

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2015–16 ANNUAL REPORT HEARINGS

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
THURSDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2016**

**SESSION FOUR
WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE**

Members

**Hon Rick Mazza (Chair)
Hon Peter Katsambanis (Deputy Chair)
Hon Alanna Clohesy
Hon Helen Morton
Hon Sally Talbot**

Hearing commenced at 1.32 pm

Mr KARL O'CALLAGHAN
Commissioner of Police, examined:

Mr ANTHONY KANNIS
Executive Director, examined:

Ms SANTA CARDENIA
Chief Finance Officer, examined:

Ms SUSAN YOUNG
Detective Superintendent, Crime Investigation Standards and Family Violence Division, examined:

Mr MARK STRINGER
Principal Performance Analyst, examined:

The CHAIR: On behalf of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I welcome you to today's hearing. Can the witnesses confirm that they have read, understood and signed a document headed "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 the 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. Agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the Parliament to review agency outcomes, and the committee values your assistance with this.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Good afternoon, everyone. I would first like to go to page 20. I know on Hon Alanna Clohesy is going to ask lots of questions about family and domestic violence, but this is just one that I want to ask about. How does the newly created crime investigation and family violence division interact with the co-located services in each of the 17 districts—child protection and family services, the police and the non-government organisations? Can you just talk about how those two interact?

Ms Young: The division that we have, we work closely with our partners at Child Protection and Family Support, which is their strategic family violence division, so Sherrilee Mitchell and the staff who work with her. So, again, from our division to their division it is that more strategic level. The operational aspects are certainly dealt with district by district.

Hon HELEN MORTON: So nothing has changed at the operational level?

Ms Young: There are still the 17 family and domestic violence response teams that have the co-location with Police, Child Protection and the support service.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Thanks; I just needed to get that clear in my head. I want to go to page 13, as you would expect me to ask a few questions about the mental health co-response services. I am interested in the statistics here, and I know that this is for the first six months only, because it commenced in January 2016. There were in excess of 4 450 interventions in the first six months. Do you have an updated figure for that?

Mr Kannis: Not beyond 30 June, but we could take that on notice, if you like.

Hon HELEN MORTON: If you would not mind.

[Supplementary Information D1.]

Hon HELEN MORTON: Going on from that, has the 80 per cent decrease in mental health transportations continued at around about that level or has it dipped below or gone up or whatever?

Mr Kannis: Yes, we will take that on notice.

Mr O'Callaghan: My understanding is that it has remained the same. I was out at the police operations centre the other day talking to the co-located mental health worker there and the information is that it is about the same—about an 80 per cent reduction—so there has been a very significant benefit for police and, of course, the patients as well.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Is there any numerical figure, as in actual number that that would equate to? Would you be able to give that number or not?

Mr O'Callaghan: Yes.

Hon HELEN MORTON: If you would take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information D2.]

Hon HELEN MORTON: We talk about the south east metropolitan and the north west metropolitan districts. In terms of the actual local area, I suppose or the actual suburbs that the south east metro covers, are you able to identify where those suburbs are?

Mr O'Callaghan: We can go back and give you a list of them, but basically south east metro extends from The Causeway in the north to just south of Armadale in the south, and goes as far east as Belmont and as far west as Canning Vale. It is that sort of strip.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I do not need individual suburbs.

Mr O'Callaghan: So it is quite a large area, and I think it is probably well known that in terms of policing it is the busiest police district in the state.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Where is the co-response team in the south east based? Do they have a base or do they operate differently from that?

Mr Kannis: My understanding is that they are based in the Perth watch house, so the coordination is all from the Perth watch house.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Would the mental health workers involved also be based there?

Mr Kannis: I would need to check exactly where they are based. I know it is coordinated from Perth watch house, but I could take that on notice.

Hon HELEN MORTON: So those people might be employed by the health department, might they not? The mental health workers are not employed by Police, are they?

Mr Kannis: No, they are not. They are employed through the Mental Health Commission.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I am just wondering whether they are part of the Armadale Health Service or the Bentley Health Service or whatever, if you know what I mean. I cannot quite get a feel for when a call comes through for a person who might need that co-response to take place. Do the mental health workers travel there separately or are they in the same vehicle as the police?

Mr O'Callaghan: They go with the police and the idea was to hold them centrally at police headquarters, the operations centre there or at the watch house, so that we could move them around both of those districts as quickly as possible. But they need to be with police when they go to deal with the mental health issue, for obvious reasons, for safety concerns.

Hon HELEN MORTON: So if there are different locations, for example, it might not be that convenient to drive and pick them up and then drive to the scene of whatever the incident is.

Mr O'Callaghan: And it is unpredictable. When we forecast the trial we said that eventually the idea would be to try to have the teams located in each one of the districts, so when you expand out, you can have them in each one of the four metropolitan districts and then further out to the regions later on.

Hon HELEN MORTON: The last question on this area is: do you envisage this expanding beyond those two trial sites?

Mr O'Callaghan: Yes, I think so. Certainly, the feedback we get from both the police operations centre and the police on the ground is that it is a very good, valuable service. From our policing perspective it is a very useful service for us, so I am keen to expand it out beyond what it is now, to wait for the trial data, and then we can make a decision on that.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Is applicable in a non-metropolitan setting as well?

