

ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARING - 2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT HEARINGS

Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC asked:

1. In regards to Foster Carers I ask:

- (a) The number of foster carers has dropped 35% from 4066 carers in 2014/15 to 2648 in 2015/16 what were the main reasons for carers leaving the system?

Answer: There has been an increase, not a drop, in the number of foster carers.

The number of carers is calculated differently in the *at a glance* section of the annual reports for the two financial years. In 2014/15 the number of approved *individual* foster carers has been provided and in 2015/16 the number of approved foster care *households* has been provided.

Page 32 of the 2014/15 annual report provides details of the 2,435 foster carer households on 30 June 2015.

Page 36 of the 2015/16 annual report provides details of the 2,648 foster carer households on 30 June 2016.

This is an increase of 213 foster carer households.

- (b) Does the number of foster carers stated include non-government sector foster carers and if not how many foster carers are registered with each organisation?

Answer: Yes, the number of approved non-government sector foster carer households on 30 June 2016 was 464. The foster carers households are approved in the following organisations:

- Anglicare WA - 12
- Foundations Care - 14
- Key Assets WA - 47
- Life Without Barriers - 117
- MacKillop Family Services - 24
- Mercy Community Services - 46
- Parkerville Children And Youth Care - 29
- Senses Foundation - 7
- Uniting Care West - 25
- Wanslea Family Services - 114
- Yorganop Association - 29

- (c) Have any surveys been undertaken with foster carers in the last 5 years to determine satisfaction? and if yes can the Minister table a copy?

Answer: Yes, the Department undertakes surveys with foster carers on a regular basis as part of the foster care partnership practice framework. These surveys are aimed at determining satisfaction and to improve practice with carers and determine any training or other support needs. There have been five surveys undertaken over the past five years and there is currently one survey underway. These surveys are listed below and their reports are tabled accordingly.

- 2016 currently underway – *Working Together to Care for Kids*. This is a national survey of carers and the report is due in December 2016.
- 2015 – *Report on Special Guardianship Orders*. This involved telephone interviews of special guardianship carers with the report finalised in September 2015.
- 2014 – *Relative Care Review: Worker and Relative Carer Perception Report*. A relative carer staff survey to improve the identification, assessment, review and support of relative carers with report finalised in August 2015.
- 2014 – *Foster Care Partnership Survey 2014: Findings Report*. A survey of foster carers regarding the Foster Care Partnership Practice Framework with the report finalised in January 2015.
- 2013 – *Implementation of the Foster Care Partnership Practice Framework within Districts*. A survey of carers regarding the Department's Foster Care Partnership Review and Implementation Plan 2013-2014 with the report finalised in October 2014.
- 2012 – *Joondalup Foster Care Partnership: Survey Report*. A survey of Joondalup carers regarding the Foster Care Partnership, the Foster Care Agreement and permanency planning with the report finalised in March 2013.

- (d) Do non-government foster carer organisations pay the same rate of allowances as the Department and if not which organisations pay different rates and what are the rates of allowances paid?

Answer: Non-government organisations procured to provide foster care services are responsible for determining the carer allowance paid to carers registered with their organisation. Many factors are considered when setting the carer allowance, including the child's level of needs.

All non-Government organisations currently pay carers at or above the Department's foster care allowance.

- (e) What was the average cost per day of a foster care arrangement in each of the following periods:

- (i) 2016/17 budgeted

Answer: \$123

- (ii) 2015/16

Answer: \$118

(iii) 2014/15
Answer: \$122

(iv) 2013/14
Answer: Not available, new measure following the introduction of the Department's new Outcome Based Management reporting structure in the 2015-16 Budget.

(f) What was the value of funding spent on respite per child in foster care in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 and what is the budgeted amount in 2016/17?

Answer: The respite cost per child in foster care cannot be quantified.

The Department's expenditure on respite subsidies for departmental general and family foster carers was:

2016/17: \$1.573 million

2015/16: \$1.465 million

2014/15: \$1.364 million

2013/14: \$1.104 million

(g) How many children in care are in homes with 4 children placed; 5 children placed; 6 children placed; 7 children placed; 8 children placed; more than 8 children placed?

