

POLICE — OFFENCES AGAINST PEOPLE — SANCTION RATES

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

A year ago, Western Australia Police released figures showing that in 2011–12, there were 32 000 offences against people and that the sanction rate was only 54 per cent compared with a sanction rate of over 80 per cent in 2008.

- (1) Did the minister say last October that she intended to grill police chiefs on why so many crimes were going unpunished and get to the bottom of why the sanction rate had dropped?
- (2) Is she aware that recently released Western Australia Police figures show that the number of offences against people has now grown to over 35 500, with an even worse sanction rate of just 49 per cent?
- (3) Did the minister ever deliver the grilling and get to the bottom of the matter last year; and, if so, how does she explain that the sanction rate has now worsened by a further five per cent?

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

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) In response to her question, yes, I did sit down with the Commissioner of Police and senior members of the police executive and ask them why there was a variance in the sanction rate around these offences. To be honest with the member, as part of the reform process we are looking at how sanction rates are calculated for various crimes and how police deal with a range of their reporting as part of the annual reporting process. Although total offences against the person have increased over the past few years, so has our population. There are other really good figures that police have been achieving.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Why has the sanction rate dropped? Why are you catching fewer offenders?

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Midland!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** As an example, non-dwelling burglary in 2003-04—that is, burglaries —

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I have not asked a general question about police statistics; I have particularly asked why this sanction rate is falling and what the minister is doing about it.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Just to get to my point, there were nearly 18 000 offences in the non-dwelling burglary category in 2003-04. That has now come down to 9 000 offences. Total offences against property has come down by over 20 000 since 2003-04 in the context of a rapidly rising population in this state. In addition, we are increasing the number of police officers available to respond to all these offences. I expect that our sanction rates and our offence rates will improve over time as we better resource our police officers to deal with crime in this state.