Mr O'Callaghan: I think the metropolitan area will obviously be our priority, but certainly to some of the larger regional centres like Bunbury. For argument's sake, recently we heard in the wastewater analysis that Bunbury has the highest per capita usage of meth in the state, so you would expect that, commensurate with that, there would be a high level of mental health issue down there. When we roll it out beyond the metropolitan area, we would be targeting first those large centres. I think anecdotally as we travel around, there are a lot of places in regional WA where the community and community forums that say that meth is affecting their communities, and so mental health issues come out of that.

[1.40 pm]

Hon HELEN MORTON: The next one I wanted to talk about is the meth testing levels in wastewater. Meth in general comes up on page 19. I was really concerned to read that 43 per cent of WA Police Perth watch house detainees tested positive to methamphetamine via urinalysis in 2015. What sort of treatment do those people get while they are in the watch house?

Mr O'Callaghan: They do not get any special treatment apart from what would be normally required to make sure they are safe to process an offender through the watch house. We now have a 24/7 full-time nurse on board there. If they require any intervention at that level, they can get it there. If it is more serious than that, they would be transported to a hospital or a site where they could be treated. But generally people coming through the watch house are not there for long periods of time; they are there overnight or even shorter if they are sent out to bail.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Just on the same issue about illicit drug use, I want to ask some questions around the synthetic drugs legislation. Whilst I do not see a specific spot in the annual report that relates to that, other than this general area around illicit drug use, I am particularly interested in the Misuse of Drugs Amendment (Psychoactive Substances) Act that came into being in November 2015; so that is 12 months now that it has been in place. Have you charged anybody under that act?

Mr O'Callaghan: Yes, I think we have. We could give you the detail by supplementary.

Hon HELEN MORTON: That would be how many and what aspect.

Mr O'Callaghan: Yes.

[*Supplementary Information No D3.*]

Hon HELEN MORTON: The other thing you might have to give me the same way is: were there any instances where the drugs had to be returned to the individual—or substances, rather, had to be returned to the individual?

Mr O'Callaghan: Yes.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Can you talk more generally about the impact that that legislation may have had on the prevalence of psychoactive substances generally in the community and how active you have been in that process?

Mr O’Callaghan: I cannot tell you what the flow-on for the community would be at this point in time because we simply do not have the data. What it has enabled us to do is be a lot more proactive around the outlets that sell those types of substances. We had a lot of complaints from members of the public about people turning up at those locations and buying psychoactive substances from them. We have been able to do a lot of proactive work around that, charge people and seize the drugs. At least from a community perspective some of the feedback from the complainants—I think the general view is there is a lot of undesirable people that would turn up to buy these things—is that it has been able to stop some of that. Some work has been done in Mt Lawley and work has been done at Rockingham, as you know, so we have been able to respond more quickly to complaints from members of the public.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Is it reasonable to suggest that you do not see psychoactive substances very much anymore?

Mr O’Callaghan: I just do not think we have the data about that. That sort of research work has not been done and probably could be done by somebody. I do not think I could make a comment on that beyond the fact that we have been able to use the legislation, we have seized substances, we have charged people and we get good feedback from the complainants.

The CHAIR: Before I move on, I might ask a question about the executive summary on page 6. There are a lot of dot points there about the areas that have operational issues. One thing that is not there is bushfire activity, like the Waroona–Yarloop fires. I wonder what the financial implications were to police and their involvement in those fires.

Mr Kannis: I am not sure that we have actually calculated the impact of police officer time on those fires at all. We do not normally do that, I do not believe. I will ask Santa what we normally do.

Ms Cardenia: Not normal time, but I can provide on notice what expenditure did occur in response to the Waroona fire.

[Supplementary Information No D4.]

Mr O’Callaghan: Can I say that we expect every year we are going to get at least one major bushfire, whether that is Waroona, Yarloop or the Roleystone–hills one or something like that. We budget for one major event like that or two major events. We had the Nannup–Northcliffe fires a couple of years ago. It is not as though it is an extra unforeseen cost because we know that every bushfire season there will be some major deployment of police. It is factored into the way we think about our budget.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I will start with the Ballajura Police Station. What date is that station scheduled to open?

Mr Kannis: Early January. Immediately after Christmas we expect the Ballajura police station will be opened.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: You do not have a date for that yet?

Mr Kannis: I believe 9 January is the date that is currently set aside for it.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That will be very welcome. How many officers have been allocated to the station?

Mr Kannis: A 30–officer police station is the size of Ballajura. I believe that is the number. It is the standard size we have. So 30 officers is what I understand to be the number, but I will confirm that. I will correct that if it is incorrect, but it is around 30 is my understanding.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is what its size is. Is there going to be a full complement of officers at the station?

Mr Kannis: Yes, we are planning on a full complement.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What suburbs will that station cover?

Mr Kannis: We have not got that detail with us. I am happy to get back to you about what specific suburbs. It is about to be gazetted. We will take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No D5.]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Let us move on to family and domestic violence. Welcome to Detective Superintendent Sue Young. I notice in response to the increasing rate of family and domestic violence that WA Police has established the new crime investigation and family violence division, which you are the superintendent of; is that correct?

Ms Young: That is correct.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Great. When was that established?

