will realise, many manufacturers now include immobilisers in their vehicles as a standard component at the point of manufacture because of their success. Therefore, in recent years all new vehicles have been fitted with immobilisers and any second-hand vehicle sold through a used car yard must be fitted with an immobiliser. That initial very successful program began through

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

the Government of the day offering people a \$30 rebate, which was then increased to \$40, on the cost of fitting an immobiliser. That funding has since been applied to other areas because of the requirement on the second-hand car market to fit them prior to sale and because vehicle manufacturers are fitting immobilisers as standard equipment. That is probably an indicator of where we are at the present time.

Hon PETER FOSS: I note that most of the answers to questions on notice by Hon Barbara Scott led to a number being quoted. However, the answer to question 3(e) stated -

- e) The Police Service advises the identity of individual officers is unable to be provided.

There is obviously a sorter number for that answer and I ask if we could please have that number. The other answers to her questions on notice were understood as requiring numbers; however, for some reason, 3(e) was not answered with a number, but stated that the identity of officers would not be provided. She did not ask for names, just the number.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The question reads in part "to whom an infringement notice was issued".

Hon PETER FOSS: No, all the questions have a lead in that asks about the result of such requests of drivers to whom an infringement notice was issued. That question did not ask for the names of drivers, just the number of them, as did all the other questions that were answered correctly. Will the minister provide the number of drivers, rather than argue the semantics?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Let us not engage in semantics.

Hon PETER FOSS: I just said that.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The question was taken to be seeking identities. The member has asked a question supplementary to the question on notice by Hon Barbara Scott and I am advised that the number can be provided.

Hon PETER FOSS: It is a shame that the minister said that he did not want to argue semantics but proceeded to do so.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: We would not, if the member would just get on with the question.

Hon PETER FOSS: Now that we are over the semantics, perhaps we can deal with a matter that is not in the budget; that is, the promise by the Government to provide 115 new police in flying squads to stop the drain on police in local stations when emergencies arise? Instead of flying squads, I understand a project called Operation Hard Drive responds to emergencies. That appears to do exactly what the policy said it was the intention of this Government not to do; that is, to drain police stations to meet those emergencies. Will there be 115 new police in flying squads, will there be any police in flying squads, and are there any police in flying squads? If the minister suggests that Operation Hard Drive is a substitute for flying squads, will he explain how Operation Hard Drive does not drain local police stations?

Mr BRENNAN: The issue really is about 115 new police in flying squads. We have not recruited a huge number of the 250 officers that we were given approval to recruit. I understand that the first 100 recruits are about to graduate from the Western Australia Police Academy, but we are still a long way from getting 250 recruits on board. Currently, 44 or 45 recruits are being used in the new police transit unit. In the meantime, we have continued to make Operation Hard Drive our primary weapon to try to give effect to the wishes of the Government to have larger numbers of police officers able to respond at short notice in flying squad-type operations. Operation Hard Drive targets hot spots and focuses on moving officers from police district to police district, primarily in the metropolitan area. We have also been able to provide officers to Kalgoorlie, Mandurah and other nearby country locations. The saturation policing method is intended to be a high-impact method of dealing with the stated intention of the Government to provide a rapid response in areas that cause people in the community concern and alarm, because they believe that crime and/or antisocial behaviour is out of control. That is a broad and general statement. The commissioning of 115 officers to a specific flying squad has not happened at this stage, but it will be negotiated as we move towards the full recruitment of 250 officers.

[2.20 pm]

Hon PETER FOSS: I refer to page 770 of the *Budget Statements* and the implementation of a DNA database incorporating the back capture of samples from serious offenders who are in custody or in the community, which is listed under the major initiatives for 2002-03. Will the minister give members an idea of how that initiative is going and whether the training of police to take DNA samples has been budgeted for? If so, how many police are to be trained, how many procedures have been budgeted for in the coming year, how does that compare with previous years, how much will end up addressing the current operation, and what will be the backlog?

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: It is anticipated that the DNA back capture implementation program will commence later this month; that is, in June 2002. Eighteen sworn officers will carry out the sampling of sentenced prisoners, and two sworn and seven unsworn staff will administer the DNA and exhibits coordination unit, which will be located at police headquarters. That accommodation is planned to be ready for occupancy later this month. It is anticipated that the team will collect 6 000 human samples per annum. The unit currently has in excess of 27 000 exhibits of various types. More than 7 000 crime scene exhibits were collected in both 2000 and 2001. I will ask Acting Commissioner Brennan to comment on the specifics of training and to provide comparisons between the forthcoming financial year and the recent past.

