

DRINK-DRIVING — MINISTER FOR POLICE'S COMMENTS

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

I refer to the minister's comments to the house last year in which she said —

Drink-driving is never acceptable ... I pledge that I will not drink and drive, and I will not accept my friends, family and colleagues getting behind the wheel drunk either.

I also refer to the minister's comments of yesterday in which she said that the member for Vasse has saved everybody money and court time.

- (1) As the Minister for Police, what example are you setting by not holding your colleague to account for his behaviour and decisions on 22 and 23 February?
- (2) What credibility do you now have when advocating for the elimination of drink-driving in our society?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

- (1)–(2) I stand 100 per cent behind the comments I made in this place and in numerous other forums with respect to drink-driving. It is not acceptable. Last year police breathalysed just over 1.5 million people in Western Australia, and 13 371 of those people tested over the limit. It is not acceptable; it is a problem.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Is the member for Vasse's behaviour acceptable?

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I do not let anybody in my company drink and drive and I do not drive when I have had any alcohol myself.

With respect to the incident that the opposition is talking about, given my responsibility as Minister for Police, my conversations around this matter have been with the Commissioner of Police. The commissioner assures me that he is satisfied that the police have investigated that matter and all of the relevant evidence has been considered. He sought independent legal advice to determine which charges should ultimately be preferred as a consequence of that investigation. That has occurred. A statement of material facts has been put to the court. There has been a decision. There has been a consequence. If anyone has any issue with the way in which that investigation has been conducted, we have a forum for putting those complaints forward—the Corruption and Crime Commission—or people can go through the commissioner to request that the actions of the officers involved in that investigation be investigated. Those are the forums; they have been set up in the interests of transparency. If the member or anyone else has any new information, they should give it to the police and they can have a further look at the incident. As it stands, the matter is being investigated and the commissioner has satisfied me that it has been investigated thoroughly.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Should your colleague have spoken to the police?

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland, I call you to order for the second time. You can have a supplementary question if you want.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: With regard to the comments I made about saving taxpayers' money, they were specifically in response to the member for Vasse pleading guilty to all those offences, which meant that the matter did not have to go before a court. The matter did not have to have court time allocated to it. It was a sentencing hearing, so no court time was taken up. We know that court time is expensive. The member pleaded guilty to the offences. Those comments about saving money were about saving the cost of a trial by pleading guilty.

Mr B.J. Grylls interjected.

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