

POLICE — OPERATION SWEEP — DETECTIVES

826. Mrs M.H. ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the directive regarding Operation Sweep to all metropolitan policing districts last week.

- (1) Were all staff asked to log into the computer aided dispatch system using the heading “Special Assignment Deep Saturation” just so the government can build statistics for a government press release?
- (2) Does dragging detectives and others away from their investigative work to fill gaps in the frontline, not demonstrate just how understaffed the frontline is?
- (3) Can the minister explain the downside of taking understaffed detective teams away from their current investigations?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Midland for the question.

- (1) In answer to the question around Operation Sweep collecting statistics for a government media announcement: no, it is not. Everybody who has been in this house over the past month understands that there was an unprecedented surge in overall reported crime that was also experienced in other policing jurisdictions. In response to that, police put together Operation Sweep, which is what they do in response to emerging trends in crime. They respond to it in a format that they think is going to be effective.
- (2)–(3) With respect to the detectives, we have recently formed a large number of joint organised crime task forces and other task forces to deal with specific areas of crime. That has resulted in the transfer of some of the detectives from the district offices into the specialised detective policing areas. The Commissioner of Police has reassured me that we are currently 34.7 full-time equivalent short of our detective FTE complement of 904.5, which is around a 3.8 per cent shortfall. We have 50 vacancies advertised on a site. The commissioner has assured me that by the end of 2016 there will be courses in place to train 268 additional detectives in keeping with the 2013 election campaign commitment to train more detectives. We have detectives in the pipeline: 170 are doing the Workbook program, which then leads to an interview program and an introductory course for detective schools. A large number of detective schools have a really good solid cohort of wonderful police officers who are being upskilled in that area.

In response to the member for Midland’s question, the results for Operation Sweep are very clear. We have seen a five per cent reduction on the September figures. We will continue to keep the pressure on and drive it down. I continue to liaise with the commissioner and the deputy commissioner to ensure that they respond appropriately.