Hon PETER FOSS: And the ordinary operation and the backlog.

Mr BRENNAN: I may have to take some of those questions on notice. A significant training program is under way to deal with the process involved in taking DNA samples, first of all in the back capture program and then with any samples that are taken during the normal and ordinary course of policing. I would need to talk with our DNA coordinator to provide information to the member on how many and who will be involved, and when that will be completed by.

[Supplementary Information No 55]

Hon KATE DOUST: I refer to page 762 of the *Budget Statements* and the fourth dot point under major achievements for 2001-02, which refers to Insight. Will the minister explain what is Insight and how it is being used?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Insight involves the use of maps and analysis. I will provide some of the history of it. After receiving reports, a burglary hotspot was located in the Kalamunda area. An operation was instigated and, as a result, six arrests were made. Subsequently, there has been a significant decrease in crime in that area. Insight has also been used for another operation dealing with motor vehicle theft and related offences. The operation has an interesting name - Carrier - and so far well in excess of 200 reports have been submitted and 25 people charged. Two people have been charged with a combined total of 95 counts of receiving and unlawful possession. As a result, the number of reported offences in the north west metropolitan area has been reduced by 22 per cent. Insight has been used to target what were considered to be widespread commercial burglaries in the Malaga area. The maps and figures were used to justify the targeting. The system was also later used to show that the problems in Malaga had decreased considerably. There are a number of examples of the success of the Insight procedure. Acting Commissioner Brennan might be able to succinctly explain how it operates, because I think that is what the member wants to hear.

Mr BRENNAN: Insight really is the key to our intelligence-led and knowledge-based approach to policing. Information was formerly collected in a laborious way by plotting on maps, putting pins in various places, and using different colour codes and all that sort of thing. That took a lot of time and it was three or four months before we knew what was happening or what trends were emerging. Now the information is available through Insight on a daily basis, because offences are recorded and go into the system as soon as they are reported. Insight is able to capture those. When a query is made of the database, it is able to throw up all the burglaries that occurred, say, in the west metropolitan district in the past 24 hours. It can give weekly and monthly trends. It can flag commercial burglaries, assaults and any antisocial behaviour, so it is a key tool in the intelligence-led approach to policing. Along with Insight we use a more vigorous approach to our forensic science techniques, which is proving to be quite successful. We have always said that we have a fair way to go with burglaries and that is still the case. It is important to note that we are able to target the right places at the right times. On occasion we can forecast what will happen to the extent that we can be there as it is happening.

[2.30 pm]

Hon KATE DOUST: I refer to the major initiatives for 2002-03 listed on page 763. The first dot point states -

Reduce the levels of repeat victimisation, particularly in family and domestic violence situations.

What initiatives are planned to respond to family and domestic violence situations?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: It is intended to continue the development and refinement of a domestic violence incident reporting system; to develop interagency protocols to ensure that identified repeat incidents are responded to in appropriate time frames; and also to recognise in the process ethnic, cultural and social sensitivities that will determine and shape the outcomes of early intervention. A program is being developed in conjunction with the south east metropolitan district for police domestic violence liaison officers to identify repeat instances of domestic violence and then actively engage in early intervention with local officers of the Department for Community Development. Other agencies can be involved as required, and the interaction between the agencies is integral to this program. The training of all police officers in recognising the impact of

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

domestic and family violence on victims is a component of the youth, crime prevention and diversity project which began in late 2001, and will continue through 2002-03 and beyond. This project puts crime prevention at the forefront of the thinking of frontline police officers. The Crime Prevention and Community Support Division works in conjunction with the police academy, district, divisions and other key government agencies to ensure that police officers have access to best practice in domestic violence management and response.

