

POLICE — DETECTIVES

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

- (1) Why are there an unprecedented 50 vacancies in detective positions?
- (2) Does the minister realise the extra stress and workload this places on existing detectives?
- (3) Can the minister explain why the last three detective schools have not been full?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for Midland for the question. She is quite right; we have advertised for an additional 50 detectives, I think it is, right across the state of Western Australia.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I can assure the house that this is in no way, shape or form linked to any government resource issue. As part of our growth program in the 2013 election commitment, Mr Speaker, you will recall that we committed to providing an additional 550 police and police auxiliary officers, in addition to our 2008 commitment. Part of that commitment was to train an additional 200 detectives, specifically in response to some of the issues that had been raised as the commissioner and I had gone out particularly to regional Western Australia, where we were told that they wanted more detectives. We have therefore made provision for an additional 200 detective positions. Contrary to the member for Midland's assertion, we are on the way to achieving that growth of 200 additional detectives by 2017. It is not linked to a resourcing issue. As members in this house know, we are undergoing a reform agenda in policing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: As part of that reform agenda, we are looking at the construction of our policing teams in regional Western Australia in particular. We have started that conversation in Albany, Broome, Geraldton and Bunbury. We are looking at what will be an appropriate composition of detectives, police officers and public servants in each of those districts to ensure they can service the community.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Members in this house will probably recall when I announced some additional detectives would be provided in the member for Vasse's electorate. We expect more announcements will be made as the reform project continues to unfold across the rest of Western Australia.