

POLICE — ILLICIT DRUGS — GERALDTON

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

Recently, 350 kilograms of ice was taken off the streets in the metropolitan area. Can the minister please advise what the Liberal–National government is doing to tackle the supply of illicit drugs in Geraldton?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Geraldton for this question and also for hosting a number of community crime forums in his electorate that the commissioner and I have both very much enjoyed attending.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Members would recall last week when we were talking about that amazingly successful seizure of 350 kilograms of methamphetamines as a result of our joint operations with our federal counterparts and \$1.5 million worth of cash was also seized; it was a very, very good haul. I am very pleased to inform the house today that our Geraldton detectives, along with our Geraldton police, have worked in conjunction with the organised crime squad in Perth and as a result of the operation in Geraldton held last week and in preceding weeks, 26 addresses were served with search warrants. From those 26 addresses that were served with search warrants, 27 people were charged with offences relating to drugs and also weapons offences.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There were 78 charges —

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker —

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is such a demoralising thing for our WA Police to have their minister not be given the opportunity to talk about their successes.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The opposition runs around like the sky is falling and it is an insult to our Western Australian police officers who are doing a terrific job —

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I call you to order now for the second time. Member for Girrawheen, I will call you for the third time if you do not calm down.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: They are doing a terrific job with their own resources and in conjunction with our federal counterparts in getting this disgusting, dreadful drug off our streets. In Geraldton last week, 78 charges were laid against 27 individuals. They seized 600 grams of methamphetamine, two kilograms of cannabis, 20 kilograms of MDMA, and 16 grams of cocaine as well as magic mushrooms and LSD. That is a very good operation of the Geraldton detectives and the Geraldton police in conjunction with our organised crime task force. I am really proud of the work that they are doing. In addition to this, through our joint organised crime task force, another 9.5 kilograms of methamphetamine was removed from the streets of Perth this week. Two men were arrested in Perth as a result of that operation with our federal counterparts. We are acting and the police are well resourced, both federally and at a state level. We are seizing these drugs and taking them off our streets, contrary to what the opposition is saying.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the second time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Opposition members are the only people in this state who think advertising for 50 detective positions is a bad thing!

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland! A quick answer please, minister.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Since July 2013, we have created 58 additional detective positions. There are now 889.5 authorised full-time equivalent detectives in WA Police. I have 14 detectives graduating on Friday. We have no shortage of trainers. We are advertising for more. We know they need more. We have resourced police for more so that we can have more successful operations, such as the one in Geraldton. There were 350 kilograms last week and 9.5 kilograms through the joint organised crime task force this week, and a range of drugs were seized from Geraldton just last week. We are working. Our police officers deserve the commendation of the opposition, not condemnation. Stop saying that the sky is falling and talk about the good job they are doing—for once!

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland, that is enough; I call you to order.