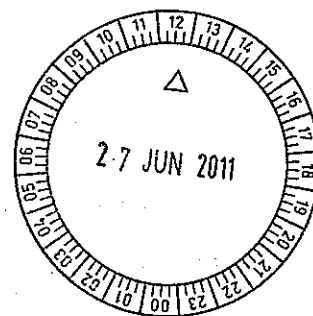


From Ms Lesley Davis

**PUBLIC**



To Ms Amanda Gillingham  
Ms Telia Reilly  
The Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs

The establishment of a police station in Capel is becoming an urgent matter. A police presence in the town will discourage a great deal of anti-social behaviour currently taking place. A specific incident I can quote is last Saturday night (18/6/2011) the ambulance was called to attend an assault in the park in the centre of Capel. The police from Busselton did attend and the ambulance did transport a male youth to Bunbury hospital, mostly to remove him from Capel. It transpired that young people are travelling from as far away as Australind and Bunbury to come to Capel to fight because they know there is no police presence here and that by the time the police get here they can be well away from the scene.

We have to put up with break-ins to the ambulance sub-centre, we have had phones stolen and a number of locks destroyed, causing us to install cameras and alarm systems in the sub-centre. We are a volunteer centre and everything we have there is paid for by the volunteers and the community. It costs approximately \$500 a time to replace the locks and has cost around \$3,000 to install the camera and alarm systems. This is an ongoing cost as the alarm is monitored. Our money could be better spent elsewhere on the safety and well-being of our community, that is what the ambulance is supposed to be there for.

Quite apart from the disruption to the sub-centre, many people have to put up with "hoons" roaring around the town at all hours of the night (and day in some cases). People (particularly the elderly) are being frightened by these thugs and even the not so elderly are becoming tired of this behaviour being ignored or dismissed by the police because Capel is still a small country town. I might draw your attention to the fact that it is one of, if not the, fastest growing shires in Australia, not just W.A. For the police to come from Bunbury or Busselton takes a minimum of 20 minutes, in most cases much more than that, which leaves people vulnerable to all types of crimes which the perpetrators know will not be dealt with until they are long gone from the scene. This response time is unacceptable in this day and age. The ambulance service is constantly criticised for tardy response times, how does it make us feel to know the police are probably more than half an hour away. On many occasions, including assaults, drug related incidents and psychiatric episodes, the ambulance crew is required to wait until the police are in attendance before they can enter the premises. There have been occasions when we have had to wait 45 minutes or an hour or more, regardless of the injury or illness of the patient, for our own safety we have to stay put. How do you think that makes us feel?

Also, when attending a sudden death the police are required to attend and the ambulance crew have to stay at the scene. This can take hours. This means that the ambulance is then unavailable for calls to help the living. A police station in Capel would resolve so many of these problems. The residents in the shire of Capel deserve to have the same service that is enjoyed by those living in major cities and towns. We are not a tiny little outback town, we are a growing and developing area and we need protection from those elements of society that are deliberately travelling in to Capel to conduct anti-social and illegal activities. We need a police presence in the town and look forward to your favourable reply in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Lesley Davis