

CRIME STATISTICS — CAR THEFT

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

I again refer the minister to the ABS crime statistics released last week.

- (1) Is the minister aware that Western Australia is number one amongst the states for car theft?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the rate of car theft in WA increased from 0.9 per cent of population in 2012–13 to 1.1 per cent of population in 2013–14?
- (3) Can the minister explain why car theft in Western Australia is almost double the national average and increasing under her watch?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Midland for this question.

- (1)–(3) We have been aware that there is a problem with car theft in Western Australia and we have put together a team of police officers who are specifically targeting that particular issue. We have also entered into a joint arrangement with the RAC and with some of the national motoring organisations to implement a brand-new scheme in Western Australia, which is a GPS tracking scheme. This scheme will allow people to have a GPS tracker fitted to their vehicle that they can link to their iPhone to put a secure shield, if you like, around their vehicle. If that vehicle escapes from that shield, it will alert the people who have that mobile phone and also the police about where that vehicle is. We have some strategies and innovations in that area of car theft that we are trying to address to drive down the rate of theft.

We also know that in many cases car theft in Western Australia is linked to home burglary and that people break into homes specifically to steal car keys. Members will be aware that there is legislation before this house around recidivist home burglars, in which we want to change the three-strikes laws and get those people behind bars after they commit three offences. I expect that once this legislation comes into place and we put prolific offenders behind bars, we will see a significant drop in the number of both home burglaries and car thefts, particularly in those instances in which they are so intrinsically linked.