

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**2021–22 BUDGET ESTIMATES**



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE  
TAKEN AT PERTH  
WEDNESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2021**

**SESSION TWO  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE**

**Members  
Hon Peter Collier (Chair)  
Hon Samantha Rowe (Deputy Chair)  
Hon Jackie Jarvis  
Hon Nick Goiran  
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt**

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**Hearing commenced at 11.17 am**

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON**

**Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Police, examined:**

**Mr COLIN BLANCH**

**Deputy Commissioner, examined:**

**Mr GARY DREIBERGS**

**Deputy Commissioner, examined:**

**Mr DARRYL GAUNT**

**Acting Deputy Commissioner, examined:**

**Mr FRANK PASQUALE**

**Executive Director, examined:**

**Ms SANTA CARDENIA**

**Director, Finance and Business Services, examined:**

**Mr ADRIAN JAMES WARNER**

**Road Safety Commissioner, examined:**

**Mr IAIN CAMERON**

**Chairman, Road Safety Council, examined:**

**Mrs RACHEL SACKVILLE-MINCHIN**

**Chief of Staff, Minister for Police, examined:**

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Welcome to today's estimates hearing. The committee acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and pays its respects to their elders, both past and present.

Witnesses, could you please indicate whether you have read, understood and signed a document titled "Information for Witnesses"?

**The WITNESSES:** Yes.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Your testimony before the committee must be complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge.

This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The committee will place the uncorrected transcript of your evidence on the internet a few days after the hearing. When the transcript is finalised, the uncorrected version will be replaced by the finalised version. This is a public hearing but the committee can elect to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question.

Members, before asking your question, I ask that you provide the relevant page and paragraph numbers.

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Minister, do you have any opening statements that you wish to make?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I do not, deputy chair; no, thank you.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** We will open our questions. We will start with the estimates committee and the shadow minister will also have some extra time.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** I am referring to page 416 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and the asset investment program. Page 416 notes that there is an asset investment program and the details, I think, are on pages 417 and 418. There are some individual line items that talk about particular police stations, but in my electorate, I certainly know that the Dunsborough Police Station and I think the Margaret River Police Station have had some upgrades. I guess I am trying to understand with that asset investment program how projects are determined and then what is the status of the projects listed on there—so, how individual projects are determined.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I can tell you about the delivery of the projects but not how they are determined, so I might ask Mr Pasquale if he can comment, please.

**Mr PASQUALE:** When it comes to initiatives that you just described in terms of things like upgrades, in the capital works program you will see that there are two programs—one is called a police station upgrade program and the other one is called a custodial upgrade program. They are generic programs that are available for all police stations that require those particular upgrades, so that is obviously done in terms of on an operational risk assessment basis. They are rolling programs, off the top of my head, in the order of \$4.4 million each per program. Every year, there is an assessment process around which stations require priority upgrades and are allocated from those programs.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I can add that as part of the COVID recovery from last year, the COVID-19 response, the state did announce funding of about \$23 million to upgrade or refurbish and expand a range of police stations across both metropolitan and regional WA. An additional \$6.7 million was approved to complete the program, obviously in line with the awarded contracts. In relation to those stations, they were selected because they were shovel-ready at that stage to assist with the state's economic recovery, bearing in mind that at that stage things were bad and we thought there were industries starting to close down across the country. In terms of the projects from that announcement, as at 1 September, five of them had achieved practical completion—Laverton, Williams, Katanning, Merredin and Wagin. The remaining projects are well underway, I am told, and they are at Derby, Mandurah, Narrogin, Palmyra, Donnybrook, Kwinana, Rockingham and Collie. So I think probably a couple of those are in your electorate.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Just as a follow-up question on that asset investment program, with the breath and drug bus replacement, I am just trying work out what you get for that \$600 000. Is that just one bus—just replacing an old one with a new one?

[11.20 am]

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Mr Warner if he can comment on that one, please.

**Mr WARNER:** Yes, there are two buses. One big bus—the existing bus—is being retired and replaced with two smaller buses. We did something similar last year; they have proved to be very effective in terms of their flexibility for operational purposes. One of the smaller buses is expected to be delivered in this financial year, and the second one in 2022–23.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** The first tranche of questions I have specifically relate to personnel and also crime figures. They are all contained in pages 412 to 414 of budget paper No 2. They are very generic questions in terms of personnel et cetera. I appreciate the sensitivities involved with personnel and what you can provide, assistant commissioner and witnesses. However, having said that, with regard

to crime figures—I am sure you are conscious they have, in a general sense, been on the decline while those against the person and domestic violence have increased—one of the pivotal areas is the CBD. Is there a crime issue, as far as WA police is concerned, in the CBD?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Honourable member, there is no real line item in the budget for that issue, is there?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** It is; it is actually with regard to crime figures, and you will find them on, I think, page 413.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Let me just see. I am just trying to work out my folder.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** They are all there. The crime figures are there, as are the personnel figures.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch if he can provide a comment in relation to that issue.

**Mr BLANCH:** To confirm, firstly, at the commencement of COVID and in the months preceding we certainly saw up to 50 per cent reduction across the state in property-based crime. That has since returned. About 25 per cent of that has come off, so we are still tracking at around a 25 per cent reduction in property-based crime across the state. There has been a moderate increase in assaults. Certainly, there has been a number of high-profile assaults in the CBD featuring youths, primarily juveniles. In all of those cases the juveniles were identified and charged. We have seen a significant increase in police numbers over the last probably six or seven weeks in the CBD from the 950 program—meaning the new 950 additional officers. One hundred extra police went into the Perth district. That includes 19 sergeants—supervisors. The number of foot patrols and high-visibility policing has significantly increased over the last few weeks to combat that.

In the past, we have run Operation Heat Shield and the city Night Safe operations to combat city violence in the Northbridge areas, but primarily we have countered most of the violence that has occurred in the city through increased presence of police and specific operations targeting youth. We have recently done an operation called Operation Tranmere, focusing on the juveniles who were coming into the city. What we did identify was many of the juveniles, realising that police were ready for them, I suppose, at the city-based train stations, were getting off at the ones earlier. We invested a significant number of police in an operation over the last few weeks to focus on those juveniles, working closely with the transport authority, to see if we can get ahead of that problem. Working very closely with the Department of Communities, we have made sure that the juveniles no longer come into the city and spend that time in there, because that was the bulk of the problem. I think that model is starting to reap rewards, and we have seen a greater reduction of assaults from juveniles, particularly in the city.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Thanks, assistant commissioner. I really appreciate that and you gave me more information than I thought I was going to get, so that is well done! With regard to that, then, how does the number of police officers in the CBD compare with, say, those figures from 2018–19, pre-COVID?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask the deputy commissioner if he is able to respond to that.

**Mr BLANCH:** I assume you are talking about the CBD itself?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Yes.

**Mr BLANCH:** The authorised strength has increased by 100 staff—100 police officers.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** From which level? I mean, is that from a particular year? Compared with, say, 2018–19, have they increased by 100?

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**Mr BLANCH:** Yes. We have increased it since October of this year, so it has just gone up an extra 100 in the authorised strength.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Have you got a comparison between the numbers in the CBD from 2018–19 and now, not October?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** No. We do not have that information on hand. I am told it is available.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Can I get that information—just a comparison of those years?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Just to clarify, honourable member, for *Hansard*, you are asking for the numbers from 2018 in the city to now?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Yes.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** So, what the number was then to now?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Exactly.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** We will provide that by way of supplementary.  
[*Supplementary Information No B1.*]

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** The next one is just with regard to response times in the CBD. You should be conscious that they have gone from 2.9 minutes to 13.9 minutes for priority 1 incidents. Is there a reason for that?

**Mr BLANCH:** The number of priority 1 responses is very, very small. There are not many priority 1 responses, so it only takes a unique response to blow the average figure out. But on the whole, the average of our priority 1 responses, where we have not had an issue in responding, has been in accordance with the KPIs being met. It has increased because I think there were a couple of anomalies that got downgraded and then upgraded.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** This is in the CBD that we are talking about?