Ms Young: About five months ago.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What is the role of that division?

Ms Young: One part of it is involved in the investigative practices, so the management of how we respond to investigations more broadly, and the other component is the family violence. It is the strategic response to family violence, so looking at some of the broader strategic aspects to family violence as well as informing the policy and the operational response to family violence.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Does the policy and operational response include training or providing advice in regard to the training of officers?

Ms Young: It has done. Where we are at in terms of that, a couple of my team have been working with the police academy in terms of the recruit training. A number of recommendations have come out of external reviews in terms of the service delivery around training. As a starting point, we have started with the recruit training to look at how we can better augment that in terms of getting a broader understanding of family violence and some of the contributing factors. That has been a piece of work that has been ongoing with a couple of my team, yes.

[1.50 pm]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What operational outcome measures or efficiency measures does the division have?

Ms Young: We are working at the moment with our business analyst team to come up with a report card, similar to a monthly report card that has been utilised for a range of other crime-type areas within the agency. Some of the areas we are looking at are things like recidivism and landing on a decision about what recidivism might be, volume number, repeat attendances—that type of stuff—so that we can get a better, easier snapshot of what is going on, where.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is great. Thank you, Commissioner, for providing responses to questions prior to the hearing. The first one was about calls for assistance and I note that there has been an increase in 12 months of about 16 per cent of calls in relation to domestic and family violence. What sort of pressure does that put on the call centre in relation to that increase, as I imagine no other calls would have decreased at the same time?

Mr O’Callaghan: In fact, our other calls have decreased, so there has been a slight drop in the number of total calls to the police operations centre —

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Has there?

Mr O’Callaghan: — for these other, non-domestic-type arrangements. So there may have been changes in policies or changes in a range of things, so it has gone down. I am not saying it has gone down by the 16 per cent increase in family violence, but we have not had any particular representation from the police operations centre about the difficulty in answering these calls in a timely way and resolving them, so I think we probably have not seen any significant growth at the call centre for a couple of years now, overall—I am not talking about family violence.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. Sixteen per cent is a fairly significant increase, particularly when you put that together with the number or the increase in the incidents that were reported—calls being one thing and the incidents being another. There has been about a 25 per cent increase in the 12 months.

Mr O’Callaghan: There certainly is. But you can put it in context: a couple of years ago the police operations centre was taking 1.1 million calls, and we have here 50 000-odd; it is a big increase in domestic violence, but a small subset of the total number of calls taken.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: But increasing and ones that require focus. I also asked for how many family and domestic violence perpetrators in those reports were known to police and you were not able to provide that information in the time frame provided. Have you been able to bring those figures with you?

Mr Kannis: Yes, we do have those. Sue can provide that information.

Ms Young: For your question 4, about how many of the perpetrators in 2015–16 family and domestic violence general criminal incident reports were known to police, of 29 938 reported crime incidents in 2015–16, a total of 7 779 offenders were processed, and of these offenders, about 2 974—or 38.2 per cent—had committed at least one additional family and domestic violence-related offence in the period from 2011–12 to 2014–15.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay, that is very handy. I like to do my own comparisons, so if I could have those figures, the 2015–16 figures, I can compare them with previous figures.

[*Supplementary Information No D6.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: We were unable to get an answer to question 5, which asked, for 2015–16, of the perpetrators known to police, firstly how many were responsible for violence perpetrated against one or more victims?

Ms Young: Again, using that same 2 974 offenders that had committed at least one additional related offence, using 2011–12 and 2014–15 as the date range, a total of 520 offenders or 17.5 per cent were responsible for acts of violence against more than one victim in 2015–16, so that is going back and capturing that five year stretch.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Similarly, with the second part of the question, how many were multiple acts of violence against the same person, you still have that same dataset?

Ms Young: Same dataset, yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: If you just want to tell me what that is.

Ms Young: Of the 2 974 in the period 2011–12 to 2014–15, a total of 1 217 offenders, or 40.9 per cent, were responsible for multiple acts of violence against the same person in 2015–16.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can I put that on notice again just for that 12-month period?

[*Supplementary Information No D7.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I also note that there has been about a 12.5 per cent increase in the number of police orders that were issued in relation to family and domestic violence in the 12-month period. I am also aware that some substantial work had been done on police orders and

refining the issuing of those. Would you like to address how the issuing of police orders is going and how WA Police is handling the increase?

Ms Young: The 12.5 per cent increase is probably commensurate with the increase of reporting as well, so, again, it is an assessment made at the time. The issuance of a police order is based around a reasonable suspicion that an act of family violence has occurred and there is a reasonable suspicion that another one will occur if they are not separated or there is not some provision put in place in terms of a police order, so that is very much a frontline officer judgement decision about the reasons and the cause for them to issue a police order. In terms of the issuance of it, it is certainly a responsibility of the individual officer to make a determination.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. I am aware that the Ombudsman's report two years ago talked about police orders as being an important frontline tactic, and that there needed to be some more work done on ensuring that the police at the scene consider issuing a police order as a first order of business or a first response, if you like, to increase that. If you are saying that the increases of response is reflected in the number of reports, has there been some work done to ensure that frontline officers have the skills in identifying the situation and the importance and need of issuing a police order?

