

POLICE — MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

181. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many police incidents involved people suffering from mental illness in 2012 and 2013?
- (2) What mental health training is provided to police officers?
- (3) How many currently serving officers have undertaken this training?
- (4) Do all recruits receive mental health training?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Police, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) WA Police incidents involving mental health were as follows: the number of mental health escorts in 2012 was 1 626, and in 2013 it was 961. The number of mental health incidents in 2012 was 1 190, and in 2013 it was 1 745. It should be noted that the statistics are provisional and subject to revision, and the information is data extracted from the WA Police CAD system on 11 March 2014.
- (2) Mental health training is delivered to all recruits prior to graduation from the WA Police Academy. This includes practical scenario training in addition to established classroom-based learning within the recruit training curriculum. The training is delivered by representatives from the mental health emergency response team, police negotiators and the Department of Health. In addition, legal trainers at the WA Police Academy include specific instruction to recruits in obtaining confessional evidence, including their dealings with persons displaying mental or intellectual disability. The training reinforces the officers' application of voluntariness and fairness tests applied to obtaining evidence. The operational skills faculty of the academy also delivers mental health first aid training to all operational police officers on an annual basis. This module focuses on providing appropriate first aid assistance to a person experiencing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis until qualified professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves. Additionally, all officers seeking promotion to the rank of first-class constable and senior constable must successfully complete a module relating to the legislative and procedural requirements for detaining and transporting persons suffering from a mental health issue.
- (3) All front-line operational police officers have received mental health training.
- (4) All recruits receive mental health training.