Answer: This information cannot be provided retrospectively. On 12 October 2016, there were:

- 109 households with 4 children placed;
- 40 households with 5 children placed;
- 15 households with 6 children placed;
- 4 households with 7 children placed;
- 2 households with 8 children placed, and
- 4 households with more than 8 children placed.

This includes several large sibling groups.

2. In regards to Family and Domestic Violence I ask:

(a) From which locations are the main increases of reporting coming from?

Answer:

- The main increases were in the following districts: Armadale, Cannington, Fremantle, Midland, Mirrabooka, Joondalup, Rockingham, South West, West Kimberley and Goldfields.

(b) Reports were up 27%, what was the percentage and value of increased funding?

Answer: In 2015/16 funding for family and domestic violence services increased by \$862,525 which is an increase of 2.46 per cent.

- (c) Are statistics kept on the number incidents that were of repeat offences and if yes, how many were repeat offences?

Answer: This question is best directed to Western Australia Police as they produce the DVIRs that are provided to the Department.

3. In regards to staffing I ask:

- (a) The total number of Staff in the Department has decreased by 46 since 30 June 2015, why has this happened and which positions have been lost?

Answer: Total staff numbers (headcount) are volatile and under constant change due to the dynamic workforce environment of an Agency of this size. Staff headcount includes all permanent, fixed term and casual employees as at a reporting date. Staffing levels constantly fluctuate due to factors such as vacancies caused by staff resignations or transfers; temporary fixed term contractors hired to backfill paid and unpaid leave absences; and casual staff hired to cover unscheduled leave. The decrease of 46 staff since 30 June 2015 therefore does not reflect positions lost.

The decrease in staff numbers in 2015-16 is largely due to the whole of Government recruitment freeze imposed on government agencies from December 2015 to May 2016, together with a transition period to a redesigned Statewide Responsible Parenting Services Model for implementation in 2016-17.

- (b) What was the approved full time equivalent staff level target and the actual in 2015/16?

Answer: The approved full time equivalent staff level is no longer used as a measure of the Department's performance and has been replaced with the agreed salary expense level. The Department's 2015-16 agreed salary expense limit target was \$220,267,000 and the 2015-16 Actual was \$214,245,000.

- (c) Which are the positions experienced difficulty recruiting staff in regional locations resulting in savings?

Answer: The additional 75 FTE Responsible Parenting Services positions created under the Royalty for Regions program located in the Pilbara, Murchison, Goldfields, Wheatbelt, South West and the Great Southern regions have never been staffed to capacity. In addition, the higher than average vacancy levels in country areas due to difficulties in attracting suitable applicants to work in regional areas and the resultant longer lead time in which to fill these positions, also contributed to savings.

There are longer lead times in trying to fill positions in country locations generally. However districts with consistently higher than average vacancies levels are the more remote regions e.g. the East Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Murchison.

- (d) What was the title and location of vacant positions as at 30 June 2016 and which of these positions were being advertised as at 30 June 2016?

Answer: *Table 1* (below) lists vacant position titles by location as at 30 June 2016.
Table 2 (below) lists those positions subject to being advertised by location as at 30 June 2016.