Hon KATE DOUST: I refer to the capital works program on page 773. I note with great interest that, for the benefit of the south metropolitan region, the new Kensington police station is anticipated to be completed some time this year. What is the anticipated number of police officers and ancillary staff to be based at the new Kensington police station, upon its completion?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: There are some sensitivities in giving the precise number of personnel to be stationed in a particular place at a particular time, but I am not sure whether that is a great problem. That can be provided as supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No 56]

Hon KATE DOUST: I refer the minister to page 774 under new works. Can you explain the second line item under that heading, "Boost Police Operational Commitment"? What does this entail?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The country radio network, fingerprint live scan units, listening posts, ammunition for the pistol replacement program and fingerprint data entry terminals are examples of the activities provided under that line item. That covers it, but if the honourable member wants further information, it can be provided.

Hon GIZ WATSON: My question relates to the passage of the DNA sampling legislation, the Criminal Investigation (Identifying People) Bill 2002, referred to in the fourth dot point on page 758. What amount does this budget include for the DNA sampling enabled by the passage of that legislation? What is the cost per person sampled? How many Police Service employees will be sampled? What percentage does that represent of the total number of Police Service employees? What percentage of the expenditure will be made up of samples taken from Police Service employees?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Mr Butcher can provide some of that information, but the balance will have to be provided by way of supplementary information.

Mr BUTCHER: The information I have available is that, in the 2002-03 allocation, \$6.2 million has been provided for DNA sampling. As far as the cost per sample is concerned, we have put the buccal swabs out to tender, and we are currently negotiating on the price for the crime scene samples with the PathCentre. That is the only information available at this stage. The rest can be provided as supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No 57]

Hon GIZ WATSON: I refer to the third dot point on page 758, which relates to the royal commission. What is the strategic approach referred to at that dot point? What, if any, are the financial costs of this strategic approach in expenditure or man hours?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The relevant passage referred to by the honourable member states -

The Police Service is taking a strategic approach to The Royal Commission so as to ready the organisation and the community.

The honourable member wants to know what that strategic approach means. I refer her question to Mr Brennan.

Mr BRENNAN: I will invite Assistant Commissioner Lienert to comment, since this matter deals with professional standards.

[2.40 pm]

Mr LIENERT: The experience from royal commissions around Australia suggests that the Western Australian royal commission will impact on police personnel, resources and morale. As a consequence, the commissioner has formed a royal commission unit staffed with five people, which will focus on both internal and external stakeholders. There will be an internal media strategy to prepare the service for adverse outcomes and findings which people within the agency might not expect. The unit will also deal with people external to the agency. The royal commission unit will liaise with the royal commission and set up a communications and media strategy. It will also deal with the issues of the health and welfare of police officers, employees and other people associated with the royal commissions, legal assistance for personnel, and police reform. We regard this as a window of opportunity to see where we are at and what can be gained from the findings of the royal commission, and to see from round table conferences and meetings with the royal commission staff how we can move forward. Another issue is the enhancement and support of the internal witness program. People may know that we have a blue line system, which is an internal reporting network to which police officers can go, if necessary

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

in confidence, and report misconduct or corruption. Other strategies include the promotion and revision of ethical guidelines and stakeholder surveys to see where the community thinks we are at. At the end of the day we look at the ethics of policing, the health of the Police Service and what the community expects and wants. We also compare complaints with workload and prepare staff to ensure we have people there to assist.

Hon GIZ WATSON: What is the cost of that, and from what part of the budget will it come?

Mr PORTER: The allocation of funds from this year's budget has not taken place yet. It will be necessary for us to reprioritise the allocation based on issues such as those raised by Mr Lienert. We expect to be in a position to make that allocation by the beginning of the fiscal year, but at this stage I cannot be specific about the extent of the allocation.

Hon GIZ WATSON: The first dot point on page 763, under major initiatives for 2002-03, states "Reduce the levels of repeat victimisation, particularly in family and domestic violence situations." What initiatives, if any, are being taken to increase the rate of successful prosecution of offenders? Is that part of that reduction strategy or initiative?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I gave an answer a few moments ago to a question asked by Hon Kate Doust. It is my understanding that the matters contained in that answer are relevant to prosecution as well as the other issues that were addressed. Intervention can result in prosecution or other measures.

