

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

**2020–21 BUDGET ESTIMATES AND
2019–20 ANNUAL REPORTS**



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
THURSDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2020**

**SESSION ONE
WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE**

**Members
Hon Alanna Clohesy (Chair)
Hon Tjorn Sibma (Deputy Chair)
Hon Diane Evers
Hon Aaron Stonehouse
Hon Colin Tincknell**

Hearing commenced at 9.01 am

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON

Minister for Environment representing the Minister for Police, examined:

Mr CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

Commissioner of Police, examined:

Mr COLIN BLANCH

Deputy Commissioner, examined:

Mr GARY DREIBERGS

Deputy Commissioner, examined:

Mr FRANCO PASQUALE

Executive Director, examined:

Ms SANTA CARDENIA

Director, Finance and Business Services, examined:

Mrs RACHEL SACKVILLE-MINCHIN

Chief of Staff, Minister for Police; Road Safety, examined:

Mr IAIN CAMERON

Chairman, Road Safety Council, examined:

Mr ADRIAN WARNER

Road Safety Commissioner, examined:

The CHAIR: On behalf of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I welcome you to today's hearing.

Please state whether you have read, understood and signed a document titled "Information for Witnesses".

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. It is also being broadcast live on Parliament's website.

The hearing is being held in public, although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question.

Members, before asking your question, I ask that you identify whether it relates to the budget papers or annual report and provide the relevant page number.

Would the minister like to make a brief opening statement?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR: Members, we have 12 to 13 minutes per member, with extra for the opposition spokesperson. We will start with Hon Aaron Stonehouse.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: My question relates to the COVID-19 pandemic response on page 418 under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. I would like to know the process that was undertaken to put back in place border controls with South Australia. At what point, commissioner, as State Emergency Coordinator, were you informed of the situation arising in South Australia, by whom, and what consultation took place between that information coming to you and the decision to reintroduce border controls in South Australia?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask the commissioner to provide a response. Honourable member, I remind you that we are dealing with the budget estimates, so we are dealing with what has gone past; we are not really dealing with things that are happening today. Nonetheless, I will ask the commissioner whether he is able to provide a response in relation to that.

Hon Aaron Stonehouse interjected.

The CHAIR: Order! Thank you. It is the budget as it relates to the forward estimates; nevertheless, the minister has invited the commissioner to make a response.

Mr DAWSON: Thank you for the question. I am able to advise that I received a phone call from the Chief Health Officer at 2.32 pm on Sunday, 15 November. He advised me then that he was very concerned about an emerging cluster situation in South Australia, with positive cases reported. The urgency of that matter was that there was an incoming flight coming in at 3.00 pm that afternoon from Adelaide direct to Perth with—I stand to be corrected—in the order of 170-odd passengers. He was very concerned that on the initial reports he had had that there would be a risk to Western Australia, so I made a decision there and then to direct verbally for persons to receive directions to be the subject of quarantine. I have that authority under the Emergency Management Act. I did it on the basis of the information provided by the Chief Health Officer.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: It was advice given to you by the Chief Health Officer verbally in the first instance but then I believe some written correspondence was provided after. Is that typically how decisions are made to issue directives when it comes to travel controls, border controls, that you will receive correspondence or communications from the Chief Health Officer and then you will make an action based on that information?

Mr DAWSON: That was what I would describe as an emergency because it is not typical of the consideration that is given. Ordinarily, the Chief Health Officer and I converse several times a day. We meet pretty well daily at 8.00 am every morning with the Premier, with the Minister for Health; Deputy Premier, and a number of other key people, including the director general of Health. Most of those discussions are at some length and often accompanied by papers from the AHPPC. I may provide further documentation, but ordinarily the decision made last Sunday afternoon was because of the particular urgency. Sometimes we have several weeks to consider matters on what might be emerging. By way of example, what has emerged in Victoria throughout this year has given us far more time to consider what strategies we need to put in place, what key messages need to be put through to the community, but Sunday’s decision was an urgent one based on the critical information.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I would like to get a sense of the most immediate and the most direct information that is fed through to you as SEC. There is the State Emergency Coordination Group. Does that play a role in the decisions that you make as SEC and the directions that you give?

[9.10 am]

Mr DAWSON: The Emergency Management Act sets out quite clearly the roles, responsibilities and functions of the various people. Obviously, as the State Emergency Coordinator, my role is essentially the last term, which is coordination. While I am the ultimate person who signs directions or authorisations under the Emergency Management Act, the process is quite well founded in both policy statements. I am a member of the State Emergency Management Committee, which is again a framework set out under the act.

That has quite comprehensive policies, procedures and guidelines that amount to quite detailed layers of both information and planning, and that also then provides for a whole lot of other areas such as the state emergency coordination group, which I chair functionally, but I have delegated it to my deputy commissioners. The deputy commissioner also chairs a number of subcommittees. such as a response subcommittee, but there are also other layers, so it is quite comprehensive. It is a 2005 act. It has stood us very well throughout the state of emergency and that, as you would be aware, was a matter that I advised the Minister for Emergency Services on on 15 March and it was declared effective from 16 March.

We meet very frequently and there are both oversight mechanisms and I have appeared before joint standing committees et cetera, and we have obviously had a number of various inquiries, also from the commonwealth as well. I have participated in a lot of reviews with Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Finkel, and with a senior bureaucrat appointed by the Prime Minister, Associate Professor Jane Halton, in regard to hotel quarantining, so it is quite comprehensive. I could keep talking, but I think I have answered your question.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Thank you for that, commissioner. Attending these daily morning meetings that you mentioned—8.00 am, every day—are the Premier, Deputy Premier, director general of Health, Chief Health Officer. Are there any other irregular attendees to those meetings? Did I miss one?

Mr DAWSON: The Premier generally has his director general or acting director general of his office and some of the senior advisers. It is not exactly daily. Often it is daily. At times we might meet three times a week, depending on each of the circumstances and individual movements of certain participants, but it is something that I think has worked very well. That would cover the field. Also, the Public Sector Commissioner regularly attends.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Okay. So this is not a statutory committee but, I suppose, an ad hoc meeting of various key stakeholders, key decision-makers, within government to coordinate efforts across the state. Would that be an accurate way to summarise it?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Commissioner.

Mr DAWSON: I would not necessarily agree that that is the key decision-making body. It is one where we have regular and frequent communication. The peak body is the State Disaster Council, which is the statutory body. That State Disaster Council has met on 30 occasions. It is a cabinet-in-confidence mechanism, but at the same time that is the peak body in which I give advice to the minister; the Premier chairs that meeting. That is where the key decisions are made in terms of that peak body. The daily meetings are to give us an appreciation of what is occurring. As recently as one hour ago, I was receiving a briefing from the Chief Health Officer about the emergency situation in South Australia, so that is why we need to meet so frequently.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Who chairs these 8.00 am meetings?

Mr DAWSON: Ordinarily, the Minister for Health.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I will finish up on this line of questioning and give someone else time, Chair, if that is what you are indicating.

At these 8.00 am meetings, the Chief Medical Officer, Mental Health does not attend. I have seen tabled correspondence between yourself and the Chief Health Officer. It is good to see that there is a direct line of communication and that it is frank and prompt. Is there similar communication between you and the Chief Medical Officer, Mental Health? Do you have direct communication with her in her role as Chief Health Officer, Mental Health?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Commissioner.

Mr DAWSON: Not through this mechanism. Under the Emergency Management Act, the designated hazard management agency is in fact the one that is delegated to the Chief Health Officer, Dr Andy Robertson. So he has a statutory responsibility to perform his functions under the Emergency Management Act. The Chief Medical Officer in terms of mental health does not have a specific role, but of course as to what liaison occurs with him, you would have to direct that question towards the Chief Health Officer or the Minister for Health.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: What I am trying to figure out is: as you are acting on the information that is provided to you, of course, as the SEC, do you receive any mental health-specific advice? I note that in the Chief Health Officer's advice to you—at least the correspondence that has been made public—there is no mention of mental health considerations, and maybe he has taken those into account already and thought they were not worth mentioning; I do not know. But are you receiving any mental health-specific advice for you to take into account when you give directions as the SEC?

Mr DAWSON: There is regular liaison. The chief executive officer of the Mental Health Commission, or the Mental Health Commissioner, is generally the conduit by which the information flows back and forward. She attends public sector leadership meetings jointly with me and other directors general and other commissioners, so she represents the Mental Health Commission at those meetings. I do not necessarily speak with the Chief Psychiatrist or anyone like that. I have, of course, through the course of my duties as the Commissioner of Police, but not specifically is it the case because it is all channelled through the Chief Health Officer.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I might just take the opportunity to make the point that the Minister for Health is also the Minister for Mental Health and he of course is part of those daily, or those regular, meetings, so he would also be a conduit for bringing stuff forward from the mental health portfolio in terms of any decision-making that needs to take place.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Just to change track for now, looking at page 528 and the regulatory fees and fines and revenue of about \$18 million, what I am wondering is if you can tell me what —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sorry; it is not 528—maybe 428.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Excuse me—page 428, which deals with revenue from fees and fines. I think the total is about \$18 million. Does that figure include infringements and fines issued for breach of COVID-19 directions; and, if it does not or if it does, can you give me an idea of the total dollar amount of COVID-19 fines and infringements to date?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sure. I will ask the commissioner to respond to that.