Ms Young: I guess the comment I would make around that is that the police apply a range of interventions; there are a number of interventions we can apply, and at the low end of intervention it will simply be either a verbal or a documented referral—a piece of paper with information that will send them off to various referral services like 1800Respect and various local family violence support services that might be available, and then it will kind of grade and scale up, if you like, depending on the situation the officers find themselves with. Obviously the penultimate, I guess, is the arrest and the removal of the perpetrator from the event by some form of criminal charge and the police order I guess falls within that provision or that determination of decision-making for each officer, based on what they are presented with, so again, it is that frontline officer's determination, based on what they are presented with about what would be the best intervention to apply.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I am just going to move on to homicides as a result of family and domestic violence. I asked a question during budget estimates and got a response that in the 2015–16 year to date, there had been 24 deaths as a result of family and domestic violence and I am aware that there were a number of caveats associated with that number, but the response I get this time is that there has been 19 deaths. Can you just explain that?

Ms Young: Yes, I will try to. The Australian Bureau of Statistics—we report nationally on the term “homicide”—includes a series of offences, and one of them is attempted murder. At our state family violence unit, we manage deaths as opposed to attempted murders, whether it has resulted in the death of a person, so the number you have of 27 in your current reporting includes a number of attempted homicides, because the ABS includes that as their dataset. However, at our unit, we include only deaths, so you have that disparate number—you have 27 and 19, so 19 people have died in the state as a result of a family violence–related offence.

[2.00 pm]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Compared with 12 last year.

Ms Young: Yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is still a shocking number, is it not? Really, what I should be asking to get an idea of the level of the escalation of the crime is also how many attempted murder charges —

Ms Young: You can, yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. Thank you. Well then, can I have that information? I am happy to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No D8.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: For 2014–15, 2015–16—the number of attempted murder charges. Thank you.

The CHAIR: On page 49, in your notes to the financial statement comment, you have got, “Sick leave”. You have made the comment that there is no provision being made for non-vesting sick leave. Have you seen an increase in sick leave relating to stress?

Mr Kannis: I am not sure if the commissioner has any empirical evidence, but there is no evidence that I have available to me to say that it has. All of those cases are referred to our health and welfare area and they are dealt with confidentially, so for us to say that we have a reported number would be only those that report themselves as suffering from stress. That would be the only qualification that I would say. I do not have data. I am happy to see if we have any data to reflect that.

The CHAIR: We will take that on notice as D9. What I am actually looking at is has there been an increase in, say, the last 12 months? That should be good.

[*Supplementary Information No D9.*]

The CHAIR: I think last year when we spoke you had been drug testing officers; is that continuing?

Mr O’Callaghan: Yes. It is an ongoing process of drug testing a portion of the police force every year.

The CHAIR: That is like a random type of drug testing?

Mr O’Callaghan: It is both random and targeted. It just depends on information that we have.

The CHAIR: How many officers have tested positive this last year?

Mr O’Callaghan: I cannot tell you. It would be a very low number—in ones or twos—but I will need to get that exact number for you.

[*Supplementary Information No D10.*]

The CHAIR: On page 56, you have got, “Employee expenses: Other leave.” I note that other leave has jumped from \$207 000 to \$2.385 million. Can you just explain to us what other leave is and why there has been such a big jump?

Ms Cardenia: Other leave can include—there is leave that is accrued by a certain number of officers that were previously on a 30-hour week, compared to the 40-hour week. That is recorded separately, so any leave associated with that is captured under other leave. That also catches the superannuation contribution component.

The CHAIR: So, to be clear, you have gone from 40 hours to 38 hours. Is that what you are saying to me? There is now an extra two hours captured.

Ms Cardenia: That is right.

The CHAIR: And that has been reported as other leave?

Ms Cardenia: That is right. And what that is saying is that there has been an increase in leave taken by those officers that are on the 38-hour working week compared to the 40-hour working week.

The CHAIR: It is quite a jump, is it not?

Ms Cardenia: Yes.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Regional and remote policing services—on page 17 you have got your reporting mechanism down as a per capita breakdown. It has reduced this year. Has it reduced this year; am I reading that right? It was going to be \$725 and it was actually \$690. If you want a more comprehensive chart, I think it is on page 107.

Ms Cardenia: The difference between the 2015–16 target and the 2015–16 actual, there are a couple of contributing factors. One of them is the impact of additional police officers that were initially expected to be deployed to regional WA. In that particular result there was a greater number of officers deployed to the metro area compared to regional WA; that is one component.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Is that in terms of a smaller increase or a decrease to regional and remote?

Ms Cardenia: No, it is not a decrease as far as FTEs. It is just as result of the additional —

Hon SALLY TALBOT: A smaller increase.

Ms Cardenia: That is right. However, those FTEs are being allocated in the current financial year. There are another 62 FTEs being allocated to regional WA. Our projections included the salary, for example, of those FTEs, and the operating costs compared to metro. Metro has a cheaper cost because in regional WA you have to pick up Government Regional Officers' Housing, transfers and other allowances.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Was there a plan to deploy more officers that were then not deployed?

Ms Cardenia: For that particular year, yes.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: And what was the reason for not deploying them to regional and remote areas?