Mr BRENNAN: Improving the rate of successful prosecutions usually involves better training of police officers when they attend domestic violence incidents. It is about training police officers to be better and tighter when collecting evidence and taking statements to ensure that nothing is overlooked, everyone who should be interviewed is interviewed, no short cuts are taken, and no laissez-faire attitude is adopted to the gravity of the incident and what they should do about it. It is a process of improving our training and making sure that all of the procedures that are involved in dealing with domestic violence incidents are done in a thoroughly professional manner. Over the years the Police Department has made significant progress in the way in which it deals with domestic-related incidents. Ten, 15 or 20 years ago, the attitude was that it is just an incident between a husband and a wife, and they should see a lawyer; and, if they are not happy with that, it is her word against his word, or whatever the case may be. That attitude has improved. That is not to say that each and every incident that is handled these days is handled correctly. We are getting better at it. It is an issue of training, and we are working towards that. There will be times when we drop the ball. We are trying to eliminate those occasions and deal with domestic violence incidents in a more appropriate and timely manner.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: A 44-hour week is in force in places like Mullewa.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Which page is that?

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: We have been told that we do not need to identify a page, but it is on page 762, the recruitment of 100 new officers. There is a problem in getting people to go into and stay in country regions, and it seems to me that more money may be the incentive to get them to do that.

Mr FRAME: The Police Service has taken a number of initiatives to encourage police officers to both move to the country and remain in the country. There has been widespread consultation to address some of the concerns about country employment, and the agency's tenure policy has been revised to encourage officers to move to the country, with the expectation that an officer who moves to the country will stay there for a minimum period, and in some cases a maximum period. The enterprise agreement that was put in place some 12 months ago identified the need to attract and retain members to what were deemed to be hard-to-fill locations, and it put in place two levels of financial incentive. Officers who go to locations that are deemed to be hard to fill and remote, such as Leonora and Menzies, are given a location allowance of \$3 000 per annum. Officers who go to locations that are probably not as hard to fill but in which it is recognised there is a need to encourage officers to take up placement are given an allowance of \$1 500 per annum. We find some locations hard to fill, but by and large we do not experience a lot of difficulty in getting people to take up country service.

[2.50 pm]

Mr BRENNAN: It is interesting that when we had a difficulty in filling vacancies at Kalgoorlie some 18 months to two years ago, a 44-hour week was sought fairly eagerly by the officers there, and also an increase in allowances. The 44-hour week that Mr Frame has just referred to was brought in for Kalgoorlie and the surrounding police stations. Today, I was interested to learn that some police officers at Kalgoorlie do not want a 44-hour week and would rather work a 40-hour week. They have stated that they do not want to be involved in this matter nor do they want to play the game. This matter is always a difficult issue. Whether or not they want to, officers stationed at Kalgoorlie will work a 44-hour week, because our agency has committed to this measure.

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

This also occurred in places such as Mullewa, and in the other mid west locations to which the honourable member referred. We are looking at the issue. Our inclination is to not go down that path. We are looking for other ways to remedy some of the issues that face officers in these towns.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I refer the Committee to the number of fatal road crashes that are documented on page 765 of the *Budget Statements*. It is my firm view that we must first deal with serious crashes, because a serious crash can also maim people and have long-term serious effects. Will the minister provide any information about serious crashes?

Mr BRENNAN: I take the member's point, as does the Western Australia Police Service. Serious road crashes, and those that are not so serious, also have a great effect on government systems and cause much trauma for the victims and families involved. In the not too distant past, a young man was involved in a serious crash the night before his twenty-first birthday. He is now confined to a wheelchair and lives in a nursing home. He has a diminished quality of life, and his accident has absolutely traumatised his parents. Indeed, they have difficulty managing many of the things they used to manage without any trouble. This is a huge issue. The Western Australia Police Service, in conjunction with the Road Safety Council, is targeting serious crashes. We certainly take them into account. The number of serious crashes can be used to indicate whether we are achieving progress with reducing fatal crashes. If we can reduce serious crashes, ipso facto, we have generally found that fatal crashes drop correspondingly. This year there has not been a blow-out in serious crashes; rather, there has been an increase. We are stepping up our activities, particularly in country districts, to ensure that serious crashes are minimised, and we believe that a reduction in fatalities will follow. There have been three more fatalities this year than there were for the same period last year. Last year was an extremely good year; that is, if 180 fatalities equates to a good year. Our target is to reduce the number of fatalities to as low a level as possible. Ideally, we would like the figure to be zero; however, realistically, that will be difficult to achieve.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: The identification of motorcycles is a matter that everyone would like to resolve. From previous experience, I know that this is a difficult issue. However, has any progress been made in the identification of motorcycles?

