

THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2014

ESTIMATES—LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE— POLICE, FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Estimates Committee Members

Mr IM Berry (Chair)
Miss VM Barton
Mr WS Byrne
Mr SK Choat
Mr AS Dillaway
Mr TJ Watts
Mr PW Wellington

Member in Attendance

Mr CJ Judge

In Attendance

Hon. JM Dempsey, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Queensland Police Service

Mr I Stewart, Commissioner

Mr B Pointing, Deputy Commissioner (Regional Operations), seconded to Taskforce Maxima

Mr M Keating, Assistant Commissioner, Road Policing Command

Mr P Barron, Acting Deputy Commissioner (Regional Operations)

Mr A MacCracken

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Mr L Johnson, Commissioner

Public Safety Business Agency

Mr K Anderson, Chief Executive Officer

Office of Inspector-General Emergency Management

Mr I MacKenzie, Inspector General Emergency Management

Committee met at 9.05 am



CHAIR: Good morning. I declare open the estimates hearing of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. On behalf of the committee, I welcome the minister, advisers and members of the public to the hearing. I am Ian Berry, the member for Ipswich and chair of the committee. Mr Peter Wellington, the member for Nicklin, is the deputy chair. The other committee members in attendance here today are: Ms Verity Barton, the member for Broadwater; Mr Bill Byrne, the member for Rockhampton; Mr Sean Choat, the member for Ipswich West; Mr Arron Dillaway, the member for Bulimba; and Mr Trevor Watts, the member for Toowoomba North. The committee will examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2014 for the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and areas of responsibility allocated to it under schedule 6 of the

standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. The committee will suspend proceedings for the following breaks: morning tea from 10.45 am to 11 am, lunch from 1 pm to 2 pm and afternoon tea from 3.30 pm to 3.45 pm.

I remind all those participating at the hearing today that these proceedings are similar to parliament to the extent that the public cannot participate in the proceedings. In that regard, I remind members of the public that under the standing orders the public may be admitted to or excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee. I ask that all mobile phones and pagers be either switched off or switched to silent mode. I remind members that the standing orders provide that directors-general and those chief executive officers set out in schedule 7 of the standing orders may be questioned by the committee. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask all witnesses to identify themselves before answering a question. The committee also has resolved that some non-committee members be given leave to participate and ask questions throughout the hearing. We have had two requests and those requests are still standing. We do not have any non-committee members here. I ask that when answering questions participants are conscious of the sensitivity of the microphones. It appears that Hansard is having difficulty picking up voices. If you could direct the microphone to the person speaking, that would be of assistance.

I now declare the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units within the portfolio of the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

Mr DEMPSEY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I certainly would like the opportunity to make an opening statement. Obviously, firstly, I would say what a great honour and privilege it is to be here as the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. It is an honourable portfolio. The men and women under it certainly do a great job in serving the people of Queensland. Before the official commencement of the hearing, I take this opportunity to thank all members within this portfolio for the significant work already done to ensure that Queensland is the safest place to live, visit, do business and certainly raise a family. In what is often a tireless and thankless job, our police, fire and emergency service workers and our hardworking volunteers are the backbone that keep our communities safe. I know that with the support of this government, the public safety portfolio of Police, Fire and Emergency Services will continue to deliver a brighter and safer future for all Queenslanders.

As part of the budget for 2014-15, the Newman government is working hard to ensure we deliver on a strong plan for revitalising front-line services. When we were elected in 2012, we inherited Labor's legacy of irresponsible spending and mismanagement. We inherited a system where police were trapped behind desks and fires were based in crumbling stations. The previous government oversaw a justice system that put the right of the offender ahead of the right of the victim and the community. It was a system that was deaf to the needs and expectations of a modern Queensland community. Instead of handing out serious penalties to serious offenders, the previous government continued, over a decade, handing out slaps on wrists. This government and the people of Queensland inherited a system that certainly had a number of deficiencies and was rapidly becoming worse under the previous government, which was obsessed with throwing good money at bad projects.

