

PRISON FELLOWSHIP WESTERN AUSTRALIA — DAVID VOLMER

672. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the April 2014 newsletter of Prison Fellowship Western Australia, then under the directorship of David Volmer, which states —

... we have also been invited into Banksia Hill Detention Centre to support the 12–18 year olds within that facility. This entrance into Banksia Hill is the answer to many years of prayer ...

- (1) When was permission granted for Prison Fellowship to become involved at the Banksia Hill Detention Centre?
- (2) Did David Volmer visit Banksia Hill as part of Prison Fellowship's activities with children at the centre?
- (3) Was the minister involved in the decision to allow access; and, if not, who authorised the involvement?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

- (1)–(3) Member for Warnbro, I know that the Leader of the Opposition has FOI-ed some information regarding my meetings with the former director of Prison Fellowship. I think I met him twice, and I provided that information either to the Leader of the Opposition or jointly to questions on notice that were provided in the Legislative Council about two weeks ago. For members who do not know what this issue is about, the former director of Prison Fellowship was recently jailed; I believe he pleaded guilty to child pornographic offences. I met him twice in my role as Minister for Corrective Services. I am sure anyone in my role would have acknowledged a request for a meeting with someone like that. I would say that the organisation Prison Fellowship does a lot of good work in the prison system trying to reform prisoners. Did I know about what he was doing? Obviously not—unfortunately, paedophiles do not come with a sign. No-one knows. I would also say that anyone in that same situation, any member of Parliament, would have accepted a request for a meeting with him.

As to the details of the member's question, I cannot tell the member right now when he was granted approval to enter Banksia Hill Detention Centre, or the date, but I am more than happy to provide that information for the member.

Mr P. Papalia: Were you involved?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: No, not at all. This is the first I have ever known he has been to Banksia Hill, so I will find out for the member.