

HOME BURGLARIES — POLICE RESPONSE

**164. Mrs M.H. ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:**

I refer the minister to her admission that after six years of a Liberal government, WA has the worst rate of home burglaries for any state in Australia.

- (1) What proportion of 22 711 home burglaries in the metro area last year were actually attended by police?
- (2) What are the criteria for police attendance at a home burglary?
- (3) What is the sanction rate for home burglaries in the metro area so far this year?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:**

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for Midland for her question. I do not have in my head the actual specific figures with respect to the sanction rates for home burglaries. However, I am happy to provide those to her upon receipt of a question on notice. What I would like to say —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** You had the figures for everyone's electorate yesterday!

**The SPEAKER:** Sit down, please. Member for Midland, I call you to order for the third time.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** What I will say is that the 27 407 home burglaries that were committed in Western Australia over the last year are reports to police of homes that have been burgled. The police have a policy of attending to those reports. Generally, the follow-up to householders after those reports is to try to determine whether any forensic information can be gathered, such as DNA evidence or CCTV footage or security camera footage. Furthermore, it is done to find out whether there will be enough evidence around those particular incidences to put a brief together to ensure we can pin those offences against an offender. We acknowledge that this is an issue, which is why we have put additional police officers on the road and made a commitment for 550 additional police officers, which includes the ability to train up an additional 200 detectives so that we can have more of a focus in this place. The community is telling us they want to see some action. In addition to that, when police charge these offenders and bring them to court, the community is telling us that it wants to see minimum mandatory terms of imprisonment levied against these people as a penalty. As we know, with home burglaries in this state, it is supposed to be three strikes and they are in! However, the counting rules have been such that offenders out there have upwards of 150 offences and they have spent no time in prison at all.

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I have not asked about the minister's legislation. She said at the start of her answer that she did not have the statistics at hand, so I am wondering why she is continuing.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, the question was to do with police attendance at burglaries and the sanction rate. If you do not have the stats, maybe you want to give them to the member for Midland at some other stage. Continue if you wish to, but that was the question.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I am interested to know how the opposition will stand with our legislation in which we propose a solution to the problem.

**The SPEAKER:** That is the question. If you want to address the question, minister, address the question.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I note that although there were 27 400 reported home burglaries in 2012–13 when we were in government, in 2003–04, when members opposite were in government, there were 33 714. Although it is trending down, it is still is not good enough. That is why we have introduced new legislation to ensure that when these offenders go to court, instead of receiving a penalty of 15 months—if they get any penalty at all—they will be sentenced to a minimum mandatory term of two years as a starting point. Obviously, the judiciary can sentence these people up to 20 years. We are asking the judiciary to start at two years and work upwards. I hope the member for Midland will support this legislation when it comes to this chamber because the community is very supportive of it and wants to see some action in this place; it wants to see these rates driven down. The government believes that this legislation will go some way to achieving that end.