For the past two years, we have begun the process of righting the previous government's wrongs and getting Queensland back on track. On the other hand, Labor has continued to repeat the same mistakes they made well over a decade ago. They voted against tougher reporting for child sex offenders; they voted 'no' for mandatory gun penalties; they did not want increased penalties for evading police; and again they said 'no' to laws doubling the penalties for serious assaults on our hardworking police. This government is getting on with the job of revitalising front-line services for all Queenslanders. This is reflected in the significant investment we have made in the police, fire and emergency services in the past two years and yet again in the upcoming budget for 2014-15. We take the issues of law and order and community safety very seriously. This is visible in the hard work this government has invested to ensure our police, fire and emergency services have the resources, technology, training and opportunities to get the job done.

In this past year, this portfolio has seen some significant change for the better, which has identified as part of the Police and Community Safety Review or the PACSR, as we call it, which was completed by Mr Mick Keelty last year. The Public Safety Business Agency was established under the recommendations of that review. It is now providing a network of policies, procedures, legislation,

facilities, equipment, systems and technology that are available to, importantly, support our front-line agencies. Additionally, for the first time we have established an Inspector-General of Emergency Management, who is responsible for providing assurances and advice that enable confidence in Queensland's emergency management arrangements. Our police, emergency service workers and the staff members who support our front line do a fantastic job every day and every night.

The new setup of this portfolio is well on the way to providing the best public services in the nation. The government has invested record amounts in Police, Fire and Emergency Services since coming into government. It is the first government to allocate over half a billion dollars to Fire Services in the state and delivered another budget of over \$2 billion for the Queensland Police Service. The 2014-15 budget will help grow our economy and make our communities stronger and safer. We are working hard to ensure we deliver on our commitments and continue to revitalise those front-line services. We will also continue to carry out our commitment to providing 1,100 additional police officers over four years. To date, we have provided well over 800 additional police over and above attrition. I will say that again: over and above attrition. \$109.4 million of the budget will be used to fund a further 267 officers in 2014-15.

In addition to delivering well over 800 extra police officers over the past two years alone, we have also delivered new and upgraded fire stations across the state, including new urban stations in Ipswich, Brassall and Ripley; and new and upgraded police stations from Lockhart River in Cape York to Broadbeach on the Gold Coast. We have replaced the 150-year-old West End police station, which was the state's oldest police station, with a modern facility. We have rolled out almost 500 iPads and iPhones, saving officers up to 30 minutes per shift. \$18.5 million will continue the delivery of our mobile service capability and expand the mobile device fleet, with a further 1,250 to be rolled out by November 2014.

We began the development of the \$500 million government wireless network—a system which allows all emergency services to communicate with each other; something that was only dreamed of by the previous government. We are rolling out myPolice blogs to provide direct access to the latest news to communities from Cairns to Southport. The current 25 myPolice blogs have received an overwhelming response of over 32 million views to date. That is a phenomenal feat.

We have kept our promise to deliver an additional \$1 million per year to both Neighbourhood Watch and Crimestoppers, delivering real results in community policing. We have delivered Australia's toughest antihooning laws as part of our election commitments, with over 7,700 cars having been impounded or immobilised. We have introduced tough antiweapons legislation, targeting those who traffic and trade in illegal weapons that could harm everyday Queenslanders.

We introduced in our first year the doubling of the penalty for seriously assaulting a police officer and introduced a new offence of the murder of a police officer. These laws are delivering safer streets for all Queenslanders.

There is \$60.9 million allocated to provide for new and replacement police, fire and emergency service vehicles. Some \$3.1 million will deliver the replacement police catamarans at Cairns, the Whitsundays and Townsville.

These record investments are allowing us to deliver more police, more fire stations, more fire trucks and cutting-edge technology to the front line. Furthermore, over the 2014-15 year, the Queensland Police Service will spend \$81.9 million, which is allocated for QPS facilities, information and communication technology and other essential equipment. Another \$46.3 million is also provided for fire and emergency service facilities, urban and rural fire appliances and communication equipment.

The newly established Public Safety Business Agency capital program will provide an investment of \$140.7 million in capital purchases to support the delivery of revitalised front-line services and safe and resilient communities. This investment will mean more stations, modern equipment, the latest cutting-edge technology and the resources officers need to ensure safer streets for every Queensland family.

The Newman government has achieved so much in just two years and that is because we are committed to delivering revitalised front-line services as part of our strong plan for Queensland. I thank all members of the senior executive of the departments in my portfolio, including Police, Fire and Emergency Services, the Public Safety Business Agency and its staff and the Inspector General of Emergency Management for their hard work and dedication over the past year. I look forward to the

2014-15 year being a brighter year for our front line, and sharing our strong achievements throughout today. I thank the committee for the opportunity of participating in this very important estimates process.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I call the member for Broadwater.

