

POLICE — FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — INITIATIVES

737. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to tackling family and domestic violence right across WA. Can the minister update the house on the initiatives the WA Police Force is implementing both to support victims of family and domestic violence and hold perpetrators to account?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Belmont for the question and for again raising the very important issue of family and domestic violence with me. Members here may be aware that lots of calls are made to police each year on domestic violence matters. Members might be stunned to hear that last year in 2018–19, there were 56 810 calls to police on family and domestic violence matters. That equates to one call to police every nine minutes for an FDV matter in the state of Western Australia. I am pleased to say that we are delivering better under our new policing model with our eight policing districts. We now have each district equipped with dedicated officers and teams that compromise, at a minimum, a sergeant and six constables in each of those districts targeting FDV.

We also received extra money in the state budget to fund some FDV programs and I am pleased to say that one of those programs, funded to the tune of \$1.7 million, is to make sure that every police officer in this state gets specialist training on FDV and how to deal with the victims and handle those situations. That training is starting in the next couple of weeks and will be rolled out to every police officer in this state. It is important that police officers are appropriately equipped to deal with FDV situations when they arise. In addition, \$400 000 also formed part of the budget to develop family violence codes of practice to strengthen the response to victims. We made a commitment to implement the government's "Stopping Family and Domestic Violence" policy as part of our election commitments. I am very pleased that we were able to get that funding and police are now putting programs in place to strengthen our frontline support.

In addition, \$5.5 million has been provided to establish the unit at the police state operations command centre. That unit will comprise 10 police officers working with Department of Justice staff to provide around-the-clock monitoring of FDV offences. That will mean there is extra monitoring and extra information. As those instances arise, that unit will be able to monitor the calls that are coming in, know who is calling in, and hopefully know the history, the frequency and a whole range of other matters connected to that call for assistance. Member for Belmont, I know we have had many discussions about what we can do better to support victims of domestic violence. I think this is a major step forward in police training, and it will make a difference. The officers working alongside the Department of Justice people at our operations command centre will also make a difference, as will the establishment of the code of practice.