**Mr BLANCH:** Yes.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** What anomalies would they have been?

**Mr BLANCH:** It might be an error in attending the location or some issue with the PAC and the way they called in to the job. It might have been downgraded immediately. There is a number of reasons and I do not have the specific ones in front of me, but on the whole the small number P1s that we did attend to were attended very, very quickly in accordance with the KPIs.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Again, with regard to personnel, we have an issue in the state at the moment with ambulance ramping; how much police officer time has been spent at each of the Perth metropolitan emergency departments?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am told we would not have that information, not only here, but not at all.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** But you do have it?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** No, that is not kept is what I am told.

[11.30 am]

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Sorry, so the police department does not keep a record of the officer time that is spent at emergency departments at hospitals?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** It does not exist. Through the CAD system they could do some analysis, but it is a task. I will let the deputy commissioner answer that.

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**Mr BLANCH:** We will have a time on the task, but it may not be broken down to how long we are at the hospital versus the scene, transporting or doing other tasks related to it. It might not be specific to waiting at the hospital.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I do not for a second want to waste your officers' time spending time behind computers for something like this if it is not readily available. I was just of the opinion, or knowledge, that WAPOL actually had defined times of officers that were spent at emergency departments, but that is not available?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch.

**Mr BLANCH:** Certainly, we would record the locations that we have attended, the scene and others, but it is just not something that we would accrue as part of our normal stat reporting.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** With regard to the attrition of officers, as a former education minister, one of the biggest issues was trying to retain teachers in the profession. As far as police are concerned, I would be interested to flesh this out a little bit. I have been to a number of graduations in recent times and noticed the number of officers or new constables that have come from the hospitality sector. I would imagine a lot of that has had to do with COVID-related issues, which begs the question about whether or not they will remain in the force. I am not questioning their loyalty, but questioning whether or not they will remain in the force. Do you have the attrition numbers of officers who leave the force, and how often are those records kept? Are they done on a monthly basis or an annual basis?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger to make a comment on this one.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** We have had significantly low attrition for the past few years. We have a monthly tally where we collate the numbers, but generally on average it has been anywhere between seven and 12 FTE per month. It is a very low number. A lot of those are related to retirements as well as resignations. They are managed on a monthly basis so that we can track, so when we get to a particular level, we run an attrition school, so we have an additional school. When you go to a graduation more recently, there will always be an academy school that is new recruits for the additional 950 program and then there will be generally an attrition school to backfill those numbers that have left the agency. We have seen very low attrition rates in the previous 12 to 24 months. We have had months below seven even. Attrition is not a concern for us at this point in time, although I think in the last month we may have seen 20 resignations and retirements. That is not the exact number, I would have to get that for you, but was the only month where we have seen a spike in more recent times. We are very comfortable with our attrition rates at the moment.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Are you able to provide attrition numbers of officers leaving the agency month by month for the last four years? Is that going to be difficult for you?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** We would have that data.

*[Supplementary Information No B2.]*

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Obviously, I have to get the minister to agree to that. I am happy to provide that. We might provide it as well as a percentage of the force as well. I think it is probably helpful. We have only got annual numbers and you want monthly numbers. Let us give the annual ones and then we will get you the monthly ones.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Will that information have the officer by rank?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** No, it does not contain officers' ranks. It would be a fair bit of interrogation over the years to find out the ranks of people, but it would be a one by one; you would have to go into

individual officers one at a time. Basically, it just provides a number, you know, X amount of officers retired/resigned over a one-month period.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** If I could just flesh that out a little bit further, that would give you the month-by-month breakdown. What about on, say, for a first-year constable or a second-year constable et cetera, will that indicate that as well?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** No, it does not. The number clearly demonstrates just a number over a period. It does not break down the ranks or years of service. You would have to go into each individual officer who left to get that information.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** You would not have an understanding of the number of first-year constables that left the service after one year, or left after two or three years? You would not have an understanding?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask DC Dreibergrs to make a comment.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** No, we do not keep it as a rule where we count and report against every rank as they leave the agency, but we do have an understanding of what those ranks are. Bearing in mind, if we are losing sergeants at a particular rank —

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I did not say rank. I meant any police officer after one year that left after one year. You would have an understanding that you are losing a lot of first-year officers or losing a lot of second-year officers.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** We would understand that, yes, but we do not need to keep the data because the numbers are so low. We would know that, for instance, in April, readily available to our professional development portfolio who run the recruiting program, we would be able to see the numbers. Similarly, we know if younger officers are leaving—I should not say younger, I should say more junior officers. We know when probationary officers are leaving, but it is not something we have to put an annual plan together to manage.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I will just ask one more. I will do some stuff on mental health, but I have got carried away. Very quickly then, minister, or through the assistant commissioner et cetera, when are the crime stats for July to September coming out?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am happy to—just, honourable member, it is deputy commissioner, rather than assistant commissioners.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Okay.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am told they will come out on the twenty-eighth of this month.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** On 28 October. I look forward to those.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Minister, my reference point is budget paper No 2, volume 2 at page 410 where it speaks of recruiting an extra 950 police officers. What proportion of those police officers will be dedicated to investigating matters referred by Child Protection?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Gary Dreibergrs to respond.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** Speaking specifically about additional FTE who have gone to our child abuse unit at state crime as a result of the 950 program, to date, we have had 11 additional officers deployed to state crime child abuse.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** So there are 11 that have been recruited so far out of this cohort of an extra 950 police officers; how many more are intended to be recruited to that particular unit?

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**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** What I am told, honourable member, is that a decision has not been made on the full allocation of those 950 new positions, so 11 thus far, but there will be more in the future; it is just that a decision has not been made yet.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** To get an indication as to the proportion, 11 have been recruited so far to the child abuse unit. This is 11 out of how many? In other words, how many of the 950 have already been recruited?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** That is 11 out of 350.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** How common is it, minister, for WA police to decline to investigate referrals from Child Protection?

[11.40 am]

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch, please.

**Mr BLANCH:** We work very closely with the Department of Communities on all investigations relating to child protection. We investigate the crime element of any child protection matter. Unless you are aware of a specific case or details, I am not aware of any in my time in WA police where we would refuse to investigate a criminal offence. That is something that we obviously have the child abuse squad and crime department to do. Certainly, the Department of Communities and WA police work side by side in our child interview teams. We have multi-agency areas working together on a daily basis, and that is our daily business.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Deputy commissioner, you say that you are not aware of any in your time in WA police. How long is that?

**Mr BLANCH:** Three years.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** In that respect, are any of the witnesses aware of any complaints from Department of Communities about instances where police have declined to investigate referrals from Child Protection?

**Mr BLANCH:** Declined to investigate a criminal offence? I just need more context. I apologise; I cannot answer without further details.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** It is as confusing to you, deputy commissioner, as it is to me. Last week the government, on 14 October, in progressing a bill to provide police-like powers to the Department of Communities—enforcement powers—their representative in the Legislative Council said, and I am quoting from the uncorrected *Hansard* —

There have been instances in which the police have decided not to investigate. That is why we are looking for these powers.

In response to that I said —

... it appears that ... police have declined to investigate some other unspecified cases in some unspecified instances ... How common is that?

The response provided by the government's representative was, "I cannot say. We do not know."

**Mr BLANCH:** As already answered, I am not aware of any in my time in WA police. Certainly, if a crime of child abuse was reported to Western Australia police, we would investigate that crime.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Yes, I would have thought so, and that was the point that was made, certainly by the opposition last week, much to the resistance of the government at the time. The types of powers that have been provided to these Child Protection officers, as I say, they are police-like powers: powers of entry, search and seizure and compelling the provision of information, use of

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force. Were WA police consulted at all with respect to these police-like powers being provided to Department of Communities officers?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am advised, yes, WA police were consulted.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** They were consulted. Who was consulted, and when was that consultation undertaken?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Honourable member, with great respect, I do not have that information here today. That does not appear in the budget papers before us. It is outside the realms of this committee. It is the kind of question you might ask in a bill. But in terms of who was consulted and when on a piece of legislation that went through the Parliament last week that belonged to a different agency, it is a long string.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Minister, last week we were told by Department of Communities and the government that there had been no consultation with police. Now we are told that there was consultation with police. Somebody in police got paid by this budget in the last financial year or, indeed, in this current financial year; someone got a pay cheque and was consulted. I would like to know who that person was, particularly given that that is quite a different response to what we got last week.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sure. First of all, we never release people's names, obviously. In terms of the agency, if we can take on notice when you might have been consulted on the bill?

