

POLICE — MORALE

591. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the Western Australian Police Union survey released in May this year that found that out of the 2 000 members who participated, a staggering 64 per cent of those surveyed perceived the level of morale in the WA Police Force as poor.

- (1) What plans has the minister put in place to combat that reported poor morale situation?
- (2) Has funding been allocated to improve morale in the Western Australia Police Force?
- (3) If the government has allocated funding, how much funding has been allocated for that task?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) I did not do the survey. I had no access to the survey questions or the nature of it, although I know that the vast majority of police officers did not respond to that survey. Whether it is reflective of the views of police officers is probably the question. I would say that I do not think it is.

I think the morale of the Western Australia Police Force, rightly, is very high. It has acquired a reputation for exceptional policing in recent years. The Western Australian community probably appreciates our Western Australia Police Force more than ever before in the state's history. Its contribution to getting this state so successfully through the pandemic was extraordinary. People acknowledged that. They appreciate the contribution made by police and they recognise that at the same time as confronting a challenge, the likes of which no police officer on the planet had worked through before, they did that very, very successfully in a collegiate manner, which took most of the people with them, other than the ones out the front today and opposition members.

The Western Australia Police Force also completed some extraordinary policing and resolved crimes in a rapid fashion in a manner that probably has never been seen before because, increasingly as a consequence of the leadership provided to the Western Australia Police Force, it has adopted technology, it has applied it, it has brought together intelligence operations in a manner not seen before and it has successfully resolved some very high-profile crimes in a very short time frame and continues to do so. We all know of the Nick Martin murder and the Cleo case. More recently, the murder that took place in the northern suburbs was resolved very rapidly. There was the tragic death of an old gentleman riding a bike on a road late at night. Within 13 hours, the police had identified the individual responsible. It was not an accident. That person did not give themselves up; they were found by the police because of our exceptional policing provided by the police force of Western Australia. I think they rightfully should enjoy very high morale at the moment. I think they do. The police I talk to—I talk to a lot—confirm that they have good morale. Perhaps the member could suggest something I might do to change the view of some people who make comments about the police and are determined to talk down our Western Australia Police Force, because I do not agree with them.