Mr DAWSON: I took a briefing on that in the last few days. We have not issued many infringements on a jurisdiction by jurisdiction—I will put this in context. We have been policing, I would describe

it, “by consent”, where it has been important that the community receives the reasons and the messaging behind the reasons for restrictions of movement—businesses, schools et cetera—when we had to do that through April and May and most recently, obviously, with the South Australian situation.

Consequently, we have only issued infringements in the order of under 300 in total since the state of emergency has been issued. Compare that with the Victoria—they have issued 35 000. We have adopted quite a different approach, but that is not to suggest that we have not faced the same critical situation that Victoria have faced. There is quite a disparity between the Western Australian police approach in terms of infringements—some 295 throughout the last eight months.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Glad to hear it.

[9.20 am]

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Minister, I have some questions I think that the commissioner will be best placed to provide answers to. It is about the actual strength of the Western Australia Police Force as it is today. I am going to base my questions around pages 417 and 418 of the budget, with specific reference to the additional 150 police officers referred to under the COVID-19 WA recovery plan on page 417, which I believe was a commitment announced by the government in April, if memory serves me right, when the pandemic really seized everyone’s attention.

Further, on that table under new initiatives, there are 800 additional police officers, who are proposed to be recruited over the course of the estimates, too. Can I start by understanding—please advise me of the appropriate terminology, too—the operational strength of the Western Australia Police Force as it is today?

Mr DAWSON: In regard to the first question—the additional 150—many of those recruits are in training now. You will appreciate that there are some 28 weeks of training duration from the time that they are recruited until they graduate. We commenced the first of that cohort of 150 on 29 June and they will graduate on 3 December. On 27 July, another squad of 30 were commenced. They will graduate on 4 February 2021. A cohort of 60 were commenced on 24 August 2020. They will graduate on 4 March. The last of the 150 were recruited—a squad of 30—on 28 September. They are due to graduate on 8 April.

In terms of the additional numbers that came through the last budget, there are an additional 800 FTE. Ordinarily, we will be recruiting in the order of 330 recruits per year to take into account resignations and attrition. That is spaced out over the next four-year cycle. In this financial year, there is a total of 350 over and above our existing strength, followed by three years of 200 recruits to make up the total of 950. We ordinarily have, by way of headcount, which is reflected in our annual report, just over 7 000—some 7 200, I think. That will be the sum total at the end of this recruitment cycle. We presently have in the order of 6 300. I do not have the exact number right in front of me, but I can particularise it if you wish.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: There is no need to particularise that amount but, at any one time, which proportion are actually on active operational duties? How many are on leave, or going through rehab, just so I can get a sense of the flow of officer manning and constraints? I would imagine that not all of your headcount is effectively on the beat at the same time. That would be a pretty optimistic assumption, I would have thought.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask the commissioner to provide a further response to that.

Mr DAWSON: In regard to operational officers, we have in the metropolitan region, as our annual report reflects on page 10, 2 449 officers by way of FTE. Appreciate that some of those are part-timers, but that is not reflected necessarily in a true headcount. The note at subparagraph (a)

explains whether they are full-time equivalents. In the regions outside of Perth, we have 1 483 officers who are spread over those seven regional districts. Ordinarily, we have about 15 per cent of our workforce on annual leave or long service leave. We have had some, I might call it, abeyance for acquitting long service leave due to the state of emergency. So we do not necessarily have as many officers off on long service at the moment, but we are routinely ensuring our officers have particular time for respite and care. So I would approximate that about 15 per cent of our workforce at any time would be on annual leave.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you, Commissioner. Could I seek clarification through the minister? With reference to both the 150 additional officer recruitment that was announced in April as the first immediate response to COVID-19 and the subsequent commitment to recruit 800 additional officers over the course of the estimates, I make the assumption, albeit as a member of Parliament but as a layperson, that that represents a headcount of officers. Is that an FTE composition? Should I anticipate part-time officers being counted towards that mix or people not undertaking frontline roles necessarily?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Mr Pasquale, I might ask you to respond to that one, please.

Mr PASQUALE: Yes, I can confirm that those numbers are actual FTE numbers, and those FTE numbers are expressed as at the end of the year. So there could be, depending on our operational requirements and our workforce requirements, two 0.5 FTEs making up one FTE. That is why there is always a difference between the authorised strength, which is expressed as FTEs, as opposed to headcount.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you for that clarification. It is particularly helpful. I have just one final framing question—two actually—on the recruitment of additional officers, because this seems to be, as a proportion of the existing force, quite a rapid expansion over a very short period of time. Can I get a sense of actually what requirements are obligated, I suppose, on the trainers of these new recruits and what system constraints are there at the academy to push through this kind of volume in a constrained period of time? I might be wrong, and I would like to be corrected if possible, but my understanding was from around 2017 to earlier this year, there was an overall FTE increase of around 200-odd or 220 additional officers. That is my understanding, so this proposition by the government, as welcome as it is, I think, by everybody in the community, would appear to be four to five times the recruitment effort as compared to the last three years. I just wonder how you will actually manage the delivery of these commitments and what other resourcing requirements might you seek further supplementation upon in further years because there is obviously going to be a need for expanded police stations, additions to fleet, rollout of body armour and the like, which I do not necessarily see accounted for in these budget papers.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger if he can respond to that, please.

Mr DREIBERGER: I can advise that relative to the police academy training specifically, the last few years have not had a significant drain on the academy whatsoever in terms of pushing through recruits. Our attrition rate has been very low. On average, I think our attrition is around 11 a month. So, to backfill when we have such low attrition does not put a significant impact on our business. In the context of training during the COVID period, there were periods when we had our academy officers deployed out on the front line. Then since, I guess, we have not had community spread of COVID, we have been able to bring our officers back into the academy and those recruits have come back and finished their training.

In terms of going forward, the 150 recruits are well and truly towards the completion of their training. The further additional 200 for the next financial year will be brought in, as the commissioner advised, in the early parts of 2021 with the first schools of the 200 starting in

December. The academy has not required significant additional resources to deal with that. The academy is well placed to train an additional 350 officers per year. The one place where we do get a bit of pressure in terms of training of our police officers at the academy is when we go to OSTTU training. We do generally a three-week solid block of OSTTU training, which is the weapons training and self-defence training. When we do get a significant block in terms of that where we have a clash of space, because clearly we have the range that we need to use, what we do there is we run an afternoon and a day shift. Then the facility is quite capable of managing the extra load. Effectively, we can manage that number quite well. In certain areas we have added some additional resources towards our investigative training, because now our detectives deliver all the investigative training to recruits at our detective training school. We added I think it was a very low number of people to assist in that space. Our foundation training and our scenario training is well structured. We can deal with large numbers coming through at a point in time. Generally, we go through in squads of 30. We have been training previously in squads as small as 20. So, to activate and deliver against a squad of an extra 10 or up to 30 does not have a significant resource impact on us.

In terms of academy training and delivery of recruits, we are very comfortable we are delivering. We decided that during the COVID period, our recruit training would be 25 weeks instead of 28 weeks because we have managed to make some adjustments to compress the course.

It does not mean that they are any less trained as to receiving the same level of training. There is no concern that we will be able to deliver an additional 200 per year for the next four years in the out years on top of the 150 that we have had.

[9.30 am]

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: If I can add to that, the second part of your question related to whether there would be a need for extra appropriation in terms of accommodation—you said police stations or weapons or anything. There is an agreed formula with Treasury that is built into this costing.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: That is embedded, is it, minister?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is built in. That takes into consideration vehicles, computers, weapons or tasers, and accommodation.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Can I ask the nerdy finance question? Is that composition then pro-rataed across the service lines as they appear in the budget or are they baked into a particular service line? There are four expense lines. I would imagine that they are baked into the first one—the metropolitan policing services—or is that an incorrect assumption?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There may well be separate appropriations for each thing. But I draw your attention to that \$73.37 million for the 150 extra police who were announced on 9 April and who came on board, as the commissioner said, from June. In that \$73 million over the four years, there is an amount for each of those officers to have a component for the things that I mentioned previously.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: May I ask a supplementary question, Madam Chair?

The CHAIR: Go ahead.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Minister, would you be able to provide me with the formula that you referred to? It would be a matter of public interest to know actually how much an additional police officer costs.

The CHAIR: Or perhaps a unit model.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is a Treasury finance model, so I am not sure if we can. Put in a supplementary and we will ask the question.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Potentially it could be redirected to the appropriate person.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Ask and we will see what can be provided.

[Supplementary Information No A1.]

The CHAIR: Honourable member, that concludes your time for the time being.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Minister, as you know, I am pretty keen to find out about data collection. I have been asking lots of questions in Parliament about that. I am looking at budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 418—I believe you were on more or less that page with Hon Tjorn Sibma before. In the police income statement, it states that \$24.43 million was spent on “Other COVID-19—Operating Costs”, as well as an additional \$1.392 million spent on tracking and tracing capabilities. My question is: how much of that has been spent on staff and systems relating to processing data collection of applications to enter the state?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, I am struggling to find the point.

The CHAIR: Can I help, honourable member? On page 418, under “New Initiatives” is “Other COVID-19—Operating Costs”. Is that what you are talking about, honourable member?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: That is right.

The CHAIR: I think the question is: what is “other” made up of and is any of the “other” related to COVID —

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Yes, data collection and systems.

The CHAIR: — data collection and systems operations? So is that the police operations centre as it relates to COVID?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There will be a couple of people who might provide a response to this one. I will start with Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger first of all.

Mr DREIBERGER: I can speak at a very broad level around how the process operates, in terms of talking about entry into the state right through to the end of the process, which includes quarantine checking and compliance. At the start of COVID, we developed a system called the G2G PASS. The G2G PASS was originally established to allow fast movement of people through regional borders, or intrastate borders, within Western Australia. It was developed in partnership between police and a local start-up tech company and was based on a piece of work that was developed between the Department of Transport, police, DPIRD and others. Basically, we did a framework of what we required to allow people to move quickly. If you remember in the very early part of COVID-19, we had lots of people wanting to move between Perth and Margaret River and out to Northam and for work and for whatever reason it may have been. The idea was we did not want to have people stopping at road points for long periods of time, so the G2G PASS was developed in the first instance for that purpose. That was established very quickly and it was very much for movement of people.

Then it established over a period of time as we moved to regional borders being opened up again, but also we had the impact of interstate travellers and overseas travellers wanting to enter the state. The G2G PASS had to be further developed and further provide us an ability to provide capability for people to apply to enter Western Australia and to meet all of the exemption requirements when we consider people who can enter Western Australia from interstate or overseas, bearing in mind, regardless of their G2G PASS application, people from overseas are still permitted to enter Australia and still enter the state regardless.

Then over a period of time the G2G PASS has been continually built upon and improved, working with the local company and working with police. Over that period of time, the contract with that

company has been expanded and changed to meet the requirements of what we have done effectively to allow for that to happen. As a result of that over a period—however long the COVID process has been going on—that G2G PASS has been changed, innovated, to provide for further ability for people to load information into that system, particularly for people to provide evidence of why they need to travel. But it also allows us to allow industry to provide information to us to allow permissions for industry, like FIFO workers, to travel. It also provides us with a history of travel for every individual. It also provides us with a history of applications for every individual, and it provides them an opportunity to provide their evidence that they have travelled.

Over a period of time, the process has never been about counting multiple people over multiple events. The process has always been about looking at an individual application on an individual basis and then making a decision whether that person is allowed to travel into the state. In that context, that is a fairly automated system. You could imagine in other jurisdictions where they do not have an automated system, it is a paper-based application system. I do not understand how they would manage in that environment. Obviously, they have some internet systems that are working behind that.

Effectively, when you apply for a G2G PASS, it goes to our Operation Tide, where our officers, working with other officers from other agencies as well—people who are working there from the Department of Transport, for instance—are assessing and processing those original applications. Then it goes through the entire process up until an approval for an individual. When an approval is provided to an individual, they are then given a requirement for quarantine.

We have multiple officers that are doing that process—to go through the approval process. It is all part of Operation Tide—the greater COVID response by WA police. As it goes through that process, those people then are provided with their quarantine direction, and as they arrive at the airport, they are provided with their quarantine instructions about what is required of them. They then go to home quarantine—I am talking about interstate persons now, not overseas persons who go to hotel quarantine.

While they are in quarantine at home, we have established officers who do COVID tracking and tracing of those individuals to make sure that they are meeting their quarantine arrangements. That involves police officers visiting people, knocking on their door or ringing them, and making sure that they are meeting their quarantine obligations. We also get calls from the community through to us if they believe that there may be people who have breached their quarantine or they think someone who should be in quarantine is out of quarantine, and we respond to that.

We then have an investigations element to that. Within our structure, we have officers who do the investigation specifically for breaches of quarantine. So when we have identified it, they have to go around and do the full investigative process so that they can then make a decision whether there is a criminal charge or no criminal charge, or an infringement. They make those decisions on prosecutions.

[9.40 am]

In terms of the data, the system has never been established for collection of data specifically. It has always been established for the purpose of making sure that people can enter the state based on a one-by-one application.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: But you are collecting data while you are going along.

Mr DREIBERGS: We are not collecting data. There is a system that has data. We have talked to the tech company about how we collect the greater level of data out of it, but we only have very high level data as we go along, in terms of airport arrivals and that type of data. I know there have been

previous questions about specifics around how many people from maritime, for instance, have entered the state with or without quarantine. The system does not collect that.

By way of a very simple explanation, if you asked us on Saturday morning how many people arrived into the state without requiring to undergo quarantine, the number would have been significantly different from the number we provided you on Sunday afternoon when we had to go and revisit all the people who arrived from South Australia and issue them a direction to go into quarantine. The process and the directions are so fluid that people move, circumstances change, directions change. Well over 130 directions have been issued. Systems always change. Just to allow people to enter the state under the controlled border requirement virtually required the whole G2G PASS system to be almost rebuilt and restructured so that it allows for automated approvals. It is significant in terms of what has to happen. I understand that there have been a lot of questions around specific data, but the purpose was never for that.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. I appreciate the thoroughness of that. I yield to the next person.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I think a part of your question was not responded to. That was just in terms of that line item and where the money was going. The money that we got in 2019–20 included money for employee expenses, investment in personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning contracts and equipment purchases to fit out officers deployed to the front line. Then, looking forward, so 2020 onwards, there was funding for accommodation and communication, so the State Pandemic Coordination Centre and the Incident Management Team operations and the continuation of the COVID-19 call centre. There is additional funding again for enhanced cleaning and additional PPE. There is the technology issue. The expenditure supports costs relating to computers, printers, software, the enforcement of border restrictions, and the rollout of OneForce phones, so 2 420 new phones to help with the QR codes. There were body-worn cameras and of course the G2G PASS that was mentioned. Then there is additional money there for salary costs, primarily relating to temporary specialist positions such as radio dispatchers who have been brought on to help deal with the pandemic. Deputy Commissioner Blanch could talk about the automatic numberplate recognition, which I think was an issue.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I am happy with that. I would like to give other members an opportunity. Thank you for the thorough coverage.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I refer to page 417 and the spending changes. I notice that the tracking and tracing capabilities cost \$1.4 million last year. Then it is up to over \$4 million and it continues at \$3 million a year. I am interested to know what expectations you are using to continue the tracking and tracing capabilities. How did you determine what you are going to need two or three years out from now? I assume that is for the COVID tracking and tracing and the world is talking about a vaccine.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will start off and then I will hand over to Deputy Commissioner Blanch. There is \$17.8 million, so from 2020–21 to 2023–24, for tracking and tracing capabilities as part of the COVID-19 recovery plan. There was \$14.8 million for automatic nameplate recognition capabilities. The acquisition of GPS tracking devices for electronic monitoring was a further \$3 million. This essentially allows the WA Police Force to track and trace community members who are subject to movement restrictions implemented under directions made pursuant to the state of emergency declaration and potentially other offenders. I will get the deputy commissioner to give some further information. I am not even sure if we might need to go to Frank to answer the second part of your question as to how we would look at the forward estimates

Hon DIANE EVERS: It is the forward estimates that I am particularly interested in.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to go first.

Mr BLANCH: Thank you for that question. There are two parts to tracking and tracing. As Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger spoke about, there is the human element—the police officers who visit premises in person. There is also the system that is called G2G Now, which identifies the people who are quarantined. The other side and the \$14.8 million for the ANPR and the \$3 million for the ankle bracelet, so the electronic monitoring—the major costs are the initial set-up of the infrastructure. Obviously, the ANPR got us 85 additional vehicles. We already had 48 over the last number of years of funding for ANPR, but another 85, as well as 15 trailers that we can set up and leave in position. The primary objective of those is where we believe there may be a breach or someone has indicated they might, for various reasons, give us intelligence that there might be a breach, we can actually enter that data into the system and it will give us an indication if there is a vehicle related to that person leaving the place where they should be quarantining. It gives us an immediate heads-up. There are two parts to ANPR. There are the vehicles and trailers themselves, and there is also what is called the ANPR hub, which is where all the feeds come in to allow the officers at the State Operations Command Centre to respond to that. That is an ongoing cost, with licences and maintenance and things over time, but the original set-up cost is the hardware and the infrastructure.

The second part is the electronic monitoring. I think we are up to about six at the moment that we have used so far. They are people who have presented and have pretty much breached immediately and have shown that propensity to continue breaching. The State Emergency Coordinator has signed a direction under section 70A(2) of the Emergency Management Act to put on those electronic monitors. Again, the infrastructure set-up costs—all this data is live when we apply them, so again the State Operations Command Centre in Maylands needs to respond to breaches. It goes into Operation Tide, the area that Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger looks after, and we can then deploy police officers to respond to those breaches. That is the very technical side of tracking and tracing.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Just in terms of the other part of that, looking forward, in 2019–20, a capital expense was needed, essentially to buy the equipment in the first place. There is a further capital expense this financial year. Because we will have the equipment that we need, the appropriation going forward has an operating expense and a depreciation amount built into it. We will buy the stuff up-front, in 2019–20 and early 2020–21, and then going forward, the appropriation is for the operating of that equipment essentially.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I guess that is where my question lies. In those next three years, unless you are saying that there is \$3 million a year, it is not all depreciation, but what level of tracking and tracing are you assuming is going to be necessary in the forward estimates?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can certainly tell you that the operating expense for the equipment for each of the years going forward is approximately \$2.5 million.

Hon DIANE EVERS: Whether we use it or not.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It will be used. I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to elaborate on that.

Mr BLANCH: We were very careful in our purchase of the hardware and the infrastructure. The electronic monitoring and the ANPR has multiple uses. The electronic monitoring bracelets can be used on family and domestic violence offenders, they can be used under the HRSO system or the new legislation that may come out, which is currently DSOs. It can be used under the Bail Act as part of home detention sentencing. The infrastructure itself will not go to waste and gather dust on the shelf. We can have multiple uses for it, but we are primarily using it for COVID at this time.

Hon DIANE EVERS: That is interesting. Thank you for that. I have one other question. It is on page 421, the service summary, point 4, “Road Safety Commission”. I notice that in this current year it goes up. There is \$92 million put aside and the next three years are a bit lower. I acknowledge that there is a note on the page further down saying that the increase is due to new major road safety projects. It looks like there is an additional \$20 million for this year. Would those new major road safety projects be continuing in the forward estimates or are they just something we are going to do this year?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Mr Warner to respond to that one.

[9.50 am]

Mr WARNER: The difference in funding between last year’s actuals and this year’s budget is related to a couple of factors. One is that COVID caused a lot of carryovers to a number of projects, particularly road infrastructure projects and a lot of other community engagement projects, so about \$23 million in increased expenditure was carried over. That was offset by some programs that have been ceased or are ceasing. The big factors there were the Indian Ocean Drive improvements and the improvements on Great Eastern Highway, which are tailing off. There has been a significant offset for that. It moves around from year to year based on where the programs are in their life cycle. They were the major factors that affected the difference between last year and this budget year.

Hon DIANE EVERS: In the forward estimates for the next years, you are not expecting that level; it looks as though it goes back to around the \$70 million mark?

Mr WARNER: At this stage, based on what the approved program is, that is the expenditure, although every cycle there will be new programs coming forward and new initiatives, but in terms of the current program of works, where the cashflow is, that is the current profile.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: My question is in respect to the reporting period. In particular, on 5 April 2020, the commissioner issued the Quarantine (Closing the Border) Directions. Is the commissioner aware that on 28 October, the Chief Health Officer wrote to the Premier advising that they be amended from 14 November?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask the commissioner whether he can respond.

Mr DAWSON: Yes, I can.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Commissioner, has it been the norm for you to be excluded in this way, specifically with the Chief Health Officer writing directly to the Premier?

Mr DAWSON: I was part and privy to those discussions. While the Premier, as I answered in an earlier question, chairs the State Disaster Council, I am kept informed by the Chief Health Officer of all such matters.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: In this particular instance, this letter is not cc-ed to you. Is that normal practice, or would you normally receive a copy of such correspondence?

Mr DAWSON: I am normally provided with all such copy correspondence. I do have a copy of that.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Okay. It is not apparent from the document that you have been provided a copy.

Mr DAWSON: I have certainly received it. I cannot answer here and now exactly what time and date I got it, but I certainly was part of the discussions prior to the document being provided, and I subsequently received a copy.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Have those directions since been amended?

Mr DAWSON: Yes. I have amended the directions on a number of occasions since 5 April. They were again amended on Sunday, and further amended I think on Monday. Whenever we have a situation where the public health advice from the Chief Health Officer is such that we need to either further restrict, or if we are seeking, based on his advice, whether we can ease some of the restrictions, which we have done on a number of occasions, on each and every time that has occurred, I have had to consider, one, the advice; two, provide instructions to the State Solicitor's Office; and, three, once I get the draft back, ensure that it complies with the policy setting and the public health advice. I would estimate off the top of my head that I would have signed in the order of 180 different legal instruments since the beginning of the pandemic and state of emergency, and, of those 180, I would estimate probably at least 20 would have related to the borders.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Have any of the 180 been made by you at the request of the Premier?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Again, Commissioner, I am not sure whether you have that detail.

The CHAIR: Commissioner, I am sure you will answer as best you can.

Mr DAWSON: The Premier chairs the State Disaster Council. He is a part of the consultation process. If it goes through the State Disaster Council as a mechanism, for instance, of easing or further hardening particular directions, sometimes you have got time on your side. As in my answer to the earlier question, on Sunday, there was very little time. You have to make a quick decision based on the best possible information. I had to make that decision within 20 minutes of a flight landing. I subsequently briefed the Premier about the decision that the Chief Health Officer and I had come to, but we spoke to the Premier within, I think, 30 minutes of our initial conversation.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I have no problem with that, police commissioner, because that is an example of where you have made a decision, and post the decision you then briefed the Premier about the decision you have made. My concern is the level of influence the Premier has had on the decision-making process since these directions have been made. If I can draw a distinction between the State Disaster Council, where the Premier chairs those meetings, have any of those approximately 180 instruments that you have been involved in come about because of a resolution by the State Disaster Council?

Mr DAWSON: Yes, some of them have.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I want to park that and compare and contrast that with conversations you might have had with the Premier. At any time outside of the State Disaster Council process has the Premier requested that you make directions?

Mr DAWSON: I would have often daily conversations with the Premier. We have full and frank conversations about myriad situations. I received advice, for instance, from the Australian Defence Force yesterday. I briefed him on that this morning. We will have to make some adjustments, not necessarily to a direction per se, but it is on a daily basis. At times we have broader policy implications because it might impact, for instance, on industry or on financial appropriations, depending on what it is. We are presently negotiating—this is led through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet—industry consultation regarding COVID safety plans and the need for us to have contact registers in place. That requires a technical development. We also then have to put in place the right resourcing. If it is a police response or a health response, it might mean, for instance, as it did on the weekend, additional COVID swab clinics and capacity. I spoke to the Chief Health Officer. I briefed the Premier, as indeed the Chief Health Officer did. Sometimes these decisions have a whole lot of knock-on implications that we will have to consult across government on.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Commissioner, I would be pretty confident that from time to time you direct your staff to do certain things. I would be pretty confident that from time to time you request them

to do certain things. There is a distinction between a direction and a request. I am also pretty confident that from time to time you have conversations with your staff. I am not interested at this point in time about the conversations you have had with the Premier. What I would like to know is if he has ever requested for you to make a direction.

Mr DAWSON: The Premier has never directed me to do something which I have not —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: No; hence why I have specifically not asked about direction, because I can well appreciate he would not have done that; and, had he done so, you might have had some robust conversation about that. I am not interested in directions. I am not interested in conversations. I am interested in a request.

Mr DAWSON: We have certainly had lots of discussion, which I would not necessarily put it at—I would not phrase it as a request. We have frank and free conversations on a daily basis. There are questions asked, “Is this possible?” or “Why haven’t we done that?” I would not phrase it as me responding to a request of the Premier on a personal level. It is a full and frank conversation that we have on a daily basis, taking account a whole lot of other things. If I, for instance, make a decision—accepting that I was a respondent to the High Court matter, because Mr Palmer sued me personally and the state—I have to weigh these things up very carefully. Sometimes when we are having conversations, I am not aware, for instance, of whether the health department has sufficient clinicians to test people. We have had that challenge coming across Eucla: can you put people at Eucla to swab people? That is one of the most remote places in the world. They have not been able to do it, so we have then had to adjust. They are the sorts of conversations I have with the Premier, and others, about whether we can test people at the Eucla border. On the advice of the Chief Health Officer, he is saying pragmatically we cannot, because there is not the infrastructure there to do that; and, in any event, you have to get the swab to a pathology lab to get a result. Those are the sorts of difficulties, I guess, in policing and enforcing the pandemic response over the largest land mass jurisdiction in the world.

[10.00 am]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Have you ever had to refuse a request by the Premier to make one of these directions?

Mr DAWSON: No, I do not recall any refusal that I have had on a direction, no.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So every time he requests you to do a direction, you just agree to it?

Mr DAWSON: No; I ultimately have to make the decision. I actually sign the directions, so I respect that my statutory role is one of advice; the Premier clearly has a statutory role in chairing the State Disaster Council, so, as I answered previously, some of those decisions that lead to directions are basically, to use a phrase, caucused through the State Disaster Council, and that has a contribution from all members of the State Disaster Council, of which I am a member. But, ultimately, when the signature goes on the bit of paper, I have to be personally satisfied that it is a lawful and proper and proportionate direction.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, I am sure that that has happened in every instance. I have no doubt about that. What I remain unclear about is on how many occasions that has been done at the request of the Premier outside of the State Disaster Council. That information is not currently clear and transparent to this committee.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It sounds like you are making a point there.