**Mr BLANCH:** Again, our relationship with the Department of Communities is very good. We work daily with their teams in investigation of child abuse. If there were powers that they sought in relation to compliance or inspectorate-type powers, I am assuming that consultation would have been in relation to that. If they related to criminal investigations or use of force by police, that would have been something that we would have been consulted with. I do not have a name of who was consulted in the police, but certainly we always work hand in hand. I understand you might be then talking about mandatory reporting as opposed to a criminal investigation of the actual child abuse, which are different things.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The powers that will now exist will be for the enforcement of all offences under the Children and Community Services Act, which will include provisions with respect to mandatory reporting but not limited to that. I guess, minister, what I would be keen to note is: are we sure that WA police were definitely consulted in respect to this matter as opposed to, "We suspect that we were consulted"?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am told WA police were consulted as part of the cabinet process.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Can we take it on notice then, minister, as to whom was consulted, and in what time frame?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I can take the issue on notice. The answer might come back that they were consulted as part of the cabinet process and it may be cabinet-in-confidence, but let us see. I will take it on notice and let us see what I can come back with.

*[Supplementary Information No B3.]*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** What is the current backlog of mandatory reports that have been referred to WA police that are yet to be investigated?

**Mr BLANCH:** That is not something that we would have available today.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Is it data that is available to the agency that can be provided if taken on notice?

**Mr BLANCH:** To proceed with a mandatory reporting investigation, we would have to seek the approval of Department of Communities, so it is potentially something that they would hold.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Deputy commissioner, in answers to questions prior to hearings with the Department of Communities, the committee has been told that the Department of Communities received 4 272 mandatory reports—that would be in the previous financial year. In further answers to the questions, the committee was told that all mandatory reports are referred to the WA Police Force. In the same response, we were told that in the last financial year, 1 043 mandatory investigations were commenced and 656 were completed. What I am trying to ascertain here is that we were told last week that Child Protection has a role with respect to these mandatory reports, but so do WA police, and I want to get a proper understanding as to the backlog. Has somebody got their foot on the hose, whether it be Child Protection or WA police, or is there a lack of resources? We talked about the 950 police officers who are being recruited, 11 of 350 so far to child abuse. Is that going to be enough? This is the type of information I am trying to seek.

**Mr BLANCH:** That information is not something I have here today, but I would be able to get it.  
[*Supplementary Information No B4.*]

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Honourable member, just noting the time, we are going to move on and we will come back to members.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I refer to page 410 and the table under “Spending Changes”, and to the Kimberley juvenile justice strategy, with \$253 000. It does not seem a very big number. We hear of so many problems with young juveniles and challenges in the Kimberley in my region. With respect to the current spate of problems in the Kimberley, I will ask a few questions in relation to what is going on. How many police officers have been injured in this financial year as a result of some of these car thefts involving juveniles and others?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Honourable member, we would not have that information with us. First of all, I make the point that the Kimberley juvenile justice strategy, which is the line item that you referred to, is a strategy that is led by the Department of Justice, with a co-design approach that will be undertaken in partnership with the Aboriginal community and key government departments. That includes the WA Police Force. That strategy does include an on-country residential facility and that facility aims to provide a holistic service that integrates educational support, cultural healing, mental health counselling, trauma-informed programs and alcohol and drug interventions. As part of the 2021–22 budget process, as you have alluded to, the state government did provide \$0.253 million this year for WA police to participate in the co-design process for on-country residential and safe place facilities in Broome. Your question related to how many police officers were injured across the Kimberley by young people. Our database would not have a figure that says an officer was injured after an altercation with a young person, I am sure.

[11.50 am]

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I could clarify. Is it normal, in the line of policing, for officers to be injured by motor vehicle theft—being run over in a situation? Is that normal?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** It would not be normal, but I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch if he can provide an answer.

**Mr BLANCH:** With the number of officers that we have out every day, the number of injuries is very small. That does not mean that officers do not get injured; they certainly do, and we have seen officers injured in all sorts of jobs when they attend. WA Police Force has brought in several initiatives to prevent injury. We have body armour and body-worn cameras. We have far enhanced training now with our officers to make sure that we are dealing with people under mental distress.

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The training and equipment has improved to the point where less officers are being injured, but it is a risky job and, unfortunately, officers, to this day, will get injured at work.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Thank you for that. Just in my understanding, there have been at least four officers reported injured in the last couple of months after being rammed by a vehicle. It seems to be a bit of a thing at the moment in the Kimberley. I also note that there is a sense of crisis at the moment in the Kimberley. I received some material this morning, in fact, from the chair of the Kununurra liquor accord, and I will refer to a section. On page 414, we see the budget actually identifying the impact of liquor, and it is good to see the acknowledgement. We see that when the restrictions were eased—this is note 1; this was right across the state after the COVID restrictions were in place—and community interaction with access to alcohol through licensed venues increased, there has been an increase in family violence.

Now, I know this is bringing two things together—family violence and youth—and this seems to be the issue that is impacting very heavily on the Kimberley at the moment. But I just wanted to read, if I could, a point that came up from the chair of the liquor record in Kununurra, and this is between 6.00 pm, or 1800 hours, on Tuesday—that is only yesterday—and this morning at 8.37.

... now we had 42 recorded incidents in Kununurra consisting of disturbances, family domestic violence incidents and assaults. Compounded with the fact we have had a minimum of 3 stolen vehicles to deal with per night over the last week Police simply do not have the ability to be everywhere we are needed at once.

Now, this communication goes on and on. There is an absolute crisis at the moment in the Kimberley, and I am wondering, going back to that \$253 000 that I mentioned earlier, is that sufficient?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Obviously, that \$253 000 that I referred to is to help the police engage in the Kimberley juvenile strategy—further work that is happening. I am not aware of who the chair of the Kimberley liquor accord is. I am not aware of that email, so if you want to table the email or provide it to us, we can look into it further. That is not a police record; that is somebody else's analysis. We do not have that available at hand, so without having it and having had the ability to analyse it, I cannot comment on that. But in terms of the issue about alcohol, I mean, people drink alcohol, some people commit crimes, some people commit family and domestic violence—that is a fact. I am not sure if you are suggesting this or not, so unless we stop the sale of alcohol across the board, and if we did stop the sale of alcohol, our crime rates would probably drop substantially and the numbers of people in police stations and, indeed, prisons would stop. But no government has decided to do that at this stage. WA police deal with crimes on a daily basis. It is unfortunate but we cannot dictate what crime a person commits. All we can do, as an agency, is respond to that crime and make sure that those people who do commit a crime go through the system and face the full wrath of the law.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** And I would suggest, in addition to that, that there would be a bigger investment in diversion. No-one in here agrees that putting people in jail is necessarily the solution, but getting on top of the issue, we have concerns in relation to public safety across the board. Yesterday, in the Health component, we talked about the fact that many in the health workforce are now leaving towns like Wyndham. Now, I have a simple question: do you think there is a crisis in the Kimberley in relation to community safety?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** What I can say, before I might get Deputy Commissioner Blanch to comment on issues in the Kimberley, is it is important to place on the record that this government has done more than ever before to deal with harmful liquor use. We created the Kimberley-wide BDR—banned drinkers register—and takeaway alcohol management system. We also passed laws

to address sly grogging, and the regulations have just come into force for those. Before that, we rolled out a BDR in the Pilbara and also we have one committed in Kalgoorlie, so we have done lots of work in this regard. But in terms of general issues in the Kimberley at the moment, Deputy Commissioner Blanch, are you able to comment?

**Mr BLANCH:** Sure. Thank you. Juvenile crime in the Kimberley is a well-known tale. Certainly in the work with the Kimberley juvenile justice strategy, particularly the PCYC is looking for those options for diversion of those youths. We take very seriously the public's safety. As the minister has already said, police are out there. We do apprehend those offenders of those crimes. The sanction rates are very high of identifying those offenders and bringing them before a court or a diversionary process. What we are working with the Department of Justice is, in fact, what is the best way to divert those children to so they are out of the community, out of harm's way, out of the harm's way in their own homes on some occasions, and give them opportunities, like at the PCYC or other residential options, where they can spend some time within a safe environment.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Honourable member, you probably have time just for one more, and then we will have to move on to the next member.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Of the young people charged in the Kimberley, what percentage are on parole?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Again, I am not sure the police would have that information. Is that the responsibility of Corrective Services?