Table 1: Vacant Positions by Location as at 30 June 2016

Directorate	Division	Position Titles
Country Services	East Kimberley	Administrative Assistant, Best Beginnings Officer, Child Protection Worker, Parent Visitor - Parent Support, Senior Child Protection Worker, Senior Residential Care Worker, Team Leader Child Protection
	Goldfields	Best Beginnings Officer, Child Protection Worker, Education Officer, Family Resource Employee, Parent Visitor - Parent Support, Remote Community Resource Worker
	Great Southern	Child Protection Worker, Parent Visitor - Parent Support
	Murchison	Best Beginnings Officer, Child Protection Worker, Parent Visitor - Parent Support, Psychologist, Senior Child Protection Worker, Team Leader, Youth and Family Support Worker
	Pilbara	Best Beginnings Officer, Case Support Officer, Child Protection Worker, Parent Visitor - Parent Support, Senior Child Protection Worker, Senior Residential Care Worker
	South West	Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee
	Therapeutic Care Services	Customer Service Officer, Psychologist, Secure Care Officer, Senior Residential Care Worker
	West Kimberley	Family Resource Employee, Senior Field Worker, Youth and Family Support Worker
	Wheatbelt	Best Beginnings Officer, Case Support Officer, Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee, Parent Visitor - Parent Support, Senior Child Protection Worker
	Country Services Other	Child Protection Worker, Senior Child Protection Worker
Metropolitan Services	Armadale	Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee
	Cannington	Family Resource Employee, Senior Education Officer
	Crisis Care	Child Protection Worker, Senior Practice Development Officer
	Fremantle	Family Resource Employee
	Joondalup	Family Resource Employee
	Midland	Child Protection Worker, Customer Liaison Officer, Family Resource Employee, Senior Child Protection Worker
	Mirrabooka	Administrative Assistant, Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee, Psychologist, Senior Child Protection Worker, Team Leader, Youth and Family Support Worker
	Perth	Child Protection Worker
	Rockingham	Psychologist
	Service Delivery Practice Unit	Child Protection Worker, Director Case Practice and Coordination, Senior Child Protection Worker, Senior Practice Development Officer
Community and Business Services		Assistant Screening Officer, Communications and Promotions Coordinator, Manager Workplace Management and Governance, Scanning and Indexing Officer, Senior Business Support Officer - Working With Children Screening Unit, Senior Policy Officer, Senior Support Officer
Policy and Learning		Director Learning and Development, Policy and Engagement Officer, Program Leader Cultural Learning, Senior Learning Development Facilitator, Senior Legal Officer, Senior Policy Officer
Service Standards and Contracting		District Director, Senior Complaints Investigator

Table 2: Positions Subject to Advertising as at 30 June 2016

Directorate	Division	Position Titles
Country Services	East Kimberley	Administrative Assistant, Senior Child Protection Worker, Senior Residential Care Worker
	Goldfields	Child Protection Worker, Education Officer.
	Pilbara	Best Beginnings Officer, Case Support Officer, Senior Child Protection Worker, Senior Residential Care Worker
	Therapeutic Care Services	Psychologist, Secure Care Officer, Senior Residential Care Worker
	West Kimberley	Family Resource Employee, Senior Field Worker
	Wheatbelt	Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee
	Country Services Other	Child Protection Worker, Senior Child Protection Worker
Metropolitan Services	Armadale	Child Protection Worker, Family Resource Employee
	Crisis Care	Child Protection Worker, Senior Practice Development Officer
	Fremantle	Family Resource Employee
	Joondalup	Family Resource Employee
	Midland	Child Protection Worker, Customer Liaison Officer, Family Resource Employee, Senior Child Protection Worker
	Mirrabooka	Child Protection Worker, Psychologist
	Perth	Child Protection Worker
	Service Delivery Practice Unit	Child Protection Worker
Community and Business Services		Communications and Promotions Coordinator, Manager Workplace Management and Governance, Senior Business Support Officer - Working With Children Screening Unit.
Policy and Learning		Policy and Engagement Officer, Program Leader Cultural Learning

5. In regards to 'homelessness services clients' I ask:

- (a) The number of clients dropped from 21,400 in 2014/15 to 14,858 in 2015/16 what is the reason for this substantial reduction?

Answer: The Department revised its Outcome Based Management reporting structure in 2015/16. As a result the client numbers for homelessness services in 2014/15 have been restated to reflect the current counting methodology.

In 2014/15 there were 13,819 homelessness clients, and in 2015/16 there were 14,858 homelessness clients, an increase of 1,039 clients.

- (b) How many first strike and how many second strike notifications were received from the Department of Housing in 2015/16?

Answer: The Department received 825 notifications of first and second strikes from the Housing Authority in 2015/16.

- (c) How many state housing evictions are the Department aware occurred in 2015/16?