Miss BARTON: Minister, page 6 of the SDS refers to the government's crackdown on criminal motorcycle gangs. I was wondering if you might be able to give the committee an overview of the progress to date in tackling these criminal motorcycle gangs and what initiatives are planned for the 2014-15 financial year for the continued dismantling and elimination of CMGs?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is an important question. It is an important question for the safety and future of Queensland.

The Queensland Police Service established Operation Resolute in October 2013 to dismantle and eliminate criminal motorcycle gangs from Queensland. Operation Resolute comprises Taskforce Takeback and Taskforce Maxima. Taskforce Takeback includes a highly visible and zero tolerance approach to public disorder and violence being committed on the Gold Coast. Taskforce Maxima focuses on the illegal activities of criminal motorcycle gangs, including pursuing unexplained wealth.

In the first nine months of Operation Resolute, weapons, including handguns and rifles, motor vehicles, drug laboratories and cash in excess of \$1.7 million, have been seized by police. Results of this operation, as of 13 July 2014, include 1,113 criminal motorcycle gang participants charged with 2,786 offences. Some 84 offenders face prosecution under the new legislation for 124 offences, including 40 on 66 charges where the criminal participant has been alleged as a vicious lawless association associate under the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Act 2013.

Some 11 criminal motorcycle gang participants are being prosecuted on 23 charges under the VLAD Act. A further 29 people are being prosecuted on 43 charges under the VLAD Act as participants of criminal organisations that are not criminal motorcycle gangs. On another 10 occasions criminal motorcycle gang participants have been located in groups of three or more in contravention of the new legislation and arrested on charges of criminal association under the Criminal Code. Some 33 applications have been referred to the CMC to consider the restraint of property under the unexplained wealth legislation. I thank the CCC for the continuation of that work.

Some 26 of the 46 criminal motorcycle gang clubhouses have been vacated or emptied and the remaining are not being used. The public wearing of colours by criminal motorcycle gangs has greatly diminished.

Multiple police operations have been conducted, including a national day of action against criminal motorcycle gangs, specifically targeting chapters, clubs and criminal participants. Major criminal enterprises linked and operated by the criminal motorcycle gang participants have been uncovered in these operations.

In 2014-15 some of the planned initiatives include a continuation, at a strategic level, of the policing of criminal motorcycle gangs. That will remain a priority for the Queensland Police Service. Taskforce Takeback will transition into the Gold Coast rapid action patrol group as of 1 July this year. The QPS will implement a further rapid action patrol group in Townsville as part of a revised service model.

In the 2014-15 budget we have committed almost \$1 million to policing hubs on the Gold Coast and in Townsville that are known as rapid action patrols. A core function of the rapid action patrols will be a continued focus on the illegal activities of criminal motorcycle gangs. We certainly are committed to addressing crime across the state and ensuring that every resident of the Gold Coast is safe. The rapid action patrols will provide a large scale crime suppression group to stop crime and make the community safe through the application of agile, highly visible, proactive policing strategies focused on problem places within the Gold Coast and Townsville.

The work currently being conducted by Taskforce Maxima will continue, maintaining a focus upon criminal gangs that pose the highest risk to the community in terms of offending and harm irrespective of police geographical boundaries. I thank the commissioner for that particularly.

The federal agencies that make up the national antigang squad have commenced working with the Queensland Police Service and will continue their relationship with Taskforce Maxima. We are committed to Queensland being the safest place to live and raise a family and our actions are delivering on that. We have a strong plan for a brighter future, but also a safer future for all Queenslanders. I am hoping to have the commissioner say a few words on this important initiative for the safety of all Queenslanders. Is that okay?

CHAIR: Yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Stewart: I highlight that at some stage I would like to also ask Deputy Commissioner Brett Pointing to comment, with the indulgence of the committee, on this very, very important issue. In terms of operations, there are other factors I would like to bring to the committee's attention that will add to the facts already provided by the minister.

Task force policing is something that, as a model of modern day policing, is gaining great momentum not just in Queensland but around Australia and across the world. Certainly the development of the hubs at the Gold Coast and soon in Townsville will provide a great model for future endeavours in this regard, certainly supported by the contemporary practice in policing.