The CHAIR: Commissioner, you might take that as a statement. I did not hear a question in that. Would you like to continue, honourable member?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Not unless the commissioner has anything further to add on that point.

Mr DAWSON: Madam Chair, I think I have answered the question. I have not been personally directed by the Premier to sign a direction, no.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: No, but requested you have been.

Mr DAWSON: We have had discussions, absolutely.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: And any time the Premier has requested it, you have not refused his request?

Mr DAWSON: No, I did not say that.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I think the record will reflect —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The commissioner has answered the question.

The CHAIR: Honourable member, the commissioner has answered the question. I am not sure that your continued rephrasing of the question will elicit the response you are looking for, so —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Now we have two different answers to the same question, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: I think your line of questioning is adding to confuse the debate, so I will invite you to structure your questions within the framework of the budget and the annual report, the budget as it relates to the forward estimates in particular, and phrase them in a way that does not lead to any misunderstanding in relation to how they should be responded to, irrespective of whether or not you like the answer. Would you like to continue with your questions?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, please, Madam Chair. I am concerned that the record now has two different answers to the same question, so to clarify, the question was: has the commissioner ever refused a request by the Premier to make a direction?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I think the commissioner has been clear in giving an answer a couple of times.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The first response that I got back was that he has never refused it.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: He said he has not been directed by the Premier.

The CHAIR: Order!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, you forget that we have been through a global pandemic for the last few months, and around the world more than a million people have died. In Western Australia, people have died. We have had debates on this in this chamber over the past few weeks. There is not a manual on a bookshelf anywhere that you can take down and say, "This is how to deal with and respond to a global pandemic." There has been a process in place in Western Australia. The commissioner has told us about that process today. He has told us that, essentially, decisions are caucused and that the State Disaster Council looks at these issues. He told us that he meets or has conversations with the Premier on most days, and, indeed, when those conversations happen in the morning, they include the Minister for Health and other public servants in attendance. He has told us all that. He has said that he has not been directed. He has said that he, at the end of the day, signs off on declarations, and that he is happy with the declarations he has signed off on. End of story, from my perspective.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: All of what you have said, minister, is absolutely correct. There is no dispute from me. The commissioner has been very clear today that he has not been directed by the Premier. That is not in dispute. The question that remains unresolved, and there is a conflicting response on the *Hansard* record now that needs to be clarified, is: has the commissioner ever refused a request from the Premier to make a direction? The answer is either yes or no.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The commissioner has indicated that he has finished responding to that. He is happy with the answers he has given.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Under Operation Tide, the minister has stated that just under 400 police officers —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, just to be helpful to me, are you referring to a particular point in the budget papers?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is page 418, division 28, part 7, paragraph 1. Under Operation Tide, the minister has stated that just under 400 police officers are dedicated to dealing with the G2G PASS system. Will this number of police officers increase to deal with the greater influx of people entering Western Australia from 14 November?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask the commissioner if he can provide an answer to that.

Mr DAWSON: For Operation Tide—which Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs can add to, as he commands that particular area—we have in the order of about 400 police who are dedicated to that particular task, which is about the compliance and the response, on a police perspective, to help the hazard management agency, being the Department of Health. That is broken down in a number of different ways. One is in regard to persons who are making application for approval to register for exemptions and there will be a myriad of those. Some will have particular reasons. They might have members of the family who are palliatively ill; they may wish to attend a funeral; they may wish to proceed to their workplace; or they may be a commonwealth official executing commonwealth official's duties or parliamentarians. The police have to then make an assessment on the application and the registration process.

We have another cohort who do the quarantine checking who will physically attend. Mr Dreibergs has already expanded on the G2G and the way we have digitised the system, but they still require people to be investigated and monitored. We also have some police who are in a permanent arrangement at one of the Perth hotels because we determined that some people are more high risk in terms of quarantine. They are some of the individuals who have been issued with electronic monitoring bracelets who have demonstrated a propensity to breach, so we put an extra layer of security around those individuals.

Equally, we have officers who are meeting every single passenger at the Perth Airport. Officers have been deployed to ports around the state and we have key land border gantry points at Eucla and Kununurra, and we patrol in between. While it is 400 in the ordinary application of those sorts of duties, we do bring in other officers as well to supplement it, so if there is a surge, we will put on additional officers, as in fact we did on the weekend. When we learnt of the South Australian situation, we co-opted officers from our regional operations group, who supplemented our Operation Tide officers.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Speaking of Eucla and the processing of G2G passes, I understand that mobile smart devices have now been rolled out and allocated to frontline police officers. Are these mobile devices used at the state border, for example, at Eucla for the assistance of processing these G2G passes?

Mr DAWSON: On the application of smart devices, they are iPhone 11s that we rolled out in about October last year. Mr Blanch might have better numbers than me. We had in the order of just over 4 000 to 4 500 issued, and that was part of a strategic digitisation of our systems. That is for general, everyday policing. We also integrate our computerised dispatch jobs and our information and intelligence systems. The benefit of procuring the extra 2 100 as part of the additional funding we got through the budget was that we had about 6 300 smart devices issued to officers around the

state. Every operational officer now has one that has not only personal locating benefits for their safety and the safety of the community.

[10.10 am]

The best example probably is the QR codes that were developed that Mr Dreibergs has already spoken to. You may recall that we had nine intrastate regional borders at the time through April–May where I issued some directions to restrict the movement of people from the Kimberley—there was a biosecurity law around that as well—right through to the great southern. We stopped in the order of 850 000 vehicles over that period of time. A lot of that was able to be done in a reasonably seamless way through use of QR codes. The officers were able to simply scan the driver when they came through and we were able to do that with the automatic numberplate recognition as well, so that when we had our trailer mounted there, the freight movement of the truck drivers, for instance, carrying our essential services, were able to simply move through once we had verified the legitimacy of the vehicle and the driver.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Are the mobile devices used on the state border—for example, in Eucla—to provide police with assistance in processing G2G passes?

Mr DAWSON: Yes.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I want to take the witnesses to Mark McGowan’s fresh idea 156, which says —

Work with senior police officers and the WA Police Union to develop a mutually beneficial system of workers compensation for medically retired officers.

And a media statement that was issued by the Hon Minister for Police issued on Saturday, 13 October 2018 in announcing a redress scheme. The statement says —

The Minister is currently progressing reforms to provide a more dignified process and legal framework to medically retired officers.

Noting today is the last day’s sitting of the Legislative Assembly, what progress has been made in the last two years?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The McGowan government is certainly committed to fulfilling our election commitment to develop a proposal to address the longstanding issue of compensation for police officers who are medically retired due to work-related injury or illness. That work is ongoing. Significant work has been done to develop a model of police compensation, bearing in mind this was an issue that was attempted by the previous government and they failed to deliver it, so we made a commitment on it. We have continued to work on it very closely. The Minister for Police has worked extremely hard and well on this, and we are hopeful of meeting our election commitment before the term is up.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Does the election commitment require legislative amendment?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Ultimately, it will, honourable member.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: It will?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Ultimately, yes.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Given those two statements you have just made to the committee, how will you fulfil your election commitment prior to the election if the commitment requires legislative amendment?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, just wait and see. Our commitment is as stated in that document that you read from. We are working to deliver on that commitment and will have a workaround if we get there before the election.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I will wait and see.

Question prior to hearing 9(a) indicates that the “WA Police Force advise that the funds have been allocated” in the state budget for this compensation scheme. What quantum of funds has been allocated in the budget for this compensation scheme and when will funds commence?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Mr Pasquale if he can respond to that one, please.

Mr PASQUALE: I cannot remember the exact year; it may have been two financial years ago. When I first started with WA police, there was a general provision made by government at the time, which I think were costs relevant to the previous government submission. I cannot be exact about that, but in the order, I think, of \$8 million per annum was placed in the general provision. As I understand, that general provision still exists today.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Just so that I am clear, there is \$8 million in each of the annual appropriations to the WA Police Force awaiting the commencement of a compensation scheme that has not yet commenced.

Mr PASQUALE: No; that is not quite correct. It is not with WA police. When I talk about a general provision, it is a global government general provision that, I think, the Department of Treasury administer, so it is not with WA police until a decision is made around what police compensation would look like. Obviously, that would be the funding. I am assuming government would use that source of funds to actually support the final decision.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Are you aware if any of that \$8 million has been spent to date in the development or preparation of a scheme?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sorry, can you ask the question again?