**Mr BLANCH:** Sorry; if I could just confirm: parole or bail?

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Sorry; bail.

**Mr BLANCH:** That would be a combination of figures between police, whether police bailed them or diverted them or the court itself chose to bail. So we would have to combine a figure between the Department of Justice and the police. We both have the authority to bail.

**Hon PETER FOSTER:** I have a couple of questions. I will first refer to budget paper No 2, page 410. Minister, I refer to the significant issues and paragraph 2, in regard to the additional officer program. How is that campaign tracking, and how is the deployment of these police officers being determined?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Thanks, honourable member. I think we have kind of got to some of that this morning already. But as you indicated, the government has committed to an additional 950 police officers over the next four-year period, so from 2020–21 to 2023–24. As at 1 September, 300 recruits of the 950 additional police officers have graduated, but I think the deputy commissioner said today we are up to 350 now, and that is across both metropolitan and regional locations. In addition, I am told there are a further 230 recruits in training who are scheduled to graduate by May next year—so, over the next seven months. What we will see over the next few years is there is 350 in 2020–21, 200 additional recruits approximately in 2021–22, and 200 after that in 2022–23 and 200 in 2023–24. It is fair to say, and I think Hon Peter Collier alluded to this in his contribution earlier on, that our police academy is busier than it has ever been before. Obviously, as the shadow minister, he gets to go along to the fantastic graduation programs that occur up at Joondalup.

[12 noon]

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I get to go out once a month!

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Yes. Since 1 July 2020 to 30 March this year, we had: the grey squad recruits, there were 19 males, 11 females, 30 extra; the red squad, 21 males, eight females, 29 extra;

there was the gold squad, 17 males, 12 females; the blue squad, 20 males, 10 females; the silver squad, 21 males, nine females; the green squad had 17 males and 10 females; and the white squad had 20 and 10; the red squad had 20 and 10. So that was 235. Since the election until October, there have been a further six graduations. We are tracking quite well. We are also doing quite well in our recruitment of female officers, and obviously we are committed to having a diverse workforce, it is fair to say, but we are making sure that both regional and indeed metropolitan areas get their fair share of those additional police officers.

**Hon PETER FOSTER:** The second question is on the same page and it is regarding the COVID-19 response. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the commissioner and the deputies for all the work they have done during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has challenged us all. I refer to point 1, “COVID-19 Response”, and I ask how much has it cost the WA Police Force to respond to COVID-19 and what services does this funding provide for?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am not even going to try to answer this one. Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs is going to comment on the COVID stuff and then we might go to Mr Pasquale who might give you some detail on the cost. Again, I thank you for your acknowledgement of police. Everyone has worked particularly hard over the last 18 months, but certainly our police have worked exceptionally hard. I will pass that on. Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs first of all.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** I can advise that our COVID response consists of a significant commitment to Operation Tide. Operation Tide is a significant structure now based in Plain Street. The offices there are separated into a semi-operational structure that you would normally run for an emergency management incident where we have operations planning logistics as per normal. We have versatility and agility to plan and respond to any particular incident at a point in time. Relative to Tide as a structure is the people who manage the G2G PASS process for people applying to enter the state. They also have the compliance teams that manage all the people who are in home quarantine. Those teams also work very much with our investigative teams who do follow-up. We have a significant effort in our investigative teams who do follow-up on people who have breached quarantines or our compliance teams have identified that there is a risk. They do that work on a daily basis. They get information from a number of sources relative to investigative actions. Our investigative team also assists if there was to be an outbreak at any point in time; for instance, the truckies’ outbreak—the TFL outbreaks—in more recent times. Our investigators are already pre-deployed up and down the Nullarbor and back into Perth and they are already available to deal with matters in a proactive way to assist the health department, who do the contact tracing. We have a relationship with the SHICC at the health department to assist with that work.

We also have officers on the border. We have officers on the border at Kununurra and we have officers on the border at Eucla. At the moment our officers at the border at Eucla have been significantly enhanced because we are doing the TFL checking as they come through under the new direction. They are checking every person coming through to make sure they have had a 72-hour test, if they are working for the trucking industry, or they are doing a rapid antigen test if they are coming from an “extreme” jurisdiction, being New South Wales and Victoria. Then they are doing the normal day-to-day. At the road borders, every person who enters the state at Kununurra and down to Eucla are checked.

At the airport, our officers work and greet every single person who arrives at the airport and checks their G2G PASS. People who have an approved G2G PASS, when they come through the airport—you may be aware—every single individual is met. Certain individuals coming from a jurisdiction where they do not require quarantine just keep going through and enter the state as an approved traveller. If you are not an approved traveller, you can be sent back on the next flight or you can be

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detained and sent back on a flight in the future. If you are a person who has to do quarantine at home, you are given a quarantine direction by our police officers at the airport that advises you what your requirements are over the next 14 days relative to undertaking quarantine, and also what your requirements are relative to COVID testing as part of that quarantine regime set out by the Chief Health Officer. We have that at the airport which meets people on a daily basis, and at our borders.

We also have an events and sporting section of our business. That is heavily focused on ensuring that the industries related to that can continue to operate within the state within reason, with a lot of strict requirements. We have very close engagement with all sorts of events and sporting agencies to assist those areas. In addition, we have an industry liaison team. Our industry liaison team works with all the industry groups that assist the state to continue to operate on a daily basis. They are working with all the industries that have FIFO workers, interstate travel, and all the people who may need to enter the state for specific industry reasons, or even just continue to operate in WA.

We also have a maritime team. Our maritime team meet and heavily engage with the shipping industry, the ports, the unions involved around the ports, and they work on a daily basis with those groups, continually negotiating those matters. They also work with agriculture on a whole number of things. Effectively, from Operation Tide we cover all spans to make sure that people can enter the state safely and that industry and the economy can continue to operate for the state of Western Australia. All the actions —

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sorry, I am conscious of the time; thank you. The second part was how much. I will ask Mr Pasquale to deal with that issue.

**Mr PASQUALE:** In terms of 2020–21, it was just shy of \$93 million invested towards the COVID response by WA police. That was primarily recurrent expenses, just under \$90 million, and \$3 million in capital. Not all of that is necessarily additional appropriation because that obviously incorporates the cost of effort by police officers being diverted to provide that response. Just under \$47 million of that \$93 million was additional funding provided to WA police to supplement the efforts of police officers involved.

To give you an appreciation of the \$93 million, very broadly: almost half was to do with police officer effort in terms of normal salary time; \$13.5 million in overtime and shift costs; more than \$5 million in an enhanced cleaning program to ensure our hygiene arrangements are up to scratch; just under \$5 million in terms of fitting out and accommodation expenses to establish the various response teams that Mr Dreiberger has referred to; and just over \$4 million in terms of computing, communications and technology and phone costs. It includes more than \$3 million for the COVID-19 call centre and just under \$3 million in terms of travel, meals and accommodation to support those deployments that were also talked about; almost \$3 million in G2G PASS application licence costs and software costs et cetera. I could go on. In the terms of 2021–22 —

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** We are probably running out of time. Is it something that can be tabled?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Have you got enough or do you want more?’

**Hon PETER FOSTER:** I have got plenty; thank you. Do I have time for one more?

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** No, I am sorry, member.

**Hon PETER FOSTER:** That is okay.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** We have a lot of members to get through.

**Hon PETER FOSTER:** All good; no problems.

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**Hon DAN CADDY:** My first question will be pretty quick. Hon Jackie Jarvis talked about the police station upgrade program which outlines all the money that government is spending in the regions. Thanks to Mr Pasquale for explaining the determination process. I assume it is the same for new stations. My question relates to pages 416 and 417, also on the “Asset Investment Program”. I just want an update on the new stations at Baldivis and Forrestfield and when they are looking to be completed.

[12.10 pm]

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Helpfully, I have some notes in my file on that. As part of the 2021 state election, the government made two commitments: one to Forrestfield and one to Baldivis. For Forrestfield, it was a replacement police station, \$22 million; and for Baldivis it was a new police station and that was \$19 million.