Ms Cardenia: Because for 2015–16 there was a focus in regard to the metropolitan area. With the new metropolitan model, the decision was made that that was a particular priority in 2015–16, so the regional WA officers have been prioritised out of the 2016–17 FTE allocation.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Who makes that decision?

Ms Cardenia: That is decided by our corporate board.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Is that as directed by the government or is it made by the board?

Ms Cardenia: No, it is made by our corporate board.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Okay. Sorry; I cut you off.

Ms Cardenia: The other component of the decrease is the change in the market for Government Regional Officers' Housing, because with the change in the mining industry there has been a decline in the rent paid. That is reflected in the average cost.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Okay. Can you quantify that for us? Can you give us the figures, or do you want to take that on notice? What was the housing component decrease? What proportion of the decrease was to do with housing?

Ms Cardenia: I can take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No D11.]

Hon SALLY TALBOT: On page 60—again, I am still on regional and remote—there is a reference to a multifunction policing facility grant, “Grants Capital Works.” Can you tell us what that line item refers to?

Ms Cardenia: That particular line item refers to our funding that was allocated by the commonwealth government to be spent on our multi-functional policing facilities. That particular amount specifically relates to Looma.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: That whole \$480 000 went to Looma?

Ms Cardenia: That is right.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: What did it provide at Looma?

Ms Cardenia: This has not been spent as yet. It sits under our current assets, so it is sitting in our cash ready to be spent on Looma. We are currently liaising with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in regard to the spending of that funding.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Do you know what it is going to be spent on?

Ms Cardenia: I do not, off the top of my head.

Mr Kannis: I do know that there is some work required at Looma on some air-conditioning systems and some maintenance on the premises.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: What was the criteria of the grant? You say it is commonwealth money.

Ms Cardenia: Yes.

Mr Kannis: There was tied money that was allocated for us to develop multifunction police facilities. This is an amount that has not yet been spent of the allocation that was originally proposed.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I see. Was there other money spent in 2015–16?

Mr Kannis: Not in 2015–16. I believe the money has been spent in previous years to establish those multifunction facilities.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I see. How was the decision made to spend it at Looma?

Mr Kannis: It is a proposal that we have to spend it at Looma, because that is where the pressing requirements are, in our view. However, those grants are tied and we have to get approval from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to actually spend it on those items.

[2.10 pm]

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Right. The state Department of Aboriginal Affairs —

Mr Kannis: Yes —

Hon SALLY TALBOT: — or the commonwealth?

Mr Kannis: — but it is also linked with the commonwealth. It goes via the state Department of Aboriginal Affairs with requests to the commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I see. Could the state Department of Aboriginal Affairs suggest that it should not be spent at Looma, it should be spent somewhere else?

Mr Kannis: They have not said it should not be spent; they just are checking to make sure that it does qualify for that expenditure. Because it is a tied grant and there are some tight details about what you can spend it on, so we just need to get through that analysis.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Just to return to the proposition that in 2016–17 rural and remote policing is going to be increased, do you have a plan? Can you describe what that increase is going to consist of?

Mr Kannis: We do have a plan for the allocation of our growth plan, if that is what you are after.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Yes, in regional and remote areas.

Mr Kannis: Yes.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Does it include new capital infrastructure—new police stations?

Mr Kannis: In some locations we are having to add to our police stations. For example, we are putting additional officers in Broome and we are spending around \$8 million on expanding the Broome Police Station to allow the additional police officers to go into that. That is an example where we are spending money on expanding, rather than totally new facilities.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Do you have a document that you can table—take it on notice if you need to—that will give us the regional and remote plan?

Mr Kannis: The allocation of officers?

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Yes, allocation of officers. Do you have anything that also includes the increase in the number of officers and where those officers will be stationed?

Mr Kannis: We have various restrictions. We will get you the information we can, because we can give it to you at the regional level, rather than station level.

[*Supplementary Information No D12.*]

Hon SALLY TALBOT: My other question is about—which I have lost the reference to. Sorry, Mr Chair, do you want to go on to something else and I will come back to this one?

The CHAIR: I might just ask a couple of questions while you are gathering your information there. On page 60 you have “Royalties for Regions Fund: To hold monies committed for projects and programs in WA regional areas.” In 2015 there was over \$10 million. Now there is \$985 000. Can you just explain that?

Mr Kannis: I might ask Santa if she has those details.

Ms Cardenia: In 2015, that was money held in our cash bank specifically for the community safety network of \$8.7 million and another \$300 000 for the regional attraction and retention program. We are currently in the process of going through the budget midyear review process and there will be a number of carryovers for the community safety network, which will then be impacting in 2016.

The CHAIR: Right; so you have expended most of those funds. Just on the organised crime investigation fund, you talk about “confiscation proceeds”. Is that the proceeds of crime confiscations that you made; is that what that refers to?

Ms Cardenia: That particularly relates to funding that WA Police receives from the Department of the Attorney General to spend towards combatting organised crime. That is not a reflection of the proceeds.

The CHAIR: It refers to “confiscation proceeds” in the first line.

Ms Cardenia: That is right; the moneys go to the Department of the Attorney General. From there we have a memorandum of understanding with the department for us to be allocated a certain amount of funding.

The CHAIR: Okay. That has increased from \$269 000 to over a million in 2016. Is that because there have been more confiscations or just that the Attorney General is being more generous to you?