Mr BRENNAN: This issue concerns us all, because there is no real way of identifying a motorcycle when it goes through a static speed camera device or a red-light camera. Some erring motorcyclists often make all types of gesticulations at the camera when they pass through and we are not able to do much about it. Some commissioners have discussed using a type of plastic plate that can be fitted to the front of a motorcycle that will not give the knife edge that a standard steel or metal plate provides. There is great willingness on behalf of the commissioners to put their suggestion to the various State Government transport representatives in order to bring about such a measure. The issue is definitely not dead in the water.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: I encourage the Acting Commissioner to implement such a measure as a matter of urgency.

Hon PETER FOSS: Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of the differences between the budget for 2002-03 and estimated actual for 2001-02? There are significant changes. I do not know why such figures are not included in the budget papers.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I agree. I do not think it has ever been done. Perhaps it should be. In so far as such information can be provided, it will be given by way of supplementary information.

[*Supplementary Information No 58*].

Hon PETER FOSS: What operational changes are involved for the Western Australia Police Force as a result of the implementation of the marijuana policy - which has not yet been announced - but which suggests that one can have two plants but not hydroponics, and which removes the requirement that people attend lectures as part of their cautioning conditions?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Is the member asking if I can foresee any procedural difficulties?

Hon PETER FOSS: Yes, as far the police operations are concerned. In other words, will such a policy make police operations easier or more difficult?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: There are pluses and minuses in every change. The policies will result in significant savings in police operations and in the courts. On the other hand, there will be some administrative procedures in the area of recording and the like. However, overall it will positively enhance police procedures. Acting Commissioner Brennan may be able to be more specific about those matters.

[3.00 pm]

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

Mr BRENNAN: Essentially, we have had to examine the sorts of processes that we will implement to ensure that any transition is handled smoothly. A system of infringements is probably a lot easier to manage, even though some consequent systems issues will need to be dealt with. The upside is that savings will be achieved by improving the process by which police officers compile briefs, take statements of evidence and then appear in court for pleas of not guilty. The only downside we can envisage is recording parts of the process. We are talking to authorities in South Australia to determine whether any lessons can be learnt in the way they have handled the process. Those talks are well progressed.

Hon PETER FOSS: Of interest to me is that apparently people are within the terms of the policy, but are using the policy to carry out what are suspected to be more significant operations, as I believe happened in South Australia. How will the Police Service deal with that practical area?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: My understanding is that there is no difficulty with that issue. The policy deals with the matter in an appropriate way. I invite Acting Commissioner Brennan to elaborate.

Mr BRENNAN: There are issues about quantities. Two hydroponically grown plants can produce more material containing a greater amount of tetrahydrocannabinol than that grown in the normal fashion. South Australia has had some problems with its policy. We hope that we can overcome those problems by learning from the difficulties experienced in South Australia. If we believe the amount of grams or the number of plants are beyond what is acceptable, we will take definite steps to ensure that the person is prosecuted for what he has with him or what he has produced. If everybody in a household grew two plants hydroponically, they could almost run a cottage industry. That is not the intention. We believe the legislation is narrower than that. The people in our organised crime area have a view, and it would be worthwhile talking to them at some stage. However, we need to go down the track a little further yet.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The hydroponic aspect is not covered under the policy. In any event, the policy is underpinned by the police having discretion.

Hon PETER FOSS: That discretion will be there.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Acting Commissioner Brennan has made it quite clear that the police will exercise their discretion in appropriate circumstances.

Hon PETER FOSS: What is the present situation with school-based police officers? I believe there were 35 school-based police officers. Is that still the case, and what are the future intentions for school-based police officers?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I am not in a position to give the precise number. I am advised that there has been no reduction, but some officers may be doing other duties. It may be appropriate to supply that by way of supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No 59]

Hon ADELE FARINA: I refer to dot point one on page 771, which refers to evaluating the effectiveness of the investigative practices review and setting future directions for investigative practices. I am interested to learn more about the review. In particular, is the review an ongoing process or is it in response to identified problems or deficiencies with police investigative practices? Further, how are the new investigative practices communicated to police officers? Is training on the new practices provided?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: That is a most interesting question, so I invite Acting Commissioner Brennan to respond.