About \$160 000 was approved to be funded from the business case development fund to do a project definition plan that would provide further costing information and confirmation of the scope of the police stations. The two police stations will initially accommodate officers from surrounding locations and a number of officers from the additional 950 police officer program that we spoke about earlier on. Those new police stations will be designed to accommodate up to 100 sworn FTEs each. In terms of the site selection, that work is well underway at the moment. For Forrestfield, the preferred site is adjacent to the current station, and negotiations with the local council, I am told, are very positive. In terms of Baldivis, several potential sites have been identified, and a number of factors are being taken into account in relation to that site. They include suitable size and configuration and suitable location—how suitable the location was, so whether it had adequate access or egress to major arterial roads, appropriate zoning and development requirements as determined by local councils and statutory bodies, whether there were any acquisition costs and site transfer times, adjacent land use and whether there is residential and/or commercial development nearby and then, obviously, environmental criteria, which is a consideration too. That work is underway at the moment, and, as I said, the site selection is well underway. I have not got a date as to when it is going to be finalised.

**Hon DAN CADDY:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch, in responding to Hon Neil Thomson, brought up PCYCs.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Do you have a line item?

**Hon DAN CADDY:** Yes, page 410 in the table. Minister, you will recall that I have spoken previously in this place about the fantastic work of the PCYCs. There is also my concern about how some local governments are looking to withdraw or amend their support, but that is outside of the scope of what we are looking at here. I am just keen to know little bit more about what the programs through the PCYCs have achieved to date, and whether there are readily available metrics that look at long-term impacts and all of that sort of stuff, but basically just to get a better understanding of exactly what it is PCYCs all over the state are doing at the moment to support youth and what has been achieved.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Let me give you as brief a response as I can. PCYCs support WA Police Force’s key priorities of reducing youth offending and Aboriginal offending and victimisation. We are investing as a state government \$18 million in PCYCs over four years, and that funding injection will allow the PCYC to remain sustainable to deliver a range of programs that are aimed at positively engaging with young people. It is anticipated that up to 50 diversionary programs will be delivered at 16 locations across both regional and metropolitan areas in each of the years that funding is being provided. The range of programs that the PCYCs run include things like breakfast club, so obviously in addition to removing hunger as a barrier to learning, the program provides young people with a

safe environment to engage with youth workers and take part in personal development or recreational activities before school. Then young people who are engaged in that breakfast club are transported to school to increase school attendance. There is the Drive to the Future program. That ensures that more young drivers are safe and qualified to drive through quality instruction and guidance and aims to improve overall community safety. There is the Full Throttle program. That is a bike rebuilding program for young people aged 12 to 18 years who are disadvantaged from school to restore damaged and donated bikes. It is not just PCYC doing that. I have had the opportunity to visit places like Jigalong where the officer in charge, I think, has been running his own bike program to get young people engaged. Anyway, the Full Throttle is about learning technical skills, and it aims to improve participant's respect for other people's property and to develop a connection to the community that they live in. There is also safeSpace, which is the PCYCs core diversionary program for vulnerable children and young people at risk. There are programs that run before school, after school and into the evening. The safeSpace Program provides opportunities for children to partake in activities and for others to avoid challenging home environments, which we see quite often around the state. That program enables access for young people to build trusted relationships with PCYC staff, and it provides an avenue for PCYC staff to refer participants to other agencies and services. They can help with the issues that the young person is dealing with—things like mental health or family and domestic violence or drug abuse. The safeSpace program is also tailored to the needs of each community, so the activities are co-designed with local police and the community to make sure that the programs meet the needs of children and young people. In terms of the learnings, I am not sure whether there is someone who can give us a bit of general background. Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger is on the board of PCYC, so I think he can probably give you a bit more info.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** A significantly important part of the PCYC model at the moment is that police have the opportunity to go down to the PCYCs and engage with the managers who are running the events down there. They understand who may be children at risk who are coming to PCYCs. They can get a lot of benefit from just engaging on a day-to-day basis with the managers, but then the police officers also have the ability to go down there and participate in activities with the kids themselves, and also go to offsite visits with kids as well. The learnings of the police officers are significant in terms of understanding the needs of the young people and their communities when they are now working closely with them.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** First of all, can I say congratulations to the police force. You guys do an amazing job both at your level and right down to the level who respond in communities across the state. I want to ask a couple of quick questions. In budget paper No 2 at page 417 it talks about the bus replacement there. The Vaccine Commander indicated in the chamber yesterday that some booze buses have been repurposed for specialist vaccination rollout. I am just wondering what the strength of the booze bus fleet is at the moment and whether that has made any impact on how many of those vehicles were repurposed.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** The answer is two, but I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger to give you more information.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** The current booze bus numbers that remain are two of the small buses, and one of the larger buses remains in situ at the traffic office.<sup>1</sup>

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Is that a reduction? What did we have previously?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** The two buses that have been taken to do the vaccine command role have been taken, so we are two down.

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<sup>1</sup> A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.



**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch can provide more information.

**Mr BLANCH:** Just to expand on that, it does not mean we are reducing the amount of effort going into drink-driving and the tests. We have deployed those extra staff who would have ordinarily been in those buses into the greater traffic units and we have put more people on the road. We have tasked our frontline police who ordinarily do traffic work out the country areas to focus a little bit more on that whilst those booze buses are focused on vaccine duties.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** In terms of the budget papers, again budget paper No 2, page 415, “Regional and Remote Policing Services”, I am just wondering how many vacancies there are across regional WA. Perhaps this may need to be taken on notice. Can it be broken down by the regions: south west, wheatbelt, great southern, midwest, goldfields, Pilbara and Kimberley districts?

**Mr BLANCH:** We would not have those vacancies available to you today.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Is it something that could be provided on notice?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Obviously, for operational reasons we do not go smaller than districts, but I am told that we can provide that information for districts by way of supplementary information. [*Supplementary Information No B5.*]

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I want to touch on Fitzroy Crossing as well, if we could. We talked about PCYCs, there is not a PCYC at Fitzroy Crossing, and I understand there are significant challenges in the town. I wonder whether first of all you could describe what the police are doing in terms of resourcing there. That is the first part of the question. The second part of the question is: are you having issues with accessing housing and support from other government agencies?

[12.20 pm]

**Mr GAUNT:** Certainly. We have allocated a youth policing officer to Fitzroy Crossing. That is occurring. The current activities in Fitzroy Crossing are happening with Marra Worra, the Aboriginal corporation, who are conducting multiple activities; and police are assisting in that space both through the youth policing officer element but also through the greater police station. They also have relationships with the local pool, which is being operated under the banner of Department of Communities, I think it is, and also the Clontarf Foundation, who have a footprint in that community as well. That is what they are doing now. You are correct; there is no PCYC. There is no facility there. Sorry, Mr Hayward; the second part of your question was?

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Just in terms of what are the issues you are facing in terms of housing and support from other government agencies such as Child Protection and others? Are those things a challenge for police at Fitzroy?

**Mr GAUNT:** Housing is a challenge everywhere, including Fitzroy Crossing, but all the officers that we have allocated to Fitzroy Crossing at present are housed, so there is not a shortage in Fitzroy in that context. In relation to the other agencies, such as Communities, I am not aware of any challenges or issues with them at Fitzroy Crossing. I know they are speaking at length with, particularly, the Aboriginal-based organisations in the community and some of the more NGO-type organisations who are there as well; I know they have a very good working relationships them.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** First off, could I just give our appreciation to WA police for all the work that they are doing. It is greatly appreciated. I refer the minister to budget paper no 2, volume 2, page 410, and specifically to the table “Spending Changes” and, in particular, to the line item “Impaired Driving Detection (Alcohol and Drug) Program”. That allocation —

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sorry, honourable member; I was doing something else. Can you tell me that line again, please?

