

POLICE, REGIONAL AREAS, VACANT POSITIONS

1914. Hon Murray Criddle to the Minister for Housing and Works representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services

I refer to the high number of unfilled police positions in country Western Australia and ask -

- (1) As at March 31 2004, what is the exact number of vacant positions, including positions filled on an acting basis, in police offices in regional Western Australia?
- (2) Will you please provide a list of the approved FTEs for each country police station in Western Australia?
- (3) Will you please provide a list of the police vacancies for each country police station in Western Australia, including the date at which the position became vacant?
- (4) For each vacant position, will the Minister indicate if that position will be filled and when?
- (5) What additional action is the Government taking to fill these positions?
- (6) Has the appalling state of police office and housing accommodation in country areas and the lack of appropriate incentives caused the high number of vacancies?
- (7) If not, what are the main contributing factors?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

The Police Service advise whilst information has been sought in relation to the 31st March, 2004, the Police Service is unable to provide vacancy data retrospectively. Accordingly all data has been supplied for the closest date possible, being the 14th April, 2004. The Police Service also advise that due to operational sensitivities specific information relating to staffing levels of individual police stations will not be provided. As at 14 April 2004, the authorised strength of the Police Service was 4, 843 and the actual strength was 4, 866. The Commissioner of Police and District Superintendents deploy police officers within their District to provide the best possible policing service to meet the varying needs of the community. Therefore, figures are provided at a District level.

1-3. The Police Service advise:

District	Authorised Strength	Number of Vacancies	Date of Vacancies
Great Southern	171	6	30 August 2002
			31 March 2003
			7 January 2004
			14 March 2004
			17 March 2004
			7 April 2004
South West	211	5	10 October 2003
			19 October 2003
			7 January 2004
			11 February 2004
Peel	122	0	9 April 2004
Wheatbelt	150	4	3 October 2003
			22 October 2003
			22 December 2003
			31 March 2004
Kimberley	143	2	14 January 2004
			11 April 2004
Pilbara	168	11	18 June 2003
			8 October 2003
			20 February 2004
			7 March 2004
			10 March 2004
			11 March 2004
25 March 2004			
			29 March 2004

			31 March 2004
			2 April 2004
			One date unavailable
Goldfields- Esperance	202	12	17 September 2003
			30 September 2003
			8 October 2003
			20 February 2004
			25 February 2004
			3 March 2004
			21 March 2004
			28 March 2004
			31 March 2004 x 2
			7 April 2004
			One date unavailable
Mid West Gascoyne	204	6	9 July 2003
			22 January 2004
			11 February 2004
			24 March 2004
			14 April 2004
			One date unavailable
Total	1371	46	

(4) The Police Service advise 9 vacancies are filled in an acting capacity, 41 vacancies are being filled through the usual processes of advertising the vacancy and seeking expressions of interests and as at 31 May 2004, 12 transfers had been issued to fill the vacancies.

(5)-(7) The Gallop Government has provided the most comprehensive and extensive range of country incentives to attract police officers to regional and remote West Australia of any West Australian Government. In the Gallop Government's first enterprise agreement for police officers (2001) \$8 million dollars of country incentives were provided, resulting in 573 police officers at 73 locations receiving \$3,000 or \$1,500 per annum. In 2001, the 44 hour week was also extended to Kalgoorlie, Boulder & Coolgardie. The 2003 police EBA provided further incentives for officers serving in country West Australia. The 2003 EBA delivers rent free accommodation to police officers serving at nearly 40 nominated locations. In 2003, the 44 hour week was also extended to Mount Magnet. In addition, the 2003 EBA included nearly \$790, 000 of incentives for officers to serve in the remote Multi Function Police Facilities. In total, the Gallop Government has committed \$9.3M in country incentives to attract police officers to serve in regional and remote West Australia.

The Police Service advise housing standards are much improved and are continuing to be improved and station accommodation is also being upgraded.

In addition the injection of additional transfers funding to implement a transfer guarantee to country officers who have completed tenure requirements. The Commissioner has determined that upon completion of their country tenure, officers will be transferred to their next posting rather than have their transfer delayed. The transfer of the replacement officer does not always coincide with the officer on "transfer guarantee".