

OUT-OF-CONTROL PARTIES — POLICE RESPONSE

409. Mr J.M. FRANCIS to the Minister for Police:

No doubt every member on this side of the house is very aware of the need to keep the Western Australian community safe and secure in their homes and neighbourhoods. I refer to out-of-control parties, in particular. Can the minister please update the house on the government's plan to break the back of these out-of-control parties?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for the question. Over the last six weeks there have been 204 public disorder incidents reported to the police. Of those 204 public disorder incidents, an average of three per week have been priority 2 incidents. For the information of members, a priority 2 incident is one that is so serious and volatile that urgent police attendance is required. The government's strategy in managing out-of-control parties is a three-pronged approach. First, we want to make it easier for police to be able to get in and control these parties, and to identify and shut down out-of-control parties. Second, we want to make sure that police have the tools that they need to effectively go about their business. Some of those will be legislative tools, but in addition we are looking at other tools to help them manage and rapidly disperse mobs. Third, we want to encourage the community and the hosts of these parties to act responsibly.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We also want to make sure that criminally responsible hosts face sanctions. As the member for Jandakot is the owner of a lovely Alsatian dog called Rex, he would no doubt be aware that on the weekend the state government announced a \$1.2 million investment—new money—in doubling the size of general-purpose dogs —

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I mean, doubling the number of general-purpose dogs! The bigger the better, as far as I am concerned! The purpose of these dogs is to snarl, growl and bark to scare people, instilling the fear of God into these people. The dogs and the police are able to effectively manage the crowds. That is one of the initiatives announced over the weekend.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Why aren't you getting more horses?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We have also been talking to the Department of Corrective Services, and we have two riot buses that will give the police the capacity to detain up to 14 offenders. The advantage of these buses is that we can separate males, females and juveniles. The buses will have cameras fitted in them and also toilet facilities. The police can detain and hold these offenders on site, outside out-of-control parties, or they can take them away and process them at a facility. One thing members opposite can be certain of is that this government will take a pragmatic and sensible approach.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Why aren't you getting more horses?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will be interested to know whether the member for Midland is across the WA Labor Party's policy on out-of-control parties, because she did have a rather embarrassing moment on the radio this week trying to articulate that policy.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Really! Have you got a request for horses or not? That is what I am asking you!

The SPEAKER: Minister for Police, if you are going to refer to a person in this place, you should expect something to come back.

Member for Midland, I have given you a couple of cautions, and I will give you a further caution.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I can assure the house that the government will not be embarking on some kind of red-tape initiative mandating that every single backyard party in Western Australia has to be registered with the police.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I can guarantee the house that we will not be doing that. I can also assure the house that legislation is currently being drafted, and members will be able to peruse that legislation and forensically go through it when I bring it to the house.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I am formally going to call you to order for the first time today.