Answer: Details about evictions may be included in individual case notes, but the Department does not systematically record this information. This question is best directed to the Housing Authority.

- (d) What was the value of funding spent on homelessness services to clients in both 2014/15 and 2015/16?

Answer: In 2014/15, the Department provided approximately \$75 million through the joint Commonwealth/State National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the

National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), for homeless accommodation and support services provided by non-government organisation.

The State provided approximately \$5.5 million for domestic violence services.

In 2015/16 the Department provided approximately \$81 million to the community service sector for the provision of homelessness services.

- (e) How many of the clients seeking support in each of 2014/15 and 2016/17 were victims of domestic violence?

Answer: The Department's 2014/15 Annual report cites 8,300 people were assisted by family and domestic violence specialist homelessness services, based on 2013/14 AIHW data.

The Department's 2015/16 Annual Report cites 9,000 people were assisted by family and domestic violence, using data from the Department's family and domestic violence performance indicator.

The Department will receive 2016/17 AIHW data in December 2017.

- (f) A saving of \$690 was achieved per homelessness client case, how was this achieved?

Answer: There was an increase in the number of homelessness clients who received support during 2015/16, resulting in a lower average cost per client compared to the 2015/16 target. In addition, there was also lower than anticipated expenditure compared to the 2015/16 Budget, following an adjustment to the timeframe for the Commonwealth payments under the National Partnership Agreement on Pay Equity and the downward revision to both Commonwealth and State indexation rates during 2015/16.

- (g) How many clients seeking support in each of 2014/15 and 2015/16 were women and children?

Answer: The 2014/15 Annual Report cited 13,819 people were assisted by homelessness services, based on 2013/14 AIHW data. Of these an estimated:

- 6,200 were females 18 years and older; and
- 1,700 were females and males under 18 years of age.

The 2015/16 Annual Report cites 14,858 people were assisted by homelessness services, based on 2014-15 AIHW data. Of these an estimated:

- 6,600 were females 18 years and older; and
- 2,500 were females and males under 18 years of age.

- (h) By region what was the breakdown of 'homelessness services clients' services in each of 2015/16 and 2016/17?

Answer: The table below shows the number of people assisted by homelessness services by Departmental District in 2013/14 and 2014/15. The Department will receive 2016/17 AIHW data in December 2017.

District	2013/14	2014/15
Armadale	1,159	2,628
Fremantle	1,826	2,130
Great Southern	444	375
Midland	278	204
Mirrabooka	406	423
Peel	890	987
Rockingham	161	154
Joondalup	357	339
Goldfields	676	712
Murchison	290	323
Pilbara	439	594
Metro/State	1,228	1,012
Cannington	291	338
Perth	2,574	2,246
Southwest	2,480	2,386
Wheatbelt	204	165
East Kimberley	45	35
West Kimberley	347	847

- (i) Were any services and/or funding transferred from Service area 1 to Service area 5 and if yes what and how much?

Answer: The Department revised its Outcome Based Management reporting structure in 2015-16 and established a new cost allocation methodology for its ten service structure.

Under this methodology, family and domestic violence support and accommodation services funded under the National Affordable Housing Agreement and National Partnership on Homelessness Agreement are included under service area 5 – Family and Domestic Violence Services. In 2015-16 this was approximately \$29.695 million expenditure.

6. In regards to the Hardship Utilities Grants Program (HUGS) I ask:
- a) Can the Minister provide the step by step process for applying for HUGS assistance before and after the changes to the program in 2015?