Task force policing provides the ability, through the establishment of standing task forces in hubs—and we are calling them rapid action patrol groups—to deploy staff very, very quickly not just on a week-by-week or month-by-month basis but in fact an hour-by-hour basis to areas where crime or particular hot spots are occurring at any given time during a normal day. Having that capability to put a lot of front-line assets into an area we know has a major impact on suppressing crime and actually works in a crime preventative way. So we are very grateful that the government has supported us in this initiative and allowed us to take the action of developing the hub model to where it is today. We will be evaluating that over time to demonstrate the value that that has, in comparison to other models of policing which have been practised in this state for some time.

The hubs also give us great flexibility in terms of what we call borderless or boundaryless policing. As you know, our state is currently divided into five police regions and 15 districts. There are many police divisions within those districts. That is the model that we have always had in this state and it does work for us in an administrative sense. But the criminals do not recognise lines on maps and neither should we. The hub model gives us the ability to deploy our staff without concern for those divisional, district or even regional boundaries. Again, we believe that that is one of the advantages of that model. The task force model which I indicated was basically a standing arrangement in a hub situation is one which has worked very successfully for us in recent times.

The underlying theory of the deployment of staff is also based on what we call case and place policing. Case meaning a particular type of crime or a particular case. Perhaps I could indicate that the Baden-Clay case is a good example of that. That is when we bring significant policing resources to bear on a particular case or investigation. As opposed to place where we may have a hot spot of crime—a particular type of crime but not necessarily; it could just be general crime occurring in particular area. The safer night precincts that we are now developing are a very good example of that. It is the place which is the focus of your police department. So the combination of case and place as the theoretical basis for task force policing is a very sound one for the future.

The other area that I would mention in the fight against organised criminal gangs in this state is the fact that our front line has been increased significantly not only by the extra police that the government have given us over a four year period but also by the fact that the government has insisted that we look at ways of bringing people from the back office, from support roles, to the front line, which is what the community expects of us. We are in the process of doing that. We are bringing more and more people onto the front line to do what the community expects of us and that is to keep the community safe.

I also want to highlight that towards the end of his comments the minister did mention such things as other agencies. The national antigang squad, which operates in Queensland at the moment, is the bringing together of other federal agencies to support us. It also supports us in the area of communication flows—vital information flows—particularly in the intelligence area. More broadly, I do not think we have ever seen a time in this state where the assistance of federal agencies and other jurisdictions, in particular our bordering jurisdictions of the Northern Territory, South Australia and New South Wales, has been greater in the fight against this type of very insidious crime which has been affecting our community. The tools that we need to do the job have been provided to us. We are about getting on and doing it.

With the committee's indulgence, I would like to invite Deputy Commissioner Pointing to come forward and give you some further insights into the very, very good work that has been achieved in relation to the fight against CMGs in this state.

CHAIR: So Deputy Commissioner Pointing is going to be talking to us about CMGs?

Commissioner Stewart: Yes, he will. Specifically about some of the very good statistics that have come to light. Is that okay?

CHAIR: Yes.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Chair. In early October last year I was appointed to head up Operation Resolute, and that included the two task forces of Task Force Takeback, which is on the Gold Coast, and Task Force Maxima. Just to give it some perspective, Task Force Takeback is Gold Coast specific. It is under the command of Superintendent Jim Keogh. We were able to allocate permanently an additional 50 staff from growth to that task force. I will talk about the two task forces separately. Since then we have also increased staffing on the Gold Coast to that particular task force from 50 to 100. We have done that by rotating people from the different divisions through that task force. They have moved into new premises at Varsity Lakes. I will give some results in a minute, but their broad remit as a task force is to provide a very high-level crime suppression group. They are focused on the whole of the district. They are not fettered by having to police within boundaries and they are to collaborate with local, state and federal agencies to achieve their results.

Since they have commenced, their results have been outstanding. They have arrested 2,205 offenders on over 3,000 offences. They have issued nearly 5,000 traffic infringement notices. They have issued over 250 liquor infringement notices. They have submitted nearly 10,000 intelligence submissions, and they have done almost 2,000 visitations and compliance checks at licensed premises. Their remit has been very much to restore law and order to the streets. The Gold Coast has been the epicentre, I guess, of the CMG problem in Queensland. We have seen that through a number of high-profile events, particularly through 2012 and 2013, although it does go back a little further than that.

