

POLICE — METHAMPHETAMINES

295. Mr J. NORBERGER to the Minister for Police.

Can the minister update the house on what the government is doing to address the methamphetamine issue?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

Thank you, Mr Speaker —

Several opposition members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The response is interesting to what is a very serious issue in the community. I thank the member for Joondalup for his interest in this matter. He takes a considered approach to these matters, as indeed the government does.

Quite some time ago, I raised this issue of methamphetamine use in the Western Australian community with the WA Commissioner of Police. I asked the police commissioner to work up a strategy to address the supply end of the methamphetamine issue in our community. I am happy to say that we are in the final stages of the development of that strategy. A very positive approach has been taken by Western Australia Police. It is indeed a multiagency approach that has involved other commonwealth jurisdictions. Western Australia Police report to me that it has the best ever working relationship it has had with our federal counterparts. That is being driven largely in part by the federal Minister for Justice, Hon Michael Keenan. We have arrived at a coordinated approach involving the federal agencies of Customs, the Australian Crime Commission, the Australian Federal Police and WA Police working together side by side to look at ways to address hardening up our borders, looking at our distribution channels both within Western Australia and across Australia, and also of course at local manufacturing.

We are also working with industry in this space. I recently visited Fortescue Metals Group's Christmas Creek site and spoke with its head of security. FMG has very much taken an industry lead role in managing the flow of methamphetamine throughout the supply chains in the Pilbara, and in and out of its worksites. It has had some very successful operations. FMG works in a very coordinated fashion with our regional policing teams to make sure it can keep its worksites safe and stop the flow of methamphetamine into its worksites.

On a local level, our local policing teams will continue to be very effective in that space at looking at local manufacturing. Members might be interested to know that most of the clandestine laboratories found in metropolitan Perth, and indeed across the state, are small-scale operations mainly based around addicts supplying their own needs. In 2010–11, 171 clan labs were reported and found in Western Australia. Last year that number was down to 97 clan labs. Indeed, the pressure that WA Police have had on local manufacturing is starting to take effect, and we will continue to keep that pressure on local manufacturers.

My esteemed colleague in the other place, Hon Helen Morton, is also working on the demand end of the methamphetamine strategy and on ways we can address the drivers of methamphetamine use in the community. Members in the house yesterday would have heard the Premier talking about the outcomes of his recent Council of Australian Governments meeting, which has agreed to a coordinated approach to tackling the methamphetamine issue across Australia. It is important that everyone in this place understands that we are not going to solve a methamphetamine —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I think that I have been very lenient; I call you to order for the third time. Member for Forrestfield, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is important that members understand the complexity of the methamphetamine issue across Australia. We will come up with different solutions and a different strategy to address those people in regional and remote communities. I know that will be of concern to the member for Kimberley. We will also have strategies across the metropolitan area and broader strategies across Australia, and I intend to update the house when that strategy is finalised. It is important for members to be aware that this is a complex problem; it needs a coordinated strategic approach, and it will not be resolved by some fizzle or thought bubble such as that suggested by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday.