

# WITNESS PROTECTION (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) ACT 1996

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

### INTRODUCTION

The *Witness Protection (Western Australia) Act 1996* was proclaimed on 28 June 1996.

Section 37 *Witness Protection (Western Australia) Act 1996*, requires the Western Australia Police Force to report annually on general operations and performance of the State Witness Protection Program (SWPP).

This report is provided to the Minister for Police by the Commissioner of Police and must be provided on or before 1 September in each year.

The Minister is required to cause such a report furnished by the Commissioner of Police to be laid before each House of Parliament within 14 sitting days after it is prepared.

The following extract from the *Witness Protection (Western Australia) Act 1996* relates to annual reports.

### **SECTION 37 WITNESS PROTECTION (WESTERN AUSTRALIA) ACT 1996**

#### **37. Reporting on the SWPP**

- (1) The Commissioner must keep the Minister informed of the general operations and performance of the SWPP.
- (2) On or before 1 September in each year, the Minister, in consultation with the Commissioner, must prepare a report (the **annual report**) on the general operations and performance of the SWPP with respect to the previous financial year.
- (3) The annual report must be prepared in a manner that does not prejudice the effectiveness or security of a witness protection program, despite Part 5 sections 81 and 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.
- (4) The Minister must cause the annual report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament within 14 sitting days after it is prepared.

The table below relates to the relevant statistics applicable to the general operations and performance of the SWPP.

<b><u>STATISTICAL DATA</u></b>	
1. Total number of formal referrals (defined by a formal interview and offer of witness protection), including children.	<b>33</b>
2. Total number of formal operation referrals that progressed to the State Witness Protection Program Committee (SWPPC).	<b>0</b>
3. Total number of referrals that were assessed for the SWPP (signed an interim MOU – security operations commenced).	<b>4</b>
4. Number waiting to be progressed to the SWPP.	<b>1</b>
5. Total number of formal referrals relating to crimes of Family Violence.	<b>10</b>
6. Total number of formal referrals relating to crimes of Family Violence with an organised or gang crime association.	<b>2</b>
7. Total number of formal referrals relating to Organised Crime and other matters.	<b>21</b>
8. Total number of active operations in the SWPP as at 30 June 2021.	<b>6</b>
9. Number of SWPP participants who voluntarily terminated from the SWPP during the reporting period.	<b>2</b>
<b><u>GENDER DATA</u></b>	
Total number of males protected (including children) during period.	<b>5</b>
Total number of females protected (including children) during period.	<b>7</b>
Total number of current participants (including children) at 30 June 2021.	<b>8</b>
<b><u>RESOURCING</u></b>	
Staff gender ratio Case Officers (% of female sworn officers).	<b>33%</b>
Budget Expenditure (not required to be reported on).	<b>N/A</b>

2020-2021

## TRENDS, ISSUES AND MAJOR EVENTS

### Witness Safety

The safety of all Witnesses was maintained, no compromise encountered.

### Witness Compliance

There were several minor breaches throughout the last financial year. No witnesses on the SWPP breached their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by being arrested or incarcerated whilst in the SWPP.

### Forced Witness Terminations

No witnesses were terminated during the 2020 – 2021 financial year due to breaches of their MOU.

### Voluntary Termination Cases

Witness Protection Unit (WPU) maintains a working regime over operations in which participants have voluntarily withdrawn from the program after relocation. This commitment includes ensuring legal proceedings do not compromise the participant's new identity and existing identity documentation can be verified.

WPU are required to facilitate all outstanding financial reconciles as a result of assets being liquidated. Additionally, WPU co-ordinate any outstanding legal proceedings and provide security for former participants who are still considered at high risk and are required to provide evidence in court proceedings.



CHRIS DAWSON  
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

27/8/2021