

JUVENILE DETAINEES — BANKSIA HILL DETENTION CENTRE

**670. Mr P. ABETZ to the Minister for Corrective Services:**

Can the minister please update the house on the transition of juvenile detainees from Hakea Prison in my electorate to Banksia Hill Detention Centre in my electorate?

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

I thank the member for Southern River for his question. He is right, both of these facilities are next to each other and in his electorate, and I acknowledge his continued interest in and concern about what happens within the walls of both Hakea and Banksia Hill. I take this opportunity to inform the house that, as of yesterday, the juvenile detainees who remained in Hakea have now been relocated back to Banksia Hill and there are no longer any juveniles whatsoever left in Hakea. As I have always said, the transition of these detainees back to Banksia Hill was going to take a bit of time because it had to be done properly, carefully and sustainably. A number of things were required, based on recommendations of the report from the Inspector of Custodial Services and also recommendations from the union that covers youth custodial workers, which were to provide upgrades to the infrastructure within Banksia Hill. Some of those upgrades related to the hardening of the infrastructure, but we did not want it to end up looking like a prison because it is a facility for juveniles. There were also upgrades to some of the courses, the programs and the services provided to those juveniles. I place on the record my appreciation of the new superintendent at Banksia Hill, Jaide Lancaster. She is doing a wonderful job in organising all of the interested parties that have to work with these juveniles. She is doing a brilliant job in managing that and so far things seem to be going swimmingly. The juveniles are back at Banksia Hill and all is going well so far.

I also make a point about where the focus will now change. I expect the attention and the focus of the Department of Corrective Services within the juvenile sector to now more closely move back towards prevention and diversionary programs. As members will know, in this year's budget a substantial increase has been made to the funding available for programs for at-risk juveniles. The total amount of funding has increased by \$2 million this financial year, which has led to an increase in operations to youth diversion services across the entire state of Western Australia. I think it is important that we do everything we can to try to stop juveniles from ending up in detention in the first place. I thank the member for Southern River very much for his question. I think this is a significant milestone in this regrettable history, but all the juveniles are now back within the walls of Banksia Hill and the staff are getting on and doing their job.