Ms Cardenia: Neither one. What happened was that going from 2015 to 2016, there was a delay in the memorandum of understanding being signed off by the Department of the Attorney General and the money fell into this current financial year. So, there was a carryover of \$1 million from the previous year.

The CHAIR: Right. Just one last question before we go back to Hon Sally Talbot. On page 110 there is an act-of-grace payment. I am unsure whether that is \$4.3 million or just \$4 302.

Ms Cardenia: That is \$4 302.

The CHAIR: I thought it might have been. Can you tell us what that was in relation to?

Mr Kannis: We generally do not disclose that. I do not think we are able to disclose.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I have found my place again now, thank you. Workers’ compensation—police officers still do not have workers’ compensation provisions extended to them, do they?

Mr Kannis: Correct.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Is there any work being done within the department about implementing the workers' compensation scheme for police officers?

Mr Kannis: For some time the department has been doing a certain amount of research on options available. So, yes, we have been investigating options available for making workers' compensation available to police officers.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I had a look in the annual report to see whether I could find any reference to it. The references to "workers' compensation" obviously refer to police what you call workers, rather than officers.

Mr Kannis: Police staff—public servants, yes.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Yes. Are you spending any money on the research on possible options for a workers' compensation scheme for officers?

Mr Kannis: We are spending time as business as usual. We have areas within our human resources area that have that responsibility to investigate such things. You might be aware, we are doing a wider workforce optimisation project, which is about helping officers move to other careers and other things and also to actually help them get back to fitness quicker so they can get back on the job. As part of that overall work, we have been doing investigations of options for workers' compensation.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Do you have a costing for some of those options?

Mr Kannis: We do, but it would probably be premature to disclose those at this point in time.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Can we ask you to provide the estimates standing committee with some of those options, which we will then keep confidential?

Mr Kannis: Can I take that on notice? I do not know about my capacity to give you that information.

The CHAIR: If you could look into it for us.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: That would be good. Where are you taking the models from? Are there existing models in other jurisdictions that you are doing a compare and contrast with?

Mr Kannis: Part of the exercise is to understand what is happening in all other jurisdictions, so we have an understanding of what happens in those jurisdictions, yes, in Australia.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Are there Australian models that appeal to you?

Mr Kannis: There is such a varied range of models that, yes, some appeal more than others.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Which appeal to you more than others? Did you think I might ask you that?

Mr Kannis: In my situation I look at cost, so you might imagine that I would go for the cheaper ones. But, no, there is not any that—many provide benefits to officers and balance the benefits between what officers have and do not have at the moment. There is no-one that stands out as favoured by me. It depends on your criteria.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: That is a fair response. In your answer to the question on notice you have just taken, could you give us cost comparisons in other jurisdictions?

Mr Kannis: We have not costed our option —

Hon SALLY TALBOT: No, that is fine.

Mr Kannis: If they were to apply in Western Australia? We do not have that at the moment.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: No, but if you have it for other jurisdictions, that would sort of situate your comments, I think.

Mr Kannis: Some of those states have not been forthcoming in telling us what the costs are in those jurisdictions.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Any information you have, can you share with the committee and then indicate to us whether you need us to keep it confidential?

Mr Kannis: I will take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No D13.]

Hon HELEN MORTON: Just following up on something asked a bit earlier. It was about sick leave. Did I hear you say that police do not have a set standard sick leave allocation a year for a police officer?

Mr Kannis: Police officers have 168 days a year available to them, and in certain circumstances that can be extended.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Is your sick leave or—it is workers' comp, is it not? We had ICWA in here yesterday telling us that the highest cost for them around claims was around mental stress and that it is sort of growing at a level that was surprising to us and to them, I think. I am just wondering, I think you said earlier that you cannot identify that, but do you have a mechanism for identifying whether this stress level is the higher proportion of your leave claims?

[2.20 pm]

Mr Kannis: I would have to take on notice what sort of indicators we have and whether it has increased over recent times. I can identify whether we can identify that sort of trend or not. RiskCover's information would not include police officers, as you would imagine, because they do not insure us at this point in time.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Do you get any insurance? Do you need it?

Mr Kannis: We get insured for death. Where a police officer dies on duty, we are covered by RiskCover, but not for any other event. We fund any costs for health benefits and medical benefits to police officers through our own budget.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Is there a line item for that in here somewhere?

Mr Kannis: There are some medical benefits in our financial statements, yes. Santa might be able to explain those.

Ms Cardenia: I refer to page 56, note 6, under "employee expenses". The second last item is medical expenses, \$7.5 million.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Has that been increasing or decreasing or staying around about the same?

Ms Cardenia: Medical expenses as a trend have been increasing over the years due to an increasing number of claims, as well as the increase in costs associated with doctors and specialists.

Mr Kannis: Plus a growing workforce—the workforce is also growing.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I want to go to some questions about the financial statements. At page 31, under "current assets", you have "restricted cash". There has been a significant decrease in restricted cash, or cash equivalents, this financial year over the previous financial year, going from \$47.447 million to just \$5.709 million. Could you tell me why that has occurred?