Answer:

- Prior to 1 October 2015:
 - Customers were able to access HUGS Grants via Financial Counselling Services or Second Entry Point (utility providers);

- Normal, Additional and Exceptional HUGS Grants were available within the calendar year 12 month eligibility period;
 - Through the Second Entry Point, the following utility providers could assess applicants against their Utility Hardship Policy Guidelines and the HUGS Guidelines and recommend an applicant for a Normal Grant (only), when the total bill amount was up to the following maximum account balance limits:
 - \$1,000 (South of S26); and
 - \$1,660 (North of S26);
 - Applicants with a total account balance in excess of these amounts could not apply for a Normal Grant through the Second Entry Point, and needed to apply through a financial counselling service;
 - Utility providers could only recommend one application per customer per calendar year, and referred customers to financial counselling services for financial advice as required; and
 - Participating utility providers included Synergy, Kleenheat, Horizon Power, Alinta Energy and Water Corporation.
- Post 1 October 2015:
 - Financial counsellors ceased participation in the HUGS process;
 - Applicants can only apply for a HUGS Grant through utility providers;
 - The number of participating utility providers expanded to include Busselton Water, Esperance Gas Distribution Company and Aqwest;
 - Additional and Exceptional HUGS Grants are no longer available;
 - Utility providers recommend an applicant for a HUGS Grant when the current total account balance is up to the following increased maximum account balance limits:
 - \$1,750 (South of S26); and
 - \$2,500 (North of S26).
 - Utility providers can process more than one application per customer in the calendar year, provided the customer has not accessed the full HUGS Grant amount already; and
 - Utility providers continue to refer customers to financial counselling services for financial advice, as required.
- b) For each utility how many applications were received and how many were approved in each of 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16?

Answer: HUGS applications approved and received in 2013/14; 2014/15 and 2015/16 by utility:

• Utility	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Approved	Received	Approved	Received	Approved	Received
Alinta Energy	5,415	5,649	5,540	5865	6,444	6,768
Aqwest	14	14	13	13	25	25
Busselton Water	6	6	10	11	12	12
Horizon Power	1,910	1,983	1,572	1,675	1,602	1,677

Kleenheat Gas	65	67	191	198	365	380
Synergy	16,455	16,942	14,375	14,808	10,266	10,541
Water Corporation	1,057	1,108	1,468	1,521	1,262	1,299
Esperance Gas Distribution Company	9	10	7	8	10	10
TOTAL	24,931	25,779	23,176	24,099	19,986	20,712

- c) For each utility how many applications were received and how many were approved in 2014/15 and 2015/16 for the postcodes 6024 and 6026?

Answer: HUGS applications approved and received in 2014/15 and 2015/16 by utility for postcodes 6024 and 6026.

Utilities	2014/2015				2015/2016			
	6024		6026		6024		6026	
	Approved	Received	Approved	Received	Approved	Received	Approved	Received
Alinta Energy	27	27	21	22	25	26	19	22
Aqwest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Busselton Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horizon Power	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kleenheat Gas	0	0	0	1	3	4	1	1
Synergy	54	57	45	47	43	45	34	34
Water Corporation	14	14	19	20	7	7	9	9
Esperance Gas Distribution Company	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	95	98	85	90	78	82	63	66

- d) What was the justification for a \$1.232 million reduction in grant funding?

Answer: The reduction in HUGS Grant funding was a result of an underspend on Grants in 2015/16.

7. In regards to children in group homes I ask:

- a) Are children in group homes ever placed on the monitored list?

Answer: Children are placed on the monitored list only if certain criteria are met including the complexity and intensity of the case management is low, there is a sound

case plan noting key actions and decisions, and mechanisms for responding to and addressing issues that may arise are in place. This is reviewed every month to assess any changes to safety and risk factors. However if any additional information or concerns are received, an urgent review is undertaken to consider immediate allocation.

- b) There has been a decrease in the number of children in residential care from 417 in 2014/15 to 372 in 2015/16, why is this?

Answer: The Department finalised the model for residential care during 2015/16 which included the expansion of the community services sector Family Group Homes model. This has relieved the pressure on the Department's residential care homes, particularly in the country where they were operating above capacity on occasions during 2014/15. This has contributed to the significant decrease of children being cared for in the Department's residential care facilities across the state.

- c) Have any group homes been closed in 2015/16 and if yes, which properties?

Answer: No residential group homes were closed. The Meekatharra family group home was relocated to Geraldton.

- d) Have any new group homes opened in 2015/16 and if yes, what are the details?

Answer: No residential group homes were opened. The Meekatharra family group home was relocated to Geraldton.

