

METH ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE — POLICE

453. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Police:

Before I ask the question, I just acknowledge a fantastic former Assistant Commissioner of Police in the Speaker's gallery, former minister Hon Bob Kucera, who is still very popular in the neighbourhood of Mt Lawley, and in particular, Yokine.

I refer to the success of Operation Signal, which, as the minister outlined to the house last week, resulted in the seizure 90 kilograms of drugs, including 75 kilograms of methamphetamine.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the McGowan Labor government's record investment in police is supporting its new broader strategy of continuing to tackle the scourge of methamphetamine in our community?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house what the latest wastewater results show about methamphetamine use in WA?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

(1)–(2) I certainly can comment on our over \$125 million additional investment, which as I have —

Several members interjected.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: We hear this nonsense from the opposition, and its members say, "The budget has been cut." The budget has been increased and the total number of officers has been increased. They peddle lies and mistruths, Mr Speaker. The fact of the matter is, they were promising —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, you have asked a question; I want to hear the answer.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The fact of the matter is that the former government promised zero extra police officers had it been re-elected.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine, I call you to order for the second time.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It had not funded its meth team beyond 30 June 2017. That is when the funds ran out. It never actually realised what an issue methamphetamine was. I can comment, member for Mount Lawley, on the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission national wastewater monitoring. The fact is that meth consumption in Perth has decreased over 20 per cent since its peak in December 2016—that is the peak of meth consumption, and it is now 20 per cent lower in Perth than it was then. Let us talk about regional Western Australia as well. In regional Western Australia, it has decreased more than 10 per cent since the last report, and it is down by 25 per cent since August 2016. What I want to comment about is judging three months to three months, and six months to six months. If we look at something like meth, which people are addicted to, we cannot get people off it instantly by interrupting supply. It is a long-term effort.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands!

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first time. I warned you twice.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: What we need to do is look at it over a decent period of time. We know that since members opposite were in government, meth consumption, by those very reports, is significantly down.

An opposition member interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: It was not me.

The SPEAKER: I withdraw it then.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Yes, it is hard to get it down lower. We are not satisfied with what are pretty good results; we want to get even better results. That is why we are putting more resources into our effort.

I will finish with this quote from Assistant Commissioner Whiteley, where she commented in an article —

DUMA data documented the rise of the meth problem in WA from 2009, when 15% of detainees tested positive, to 2018 where 65% tested positive.

So, back in 2009, 15 per cent of detainees in lock-ups in Western Australia were testing positive for meth; by 2018, 65 per cent were testing positive for meth.

Hang your heads in shame.