Ms Cardenia: Yes. The difference between the two financial years is that 2015 takes into account the payment of the twenty-seventh pay for that year. Every 11 years, there is an additional pay—rather than 26 fortnights, there is additional fortnight that is paid for. So what we do across the 11 years is put money away each year so that in the final year, the payment is actually made, and then the following year the accumulation commences again. So 2015 saw the payment of \$31 million.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So, \$31 million—that leaves \$16 million.

Ms Cardenia: The other major factor that was paid in 2015 compared to 2016 was a higher spend on the community safety network project.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Of \$16 million?

Ms Cardenia: That makes up \$10 million, and then the \$6 million would be for a number of different things.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So \$10 million was for the community safety network. I will come back and ask about that a bit later, and how that was used and why that was taken out of the cash equivalents and not the rest of the operating budget.

Ms Cardenia: Would you like me to answer that?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: No; let me get to the deficit first. It might be an operational question, so I just wanted to get these out of the way and then come back to that, if that is okay. I am looking at page 78. There is a deficit of \$23.4 million for the period 30 June 2016, which is significantly higher than \$1.68 million, which was the deficit forecast in the 2015–16 budget. Can you explain why the deficit significantly exceeded the budget estimate?

Ms Cardenia: Yes. When the original budget was estimated, it was based on a number of factors, where, as part of the budget process, there was reconsideration of funding and a number of adjustments made to the WA Police budget. For example, there has been a decrease in Government Regional Officers' Housing of \$25 million, which is reflective of the current market. There was a decrease of \$6 million for depreciation. There was another \$5.5 million adjustment for the government's asset investment program efficiency measure. Then there was a cash flow from one year to the next of our PCYC grant funding of another \$6 million. So compared to what we started with or expected at the beginning of the year, there were a number of adjustments made to our funding throughout the budget process.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So \$25 million for GROH housing?

Ms Cardenia: Yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can you tell me what that was about—why that occurred?

Ms Cardenia: Yes. WA Police made a submission a number of years ago for additional funding to reflect the market at the time, especially in the Kimberley and the Pilbara due to the mining boom. So additional funding was given to WA Police. Now, as a result of the decline of the Pilbara and the Kimberley, we have seen the cost of rent decrease. GROH is something that is managed across government, and there was an adjustment to the WA Police budget as a result of that.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Of \$25 million?

Ms Cardenia: Yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Because GROH is managed across a number of agencies, was that a Treasury direction to decrease by a certain per cent?

Mr Kannis: I can answer that. Cabinet made a decision to remove that amount from our budget—from our appropriation—yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: The other efficiency measures that you talked about in the deficit, can you explain what some of those are?

Ms Cardenia: Yes. Government did a review of asset expenditure across agencies, and a number of efficiency measures were identified for government agencies, of which our contribution towards that was \$5.5 million for 2015–16. So as a result there was a decrease in our budget as a contribution towards that.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So these are the efficiency dividends. It was just taken straight out.

Ms Cardenia: That is right. What WA Police decided is that it is to come out of our cash rather than attack specific capital projects, because we had the capacity to do that.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I will come back to that one, too.

The CHAIR: I will ask a couple of questions while you find your information. On page 14 you describe the body-worn video. Can you give us any feedback on any early results that you have on that and whether the trial has been realised?

Mr O’Callaghan: We have not got the final results yet.

Mr Kannis: The trial period has been completed and we are about to evaluate the findings. We have actually treated this as a finite trial and had the body-worn video units out there, and now we are ceasing that trial and we are evaluating it. So the answer to your question is there are not any results yet.

The CHAIR: The results are pending, basically.

Mr Kannis: That is right.

The CHAIR: Talking about trials, the point-to-point cameras that you have been putting up on Forrest Highway, a lot of people ask what the hell they are—those big yellow poles. Have you started to use that yet? Have trials begun? Are they operational?

Mr Kannis: Yes, they are operational. They started on Monday. But there are no infringements to come from them at this point in time.

The CHAIR: No, because, as I understand it, you have not got the legislation in place as yet.

Mr Kannis: The legislation, I think, has been passed now, but there was a decision made to initially trial it for a period of six months before we start providing infringements.

The CHAIR: When you say the legislation is in place, is that by regulation or is that something that is actually —

Mr Kannis: No. My understanding is that it actually passed through both houses.

The CHAIR: Okay—I must have been half asleep! So it will be about six months before you actually start to enforce fines.

Mr Kannis: Yes.

The CHAIR: Just with your recruitment programs, in the last 12 months do you have more officers, less officers or the same number of officers?

[2.30 pm]

Mr Kannis: I can answer that question. As at 6 October, we had 6 235 officers. As you might realise, that covers more than the growth program that we have been allocated. We are ahead of schedule for the appointment of the additional officers.

The CHAIR: How many extra did we have in the last 12 months?

Mr Kannis: In this term of government, there was a decision to fund 400 police officers and 150 police auxiliary officers. For the 400 police officers, we have done more than that but we expect that attrition will occur over the next six to eight months when we will get close to the 6 204, which is the target for police officers.

The CHAIR: What are some of the major reasons those police officers are leaving?

Mr Kannis: Recently we did an analysis of some of our exit interviews. One of the disappointing aspects is that we have a low response rate in terms of exit interviews, as a lot of other areas have. The findings were more about family situations, other job opportunities and things like that. They were the major elements of our exit interview analysis. Only a small portion of people who left agreed to fill them out.