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Are you aware to date how much of the \$8 million has been spent or expended in the design or planning for a compensation scheme?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told \$16 million was spent on the police redress scheme.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: That is not what I am asking.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: None of that \$8 million—all of that \$8 million is preserved in an account. As has been pointed out, if a decision is made, then the money will be released. So it is quarantined, essentially.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Who has been funding to date the development of the policy—the actuarial assessment, the modelling?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That has just been done internally by police.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Internalised within the WA Police Force?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Within WA police, yes.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I now turn to questions prior to hearing 2(a) to (e) where I asked a series of questions about the government’s budget commitment to engage another 800 police officers, to follow on from a line of questioning earlier today. I note that there is a commitment to engage an additional 800 police officers over the next four years at 200 per annum. In the first year—so in this current financial year—there is going to be, I think, 102 deployed to metropolitan policing and 98

deployed to regional policing. Can I ask two questions on this: How was 800 determined as the appropriate number? Secondly, how was the 98–102 regional–metro split determined?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can answer the first question. That was a decision of government. Government decided that 800 was the appropriate number and that has been funded in the budget, obviously, on top of the 150 that came on board at stages throughout this year.

In terms of the second question, I ask the commissioner to respond to that, please.

Mr DAWSON: In discussions with government, primarily through the Minister for Police and other government members, we came to the 150 on an internal decision. That was based on a number of considerations. Of the budget appropriation, part of it was to deal with legislative reform, part of it was also to deal with the court and custodial services that police have been supporting in the Department of Justice for the provision of court security and transport of prisoners where the current C and CS contract does not extend. So, for localities such as Kununurra, Karratha, Busselton and others, we have allocated in the order of 67 FTE to go to regional Western Australia and they will be primarily be to support the local police, who are —

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Sorry, commissioner, are you talking about the 150 COVID FTE?

Mr DAWSON: No, I am not.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: What is the 150 that you are talking about? The number I have is 98 officers going to regional Western Australia in year 1.

Mr DAWSON: That is what I am addressing.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I thought you said 150, sorry.

Mr DAWSON: It is 150, so 102 and 98—sorry, I got that wrong. The total of 150 comprised, on my recall—I do not have the papers in front of me. I am fairly certain there was 98 to go to the country, and it must be 52 that were allocated for the city. I now have it here. They are part of a total appropriation of 350 in the full year, so we have 150 that are dedicated to Operation Tide. That may be what you were asking about. But in the total cohort of 350 for the full year, we have 98 to go to the country, 102 in the metropolitan region and 150 to Operation Tide.

[10.20 am]

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: You answered a question earlier about the costs associated with these additional officers. They cover a range of things, not just salary, such as equipment, vehicles and I think accommodation as well. In the “Questions prior to hearing” I asked some questions about the initial 15 regional police stations that will be upgraded or refurbished, which is a welcome commitment at a cost of \$23.5 million. I assume you cannot just drop 150 officers in regional Western Australia in policing districts that have not seen infrastructure upgrades for many, many decades. Will there be announcements beyond those 15 regional police stations, because I assume there will be an issue in accommodating a significant increase in officers in regional Western Australia.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I need to clarify, there is an element of accommodation in that formula that I mentioned earlier; it is the whole bit of accommodation. I will ask the commissioner to further elaborate.

Mr DAWSON: Of the appropriation, there is a new police station in Capel, for instance, that was appropriated separately. That accommodates nine FTE, part of which comes out of this number of 350. That is part of that. When we spoke earlier about the accompanying costs, whenever an appropriation of 800, for instance, is done, obviously everyone has to be provided with a uniform, firearm, taser, OneForce smart device and body-worn cameras, and the training costs attached to

that, and there is an element of office fit-out. But the broader appropriation for accommodation such as the Fremantle complex, which has recently been announced, the Armadale complex, which is nearing completion by the end of next year, has capacity to take on board part of the 800. In terms of the country regions, the \$23 million to \$24 million is in the maintenance schedule, which will improve the office fit-out. Most of the police stations I visit in the bush are aged, although the regional district offices are generally quite modern. Broome, Karratha, Carnarvon, Geraldton, Albany, Bunbury and Kalgoorlie have all been quite modernised or they are reasonably new premises. We can accommodate additional officers in many of those regional centres. I do not expect the small police station will get a lot of those additional officers; they will generally be in regional locations. If we need further accommodation in the next three to four years, we have ongoing budget bids that we put through on the normal midyear review and budget cycle.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I just wanted to correct: it is \$13 million going to those regional police stations of the \$23.5 million. Just looking at the list that was provided by the minister prior to hearings, most of it is refurbishing or upgrading; it is not necessarily expanding those police stations. Some of those are our regional police stations like Katanning, Merredin, Narrogin—some of our larger regional centres. Often as I travel around, superintendents are telling me that their big pressures are appropriate office accommodation for officers and GROH. I want some confidence that the government is thinking beyond just 800 police officers, particularly with some of those regional implications. But it sounds to me like that is subject to future budget allocations.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Absolutely, and you are correct that it is a figure of \$13 million out of the \$23.5 million going towards those 15 stations. Some of those will include new operational areas, so Katanning, for example. Wagin, for example, has new and upgraded operational areas, so some of those will enable us to put more police officers, but you are correct in saying that a lot of it is for refurbishment of facilities. As the commissioner pointed out, as part of the formula we have things such as vehicles, computers, weapons, tasers et cetera and an element of accommodation, but if there is a need for future police stations, obviously, as the commissioner has pointed out, he will come back to us, bearing in mind that it is the commissioner's decision as to where these 800, or indeed 950, new police officers are going. He will do that based on operational requirements. Once he has worked that out, if there is a need to come back for a further appropriation, we would expect that. The commissioner can answer that for you.

Mr DAWSON: Part of the surge we have to do in the short period of time, for instance, with Operation TIDE, we were able to secure a lease via the Department of Finance to gain the building at 99 Plain Street, in which we are accommodating about 400 officers, plus there is some expansion. That is the former Department of Communities' department of housing's area. It has had a recent fit-out. We have totally re-cabled the whole thing and that is proving quite functional for us. Of those 400 officers that generally accommodate in that area, they have of course vacated other areas within the metropolitan area so we can replace officers in areas from whence they have come.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: In year one, the 150 officers you talk about for regional Western Australia, there is obviously some precision around that now. Are you able to give us some visibility perhaps by supplementary information on a regional breakdown; for example, how many of those 150 officers are going to the goldfields region verses the Kimberley region versus the midwest region? Ninety-eight is a precise number.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Just for operational reasons, honourable member, we do not disclose that information.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I understand at a station level, but the police do disclose at a regional level.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: We have the figure of 98 across the seven districts. Nine are going to Capel; 67 were related to the earlier comment the commissioner made in relation to general duties or court work. You can work that out where the regional courts are, where those officers are. There are intelligence officers and youth policing and a district trainer is going to each region, I would imagine, so that is seven of them. That is essentially the breakdown. There are 67 for those court security custody issues, nine intelligence officers—we would not disclose where they go—six in youth policing, district trainers, one for each station, and Capel is nine. That is 98 out of that 350 that you mentioned. In terms of the others, that is still to be worked out.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I take you to part 2(h) of the questions asked prior to hearings, and a project titled “Police Headquarters Planning”. What is intended here? Is this project looking at the complete relocation offsite of the police headquarters to a new location and the sale of the East Perth site, or have I misinterpreted what is being provided here?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Mr Pasquale to comment on that.

Mr PASQUALE: The WA Police Force was asked to develop a business case to explore a strategy to consolidate its accommodation. I do not know the exact number but I think it is in the order of 14 different locations that police have functions at different accommodation across the metropolitan area. The business case was to explore how we would consolidate that and also include the commissioner’s desire to have a multi-agency state coordination function built into that design. The business case was purely just exploring that for government’s consideration. There is no determination that has been made or outcome that has been reached. We were purely provided funding to work in conjunction with the Department of Finance to design that business case, and that is where we are at at this stage. No further determination has been made but the intent is to look at consolidating all of our accommodation into fit-for-purpose contemporary accommodation.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Who has asked you to do that business case? Does the scope of that business case include both onsite and offsite options at the East Perth site?

Mr PASQUALE: I cannot recall the exact recommendation. I am pretty sure it was a referral from ERC about designing a business case, or it may have been Treasury—I cannot recall the exact detail. ERC is my recollection. What was the second part of your question, sorry?

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Whether the business case will consider onsite and offsite development options.

Mr PASQUALE: The business case is considering all options in terms of what are suitable sites that have been presented for consideration of government. It explored a variety of different sites, including the existing site and alternative sites and presented options for consideration, which are still under consideration.

[10.30 am]

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: When is that business case —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, rather than waste your question on this, because it is work for the ERC, it is cabinet-in-confidence. I have let it go as long as I can —

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I am not asking about the ERC decision.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: But you are asking about the business case and when it is due back.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Yes. It is in the budget papers. You have allocated state money to it.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: In terms of when it comes back, it is captured by cabinet-in-confidence because it has to report back to the cabinet process.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I would like you to explain that to the Auditor General, but I am going to ask it anyway.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Ask the question; you will not get an answer.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: When is the business case likely to be completed and what is the value of the land at the East Perth site?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: So, (a) you will not get an answer to that first question —

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Okay. I look forward to your section 82 notice.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: — because the work is being done at the request of the ERC, which is a committee of the cabinet, and so once that work is done, it will go back. In terms of the site at east Perth, you will have to go to the Department of Finance, which is responsible for government sites. So it is not a question of police.¹

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Is the site not an asset of the WA Police Force? It would be listed as an asset in the budget papers.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Mr Pasquale.

