

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS SUMMIT

579. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the tragic family and domestic violence death of Lynn Cannon in December 2022. Yesterday the police minister admitted that he had not yet received a briefing on this tragic incident and could not explain why it took the Western Australia Police Force over an hour to respond to her 000 calls for help, to which the Commissioner of Police acknowledged that WAPOL had let her down.

- (1) How does the Premier expect Western Australians to believe his government is taking this seriously when he has a police minister who was unaware of the circumstances of a FDV death and had not sought a briefing after nine months?
- (2) Why do we have a family and domestic violence minister who could not answer simple questions about a government initiative for GPS monitoring —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Madam Speaker, I literally cannot hear the Leader of the Liberal Party because of the noise coming from the other side.

The SPEAKER: Members, the level of interjection whilst the Leader of the Liberal Party was asking the question is too high. I ask people to desist. I think it is important that we get to hear the question and then I will ask the Premier to respond.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms L. METTAM: I go to the second part of the question: why do we have a family and domestic violence minister who cannot answer simple questions about a government initiative for GPS monitoring to protect women and children?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) Just to the first point, I thought the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence dispatched the member pretty effectively in terms of her question. She is a very effective minister. The member was actually asking her a question that was not about her portfolio; it was the Attorney General's area. If the member wanted to understand how that particular program was developing, he would have been the more appropriate minister.

I had the honour this morning to attend the Domestic Violence Crisis Summit. I say it was an honour because people at that forum brought forward some of the rawest emotions from their experiences, whether individually or as a member of a family that has experienced family and domestic violence. We know of the incredible disease on our community, which is FDV. I know I speak on behalf of all members of Parliament when we say that we condemn it. We want to see it, if not eliminated, reduced as much as possible, and we all want to see the community unite to work together against this insidious aspect of our society. I had the honour to attend this morning with the Deputy Premier; the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; the Minister for Women's Interests, Hon Sue Ellery; and the Minister for Police, Hon Paul Papalia. We were front and centre with our key leaders of the public sector, specifically Commissioner Col Blanch, to meet with these people, to discuss and to hear their concerns and understand their pain, although we can never understand it from their perspective or feel it so viciously. What happened at that particular forum was very moving and very powerful. I commit on behalf of my government that we will take away the thoughts and pleas of those people at today's summit and make sure that as a government, we recommit ourselves to ensuring that we are doing everything we can to reduce the incidence of family and domestic violence in our community. We cannot always be successful, but we can do our best.

We have invested over \$200 million since 2017—the largest investment in family and domestic violence services in this state's history, which includes \$84.5 million this year and a wide range of strategies and initiatives to support victim survivors. That includes 43 refuges and safe houses around WA. Two more refuges are currently under construction. We have set up 17 family and domestic violence response teams, a rapid rehousing pilot to support safe and stable tenancies, counselling advocacy services, perpetrator interventions, outreach services like Safe at Home and other programs that support victim survivors, and committed around \$4.5 million annually for perpetrator interventions, including the residential Breathing Space program, a men's behaviour change intervention.

I acknowledge Hon Simone McGurk, the previous Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, for the programs she put in place, including 16 Days WA and the respectful relationships teaching support program, which is about to continue to elevate this issue in our community and to make sure that we are doing everything we can to be aware of it, identify it and respond to it. That is a conversation that we have to continue to have right throughout our community.

When we get to a situation in which people are impacted by family and domestic violence, we need our first responders to be there and to be able to make the interventions that we require. We have invested \$2 million into St John Ambulance to provide it with family and domestic service-specific training to ensure that we can support it better—and, of course, we want our frontline services, including our police officers, to have all the resources they need to be able to intervene in these circumstances. It does not always happen and we do not always get it right, but the government is committed like none in this state's history to ensuring we do everything we can to reduce and eliminate the incidence of family and domestic violence.