

CHILDREN IN CARE — WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

1042. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the minister representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the inconsistent answers to my questions without notice 623 and 824 on 14 June and 10 August 2023.

- (1) Does the minister recall that on 10 August she informed the house that as at 14 June 2023, one child was recorded as missing for three days?
- (2) Does the minister recall that on 14 June she informed the house that no child was recorded as missing?
- (3) Which answer is inaccurate?
- (4) How many children who are in the care of the CEO have their whereabouts currently recorded as —
 - (a) unaccounted for—in contact;
 - (b) unaccounted for—not in contact; and
 - (c) missing?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

The Department of Communities advises the following.

- (1)–(3) At the time the answers were provided, both answers were accurate. Question without notice 623 was answered on 14 June 2023 using information as at 13 June 2023. The response to question without notice 824 was answered on 10 August 2023 using information as at 14 June 2023.
- (4) Children and young people may move between living arrangements, which are recorded by case management in the child’s or young person’s placement type. Many of the children are teenagers. Every child still has access to the same supports that would be made available to them if they were residing in their approved placement. Communities and the WA Police Force work to contact and locate the young person to ensure their safety. Communities and the WA Police Force have aligned nomenclature regarding missing children that includes updating the previous placement type of “unknown—in contact” and “missing” children with the following placement types: unaccounted for—in contact; unaccounted for—not in contact; and missing.

Communities advises as at 12 September 2023 —

- (a) three children were unaccounted for—in contact;
- (b) four children were unaccounted for—not in contact; and
- (c) no children were missing.