

CRIME PREVENTION — NORTHBRIDGE

20. Ms E. EVANGEL to the Minister for Police:

Can the minister please advise how the state government's \$25 000 crime prevention grant to the Business Improvement Group of Northbridge will help to make the area an even safer place for businesses, residents and visitors alike?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the new member for Perth for her question and congratulate her on her election win. It is indeed very good to see such a strong supporter of the Perth and Northbridge precinct in this house. The \$25 000 community crime prevention grant to the Business Improvement Group of Northbridge, otherwise known as the Big N, is designed around a trial program of the Northbridge community ambassadors program. Four ambassadors will be funded between 9.00 pm and 3.00 am on Friday and Saturday nights in Northbridge over a three-month period. This is based on a very successful program that has been running in Sydney in the CBD and the nightclub precincts. It is envisaged that the ambassadors will have a role in reducing antisocial behaviour by assisting patrons and customers of Northbridge as they move through the thoroughfares and laneways of the Northbridge precinct. These ambassadors will also communicate with police, with the surveillance centre for the City of Perth, with the City of Perth rangers and also with the street chaplains who locate themselves throughout the Northbridge precinct. We will assess this program after the three-month trial period against its reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour criteria, with a view to continuing to work with the BIG N in Northbridge, other business owners, nightclub owners and liquor licensees in Northbridge, as well as the patrons of Northbridge. We will continue to improve the amenity of Northbridge and the downward trend in crime in the area to make people feel safe when they go to Northbridge and ensure that the patronage of Northbridge is consistent with the improvements that the business owners in Northbridge are continuing to make.

I commend the BIG N for putting together this program and continuing to work with government on ways to improve the Northbridge precinct for the benefit of all visitors to it.