Mr BRENNAN: The investigative practices review was undertaken three years ago as a result of a conversation I had with former Commissioner Falconer, which was along the lines that a lot of young detectives were not as seasoned as we wanted them to be and that once we got past the top 15 operators, we lost quality very quickly. It was only an experience factor and we needed to do something about it. His idea was to have somebody look at what we were doing, how we were doing it and whether it was effective. We looked around Australia, but there seemed to be no-one who could lead us along the track that we wanted to go, so we brought out two police officers from Scotland. They were very experienced investigative officers who had recently done an investigative review of their force in Scotland. They came to Western Australia and worked with our professional standards portfolio. The review resulted in 114 recommendations, of which 101 have been implemented. Some have been implemented but not as stated; in other words, local issues needed to be dealt with. Only about three or four recommendations were not implemented, because they involved either technology that we did not have or technology that was different and that could not facilitate what those recommendations were seeking us to do. Several reviews into the progress of the investigative practices review and the way it has been implemented across the State have been carried out by Superintendent Malcolm Shervill.

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

One of the big-ticket items was that there be a devolution of detectives from Curtin House, which is the crime investigative support area, to the districts. We were of the view that the district was the building block for what we were trying to do with devolution and people taking responsibility for their own patch. It also looked at the restructuring of the detective office. Instead of having just detectives, we had tactical investigation groups, district support groups and a range of people. Instead of working in isolation, they combined not only the district detectives, but also the uniformed police, the forensic branch and other areas of policing. That review is ongoing.

Crime management units and a range of processes that are in place are starting to work effectively. Essentially, the review did away with the old squads. There used to be a squad for everything. However, contemporary policing practices throughout the world have shown that to continue with squads is not best practice. Squads like the armed hold-up squad and the drug squad no longer exist. Officers in the major crime division are responsible for references such as the Asian crime reference, the armed hold-up reference, the stolen motor vehicle reference and so on. There is an organisational responsibility; people have a specific responsibility to coordinate through newly formed groups to ensure that everything that happens in the State concerning organised and serious crime is coordinated by a committee that has regional and metropolitan representation, including the traffic branch and other specialised areas. The system is working well; it was a sound move and is proving to be particularly effective in some of the huge operations that we have run in recent years such as Operation Zircon, which is one currently in people's minds. The Macro Taskforce investigation is another example. A lot of very good work has been done on that investigation, although it has not been rewarded yet. The quality of the work and the capacity of the investigators have improved remarkably from what they were. The general effect has been rather than have detectives handle all investigations, there has been an improvement in the quality of police officers across the board; that is, uniformed and plain clothes officers. We are getting a better product from police officers when they attend the scene of a crime. They are better able to take statements at crime scenes and obtain rudimentary forensic evidence, whether it is a biological specimen or fingerprints. The service has seen a general lifting of its investigative horsepower. The service is pleased it went down that track. Other people are looking at the way we have done things.

[3.10 pm]

Hon ADELE FARINA: The third dot point at page 771 of the *Budget Statements* refers to the commencement of the second stage of the incident management system. What additional benefits will be brought to the current management system by the commencement of the second stage?

Mr CASTLEHOW: The second stage of the incident management system builds on the first stage of the project. It will give the Police Service a greater capacity to understand, record and learn from domestic violence incidents and traffic incidents, including serious accidents and fatalities. Information from such incidents will be recorded in the system. It will enable us to provide better policing, rostering and problem solving. It will give us greater capacity for intelligence. The service will go from strength to strength by implementing the second stage.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I refer to page 43 of the Police Service annual report, which refers to the equity and diversity management plan. I asked a similar question about the plan during the estimates hearings last year. The Police Service appears to be about three-quarters of the way through the plan. I would like an update on the implementation of the plan.

Mr FRAME: The annual report touches on a range of things that the Police Service is doing. Commissioner Matthews has been very committed to the establishment of the women's advisory network, which is up and running and proving to be very effective in providing advice to the organisation about issues confronting women in policing. A number of projects have been identified from that forum. We are looking at a mentoring program and recruiting strategies that impact on women joining the Police Service as well as the selection process. In addition to issues identified by the women's advisory network, reviews have been undertaken by an external adviser to the Police Service. The review has identified strategies for the Police Service to address on selection and promotion opportunities for women in order to assist women with career development. The past two months have seen the appointment of only the second female police officer to be commissioned in the Police Service. It reflects the agency's commitment to career opportunities for women in policing.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What about cultural diversity in the Police Service? What are the recruitment programs and practices used to recruit officers from a broad range of cultural backgrounds?

