

LICENSED HANDGUNS HELD BY PASTORALISTS

664. Hon Ken Baston to the Minister for Energy representing the Minister for Police

I refer to recommendation three, in the August 2008 report to the Minister of the Review of the Firearms Act, which seeks to amend the regulations to the effect that pastoralists will be unable to licence handguns for occupational purposes, and ask —

- (1) Since 1 January 2001, have there been any successful prosecutions for the illegal use of licensed handguns, in the electoral districts of, —
  - (a) the Kimberley;
  - (b) the Pilbara;
  - (c) the North West;
  - (d) Kalgoorlie; and
  - (e) Eyre?
- (2) If yes to (1), how many of these licences were held by pastoralists?
- (3) Since 1 January 2001, have there been any incidents that have resulted in death or injury to persons involving the use of licensed handguns, in the electoral districts of, —
  - (a) the Kimberley;
  - (b) the Pilbara;
  - (c) the North West;
  - (d) Kalgoorlie; and
  - (e) Eyre?
- (4) If yes to (3), how many of these licences were held by pastoralists?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

- (1)-(4) The responses required for these questions would take a significant amount of time to collate. The Commissioner of Police advises he is not prepared to divert valuable resources away from core policing activities to retrieve and collate the data.

The legislative changes dealing with handgun reforms were introduced for consistency with national policy and were part of the National Handgun Reforms in 2002.

The Western Australia Police support pastoralists possessing firearms for legitimate use in their profession and although persons can possess a handgun to be used for occupational purposes, a handgun cannot be possessed for the destruction of stock or vermin.

Recommendation number three addressed the pastoralists and farmers handgun issue. The submissions received on this issue did not provide examples of incidents which would satisfy the licensing officer that a handgun is the only option available for this purpose. There are a number of suitably styled firearms which are legislatively permissible and specifically designed for the purpose of stock or vermin destruction (ie reduced barrel and stock).