

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDERS — GPS TRACKING

635. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:

I refer to the WA Labor government's \$15.5 million, two-year GPS tracking trial for family and domestic violence offenders that was launched in August 2020 and concluded more than 12 months ago. So far, the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence has been unable to answer simple questions about this.

The SPEAKER: Member, you cannot run an argument or commentary in your question. You can have a preamble in order to make your question intelligible, but I urge you to ask the question appropriately of the Attorney General and not to include criticism, real or otherwise, of other members.

Ms L. METTAM: I ask the following questions.

- (1) What was the total number of FDV offenders subject to GPS tracking during the trial period?
- (2) Are any FDV offenders in WA still subject to GPS tracking; and, if not, why not?
- (3) What has happened to the additional 15 adult community corrections staff and two dedicated, around-the-clock police officers announced as part of the trial?

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

- (1)–(3) As to the last question, I will wait for my friend and colleague the Minister for Corrective Services to return to the chamber. I would be asking his empty chair at the moment.

It is a very serious question. The two-year FDV GPS tracking trial was an election commitment, as the member stated in her question. The department is evaluating the data from those packages. The evaluation is examining three key questions: Was the trial implemented as intended? Was the trial aligned with best practice? Did the trial achieve the intended community safety outcomes? I have asked the Department of Justice to provide me with its findings. I have a document called *Evaluation of the FDV GPS tracking trial—Early insights*. It is not the final report. As the member said, the trial ran for two years. It has been a year since the trial ended, but some people were put on the trial towards the end of the two years, so those people had to be tracked for a period after the conclusion of the trial. It would not be right to include someone in the twenty-third month and then conclude and report because the department would not know what had happened to that individual. I expect to receive a comprehensive evaluation in the coming months. In the meantime, most of the answers to the member's inquiries are set out in this preliminary report, which I now table.

[See paper [2231](#).]

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I refer to the key findings of that report. GPS tracking conditions were imposed on 137 FDV offenders in 159 cases throughout the two-year trial. There is no end date on the legislative amendments that enabled the GPS tracking of FDV offenders—that is there forever. The take-up of the new GPS tracking option for FDV offenders has continued to increase since the trial ended and more people have gone on that program. In fact, almost double the number of offenders had GPS tracking devices fitted in the year following the trial than the average number during the trial period. We have doubled the number of people with GPS tracking in one year since the conclusion of the trial. Since August 2022, 122 FDV offenders had been fitted with GPS tracking. The department advises me that with a new sentencing option such as this, it takes time for the courts and other stakeholders to ramp up awareness of the program. As the judiciary and more stakeholders become aware of it, we expect a bigger take-up, with more tracking devices ordered to be fitted.

The Commissioner for Victims of Crime has been actively engaged in supporting victims involved in the trial and monitoring their perceptions. In 83 per cent of cases in which GPS monitoring conditions were being considered, 60 per cent of victims wanted tracking imposed. The preliminary report shows that GPS tracking has not been limited to offenders who breached a family violence restraining order with a further act of family violence, which was the initial parameter, and that 19 offenders who met this specific criterion were tracked during the trial. Early analysis of the data indicates that at least 118 additional FDV offenders were tracked in the trial period, taking it to a total of 137 offenders tracked during the trial, with the monitoring condition imposed on 159 occasions. I particularly thank the Commissioner for Victims of Crime, Ms Kati Kraszlan, and the Western Australian Office of Crime Statistics and Research. That was another initiative of the Labor government on coming to power—not to introduce policies based just on guesswork but to have an Office of Crime Statistics and Research to guide us on policy issues. I thank them for expediting the *Early insights* paper for Parliament. I look forward to receiving the final report, which I will table in due course.