Mr FRAME: The agency is attracting applicants from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds. Something I should have mentioned before is that the service was successful in having, for the first time, a recruit school in which females outnumbered males. That school will graduate in August this year. The service is looking at

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

ways of making different cultural groups aware of policing as a career and is quite active in that regard. Although details have not been finalised for the next recruit school, current indications are that a number of recruits are from different ethnic backgrounds, including the Middle East and Asia. The service continues to promote policing as a career opportunity for people from different ethnic backgrounds.

The service is also working on ways to encourage more applications from indigenous Australians. The service has a very successful Aboriginal police liaison officer program. It has recently put in place strategies to enable Aboriginal police liaison officers to transfer to full policing duties if it is something they want to do. Clearly, there are some issues associated with that.

Hon GIZ WATSON: I refer to the sixth dot point at page 763 of the *Budget Statements*, which states -

Positively impact community perceptions relating to the level of fear of crime and influence community perceptions of crime.

In what way does the Police Service intend to influence community perceptions of crime? What is considered a positive impact on community perceptions relating to the level of fear of crime?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: This is an issue of perception and, unfortunately, it has been a long-standing difficulty in our community that the perception of crime is worse than the reality. That is because of the behaviour of a number of people who should know better when putting forward issues in the public arena. One area in which the police have noted this unfortunate triumph of perception over reality is with safety on trains. Significant numbers of people surveyed believed there were substantial problems on trains but many of the people who had that perception had nothing to do with travelling on trains. It is an unfortunate thing in our society that we have seen a triumph of perception over reality. It is something that responsible organisations such as the Police Service have been grappling with for some time. Outside the Police Service, anyone commenting in the public arena should avoid making things appear to be worse than they are. That would help turn around public perception. People should forgo engaging in false views about the state of law and order in this State. If they did, public perception would improve. Having said that, the Police Service is keen to get on top of the problem. By continuing to make the reality better, it is hoped that perception will catch up with reality and the world will be seen the way it is. The Police Service is getting on with the job.

[3.20 pm]

Mr BRENNAN: There are some issues. Safety on the trains was a significant issue and caused a lot of angst to the commuting public. We have dealt with that effectively by having 45 officers currently working in the police transit unit. That unit is working effectively and is supplemented as needed. However, those officers are not isolated to trains; there is a district spin-off depending on the train line. There might be trouble on a train when someone has played up either in a station or on a station platform and then moves out into the suburbs, or there might be incidents in car parks around railway stations, and so on. Having a police presence in those areas, having vehicles patrolling the areas and giving the police dogs a run through those areas from time to time tends to engender a greater amount of security among train travellers. Anecdotally, the level of confidence has increased and the level of fear has been reduced in recent times. We have, therefore, achieved something.

Another proactive initiative that has also engendered confidence is the recent saturation of policing operations that we move through the suburbs on a cyclical basis. Other initiatives include crime prevention programs, the release of pamphlets, and educational programs for seniors and for people in ethnic communities, who might fear the system and who are not confident that they speak English sufficiently well to make their point felt when they are victims of crime, or are fearful of being victims of crime. All those educational programs through Safer WA and a more proactive role by police officers generally have added to a reduction in the fear of crime and the perception of crime in the community.

Members may recall that the fear of crime greatly increased after the newspaper published a photograph of an elderly gentleman who had severe bruising, black eyes and so on after being beaten by an intruder. That photograph caused a great deal of trauma and angst to many senior citizens. Although members know that senior citizens are not the victims of a great deal of crime, many seniors believe they are and they know they cannot defend themselves. However, only a very small percentage of seniors are victims of crime, and an even smaller percentage are victims of violent crime. That is not to say that some of them have not been victims of crime and that they need to be reassured that the police and the community are working together to make our State and our suburbs a safer place in which they can live. Generally, those programs will add to the confidence of the community and a reduction in the fear of crime.

