

DANGEROUS SEX OFFENDERS — GPS TRACKING DEVICES

**198. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I refer to a report in *The Sunday Times* that there have been 998 incident reports over 12 months for dangerous sex offenders wearing GPS tracking devices, and the minister's claim in this place on 19 March this year that if offenders breached their conditions—they would only have to look the wrong way, at the moment—there would be significant consequences for such actions.

- (1) Did any of the three dangerous sex offenders reported as being charged with breaching their release conditions actually go back to jail?
- (2) Is the \$300 fine given to the serial violent sex offender Mr TJD what the Barnett government means by a serious consequence?
- (3) Is it true that the three offenders collectively breached their conditions 18 times over the past 12 months; and, if so, how many breaches were there by each of the offenders?

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:**

I thank the member very much for that question; it probably would have helped if he had given me some notice of the details.

- (1)–(3) What I can say is that, as of today, approximately 22 dangerous sex offenders are being tracked 24/7 using GPS technology. Not all of the 998 occurrences were necessarily breaches. Some of the constraints that might be put on a DSO might include not going within the proximity of a certain location, such as a school, or someone's house, or obeying their curfew; but there may well be a reason why the GPS system might trigger the alarm, such as the offender being in a taxi and, because of roadworks, the taxi having to —

*Point of Order*

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Mr Speaker, I posed three very specific questions to the minister, none of which referred to the 998 incident reports. The three questions were: Did any of the three dangerous sex offenders go back to jail? Is the \$300 fine what the government considers a serious consequence? Is it true that the three offenders collectively breached 18 times in 12 months? I request that you ask the minister to answer the questions I asked him.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr J.M. FRANCIS:** I thought the member's question started with the 998 occurrences.

There may be some reason why the department does not refer every single one of those cases, such as there being a logical explanation as to why the GPS alarm might have been triggered. I do not know the details of all 998 instances; if the member wants to put that question on notice, I will certainly ask.

I do not know which three DSOs the member is talking about. I know I have 22-ish right now who are being tracked on GPS. What I can tell the member is that, as happened with Mr TJD, if there is a breach and it is detected by the Department of Corrective Services, my department's role is to ensure that conditions set by the courts are imposed and adhered to. If there is a breach, it is reported. What happens to that particular person after the matter has been reported is up to the courts to decide. Last time I checked, there is a significant principle in our system of government of a separation between the judiciary and the executive. As I have said before, and as both the Minister for Police and Attorney General have said before, if it were up to us, we would have made a different decision. But it was not up to us; it was up to an officer of the Supreme Court to make the decision about the conditions of Mr TJD. I can tell the member that when there is a breach, whether it is minor or major, it is reported appropriately by the Department of Corrective Services, and that is exactly what happened in the case of Mr TJD.