Just to give some perspective, we have seen CMGs or members of criminal motorcycle gangs grow by 50 per cent over the last seven years in Australia. To a large degree those numbers of CMGs have paralleled the growth in recreational drug use. So it was interesting to see the United Nations report the other day on drug use in the world, and of course Australia and New Zealand unfortunately have the reputation as the highest level of recreational drug users. So it is not surprising that CMGs have grown in response to that.

I would like to read into the record some figures. With such an intense policing model, a legitimate question is: what is the impact on crime on the Gold Coast? Assaults on the Gold Coast are down by 14 per cent. I will just give some clarity to this. These figures relate to the period from October last year through to now. When I raise these statistics what I am doing is comparing, say, October month by month. In other words, we are comparing the period this year to the same period last year. Assaults are down by 14 per cent. Robberies are down by 22 per cent. Unlawful entry is down by 29 per cent—that is people breaking into houses and shops and businesses. Offences against a person are down by 14 per cent. Unlawful use of motor vehicle or cars getting stolen are down by 30 per cent—that is almost 500 vehicles.

CHAIR: Sorry what was that—14 per cent for cars?

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: No, down by 30 per cent—454 offences. The impact of Task Force Takeback on the Gold Coast has been, I think, incredible. Linking that to CMGs, we have also noticed that the CMG outlaw motorcycle group the Finks have virtually closed down. Many have patched over to the Mongols of course. But all of the clubhouses on the Gold Coast have ceased to operate—clubhouses that are, in effect, safe houses that allow criminal motorcycle gangs to plan criminality.

One of the key drivers of this operation is to actually encourage people to leave gang life. Interestingly, we have also seen a drop in participants in criminal organisations or criminal gangs from 1,133—these figures are quite fluid and it is not always easy to be exact. But from our intelligence at the beginning of the operation we have seen a drop in participants from 1,133 to 861, which is roughly a 25 per cent drop in participants in criminal gangs. To achieve that, we have also instigated a formal process on our own QPS website that allows people to disassociate if they wish to. Only 12 CMG members have disassociated through that process. But many have disassociated through legal representatives or through simply verbally advising us they have disassociated from gang life.

The minister has read into the record the broad statistics of achievements. I will talk about Task Force Maxima, under the leadership of Detective Superintendent Mike Niland. Task Force Maxima have a state-wide remit. Their function is very much about dismantling criminal motorcycle gangs in Queensland, and they are working all around the state. Of the offences that the minister mentioned, the 2,786 charges, 43 per cent are for serious criminal offences—so they are offences as defined in the Criminal Organisation Act 2009 that attract a period of imprisonment of seven years or more.

In broad terms, 188 offences relate to assaults, torture, extortion, robbery, stalking and affray. Just to give some clarity, the initial event that triggered this operation—the event at Aria restaurant on the Gold Coast on 27 September—has resulted so far in 40 arrests either for riot or for affray, and I think 10 of those have been dealt with through the courts. There have been 104 offences against property—in other words, stealing, unlawful use of a motor vehicle, robbery, burglary, break and enter, and arson. There have been three offences of fraud. This will not be surprising but 852 offences relate to drugs—that is, the production and trafficking and distribution of drugs. Thirty-five offences relate to weapons offences, and there are five offences for perjury, attempted perjury and possessing child exploitation material. There have also been nine offences under the Commonwealth legislation for money laundering and using devices for threats and counterfeit money.

The results to date, I think, for Task Force Maxima and Task Force Takeback have been outstanding. We have seen that reflected in the crime statistics not only on the Gold Coast but also around the state. The drop in crime around the state, whilst not quite as good as the Gold Coast, is very, very close.

In response to the earlier question around the future, the commissioner has advised me that I will retain ownership of Operation Resolute at least through to 1 July next year. Task Force Maxima will remain in its current form. The government has allowed us to carry forward unspent moneys out of the \$20 million to finance the ongoing campaign. It is the same with Task Force Takeback. I will retain command of Task Force Takeback. Even though it is actually transitioning to a different name—the rapid action and patrol group—it will still be carrying on the work it is doing in terms of reducing violence on the Gold Coast and making the streets safer.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Minister, I want to put on the record that I acknowledge that certainly in my electorate there are improving crime statistics in some categories of crime. I do not undersell the merit and value of the leadership of the Queensland Police Service, particularly in my area, in my region and district, in terms of the leadership that they have demonstrated and the results that have reflected that on the ground. However, it is interesting that today already we have heard the Gold Coast mentioned on a number of occasions. I refer to the SDS and pages 7 and 8, which are all about statistics. Particularly I am referring to the myPolice page, the Queensland crime statistics and all offences numbers for the Gold Coast for the last 12 months.

The myPolice website states for the month of May 2014 the total number of offences on the Gold Coast is 3,010 offences for that period. When you sit down and actually calculate the total—and I can read each category and the numbers in it, if that is of any help to your understanding—by adding up each of those separate categories, my maths comes to 3,389 offences committed in the Gold Coast district for the month of May 2014, which is a lot more than the stated total of 3,010. Can you explain why there is a difference in the crime statistics of around 12 per cent and why the total is actually lower than the number of offences when aggregated?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is important to have clarity. We spoke about the myPolice system at estimates last year. It is great to see the good member going in and utilising that open data in the way that it is meant to be used—for the community to look at and have peace of mind. For us as a government, having a strong plan for a brighter future and a safer Queensland, it is not just about the numbers of police and the technology and the legislation. It is about empowering Queenslanders. We have seen some magnificent results in all facets right through to, as I previously mentioned, over 32 million hits on our myPolice blog.

Another facet has been the great statistics in the continuation of funding of \$1 million per year for four years to Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers. Queensland has one fifth of the population of Australia, yet over 41 per cent of the reporting to Crime Stoppers is here in Queensland alone. That is a phenomenal effort and phenomenal support of the people of Queensland in relation to the operations that police are conducting. The number of hits—the tens of millions of hits—on the myPolice blog, while looking at that particular facet of crime figures, also shows the re-engagement of the community in what police are doing and a confidence like never before.

As the good member would have seen on that particular site, if he scrolls down to the next little bit on that website there is a disclaimer underneath it. It is a fairly large disclaimer and I encourage him to read that disclaimer, because that disclaimer, amongst other things, eludes to the fact that a lot of these figures do not include identifying areas of domestic violence, types of sexual offences that have been committed or other particular offences that may cause an added hazard or danger to a

person who is a victim of crime in that particular area. What those statistics do is give the community a greater idea of where crime is happening. You can see the different colours on that particular website that are highlighted.

We have also found, particularly with that website, that it gives the community peace of mind in relation to not just when crimes have been committed but also when crimes have been solved. Not wanting to name anyone, but if we go back to our own local communities, whether it be Rockhampton or somewhere else, someone might get information through Neighbourhood Watch or the paper or other areas and they would be looking for an offender to see whether he or she has been apprehended. That would increase their fear of crime. Whereas now they are able to go on to the website and see that offenders have been apprehended or offences have been solved. That certainly adds to the peace of mind of all members of the community.

Rockhampton, as you just mentioned, has certainly seen a reduction in crime statistics right across the board, and that goes for Rockhampton or Gladstone or other areas in between. Whilst we pat ourselves on the back as far as the policing response is concerned, it is also about the community response. In relation to your particular question about statistics and the calculations, whilst the myPolice blog is there to inform the community and give them information as close as possible about what is happening in their areas, we see a number of statistical abbreviations where police have solved crimes or are in the process of solving a particular offence.

You can imagine previously, where we did not have the myPolice blog, a police command may have had an operational performance review every three months. Whether in private practice or in government you would not have wanted to see peaks and troughs and things were streamlined all across. What we see now is by having the myPolice blog he has been able to show the community, and particularly police officers as well—and that is an important part—exactly what is happening on the ground and, because of that, being able to respond in a way to be able to put resources to it. For the actual determination on those statistical figures I will ask the Commissioner to make a comment. You will see through the SDS statement, whether it be from the ROGS report or the traffic reports and so forth, there are different variances in times and I would rather have clear statistical figures.

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Mr Byrne, for that question. I cannot deal with the very specific numbers that you have given us right here because I do not have that data in front of me, but I am more than happy to take those figures on notice to try to give you a fulsome and better explanation afterwards.

CHAIR: Are you happy to take that as a question on notice?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy to take that as a question on notice and provide the answer by the end of today.

Mr BYRNE: Can we move on then to the next question?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr BYRNE: Minister, the estimates question on notice 15. It is the same issue. On the Gold Coast for the month of May you have provided a different set of numbers. I requested those very figures to compare them just as a snapshot against the available data on the myPolice website. When you add up the number of offences provided, it adds up to 3,398 offences, which is a similar amount to the individual adding up of what was available on the myPolice website which again is in major contrast to the 3,010 number of offences that appears on the website. As you have referred to, not all of the offences are reported as separate categories on the myPolice website, but can you explain why, even with these limited offences, the indications given on this website, which I would assume are accurate, are not reflected by the material on the website or necessarily your subsequent material provided on the question on notice to this committee?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. We have set about, as a government, making sure that we have a greater deal of openness than ever before. Part of that is the myPolice website. If you go to the disclaimer at the bottom of that particular website, and I am happy to provide a copy to you by the end of the day, and please read it, it will show that those figures certainly have a fluent finalisation as investigations go on. For example, an offender might come in for a certain number of break and enters but on further investigation of that particular offender there is an increasing number of offences. The open data certainly is there to give information to the community to have that peace of mind, but for an estimates process I would prefer to have the actual detailed numbers provided to you in a way that you are satisfied with. Commissioner, if you would like to particularly comment in relation to where we see that variance in numbers.

Commissioner Stewart: Thanks, Minister. Thanks, Mr Byrne. I have noted the data that is provided in the question on notice. I do not know at what date that was provided.

Mr BYRNE: Yesterday.

Commissioner Stewart: The question on notice was, but I do not know at what date the data was provided. There is always a settling period with statistics. They do vary over time, there is no doubt about that. That is one of the reasons why we always put caveats on our statistical data. I note that in the question on notice the caveat is actually provided with the information. I think that you are talking about May of 2014?

Mr BYRNE: Correct.

Commissioner Stewart: And the total number of offences for the Gold Coast policing district is 3,969?

Mr BYRNE: That's correct, 3,969.

Commissioner Stewart: Sorry, you are saying there is a variance with what is on our website?

Mr BYRNE: There certainly is. There is a variance between that data and what is revealed on the myPolice website which I find difficult to appreciate.

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, the minister's explanation, everything that he said I support, in relation to the fact that some crime is not reported on the website because of privacy issues. That is around sexual assaults and domestic violence issues. That is to deal with the technology that people can actually track individual crimes close to where they occur. A decision was made some time ago when we went to the open data portal, which I support 100 per cent, that you still need to be very, very careful not so much in large volume areas but in smaller volume areas like Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: I understand that, but my whole point about the material that has been raised with us and put to us is that if you look at the total summary of all those offences, even the data that is available to me, there is something like, we calculate, a 32 per cent understating of offences on the Gold Coast for that period, for that month, when you aggregate all the other pieces that are supposedly visible on the site plus the inaccuracies. I find it very difficult to sit back and say well here is a myPolice website, it is all part of transparency, there is a 32 per cent understatement, in fact, in the rate of offences on the Gold Coast. I find that difficult to imagine.

Commissioner Stewart: If I just also point out though that the current open data portal provides that Queensland Police Service data is probably world's best practice. We are one of the only police agencies in the world, at the insistence of the government, that provides data with I think at the moment it is about a two-working week lag—so, a 10-working day lag—but even then the data does change because people change their minds about complaints. So we do get a variance. Normally when we do our yearly statistical analysis we wait at least six weeks and ultimately longer before we provide that. But because of the transparency issue and the need for us to be accountable and to provide that information through the online open data portal for the Queensland government, the risk is that some of that data will be out of sync. The reality is the information that was provided in the question on notice is the accurate data as best as possible at that date and that is why the caveat is put there, sir. I think that moving forward, around the world we see police agencies and law enforcement agencies provide this type of data on open portals. Without naming different jurisdictions, even in Australia most of that data is quarterly and it is only updated once a quarter. The Queensland Police Service portal, through the open data initiative of the Queensland government, is, in fact, as I said, probably world's best practice in that we are only two working weeks behind, but that brings with it some difficulties in the complexity of the data and understanding it. But as I said, I am more than happy, if the minister is agreeable, to try to provide an even more fulsome explanation and perhaps give you a briefing on the way that the portal works.

Mr BYRNE: Fine with me.

Mr DEMPSEY: We can do that by Tuesday—through you, Mr Chairman?

CHAIR: That would be fine, thank you, Minister. Just on that point, just so that I am clear, and so the minister is clear in relation to the question, you want the police minister to come back to you in relation to the variance or in relation to the most accurate statistical data?

