

POLICE — ROBOTIC TECHNOLOGY

619. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

As a strong advocate for new and innovative technologies, I refer to the news section of the WA Police website and specifically to an article published on 29 July 2022, “Meet Spot, the WA Police Bomb Response Unit’s newest member,” apparently a highly agile, multi-purpose robotics platform.

- (1) What did “Spot” cost WA Police to purchase, and given that his manufacturers are based in the United States, is there capacity to affect maintenance and repairs here in Australia?
- (2) When did “Spot” sign on for active duty and has he or she been deployed in any active scenarios since?
- (3) Will WA Police’s newfound appreciation of exotic technology extend to other innovative electronic inventions from the US, for example some of the new, cutting-edge technologies from US companies that would allow us to test for impairment rather than for the mere presence of THC in a driver’s system?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police. The Western Australia Police Force advise —

- (1) In total, inclusive of additional equipment, the robot cost approximately \$A330 000. Maintenance and repairs are aligned to the warranty and the Western Australia Police Force will repair minor issues at the local level cognisant of the warranty specifications.
- (2) The robot was received for operational deployment in July 2022. No deployment to active operational scenarios has occurred. However, the operators are ready and able to deploy as required.
- (3) The WA Police Force is investigating several technology opportunities including: enhancing remote communications to facilitate more uniform access to core policing systems statewide; the continued optimisation of the Police One Force mobile phone capability to further enable access to quality data by officers in the field; and the continued development of a data analytics capability to improve investigative outcomes.