

POLICE — PRIORITY 1 AND 2 INCIDENTS

613. Hon CHARLES SMITH to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

The 2016 annual Western Australia Police report shows an alarming trend in the proportion of priority 1 and 2 tasks doubling in the report period from 6.5 per cent of total tasks in 2011–12 to 12.1 per cent in 2015–16.

Can the minister explain how WA Police are expected to respond to an increasing proportion of tasks within the 12-minute time frame without additional resources?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

WA Police advises that each year, it identifies the most significant issues that may impact on both the community and agency to enable it to prioritise its resources and efforts. Key significant issues for the WA police force include increasing demand for services; an increase in illicit drug use, particularly methamphetamine; impacts and effects of family and domestic violence on the community; rates of fatal and serious crashes throughout the state; and the need for a collaborative approach through partnerships with key agencies and services to address the multifaceted and complex issues in the community. The percentage of sworn officer hours available for frontline policing duties has increased in recent years. The progressive implementation of improvement programs has resulted in the redeployment of police officers to the front line and has identified potential opportunities to release more police officers from non-frontline functions.

Priority 1 incidents pose an imminent threat to life and require urgent attendance. Priority 2 incidents involve situations that require immediate attendance such as a serious offence/incident in progress. The percentage of priority 1 and 2 incidents in the metropolitan area responded to within 12 minutes improved by 8.7 per cent between 2014–15 and 2015–16. This improvement in performance has largely reversed the decline from 2012–13 to 2014–15, which was largely due to the statewide increase in the number of incidents graded as priority 2. The increase in priority 2 incidents was mostly attributable to internal allocation practices, but also to a general increase in calls requiring an urgent response.