

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — VICTIM ARREST WARRANTS

536. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

Given that the WA Police Force was forced by an order from the Midland Magistrates Court to arrest Kearah Ronan, a six-month pregnant mother and alleged victim of family and domestic violence, after the court registry had been informed that she was unwell, how will this Parliament and the McGowan government ensure that this heavy-handed and completely unnecessary treatment never happens again to any alleged victim or witness of family and domestic violence, let alone one who is six months pregnant?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

The decision to issue the arrest warrant for Ms Ronan was made by an independent judicial officer on application of the police prosecutor. The Attorney General has requested that the Acting Commissioner for Victims of Crime investigate the practice of issuing arrest warrants for the victims of domestic violence and make recommendations for future practice. The acting commissioner will consult with the Western Australia Police Force in the conduct of this investigation.

Lastly, the McGowan government looks forward to the commencement of the custody notification service in the second half of this year. The CNS will provide a 24-hour welfare and legal advice phone line for Aboriginal people taken into police custody and will also provide appropriate safeguards for Aboriginal people in custody.