- e) What was the average cost per day for a child in the Departmental group home?

Answer: 2015/16: \$1,343 per day of a residential care living arrangement.

As referred to on page 72 of the Department's 2015-16 Annual Report, a residential care living arrangement provides time limited therapeutic residential care, which focuses on creating a sustaining care environment capable of healing the traumatic impact of abuse and neglect and the disrupted attachment that ensues. The Department operates 22 Residential Care group homes, which are operated on a staffing model 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- f) What was the average cost per day for a child in the non-government group home?

Answer: The expenditure relating to family group homes operated by the community services sector is included under the efficiency indicator average cost per day of a foster care arrangement, which was \$118 per day.

Family group homes are operated by the community services sector and provide a home-based group model of care with a live-in carer for four children/young people in each home.

Costs in 7(e) and 7(f) are not directly comparable with one another because they are not the same type of residential care arrangement.

A specific comparable average cost per day for a child in a family group home living arrangement is not available.

8. In regards to children with complex needs I ask:

(a) Are children with complex needs ever placed on the monitored list?

Answer: Children with complex needs are not placed on the monitored list as they require active case management.

(b) Did the definition of 'complex needs' change between 2014/15 and 2015/16?

Answer: No.

(c) How many of the children with complex needs in 2014/15 were still classed as having complex needs in 2015/16?

Answer: In 2014/15 there were 337 children, in 2015/16 there are 290 children classed as having complex needs.

9. In regards to Children in the Care of the CEO I ask:

(a) Why did less children complete Viewpoint surveys in 2015/16 than in 2014/15?

Answer: Participation numbers were only marginally lower from 2014/15 to 2015/16. In the latter half of 2015/16 staff resources within the Department's District Offices were redirected to frontline service provision. As a consequence there may have been a reduced number of children completing the survey.

(b) Were all eligible children given the opportunity to complete a viewpoint survey and if not why not?

Answer: The Casework Practice Manual is quite clear that all eligible children must be invited to use Viewpoint, but it has been challenging to achieve compliance. A range of strategies have been developed to address shortfalls including:

- Monthly reports to Corporate Executive to show participation numbers in individual District Offices. Executive Directors are responsible for following up with respective District Directors to improve numbers.
- Regular six-monthly workshops with Team Leaders to develop good practice and promote the use of Viewpoint as a tool for consulting young people in care.
- The introduction of a new Viewpoint report which Districts must complete to show the reasons why individual young people in care have not undertaken a questionnaire.
- Plans to share data between the Department's client database and the Viewpoint database using net services. This will mean Districts will no longer be required to manually create a profile for young people in care in the Viewpoint database: questionnaires will be automatically available.

- (c) The average cost per child involved in child protection cases was below target at \$6,489 in 2014/15 this has decreased to \$4,273 in 2015/16, a reduction of 34%, what were the operational changes that occurred to deliver this saving?

Answer: The Department's cost allocation methodology was revised as a result of the increase in the number of services within the Department's Outcome Based Management reporting structure. Consequently, total costs for the 2015/16 target and actual result for this indicator are lower than in previous years.

- (d) How many children entered secure care in 2015/16?

Answer: There were 51 children admitted to secure care during 2015/16.

- (e) What was the total number of children in the care of the CEO at any time during 2015/16?

Answer: There were 5,383 children with a period of care during 2015/16.

- (f) What is the estimated number of Children in Care that were admitted to Banksia Hill during 2015/16?

Answer: There were 38 children in care who were admitted to Banksia Hill detention centre during 2015/16.

- (g) What data transfer occurs between the Department and the Department for Corrective Services regarding children who have come into contact with the justice system?

Answer: In 2015 legislation was changed to allow for greater information and report sharing between the Department and Department of Corrective Services. The Department also develops a weekly report in relation to shared clients at Banksia Hill Detention Centre, which is also sent to the Department of Corrective Services.

10. In regards to Responsible Parenting Services I ask:

- (a) What was the total number of each of Parent support, Best Beginnings and Strong Families cases in each district?

