

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — COERCIVE CONTROL

665. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:

I refer to the family and domestic violence coercive control measures introduced in other states to tackle family and domestic violence incidents.

- (1) Why is Western Australia lagging behind other jurisdictions on these important measures, which the Western Australian Labor government has talked about for more than two years?
- (2) When will the government introduce these measures so victims and the community can have clarity?

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

- (1)–(2) Queensland and New South Wales have introduced some legislation. In New South Wales, it has been introduced and not proclaimed. In Queensland, it is a little bit more problematic. The Standing Council of Attorneys-General has received a report on this and will consider it on Friday. We want to develop a national approach to the problem of coercive control, and, as far as possible, harmonise the laws across our nation.

Also, the Commissioner for Victims of Crime in Western Australia has prepared a report for the government of Western Australia on this subject, which will certainly be going to cabinet for its consideration for responses—this will be after SCAG—in the near future. We will keep the member updated. Coercive control, of course, is not like domestic violence. It is not like an incident where someone gets punched and responders come around and see someone with a black eye. It can be a pattern of behaviour, often nuanced behaviour like being cruel to a pet. A whole lot of things can cause a person to be under coercive control. We are coming to grips with all these matters. In Queensland, the legislation introduced is to make coercive control part of the family violence definition. That is a step towards making it a matter that can be the subject of a restraining order. We are looking at those subjects at the moment.

I will be discussing them on Friday with all Attorneys General. The cabinet will consider those matters subsequent to that and after we have considered the report of Ms Kati Kraszlan, the Commissioner for Victims of Crime.