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**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** It is “Spending Changes” on page 410 and going down to the line “Impaired Driving Detection”. Now, that allocation is set to almost double, and I assume that is because testing is either becoming more expensive or that more testing will be requested, which is perfectly fine. But I am intrigued by the wording on the next page, 411, paragraph 11, where it says WA police continues to target offences such as driving while impaired by drugs. My first question is: how does the WA police ascertain whether someone is impaired by drugs? Say, for example, cannabis, which, of course, is my special interest, how do you, when you are stopping traffic, gauge whether or not a driver is impaired as a result of cannabis consumption?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Just in terms of the first dot point that you referred to, obviously the ongoing Impaired Driving Detection (Alcohol and Drug) Program aims to promote positive change in behaviours through compliance and enforcement efforts that respond to current and emerging risk behaviours associated with alcohol and drugs. The program provides increased breath, blood and drug testing activities across WA to target impaired driving. As part of the budget process, an additional \$8.6 million across the forward estimates has been allocated to the program. That is to meet additional costs attributable to increasing roadside drug testing from the target of 40 000 per year to 50 000 per year by 2024–25. In relation to how do we tell if somebody is drug-impaired, I will hand over to Deputy Commissioner Blanch.

**Mr BLANCH:** In relation to impairment, police generally use their observations. So, it is how the driving is being conducted on the road, whether there are any strange behaviours in relation to driving, powers of conversation, talking to them, making sure they are not slurring their words or being confused. Generally, the impairment will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by officers to then determine next steps. That could be a drug swipe test; it could be a range of things. If we are concerned for the safety of other road users or the driver themselves, then we have got a number of powers available to us to go further.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** The classical thing here is alcohol .05 and then you have an offence. Below that, there is no offence; you carry on driving. So, if someone driving .048 would not be classified as impaired, would they?

**Mr BLANCH:** We can still use powers under the road act if their driving is dangerous or careless or it is causing an issue for drivers. You might be .048 and whilst the offence of drink-driving may not account for what is occurring, they may be impaired by alcohol to the point where their driving is so risky that we would look at other offences under the road safety act.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** What about .052 and they are not impaired?

**Mr BLANCH:** The legislation requires that we proceed with the charge over 0.05.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Whether or not they are impaired?

**Mr BLANCH:** The legislation requires that it is 0.05.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Which leads me to the next question here. It is not really impairment; it is a measurement. It is nice to know that the visual and experience of the officer is used. But here I would like a precise answer, if you would not mind: how impaired is someone with trace levels of THC in their system if they have not consumed cannabis for a week?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am not sure whether the deputy commissioner is in the position to answer that, but if you want to give it a try.

**Mr BLANCH:** Could I ask you to clarify the question again, please.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Let us assume someone is a teetotaler and they have smoked—a very unhealthy thing to do—cannabis a week prior, and they have been stopped and a random drug test

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is carried out and they test positive for THC. Are you saying that the presence of THC is equivalent to impairment or not?

**Mr BLANCH:** So, the purpose of police involvement in road activity is to make sure that we keep the roads safe. So, if we are pulling people over or we are participating in a road-stop at any time, we are looking for reasons for impairment. I have described a couple of those already and that is being unsafe on the road or having obvious sights to us, to the police officer, there is something wrong. If we do a drug swipe, then we follow the law just as we would under the alcohol provisions.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Just to confirm, therefore, you are confirming that the presence of THC does not equate to impairment?

**Mr BLANCH:** It is the same answer as for alcohol.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Right. So, what I am asking here, to be very, very precise, is that you are equating the presence of THC, which is legislated as being equivalent to impairment, but the observation of the police officers who test someone at a random drug test who are not impaired, by police observation, are still treated as if they are impaired. Am I correct in that assumption?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Honourable member, this is a budget hearing and so we are looking at the budget for the year ahead. I am not sure it is the most appropriate place to have a debate about the use or otherwise of cannabis.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** No, we are talking about drug driving and safety, which has been paid for in the budget, so I would think that is an appropriate question. Would you not agree?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am not so sure. Deputy Commissioner, see if you can answer.

**Mr BLANCH:** So, the police will be very clear when they are operating on the road, and that is if there is a risk to public safety, we have a range of offences available to us on that driver in relation to the public's safety that does not relate to the alcohol content or drug content that might be in their body. The law, which we will always follow, will then decide whether or not the presence of alcohol or drugs, then we will go down a separate path.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Next line here, with the minister's indulgence—I do beg your pardon—back to page 410, "Proceeds of Crime". I note there is a figure there for last year's actual, \$1 202 000, but nothing going to the forward estimates. I assume that is because you are not planning to have proceeds of crime because you are not expecting people to be criminals. But does the figure for 2020–21 include the proceeds of confiscated assets; and, if not, where might I find those? I ask the minister because, if you will recall, in 2015 performance measures were introduced into the funding agreement of the police. I am quoting from the Auditor General's report on criminal confiscation in May 2018. I am interested to know if those performance measures are still in place; and, if they are, how much additional funding WA police has received in the past budget cycle as a result of the confiscation cases.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Quite a big question, honourable member, and quite a number of parts to it. Obviously, the table you referred to is actually "Spending Changes". However, in terms of, generally, proceeds of crime and what we get from it, I will ask Mr Pasquale to comment and then we will see who else needs to give you extra information.

[12.30 pm]

**Mr PASQUALE:** The WA Police Force receives an annual funding commitment allocated under the criminal property confiscation proceeds funding agreement for organised crime. The allocation of funds for 2019–20 and 2020–21 included \$1.15 million per annum to combat organised crime and \$400 000 per annum for leased premises used for the storage of confiscated assets.

I am also aware that there has recently been a revised memorandum of understanding between the Minister for Police and the Attorney General in relation to the success of WA police's response to the confiscation of drugs over recent months or so. I am not sure if the commissioner would like to advance on that discussion.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** The other question I think the honourable member referred to was how much money we have received from proceeds of crime over the last few years. I think you might have said since 2015, did you?

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** No—2015 was that report, I think.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Was that information from Mr Pasquale sufficient or do we need to give you some further information about proceeds of crime for the last few years?

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** No. Thank you for the time. These can be asked, I think, in more detail later. I would be happy to have the opportunity.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Thanks, honourable member.

**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** My question is related to the G2G application. On page 410, there is a line item for "COVID-19 Emergency Management" for \$15 million in 2021–22. My question is: how many travellers that you are aware of have been denied entry to WA as a result of issues or defects with the G2G application?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger to provide a response as best he can.

**Mr DREIBERGER:** I do not have the number in front of me specifically about the number of rejected applications in the period since COVID started, but how I can explain it to you is that there is not a number that is specific to individuals or to numbers of travellers who have been rejected. What happens in the G2G PASS process is that you apply and you can be rejected on one occasion, and then you can apply within an hour or two later with more information that is required and you can be rejected again, and you can apply again a couple of hours later and be rejected again. Hence, the data we have about rejected travellers is not accurate in terms of the actual individuals who have applied to enter the state and have not been permitted to enter the state. Basically, the process does not calculate the numbers of individuals who have been rejected in totality from entering the state. Not only that, if you are a rejected traveller and you have put in three applications, or sometimes up to six applications, people can be approved and become an approved traveller, so although at the start of the day they were a rejected traveller, within a period of time they can then be an approved traveller. The system does not collate that for us in terms of individuals.

**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** My question was really around any issues or reported deficiencies within the G2G application that have resulted in rejections for travellers.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger.

**Mr DREIBERGER:** There is a multitude of reasons people become rejected travellers. When a direction is issued, there are specific elements of a direction under which some people can travel from an at-risk jurisdiction; for instance, it goes from very low to low to medium to high to extreme. If you are a rejected traveller, you could be automatically rejected purely on the basis that you did not meet one of the criteria of those travellers as per the direction. It is an automated rejection, and then there is a multitude of other reasons why people may apply under compassionate grounds and then those matters are assessed and rejected or approved. Often they are rejected on the basis of insufficient information provided to the police at the point in time to make a valued assessment of that application.