Mr PASQUALE: My recollection is that it is a crown reserve, so it will be on the Department of Lands' accounts. I am not sure if it is actually valued on our accounts. My CFO is saying no, and I could not tell you off the top of my head what the value of that property is. I do not have that available.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Thank you.

Hon RICK MAZZA: We spoke earlier about extra policing in the regions, and accommodation. I just bring your attention to page 363 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, under cost of services expenses.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Page 363 is not one of our pages.

Hon RICK MAZZA: WA Police Force—page 363?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Budget paper No 3?

Hon RICK MAZZA: Budget paper No 2.

The CHAIR: Page 363 is not the WA Police Force division, honourable member.

Hon RICK MAZZA: My apologies, Chair. I have been given the wrong year. But, in any case, with accommodation expenses, there has been a reduction. No, there has not now. Sorry, Chair. Could I just defer this for a moment? Maybe you could move on to another member.

The CHAIR: Yes, that is fine. Someone might find the right reference for you while you are asking your next question, if you like. Have you any questions other than that?

Hon RICK MAZZA: No. You can move to another member. Thank you.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Let us try page —

The CHAIR: All honourable members are entitled to ask questions without interference from other honourable members. Thank you.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Can I go to page 418. This is one of the significant issues impacting the agency and relates to the COVID recovery plan. I wonder if the minister or one of his advisers can tell us what are the police station upgrades contained in the \$23.8 million allocated as part of the COVID recovery plan.

¹ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sure. I am happy to do that. As part of the COVID-19 recovery plan, the state government provided \$23.8 million to refurbish and upgrade 15 police stations across regional and metropolitan Western Australia. The highest priorities were those stations that can be refurbished in 2020–21 and thus contributing to the state recovery. The stations that were identified for refurbishment or expansion have been selected as they are the highest priority for new works. They are, in the metro area: Belmont Police Station has \$1.5 million attached to it; Kwinana Police Station has \$2 million; Mandurah Police Station has \$2 million; Palmyra Police Station has \$2 million; and Rockingham Police Station has \$1.5 million.

In the regions, in the goldfields–Esperance region, there was the Laverton Police Station. That was an allocation of \$1.5 million. In the great southern, there is Katanning Police Station with \$1.5 million; Narrogin Police Station with \$2 million; Wagin Police Station with \$1 million; and Williams Police Station with \$1 million. In the Kimberley, there is Derby Police Station with \$1.5 million and Kununurra Police Station with \$500 000. In the south west, Collie Police Station has \$1.5 million and Donnybrook Police Station has \$1 million. In the wheatbelt, there was the Merredin Police Station and that was \$1.5 million, too. Also, in that bucket of money there was an allocation of about \$1.8 million, and that was for planning or administrative fees attached to it.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Thanks. Can I flick you now to the annual report, page 11? You are talking about the new police stations there, and I know that we opened Capel the other day. Can you give us an update —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, I am struggling to hear you. Do you mind asking that again?

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Yes. Can I flick you to the annual report, page 11? You just referred in your answer to upgrades to police stations. We have just opened a new one in Capel. Are you able to give us an update on what is happening with the staffing levels and the availability of police at the new Capel Police Station, please?

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: That is an operational matter. You will not be able to disclose that.

The CHAIR: Order, honourable member. Thank you. We will try and let the minister and commissioner provide the answer instead of you.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sure. I have certainly disclosed to Hon Martin Aldridge, a few minutes ago, that the staffing attached to Capel Police Station is nine officers. But I can ask the commissioner to elaborate further.

Mr DAWSON: Of the nine officers there, obviously we have an office in charge—a sergeant—and he is supported by eight other officers. We have allocated to that police station specific roles not only for the general policing matters around the Capel community, but also we have dedicated officers—five of them—who will be performing regional traffic enforcement. Because we have the Bussell Highway and the arterial roads in and around the south west district, they are dealing with high-volume traffic. There has been quite an increase in tourists and regional traffic there, and, tragically, there have been two double fatals since that police station was opened, within kilometres of that police station. So that is an unfortunate reminder to us of the disproportionate level of road harm in the regions and is one of the reasons why we have allocated specific traffic enforcement officers to complement the local police.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Thanks for that. That segues beautifully to my third question. You mentioned, commissioner, the tragedies we had recently on the roads around the south west region. Back to the budget now on page 417. I note in the spending changes table, there is a specific line item about run-off-road crashes and the program that we have announced under the COVID-19

recovery plan. Can you give us an idea about the funding for that program has increased and why is it such a priority? As a local member, I am aware of the dangers. I know that the minister is no stranger to the road in the south west.

The CHAIR: Honourable member, could you please just provide us a reference again?

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Page 417. It is in the “Spending Changes” table. The line item as “Run-off Road Crashes Program”.

The CHAIR: I see. Near the bottom. Thank you.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Sure. And that is actually not a question for the commissioner; that is a question for the officer of road safety, so will ask Mr Cameron if he can provide a response to that one, please.

Mr CAMERON: Thank you, minister and chair. As the member has indicated, probably our most enduring road trauma problem in this state is country road crashes and more specifically single-vehicle country road crashes. Every year there is a disproportionate burden, as the commissioner said, on our regional roads.

Some time ago, Main Roads, with the support of the Road Safety Council, commenced a program that has evolved from 2012 to the present day, which essentially is aiming to apply low-cost treatments on our regional road network. Main Roads has identified initially about 18 000 kilometres—sorry, 14 000 kilometres that need to be treated —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I thought it was 17 400.

Mr CAMERON: It is 17 400—my apologies. I am going off my memory. We have treated 1 400 kilometres to date, so we have got a significant task.

[10.40 am]

The information provided to the Road Safety Council has shown that, with the road trauma trust account, since about 2012, we have recommended to government and the ministers that about \$20 million a year be spent on essentially what is adding a little bit of bitumen to the side of each country road and adding an audible white line, or a rumble strip. In some cases, with Indian Ocean Drive being an example, where the traffic volumes justify it, we have started to add wide, centre median lines—audible rumble strips with a metre in the middle of the road. The reason for that is that the run-off crashes often start left or they start right. In the case of Indian Ocean Drive, members of the public thought it was all about so-called idiots overtaking or taking dangerous manoeuvres. While there are some of those behaviours present, the vast majority of crashes on our country roads today are somebody like the people in this chamber just making a mistake. I think the country representatives here would fully understand that not every crash on a regional road is what we would traditionally call deliberate risk-taking—speeding, alcohol or not wearing seatbelts. It is now more likely to be someone tired, distracted momentarily or slightly inattentive. That burden of trauma needs a significant response.

The work by Main Roads and recommended by the Road Safety Council showed that, for about \$20 million a year, it was going to take us 44 years to treat the priorities that the minister thankfully corrected me on—those 17 400 kilometres that we have initially identified. That 44 years can be reduced to nine years if that \$20-million-a-year program becomes a \$100-million-a-year program. I am very pleased to say, as you have asked, that under the COVID responses, the \$20 million from the state was subsequently matched by another \$80 million from the federal government, which represented the first year of what would be a nine-year program. More recently, there have been announcements by the federal government for continued support and further support. The state

government has welcomed the announcement of a \$284 million allocation for the Western Australian part of the federal budget. At the moment, Main Roads is in the process of finalising a submission to put back to the federal government through the state government for approval, which will identify further treatments that we can take. That is a remarkable change.

The state's road safety strategy, which the minister announced on Sunday—this funding support essentially becomes the backbone of a regional response. It is not just a single response. We need to make sure that we have people driving vehicles with lane-departure warning. The commissioner mentioned the regional traffic presence. That is welcomed from a Road Safety Council point of view. Those police presences do save lives on country roads. We need to do more, particularly in relation to speed enforcement on regional roads. There is a good response, but that combination of managing speeds, improving those roads and upgrading the vehicles that people are in is going to give us our best chance. We are losing far too many people on those regional roads. This is a very significant program. In my 20 years in road safety, it is the biggest commitment I have ever seen. It is one that is going to make a significant difference. For country members and representatives, and I implore communities—this problem is no longer some risk-takers. We have pared away those high-risk crashes. They have come down significantly in the last 10 years. We are now left with three out of four serious crashes being somebody like the people in this room, a bit tired, making a mistake and inattentive. We still need the police to enforce those risky behaviours, but I implore the house and have on the record said that three out of four crashes are now just ordinary people like us making a mistake. We can do something, not to prevent the crash, but to reduce the consequences. These treatments on these regional roads will make a huge difference.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: If I can just add, honourable member, that yesterday in the Main Roads session, there was a helpful conversation about the regional road spend. I draw to your attention that that happened yesterday, Hon Dr Sally Talbot. You may want to read that *Hansard* because there is some illuminating stuff in there.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I have just one line of questioning. A lot of it has been dealt with by Hon Tjorn Sibma and Hon Martin Aldridge. It is with regards to page 418 and new initiatives—the 800 additional police officers. I am not sure how much more information you can give, but I am quite interested with regards to whether any decision has been made with regards to the 800 officers, how they are being deployed, particularly with regards to the northern region, which is where I represent, and the community servicing.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Honourable member, there is nothing further I can add. We have spoken about those 350 officers already in terms of the 800, but that detail is yet to be worked out, the commissioner tells me.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: Can I ask, then, has there been any decision made with regards to the range of services as opposed to where they are putting them—whether it is mostly with regards to community servicing or not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I think the commissioner can probably answer broadly on that one.

