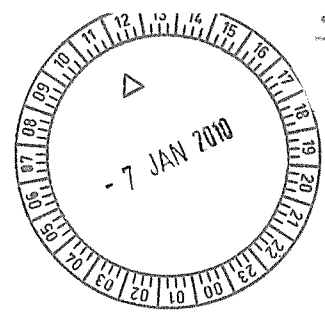


Anthony Watkin



Chair of the Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
Perth 6000

Tuesday 5th January, 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: **Submission Regarding Proposed "Stop and Search" Laws**

While the proposed "Stop and Search" legislation might appear to have merit "significant" safeguards need to be built-in if this legislation proceeds.

What is to stop corrupt Police officers from doing a "stop and search", then handcuffing a searched person, then planting drugs in a bag in that person's hands to get finger prints, and then claiming that person had the drugs on him or her? This legislation, if passed, needs to take into account the fact that people could lose their home in such a situation under other legislation already in place in Western Australia.

What is to stop corrupt Police officers from stealing money from a person's wallet or other things such as items of jewellery during a "Stop and Search"?

What effect will this proposed legislation have on the areas where this legislation will apply? For example, will ordinary citizens be less inclined to visit Northbridge because of this and will businesses lose trade as a result?

There have been many publicised cases of injustice already in the press regarding WA Police (Mallard, Beamish etc). How many more people will be sent to the already over-crowded jails in Western Australia and how much more would that cost to the tax payer? The WA Police are very vocal and skilful at promoting their needs for more and more power, more equipment etc. But do they really need it to solve crimes such as the Claremont murders. I don't think so. Their demands are a distraction from what they should be concentrating on which should be good Police work and solving crime.

Australia is, for the most part, a tolerant society but this unprecedented legislation is likely to have unintended consequences some of which I have outlined above and is equally likely to be unpalatable to the community at large due to its extreme nature. People are likely to vote against the present WA State government at the next election if this legislation is passed because people are getting fed up with the excessive nature of the present Government's Law and Order agenda which seems very Un-Australian.

Legislation like this does not exist anywhere else in Australia and is likely to cause more problems than it solves. The anti-social issues of youth etc need to be tackled at school etc.

Regards, Anthony Watkin – Will Western Australia become a Police State – Where will this stop?

Anthony Watkin

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