Hon GIZ WATSON: It appears to me that the response to the question was mostly about policing; that is, a police presence as a means of reducing people's fear of crime. That is one approach. However, I am asking

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

about an approach by the Police Service such as the good example given by Mr Brennan which I intended to raise; that is, the percentage of seniors who are victims of crime is very low. Will the Police Service publish that information? It appears that the Police Service responds by publishing statistics rather than with a show of police force, which is another way of responding. I would welcome a reality check on those facts and figures.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: My understanding is that when these issues are raised, the police point to the truth of the matter. Unfortunately, on occasions the rhetoric of others grabs the attention of those who see themselves as a means of communicating these issues to the public. The police are proactive in informing the community.

Mr BRENNAN: Specifically, we have a seniors safety program in which officers visit retirement villages and similar places to proactively seek out seniors. They encourage them, reassure them and talk to them about the sorts of things they should do; for example, they tell them how they should carry their bag when they go shopping and that they should not go to automatic teller machines late at night unless someone is with them to provide a degree of comfort and security. We have programs that are designed specifically to do that. We have carried out a review of our community services, which embraces all the issues raised by the member. We have taken a new approach in a range of areas - rather than using what are in some people's view mundane programs - and have wire-brushed and revitalised some programs. There have also been significant re-introductions of programs from Safer WA and other avenues.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I have a couple of quick cannabis-related questions. The first relates to traffic fatalities. I listened with interest to the acting commissioner's remarks a little earlier. I was also interested to note that in the last full year for which there are figures, just under 200 traffic fatalities were recorded in this State. Of those 200, subsequent toxicology reports in a little more than 100 indicated various substances present in the bloodstream of the victims. Similar numbers of victims had either alcohol or cannabis in their bloodstream. I am aware that the police are putting in a tremendous amount of effort dealing with alcohol as a cause of traffic crashes and other trauma on the roads. What resources are being put into addressing cannabis and other illicit drugs as a cause of road trauma?

[3.30 pm]

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: It has long been an offence to drive under the influence of alcohol. It is an offence to drive under the influence of drugs. Driving under the influence of cannabis, so that one's driving capacity is impaired, has been a difficulty for a long time. I am advised that that matter is being examined by the Western Australia Police Service as well as by other jurisdictions. That matter is being actively considered by commissioners across Australia. It is hoped that an appropriate resolution can be found to this longstanding problem of detecting the use of drugs other than alcohol which impair people's driving.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I certainly wish the relevant authorities every success with that. I see a helluva lot of booze buses around but not too many grass buses, not including some of the kombis one sees.

I was slightly disappointed that the answer from the Police Service to my third question on notice - how many recipients of cannabis cautions have subsequently re-offended - was that the information was not readily accessible at this point. It is a key point as to whether people are cautioned only once or whether they are cautioned two, three or an indefinite number of times. I am not sure what the Government's ultimate policy on that will be. We have been told that the Western Australia Police Service is working closely with the South Australia Police on this issue. I have spoken with the South Australia Police and will continue to do so. I know the advice that has been given to the Western Australian Government, its working parties and the like. Will the Government take its advice and record details of people who are issued with cautions, so that information can be provided about recidivists, or will the Government do something else; that is, not record cautions and expiated fines and such things?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: Hon Peter Foss earlier asked a question about the policy on cannabis. In answering that question, the acting commissioner and I referred to the fact that resources would be employed in recording appropriate information. That is intended to occur. It is expected that details on cautions will be recorded. Infringements are not issued into thin air. One would expect those items of information to be recorded. I do not anticipate a difficulty in that respect. I do not know at what level the honourable member communicates with the police in South Australia, but he put a question on notice for the purpose of these proceedings. He has received an answer. It was not an uncommon type of answer because, irrespective of who happens to be in power, it can sometimes be quite difficult to get information of this kind within the time provided. I anticipate that this sort of information will be available in due course. One hopes that as the systems get better, that information will be provided in a more speedy fashion.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I thank the minister and his advisers for their assistance and attendance at the Committee today.

Extract from *Hansard*

[COUNCIL - Wednesday, 12 June 2002]

p628b-637a

Hon Peter Foss; Hon Nick Griffiths; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Giz Watson; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Adele Farina;
Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Simon O'Brien; Deputy Chairman

Sitting suspended from 3.35 to 3.48 pm