Mr DAWSON: I will heavily caveat this in the sense that we still remain in a state of emergency, so while we have allocated 400 existing police and 150 of the first cohort are going to that, we still have, for want of a better expression, the bulk of the officers responding to COVID on loan from other areas. We are not backfilling those until the next 200 come through. Of the remaining 600 officers to be recruited over the three out years, we will reserve judgement based on, firstly, if we are still in a state of emergency and, secondly, clearly where police responses are. I would, though, add that there is a strong emphasis that we are driving in terms of prevention of crime and dealing with youth. There are those two areas, and the other area that we have put a lot of investment into

is in our intelligence and high-end drug trafficking. Those efforts are bearing fruit, and we know that with the large reduction of methylamphetamine coming into the state, which has nearly halved, the crime rate has nearly halved. So we know that there is a very direct correlation between the amount of supply of particularly methylamphetamine, and the volume offences such as burglary, stealing and stealing motor vehicles have dropped between the order of 40 per cent to 60 per cent. We will continue to drive high-end drug trafficking as a key target. We also want to divert a lot of young people away from the criminal justice system as much as we can. That is working closely with PCYCs, ensuring that our youth policing officers are not contributing to the children simply chalking up more Children's Court convictions, but we are diverting them away from crime into areas, ideally, to get them job ready by the time they are 17 and 18.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I was just going to be helpful to Hon Rick Mazza. In terms of your office accommodation question, you could ask it related to page 418. There is a line item that talks about the government office accommodation reform program. The lines we have for that may well answer what you want.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister, for directing the traffic there. Hon Martin Pritchard, do you still have questions?

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: No.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Hon Rick Mazza, do you want to pursue that question? He does not want to. Thanks, minister, for being helpful.

[10.50 am]

Hon DIANE EVERS: I have one brief question. I did like hearing about the road trauma trust account and the good work that is being done with that. I note there is another item on page 417, the "Safe Intersections Program". I am interested to know why in the "Spending Changes" table it decreases in 2021–22 only to then increase in 2022–23 and forward? Is there some change there or what is the direction?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I will ask Mr Cameron to respond to that, please.

Mr CAMERON: Member, can I acknowledge and thank you for having the international and national symbol of road trauma on display, along with a couple of other members today. This is National Road Safety Week. We talked earlier of a pandemic; there is a worldwide pandemic in road trauma—1.35 million.

On your question around intersections, there are two components to this; and, yes, it is evolving. Traditionally, the road trauma trust account has put an amount in each year for a limited number of intersections that Main Roads identify that need treatment. If I can describe it, they fall between major projects. So where Main Roads will spend tens of millions of dollars on a bridge or grade separated intersection improvement versus what many would know as traditional black spot treatments, which are much smaller, there is an amount in between that the trust account has been funding for a number of years. There is a change that you have alluded to this year. There is a second program that the Road Safety Council recommended and the government has approved to treat low-cost intersections. In recommending and forming the budget with the resources we have had, we have recommended a combination of continuing to do the former program, but adding this new program.

In the first year, Main Roads only wants a limited amount to pilot the program. The difference with the second program is that it is a low-cost intersection treatment, so it will be a cheaper program—moneys typically in the tens to maybe a couple of hundred thousand per intersection. The rationale for this is a conversation and a series of presentations to the council that in Perth alone we have

50 000 intersections. If we are going to engineer our way out of these problems, about 2 000 of those a year have a crash or a number of crashes at them, but 48 000 are going to have a crash one day. If you are moving towards zero, we have to look at how do we treat all of those. So this program is designed by Main Roads. We are going to pilot this to see whether or not we can apply lower cost treatments to a greater number of intersections. When you combine it with speed management and other things like that, basically we want to treat more intersections sooner. That is the reason you are seeing the numbers vary.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I would like to try to fill in some of the gaps I have after my previous questions. I am trying to get an idea of the various committees and bodies that advise you, commissioner, in your role as SEC. Who are the current attendees of the State Disaster Council? Can you give me a quick run-down?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am not sure there is a line item in the budget or indeed the budget papers on that.

The CHAIR: Thanks, minister; it is a pretty straightforward question: what is the membership of the State Disaster Council.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Absolutely, Madam Chair, and I am saying that I am not sure there is a line item in either the budget papers or the annual report on it. We might not have that information before us, is my point. However, I will ask the commissioner if he is able to provide a response, noting, of course, that he does not have any notes on it and so he might not get every member correct. Commissioner.

Mr DAWSON: The State Disaster Council is chaired by the Premier. The deputy chair—these are both set out under the Emergency Management Act—is the Minister for Emergency Services, Mr Logan. The other, I guess, non-government members that attend are myself as the State Emergency Coordinator and Commissioner Klemm, the commissioner of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Other attendees include the Public Sector Commissioner and the Director General of Premier and cabinet. But they are specific people who have been appointed by the State Disaster Council itself. The Minister for Health is obviously always there; the Chief Health Officer, the director general of Health, and the rest of them are combined numbers of cabinet ministers—they are not always able to be there—so that number is not necessarily constant.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Thank you. I appreciate that a comprehensive list of all attendees cannot be provided.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am aware that certainly the director general of the Department of Communities also is a member—that is, in her role as the chief welfare officer; is that correct?

Mr DAWSON: That is correct.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: As I was asking about those morning—8.00 am—meetings, and the state emergency coordination group at the State Disaster Council, there is not the attendance of the Chief Medical Officer for Mental Health or the Chief Psychiatrist or the commissioner for mental health, is there?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No. Again, my earlier response was that the Minister for Mental Health is in attendance.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I might leave it there for now and give other members a chance for questions.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: This is a budget paper-related question, minister—page 418, third line item under “New Initiatives”, “Body Armour”. Could you provide an update about how many—I think it is about 6 200—multi-threat body armour pieces have been rolled out to frontline officers?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can ask deputy commissioner Dreibergs to give a response in relation to the body armour stuff.

Mr DREIBERGS: I can advise that at the end of September, 6 203 officers had been measured, with 3 611 kits being delivered, with the remaining kits to be supplied between now and early 2021.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: How do you prioritise the rollout, deputy commissioner?

Mr DREIBERGS: As the priority of the rollout has been done internally, in terms of identifying districts that we believe in the first instance needed it—for instance, the very first area that was provided with the body armour was our regional operations group because they attended the most high-risk incidents—for a number of reasons, we provided to particular districts based on operational information.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: My understanding is that the original project scope was around \$15.4 million, but that the budget figures seem to be slightly higher than that. Has the cost of the program increased in any particular way?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The commissioner can answer that.

Mr DAWSON: The appropriation of \$19.2 million—the change in some of the budget allocation for that was primarily around the installation of body armour storage. Some 98 sites have been identified. This particular equipment is world’s best practice in terms of its ballistic properties. The nature of the manufacturing—this is on advice from the key manufacturer—is that it cannot be simply just thrown into the boot of a car. It has to be stored properly to maintain the integrity of its ballistic properties. Secondly, because they are personal issue, they have an inner webbing, if I can put it that way. Obviously we live in a hot state and officers are provided with additional supplementary fit-out, because if they are working in a hot environment, they need to, obviously, take the vest off when they complete their shift of work, and we need proper storage and drying areas in the way that does not impact on the integrity of the equipment. That has generally been why we have had to allocate a bit more spend to get those drying racks out.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: On a related issue, can I ask about the rollout of the body-worn cameras; how many units have been procured and how many have been rolled out to your officers, and when that might be completed? I think it is an annual report-based question.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is. The rollout of body-worn cameras is being delivered at a cost of \$20.9 million over five years. The body-worn cameras include a digital evidence management system that captures, stores, manages and shares all data from body-worn cameras and other digital evidence sources. The statewide deployment started in June last year and was completed in early July this year. The devices capture real-time audio and video, and strengthen community safety and, obviously, improve transparency and accountability in police interactions with the public.

The CHAIR: Given the time, that concludes our hearing with WA police. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you for your attendance today.

I remind members that due to time constraints, the electronic lodgement system will not be reopened for additional questions this year.

For witnesses, I advise that the committee will forward the transcript of evidence, which includes the questions you have taken on notice highlighted on the transcript, as soon as possible after the

hearing. Responses to questions on notice are due by 5.00 pm, 10 working days after receipt. Should you be unable to meet the date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met.

I thank you for your attendance. I ask that you promptly leave the chamber due to COVID-19 cleaning. Thank you again for your participation.

Hearing concluded at 11.00 am
