

POLICE — RECRUITMENT

**323. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Police:**

Firstly, Mr Speaker, can I please acknowledge the student leaders from Heritage College, who are in the public gallery, from the member for Forrestfield's electorate.

Can the minister please advise the house on how this year's state budget is helping the Liberal-National government deliver on its election commitment to recruit more police officers?

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

I thank the member for Geraldton for an excellent question. Before I go to my response, though, I acknowledge the year 6 students in the gallery today from Newman College, from the member for Churchlands' electorate, and I am sure many of them may live in my electorate as well.

As members will recall, in the 2013 election campaign we made a commitment to recruit an additional 550 police and police auxiliary officers, and train up 200 detectives. I am very pleased to announce that, in a difficult budget environment, we have allocated a further \$32.2 million to this project. So, this year, we will recruit and train an additional 56 auxiliary officers and an additional 100 police officers to fulfil this year's part of that four-year election commitment from 2013. I think it is important that we remind ourselves of why that commitment has been put in place. We made a commitment in 2008 to grow the strength of WA Police, and a further commitment in 2013. That was in response to community concerns and feedback from the community about the policing presence available across the state.

Member for Geraldton, the result of this expansion speaks for itself. I am sure the member is aware of the —

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Girrawheen!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** You see, Mr Speaker, they always interject when I try to talk about the achievements of our police officers. It is so frustrating.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you for that, member for Girrawheen. I call you to order for the first time.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** If you want to be called for the second time, I will oblige you.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The Geraldton subdistrict has achieved outstanding results—outstanding results. It has recently conducted a targeted campaign, targeting a specific number of prolific priority offenders. A large number of those priority offenders are now in custody. As a result of that activity, overall crime in the Geraldton subdistrict is down 8.3 per cent. That subdistrict can achieve these results because of the commitment of this state government to funding our police force appropriately. We have had an increase in the police budget every year since we have come to government, and that is because we know it is important to the community that the police are funded to do their job, and to drive down crime in areas like the member for Geraldton's electorate by 8.3 per cent. We are proud of their efforts. I know the people opposite do not like hearing about the achievements of our police officers. They interject when I talk about it; they speak through my answer. But that will not stop us from continuing with our campaign.