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**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** Just to give a bit of context to my question, I have a testimonial from a nurse who was travelling from the eastern states to Kalgoorlie. Her G2G application was rejected several times and it took three weeks and an ABC article and comments by the health minister before this issue was resolved. She was contacted by a police representative who informed her that there was a deficiency in the G2G application and now her application had been approved. I am just curious: is there a list of known issues that the police record related to the G2G application?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** No, there is not a specific list of things that we record relative to the very multitude of reasons people are not successful in their application. But with a traveller who may need to travel from a particular jurisdiction at a point in time and they have said, “I’ve got permanent employment at a particular location”—that could have been in Kalgoorlie—“and it’s to do with nursing” and they have not provided evidence that they are actually going to be employed as a nurse or that they have a job contract available to them or that they have suitable quarantine residence when they arrive, there is a multitude of reasons that people can have their applications rejected. It is a very complex process that officers go through in terms of a line-by-line item of assessment of an individual. Unfortunately, the backstories of people you hear are rejected are not always the facts that we have been provided. Quite often, when we interview individuals or speak to individuals at greater length, we get that information that we require because they have simply not provided that information that was required in the first instance.

**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** In the instance I referred to, the nurse had provided all the required information, but the system still rejected her. It was reported by a police representative that there was an issue that was fixed in the G2G application and then magically her application was then approved. I am just curious: is there any feedback or reporting from Genvis to the police around deficiencies in the G2G application?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** How the system works is that there are automated applications. So, that person may have had their application rejected through the automated phase and then they are contacted later on when we do a review of that, because we do have a review process of applications that are automatically rejected as well, and that person could be contacted and then be asked to provide additional information. I would need to be more specific about what is the alleged fault with the system—specifically, the Genvis system—because it could be a case of that person had a box to check and tick off in their application and they continually forgot to do it. But if there is a very specific question that you have that the person believes that something happened, we can look at that specifically.

**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** Thank you for that response. I am just curious: do the police have any visibility into issues that Genvis have been informed of related to the G2G application? Do you have a list of known issues that have been reported either by Genvis or by the community?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Before I hand over to Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs, it is important to place on the record that there would have been millions of applications for G2G passes over the last 18 months, so that is significant. I think there has previously—not by people in this place—been criticism by people about the numbers of police we had actually working on the G2G process. It is always obviously about balance. We want to make the process as seamless as possible to get Western Australians back into the state or into the state where appropriate for appropriate visits. But this is something new that we had never done before until 18 months ago, so I just wanted to place that on the record. I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs to deal with the specific question.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** Further to the minister’s position, we have had Genvis over the period of time and there have been over a thousand iterations of upgrades to the G2G system—over a thousand

changes to the system. The system, as you can imagine, was built for a very specific purpose in the first instance, which was to get industry moving within the state of WA, and over time has been continually improved. Every time we have feedback around the system that could make it better, we improve it again. We have a team that works hand in glove with Genvis on a daily basis; it works very closely. If people raise an issue that is related to the system—that it is not doing things appropriately or it is not meeting our needs—we speak to Genvis on a daily basis. But there have been over a thousand iterations to change the system over a period of 18 months or since we have been running the system.

[12.40 pm]

**Hon WILSON TUCKER:** Of those thousand iterations, have any been as a result of deficiencies that have been reported by travellers in relation to the G2G application?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Honourable member, we would not have that information. Many of those iterations might have been because of emergency management directions made by the commissioner. So, from time to time, depending on where the person is coming from, for example, and depending on the restrictions there or how prevalent COVID-19 is in that state would mean that we would have to make changes to the system based on that. Is there anything further, deputy commissioner?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** Just in closing, Genvis' focus is that the user experience has to be as good as it possibly can be for people to use the system. That is the same with the G2G PASS and G2G Now. They are a professional organisation that wants to make sure the user experience is equal to the experience that we need from an operational perspective to keep the community safe. So they will take everything that they can to make the user experience better and improve the system continuously. That is in their interest and that is what they want to do.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** I have some questions continuing on from Hon Wilson Tucker. What has been the cost to date of Genvis G2G platform?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I presume that you are referring to page 410 of the budget papers, COVID-19 response?

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** That will do.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Mr Pasquale to provide what he can.

**Mr PASQUALE:** What we do have available to us, which I think I may have alluded to previously when talking about the COVID expenditure, is for 2020–21, so last financial year, as part of that \$93 million that I referred to earlier. There was \$2.9 million in that 12-month period for G2G PASS application licences. I am not suggesting that that is necessarily the development cost and the full cost, but that is the licensing costs that were incurred in a 12-month period.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** It has been interesting to learn today that there has been over a thousand changes made to the G2G PASS system from its inception. One of the real weaknesses that I think exists is the lack of data available to WA police. As an organisation that I think is very much data driven, it surprises me how little data can be provided to the Parliament in answer to questions, with respect to simple questions like: how many people arrived at Perth Airport without a G2G PASS and how many of them were approved or rejected? Simple questions like that cannot be answered because of the lack of data that is available. So, is WA Police Force resourced sufficiently to make further improvements to the system—keeping in mind we may be using the system for a number of months or years ahead—to actually improve the data outputs available not just to police, but also the Parliament?

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**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to comment. Honourable member, it is important to point out that until 18 months ago this stuff had never been dealt with before.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** There has been a thousand changes, minister.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sure. Until 18 months ago this had not been canvassed and we do not have systems in place. As alluded to earlier on, many changes have been because the emergency management directions change from time to time depending on what is happening in other states or territories, depending on how COVID-19 is tracked. I will ask the deputy commissioner to make some general comments.

**Mr BLANCH:** Just to clarify on the changes: primarily they do relate to the hundreds of directions that come in—often up to five or six daily. So we make changes to the system to accommodate the changes in the emergency management directions. Prior to 15 March 2020, police were responsible for policing the state of Western Australia, but under the state of emergency, obviously, we went into Operation Tide, which required us to essentially become a border agency and protect our borders from people coming in in relation to COVID.

The system of G2G was provided specifically to assist us with using those directions to manage people coming into the state. It was never focused on collecting stats from the start. It was moving too quickly. The pandemic was about not allowing our community to get COVID, so not only do we have the responsibility for the G2G and access to the border, but also working in partnership with the hazard management agency, the Department of Health, in relation to hotel quarantine, breaches, tracking and tracing. So the resources of WA police during the entire state of emergency were focused on addressing the emergency. The statistics component—we are quite open about this—was not something that was focused on at the start. Over time, we have gradually got better at collecting those statistics. We are a data-driven agency; however, we have always prioritised public safety and making sure that we protect the state of WA from COVID.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** Do you now have the capability to tell me, if I were to ask, how many people arrived this week at Perth Airport, how many of them had a G2G PASS, and of those how many were approved and how many were rejected?

**Mr BLANCH:** On a day-to-day basis, that question could be answered on a specific point in time on a specific day because we are not collating as we go.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** Good to hear. Given the G2G PASS system now has live tracking functionality, on how many occasions have police accessed the G2G data for a police purpose other than border control?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** We do not have that here.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** Can you take that as supplementary information?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Yes. Just to be clear for Hansard, can you just repeat your request?

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** My request is: on how many occasions has G2G data been accessed for a police purpose other than border control?

*[Supplementary Information No B6.]*

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** There has been some discussion today about Operation Tide and we know that there are a number of officers and police staff working within Operation Tide. How many police officers and police staff within Operation Tide are tasked to G2G PASS processing?

**Mr BLANCH:** The number of police officers dedicated to different roles and responsibilities in Tide regularly changes. We have been quoted in the past as saying approximately 400 across Operation Tide, but that is entirely scalable depending on what the directions may cause, the level of threat

each jurisdiction poses to Western Australia and the number of travellers coming in. Often a very low situation creates more travellers, so we have to put more staff in. Sometimes it is the reverse, as to how many staff we have to put there. I cannot give you an exact figure on G2G PASS applications, except to say that as the demand increases, we will put more officers on to that.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** In the current environment that you are working at the moment, can you give me a sense of how many officers and staff of that 400-odd—I think it is almost 450 officers and staff? Would it be 10 per cent that we would expect to be working on G2G processing?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Dreibergs if he can provide a response.

**Mr DREIBERGS:** It could be around 10 per cent, depending on the point in time.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** Do you know what it would be currently?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I think they deputy commissioner is suggesting that 10 per cent is probably the average figure. Is that right, deputy commissioner?

**Mr DREIBERGS:** Correct.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I think that 10 per cent is the figure.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** I understand the police commissioner issued a direction around vaccination to the workforce and then there was a public health direction issued with respect to mission critical facilities and there has obviously been an announcement today whilst we have been sitting in this hearing. What is the vaccination status of the police workforce?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch.