Answer: Information on these case numbers is listed on page 115 of the Annual Report 2015/16:

- Armadale - 143 Parent Support, 79 Best Beginnings and 30 Strong Families cases;
- Cannington - 96 Parent Support, 60 Best Beginnings and 28 Strong Families cases;
- East Kimberley - 19 Parent Support, 2 Best Beginnings and 26 Strong Families cases;
- Fremantle - 67 Parent Support, 71 Best Beginnings and 23 Strong Families cases;
- Goldfields - 103 Parent Support, 21 Best Beginnings and 22 Strong Families cases;

- Great Southern - 74 Parent Support, 25 Best Beginnings and 34 Strong Families cases;
- Joondalup - 88 Parent Support, 34 Best Beginnings and 29 Strong Families cases;
- Midland - 47 Parent Support, 78 Best Beginnings and 34 Strong Families cases;
- Mirrabooka - 51 Parent Support, 28 Best Beginnings and 24 Strong Families cases;
- Murchison - 151 Parent Support, 40 Best Beginnings and 38 Strong Families cases;
- Peel - 50 Parent Support, 41 Best Beginnings and 23 Strong Families cases;
- Perth - 61 Parent Support, 57 Best Beginnings and 16 Strong Families cases;
- Pilbara - 189 Parent Support, 32 Best Beginnings and 26 Strong Families cases;
- Rockingham - 87 Parent Support, 51 Best Beginnings and 21 Strong Families cases;
- South West - 98 Parent Support, 60 Best Beginnings and 32 Strong Families cases;
- West Kimberley - 35 Parent Support, 16 Best Beginnings and 32 Strong Families cases, and
- Wheatbelt - 109 Parent Support, 70 Best Beginnings and 19 Strong Families cases.

(b) How many Liquor Restricted Premises Declarations agreements were entered into?

Answer: There were two agreements applied for by the Director General during 2015/16.

In addition to this, the Department assists many families to make a voluntary application to have their homes declared liquor restricted and as a result do not need to regularly invoke an application from the Director General.

11. In regards to non-government service providers delivering services to the Department I ask:

(a) Do staff managing children in care have to comply with the workload management direction of the Industrial Relations Commission and if not, why not and what agreement has been made in regard to case numbers?

Answer: Non-Government Organisations procured to provide foster care services are responsible for determining the workload management with their staff. Each organisation complies with the Industrial Relations Award or Agreement they fall under.

According to services response documents at the time of procurement, all services indicated their policies and procedures were aligned with the 2008 WA Industrial Relations Commission Order regarding workload management.

- (b) Are staff managing children in care required to adhere to all Departmental policies and practice frameworks and if not, why not?

Answer: Non-Government Organisations procured to provide foster care services are responsible for determining policies, practices and frameworks in which to provide the service and achieve the outcomes of the Service Agreement.

The Service Agreement outlines a number of Departmental policies and practice standards with which every service must comply.

Every organisation provides the Department with the practice framework they will implement as part of the Tendering process. Each practice framework must be trauma and attachment informed.

12. In regards to Effectiveness Indicators I ask:

- (a) In how many instances did a child in care answer 'not really' or 'not at all' to the question 'Do you feel safe at home' and what action was taken to address this concern?

Answer: There were 72 instances (6.3 per cent).

The viewpoint questionnaires are intended to flag young people's concerns so that they can be followed up by the responsible district. Policy requires that case workers meet with each young person face-to-face once they have undertaken a questionnaire so that their responses can be discussed in more depth and actions generated to address and resolve them. Each action will be unique and the details will be retained on the individual case file.

- (b) In how many instances did a child in care answer 'not really' or 'not at all' to the question 'Does your caseworker help you' and what action was taken to address this concern?

Answer: There were 164 instances (15.1 per cent).

The viewpoint questionnaires are intended to flag young people's concerns so that they can be followed up by the responsible district. Policy requires that case workers meet with each young person face-to-face once they have undertaken a questionnaire so that their responses can be discussed in more depth and actions generated to address and resolve them. Each action will be unique and the details will be retained on the individual case file.

AR Mitchell
MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION