

POLICE TRANSPORT UNIT–REGIONAL OPERATIONS GROUP — MERGER

**466. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Police:**

Before I ask my question, I acknowledge the fantastic student leaders from Edney Primary School in High Wycombe in my electorate, who I had the pleasure of having lunch with today, and the principal, Miss Jill Durrant.

Can the minister please update the house on the merger of the regional operations group and the police transport unit?

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

I thank the member for Forrestfield for this question. As part of the Frontline 2020 initiative, the regional operations group was merged with the police transport unit. We commenced that work in July 2013. We looked at how we could merge those two particular work units within police. Phase 2 of the project was finalised in February 2014. Since that time, we have had the regional operation group units operating in a dual capacity along the railway lines, and also, obviously, as a supplementary resource as required to supplement the district teams. The trends have indicated that offending patterns have actually moved away from transport infrastructure, but offenders on public transport still have an impact on public safety. WA Police was required to come up with a more effective, responsive and proactive response in the deployment of resources to address this problem. Our new ROG model actually allows for this. We have managed to put together an enhanced commitment to Operation Railsafe. We are very pleased with that. It has been focused on the Burswood–Armadale rail line. We have had a greater focus on at-risk juveniles who are unaccompanied on railways and public transport late at night, and we have also regularly been deploying our police dogs onto the train services to target drug activities, particularly around the entertainment precincts and concert venues.

The new model is still being bedded down and refined, but the initial three months have shown a significant result. The achievements of this unit are terrific. I am very proud of the work of our police officers in the community. They do a professional and outstanding job at all times. We have had a 27 per cent increase in court briefs, we have had 203 apprehensions on warrants, we have had 539 at-risk juveniles apprehended, our rail offences have been reduced by 5.6 per cent, and when we exclude the drug offences targeted by police, all other reported offences on our rail unit have decreased by 24 per cent. We are very pleased with the operational outcomes of the merger of these two units. It was quite contentious at the time, and the accusation was made that we were trying to make our police force do less with less. Once again, all sorts of attempts were made to undermine the ability of police to do their job and undermine the not insignificant efforts of police to do their job more efficiently and more effectively in keeping with the requests of this government to ensure that we deliver the best police service and we can be the benchmark jurisdiction across Australia.