The CHAIR: Are you still recruiting people from overseas? At one stage you were bringing people from the UK.

Mr Kannis: We still have transitions coming in. They come from either interstate or overseas. However, we are not actively seeking or recruiting from the UK at this point in time because we have got to our targets. That, associated with low attrition rates, means that we do not really have to go to the UK.

The CHAIR: The end of the mining boom might help too.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I have some quick questions about the family and domestic violence perpetrator engagement project. Can I get a sense of how that is progressing and what are the key steps in the next phase of that?

Ms Young: It was a small sample size so we used a small sample at the Perth watch house, and we have tracked them. Sadly, all bar one have re-offended. Despite varying interventions and some who did not take up any interventions, all bar one have re-offended. The positive nature of that engagement is part of the recruit training package that we are going to implement at the recruit phase, if you like, in terms of a way forward of saying, “These are some strategies and opportunities you can take to increase the engagement of perpetrators in other services.”

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: The training package—are there any proposals to further the work in the perpetrator engagement project?

Ms Young: At this stage it is contingent on the capacity of the other agencies we engage with. It was the men’s help line and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support–funded support services so it is really about their capacity to take on more work.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: In one of the questions that I asked on notice about the number of children involved in domestic violence incidents, I think the response was that that is not collected at call level stage. Data with children present is not available because the computer-aided dispatch system does not identify if children were present. Does that mean that when someone calls the police for assistance, they are not asked if children are present in a situation?

Ms Young: If someone calls in terms of a family violence incident, our operators will ask a series of questions. They are primarily around safety and urgency of response. It is really about how quickly we get someone there. Those types of questions form part of the domestic violence incident report, so they are captured on the incident report information. We do record not just whether children are present but that children belong in the family so they may or may not be present. We record that and we also record child victims.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I thought that that would be the case, because I have made calls about domestic violence myself, not in my own home, just because that is on record. I have been asked those questions about whether children are present. This answer says that the computer-aided dispatch system does not identify whether children are present.

Ms Young: It is not recorded on the CAD. There is capacity on the incident management system report for us to record children present or not. It does not exist on the CAD.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: If I asked about the incident reports when children were present, I would get a different answer.

Ms Young: You would, and I can tell you that about 41 per cent of our incidence reports record children present.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I might go back and put these questions on notice after the hearing because they are very specific about the number of incidents when children were present and age range of children present. I will not put them on notice now but will do before next Monday.

I think that is all I have about family and domestic violence right now but I have a couple of other questions about other issues if that is okay.

The CHAIR: Yes, that is okay.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: In the budget estimates hearings, we talked about community forums. How many WA Police community forums have been held in 2015–16?

Mr O’Callaghan: I do not have the number here. We could supply you with that number.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: And their location as well as those that have been held year to date and those that are planned for the next financial year. You do not have any of that with you?

Mr Kannis: Not on hand, sorry.

[*Supplementary Information No D14.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What is the budget to run, for example, one community forum?

Mr Kannis: We do not have a specific budget for each forum. The costs are generally met from the local police district and between them and our media and communications area. We have officers within those areas. Part of their job is to organise and assist in organising them. We do not have a specific budget for each one. They are generally taken out of the operational budgets between the district and media and communications.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: For example, the 12 officers who might attend one community forum comes out of that local station’s operating budget.

Mr Kannis: Those officers are on duty at the time, I would imagine.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What is the advertising component of each forum?

Mr Kannis: It is a very low advertising component. We use Community News where possible and email, I believe; and social media. We do not spend a substantial amount on advertising.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So you place ads in Community News?

Mr Kannis: That is right.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Is there a budget for that or do you just take that out of your operational budgets?

Mr Kannis: It comes out of the operational budgets. It is not big enough or material enough to be a specific budget. It is just general day-to-day running. It is very low cost.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So there were no marketing or promotional agencies used. It is all done in-house?

Mr Kannis: Yes, that is correct.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That does me on community forums, which I found very interesting when I attended. Thank you, Commissioner.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I am sorry to keep banging on about the same thing but my question is about medical expenses on page 56. I note that in 2015, around \$11 million was spent and in 2016 that had dropped down to \$7.5 million yet you say that the actual trending is up. Was 2015–16 an exceptional year for some reason around medical expenses? Do you want to explain why that was exceptional?

[2.40 pm]

Ms Cardenia: Yes. It specifically relates to the post-separation medical scheme. Every three years there is an actuarial assessment that is done and payments are adjusted at the end of that third year. So 2015 saw the actuarial assessment and there was another \$2.8 million paid in relation to post-separation medicals.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Thank you. I just needed that clarification.

The CHAIR: If there are no further questions, we will close the hearing. On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your attendance today. The committee will forward the transcript of evidence, which highlights the questions taken on notice together with any additional questions in writing, after Monday, 7 November 2016. Responses to these questions will be requested within 10 working days of receipt of the questions. Should you be unable to meet this due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible beforehand. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. If members have any unasked questions, I ask them to submit these to the committee clerk at the close of the hearing. Once again, I thank you for your attendance today. I remind members that the deadline for submitting additional questions is 12 midday on Monday, 7 November 2016 as stated in paragraph 8.2 of the procedure policy. Thank you very much for coming.

Hearing concluded at 2.41 pm
