

POLICE — CRIME RATES — GERALDTON

690. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Police:

Can the minister please advise the house on what progress police have made in reducing the volume of crime in Geraldton?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Geraldton for this question and his close monitoring of the activities of our police officers in Geraldton. As the member for Geraldton is well aware, like most parts of the state, Geraldton has its suburban pockets that have some social challenges. Like everywhere else across the state, it certainly has pockets where there are issues with criminal activity, substance abuse, drug dealing and those sorts of activities. Earlier this year, as the member for Geraldton is well aware, from our growth program of 1 050 additional police officers and auxiliary officers by 2017, we have taken 25 officers and given additional resources to Geraldton. Those officers have been working very closely with the Geraldton police volume crime team. They ran a fantastic campaign over 12 days.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Girrawheen does not care about what happens with police officers. She continually interjects and speaks over me.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I have been pretty lenient on you. You have been cutting in quite a bit today.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Those hardworking officers at the Geraldton —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Those hardworking police officers in Geraldton, who deserve to have some recognition in this place, have that opportunity at this moment in time, member for Girrawheen. I hope that the member listens. They ran a volume crime campaign over 12 days, and they used the information that they had received from members of the community, who have a great partnership with police in Geraldton. Out of that, police focused on one particular suspect who had been responsible for multiple burglaries. From that, they initiated an additional nine search warrants, and from those search warrants, they have now charged 11 people with 84 offences, ranging from drug possession to firearms charges, burglary charges, stealing charges and also fraud. Those offenders will no doubt come before the courts. As a result of our strong platform, our three strikes burglary legislation, some of them are likely to face mandatory penalties as a result of their criminal activity. I would like to congratulate the Geraldton policing team, and, indeed, all our hardworking police officers across the state, for the great job that they do. They can be assured of continued support from the Liberal–National government in that law and order space. They can also be assured that we will not unravel the Frontline 2020 model, which gives us additional resources to deploy to the front line.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We will not be sacking the commissioner or telling him how to do his job. We will continue to support police officers with the tools and resources that they need to make an impact on volume crime in places like Geraldton.