

POLICE — COMMUNITY SAFETY

1077. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Police:

On behalf of the member for Jandakot, I welcome the leadership team from the Mosaic community centre.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to community safety, which is demonstrated by its unprecedented boost to police operations over this coming summer. Can the minister advise the house how this unprecedented summer blitz will increase the police presence across Western Australia and help drive down crime?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Mount Lawley for his question and for his unswerving support of community safety and the job that our police officers do. On Sunday, 17 November, along with Deputy Commissioner Gary Dreibergs, I had the pleasure of announcing Operation Heat Shield, which is a police operation that will run over summer. It is an unprecedented statewide operation targeting crime and antisocial behaviour over the summer. I think it is well known that not only around Australia, but also worldwide, when people are outdoors and perhaps having a drink and enjoying the sunshine in summer, unfortunately, antisocial behaviour increases and crime peaks. It peaks here in Western Australia, in Australia, and around the world. Thanks to the sound financial management of the McGowan government and the state being in a strong financial position, we are able to allocate an unprecedented amount to supporting our police over this period and will be able to support them for a longer period over summer than ever before.

We have allocated \$5 million and it will start on 1 December, going through until the end of May. It will result in about 55 000 or more police hours being available to the Commissioner of Police to deploy. The beauty of this program is that it can be deployed on a needs basis. We will specifically target those urban centres where we know there are problems and issues from time to time, be that the city, Northbridge, Joondalup, Mandurah or Ellenbrook. Wherever issues occur, additional resources can be mobilised very quickly. It will be similar in regional areas. I hope we do not have to mobilise too many people in Albany, Mr Speaker, but whether it is Bunbury, Geraldton, the Kimberley or the Pilbara, that overtime will be available for the commissioner to allocate to his district superintendents to deploy. Not only district officers will have this opportunity. It will involve a number of our squads. It will involve the mounted police, the dog squad, the regional operations group, the juvenile action group, and bike and beat patrols in the most coordinated police blitz that this state will have seen. Crime is well down compared with the Barnett–Harvey era, but we will not rest on our laurels. We know that summer can be a period in which crime increases. Assaults increase and antisocial behaviour can occur in a variety of urban settings. We want to nip that in the bud. In addition to increased patrols in suburban centres, no matter where they are, in metro or country, police will be targeting volume crimes. They will be looking at burglary, shoplifting, fuel theft and other common crimes that concern people in our community. I am very grateful that the Treasurer and the Premier have provided sound financial management and we are in a position to be able to support our police force to get on and do an excellent job in supporting the community.