**Mr BLANCH:** The vaccination status of WA police sworn officers is just over 92 per cent. Sorry; 93 per cent for sworn officers and 92 per cent for police staff—public service.

[12.50 pm]

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** Is that one vaccination or fully vaccinated?

**Mr BLANCH:** It is a single dose.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** As I understand the police commissioner's direction, although I have not seen it, those officers who were not vaccinated by a particular date are required to wear a mask. Is that the case? Are officers compliant in that case?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sorry, member, I was trying to get you further information to your last question, so I did not hear this one. Could you ask it again please?

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** My understanding of the police commissioner's direction is that officers who are not vaccinated need to wear a mask. How many officers are we talking about that would fall into that category?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Blanch.

**Mr BLANCH:** Firstly, yes, they are required to wear a mask unless there is a medical exemption. It is the other eight or seven-odd per cent of the workforce who are unvaccinated. It is related to one dose. You have to demonstrate that you have had one dose. That 92 per cent, 93 per cent figure would mean the remaining are required to wear masks, unless they have a medical exemption.

**Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE:** With respect to the mission critical directions issued by the Chief Health Officer, how many officers have been excluded from mission critical areas of the WA Police Force as a result of the directions?



**Mr BLANCH:** It was approximately 40 staff; however, most of those staff were still doing the job that they were originally tasked to do, they just did it from a different location. The mission critical area was determined under the public health order. The ones that were doing it in that location that could no longer do it because they did not have their first dose of the vaccination were moved to a second location where they still performed the same function.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** My questions relate to page 413 of budget paper No 2, volume 2 concerning the two metrics there in the table, rate of offences against the person and rate of offences against a property. I just ask, potentially on notice, is it possible to report those figures on a district basis rather than just the globalised figures that you have got?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** It has never been done before; the figure that is released is the global figure. I think there are operational reasons for doing so.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Can I express, as a lay person, my surprise at that response. Is it possible to report on that basis? I will pull it back.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to comment.

**Mr BLANCH:** We can report by district, not by subdistrict, police station or suburb.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** District would be fantastic. If that could be a supplementary, those statistics, those two by district, at some stage, that would be great.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** We will see what we can provide.

*[Supplementary Information No B7.]*

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Another question—I will just relate it to the two global figures that I have mentioned. Is there an analogy, say, for example in the public health system where you have, say, five per cent of patients driving 20 per cent of ED presentations? Is there an analogy with volume crime of this kind; and, if so, I mean, what proportion of the offending population is responsible for the offences? It sounds like a generic question, but I just want to understand the source problem.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** It seems like a generic question; I am not sure which line item you are referring to, but the deputy commissioner has indicated that he would be happy to provide you a response, honourable member, so I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to provide a response.

**Mr BLANCH:** The general rule of thumb for law enforcement is 20 per cent of offenders commit 80 per cent of the volume of crime; however, in Western Australia, we have looked specifically at that, and probably in the last 12 months we have looked at around 6 000 offenders committing 50 per cent of the volume of crime.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Extraordinary. My question before last was seeking whether or not it was possible to report against, or to break those rates down on a district basis. Is it possible to break that information down to, I suppose, on an age basis? My two parameters being youth versus mature offenders. Do you have those datasets available?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** That information is not readily available. It would require a significant piece of work to do it.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Is it possible to provide by supplementary after this hearing?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am not sure. We will investigate the matter. Given how busy police are at the moment, I do not want them to have to spend days going through individual files to work this stuff out. Deputy Commissioner Dreiergs has indicated it would take significant resources, so I am going to decline to provide that information to you.

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**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Minister, then, my question would be—it is very difficult, perhaps I need to refer to the annual report at some stage, which is obviously not the focus of this hearing—but it would be difficult for an interested party to ascertain the rate of offences against a person and rate of offences against property in Western Australia committed by youth offenders. Is that an impossible data?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Can you, honourable member, just clarify again what your request is?

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** The request is this: the first two metrics there on that table, just those two, rate of offences against the person and rate of offences against the property, is it possible to break those figures down in terms of whether those offences were committed by a youth offender or a mature age offender? That is what I am trying to ascertain.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Deputy Commissioner Dreiberger is indicating no. Honourable member, if you want to place a question through the process post —

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Yes, I think I might —

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am not taking it on notice.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I think I might do that, minister.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Place it through the process and then we will see what actually can be provided, noting of course that I have said that I do not want people spending weeks on this stuff.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Thank you. My focus obviously is in youth offending, so perhaps I will adopt another process. In previous budget iterations there has been reporting against, I think it was called, the Target 120 program.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Can I just say, in terms of the question that you will ask at a later stage, the easier you make the question —

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** It is pretty simple. I do not know how more simple I can make it, seriously.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sure. You were talking about cohorts, though previously, so I am suggesting to you —

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Maybe under 18, over 18. I will make it really simple, okay?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am trying to be helpful, here. The easier you make it —

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I am here to help the government, too, minister.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** —perhaps it might be easier for the police department to provide.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Just with respect to youth offending, generally speaking, we have heard regional reflections, but could I ask whatever happened to the Target 120 program? It used to be reported in budgets, and I know it was a cross agency issue. What has happened to that program?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** Sure, I can answer that. Target 120 still exists. It is the responsibility of the Department of Communities. It does exist in the Department of Communities budget. That agency would be the appropriate agency to ask the question of. It continues. I was at a briefing recently, as a minister, where it was alluded to and spoken about.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I was regrettably unable to attend the communities hearing, but I have looked at their budget and I cannot see reference to that particular measure, which is why I have asked the question.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** It definitely exists. Perhaps it was funded for four years two years ago, so it is in that two years, but it is still funded and it still exists and it still continues to do good work.

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**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Just a follow up, last one if I may, has WAPOL undertaken any assessment of the effectiveness of that program?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I am told no, because it is a Department of Communities role. They may well have done it but WA police have not.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I have a lot more questions, specifically with regard to mental health in police, but I will deal with that at a different time. The deputy commissioner may be able to help with this one. I had a very brave young lady come to see me recently, as she had been sexually assaulted. She found the reporting quite daunting and she suggested to me a process that is used for a New South Wales police called Sexual Assault Reporting Options, SARO. I am just wondering if the deputy commissioner is familiar with it. I did explain to her that I would provide the information to WAPOL and potentially in another hearing, if the estimates committee has a hearing we can delve into this further. I can perhaps provide this to the deputy commissioner.

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** May I suggest, behind the chair?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Yes, I will. I am interested to know at the outset if you are familiar with a process known as SARO.

**Mr BLANCH:** Thank you for the question. Yes, I am. I fully appreciate how daunting it can be to report sexual abuse and assault. It is something that we are continually improving. We are working across the country on always improving our processes. It is something that we consider very high on our priority.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Minister, where is the Commissioner for Police?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON:** I will ask Deputy Commissioner Blanch to comment on that. Certainly, the Commissioner for Police was a few months ago appointed as the Vaccine Commander for Western Australia. That was to help government roll out the vaccine and deal with the COVID-19 response, particularly to get those who were struggling to get vaccinated or were reticent to get vaccinated to help get them vaccinated as quickly as possible. We would have seen yesterday—I am not sure, honourable member, if you were here—the existing Commissioner for Police in his acting role came to the health budget estimates hearing. The current status is that Deputy Commissioner Blanch is acting not as the acting commissioner, but he has another title. What is it?

**Mr BLANCH:** The title being used is Deputy Commissioner performing the duties of the Commissioner, given the commissioner, under the Emergency Management Act has the role of State Emergency Coordinator. For him to remain to remain the State Emergency Coordinator, he must remain the Commissioner of Police.

**The DEPUTY CHAIR:** Thank you members for your attendance today. Members, you may submit your remaining questions through the Electronic Lodgement System, which will close at 5.00 pm on 29 October this year. Witnesses, the committee will forward the uncorrected transcript of evidence, with questions taken on notice highlighted, as soon as possible after the hearing. Responses to questions on notice are due by 5.00 pm on 17 November this year. Should you be unable to meet the due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before that due date. The advice is to include specific reasons why the due date cannot be met. Once again, we thank you for your attendance.

**Hearing concluded at 1.02 pm**

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