

DANGEROUS SEX OFFENDERS — TRACKING DEVICES

40. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:

On behalf of the member for Bassendean, I acknowledge members of the Morley Action Group, who are in the gallery today.

I refer to the minister's statement in this place on 17 September last year when he said —

The bottom line is that not a single dangerous sex offender has been released because we have brought in GPS tracking.

- (1) How does the minister reconcile this claim with the Director of Public Prosecutions' statement that his government's amendments to provide for mandatory GPS monitoring of dangerous sex offenders have "resulted in a greater number of offenders being released"?
- (2) Will the minister now apologise for misleading the house and the people of Western Australia over this matter?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

- (1)–(2) How do I resolve that claim? I resolve it by quoting exactly what the director general of the Department of the Attorney General said yesterday. He said that it is not possible to provide a statistical analysis that supports any interference and that the statistics by themselves cannot show a link between the introduction of GPS monitoring and conditional release from prison.

Mr M. McGowan: So the DPP was wrong.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: That is what the director general said yesterday. The member can take it up with the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions but I am quoting what he said yesterday. The reality is that since 2006, when the Labor Party in government brought in the dangerous sex offender legislation, it has allowed dangerous sex offenders to be held—I promise that I will not defend them—after their sentence expired. The only class of offenders we hold for a crime they might commit but have not yet are those people who have completed their sentence but are still being held in custody because they are a danger to the community. Interestingly, we do not do it with other classes of offenders, such as murderers or those who commit violent assaults, but we do it with sex offenders and that is another issue. The reality is that prior to this government bringing in GPS tracking, those sex offenders would have been released under Labor anyway. What we are doing is providing another additional level of protection in the community. The reality is that if the shadow Minister for Corrective Services actually cared about this, he might have done what I did over a year ago, which was to have a conversation with the Chief Justice. I had a conversation with the Chief Justice about this very issue. He knew exactly —

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The Director of Public Prosecutions made a different comment yesterday.

The Chief Justice knew exactly what the government's intention was with GPS tracking. Not a single dangerous sex offender has been released to a red or a green or to a go or a no-go because of GPS tracking—not a single one. If the member for Warnbro has a problem with this issue, I suggest he do what I did. He should get off his backside and go and have a conversation with the Chief Justice about this very issue.