Mr BYRNE: The original question has always been about why there is this inconsistency in data. As data has been bandied around so freely these days, I would just like to make sure that the data that is actually presented reflects reality.

CHAIR: There are two questions. One is the explanation for the variation and two is what is the most accurate statistical position in Queensland in respect of crime and crime management.

Mr BYRNE: The same issue applies to the yearly summaries as well. If you do the same enterprise on the yearly summary you get the same conflict and problem and that makes no sense to me either.

CHAIR: The question is on notice. We will leave it to you, Minister

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes. Through you, Mr Chair, just for clarification of the question from the member, he has now extended it to yearly in the state from the concentrated area on the Gold Coast. The third point was in relation to the myPolice blog. I have explained to the member the variances and the fluidness of the myPolice blog and getting the information out. We are the only state or territory, as the Commissioner alluded to, leading the world in relation to getting that type of open data out. I point out the disclaimer which is on the bottom of the website for that particular part of informing the community. But if we have the actual figures, whether it be from a 12-month period—does the member want to pick a particular part of the year?

Mr BYRNE: Let us make it really simple. The summary of individual offences does not equate to the total. It is simple.

CHAIR: Member for Rockhampton, I am trying to follow the line of thought. Do you want to finish what you said and then we will go to the member for Rockhampton?

Mr DEMPSEY: We have the myPolice blog and what it is doing to inform the community and enhance that community engagement. Then there are also the figures that can be provided through the SDS statement that we have before us here today. Whether it is a figures issue or whether it is an educational view, I am happy to tell the good member for Rockhampton how the actual myPolice blog website works.

CHAIR: Member for Rockhampton?

Mr BYRNE: I will try to keep it simple. When you go and look at each offence, it does not matter whether it is the example I have used for May on the Gold Coast, which was simply used by me as an example, or you do it for the annualised version, when you tally up the individual offence numbers against the categories demonstrated they are demonstrably different to the total given. This is an Excel spreadsheet and maths issue, it is not anything else. That is all I am simply saying: why can't the number at the bottom tally what all the offences are? You cannot program an Excel spreadsheet properly?

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chairman, again it is great to see the member for Rockhampton has actually opened up the site and gone through and looked at a particular part of the site. We have the myPolice website which is, as I state, for a particular purpose. If the member then wants to look at particular crime statistics, as alluded to by the Commissioner there certainly is fluency in relation to exact times and figures. We can certainly look over a five-year period, a 10-year period to avail the member.

CHAIR: I think the estimates is really 1 July 2013, unless in relation to that area it needs to look at the previous situation to make the comparison. As I understand, and I just want to clarify it so that you understand what you need to do, there is a variation of 32 per cent I think the member mentioned in the data from one place to another. That needs to be explained. Number two is I think what he wants is the accurate statistical position on crime in Queensland. That is the thrust of it. I do not want to spend too much time on it, but that is what I understand is in issue. Perhaps you might clarify that, if you wouldn't mind. Member for Ipswich West?

Mr CHOAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Minister, before I ask a question, my people in Ipswich West would take me to task if I did not express publicly on the record our thanks for the tremendous work being done in fire and emergency services and police. We are a little bit old fashioned out there, we refer to our police as a police force because we believe if you want to do the wrong thing they are a force to be reckoned with. The new station at Brassall, the new appliances we have got throughout, are fantastic, but if I can talk about the statistics, because they entered a little bit of the line of questioning, whichever way you look at it we see a reduction in robbery of around 33 per cent and break and enter 22 per cent. That is fantastic. My people are very, very appreciative. I thank our local leadership team, District Superintendent Mark Kelly and his team, people like District Inspector Charysse Pond, Troy Hamilton—fantastic work.

CHAIR: Do you have a question?

Mr CHOAT: I do indeed. In referring to the question that my colleague the member for Broadwater asked and specifically in relation to criminal gangs and drug labs, would you tell the committee about progress in destroying organised criminal networks involved in high-level drug trafficking and production? In particular, could you give recent examples of significant clandestine drug labs that have been dismantled?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question and his support of all police, fire and emergency services in the electorate of Ipswich West and for continuing to keep his community engaged and safe right across-the-board. Whether it be Ipswich West or the rest of the state, the Queensland government has a strong plan for a brighter future. That brighter future for all of Queensland is one in which we can ensure we can buy new resources as well as making a record investment to deliver those safer communities throughout the state. Over the past two years we have begun the process of getting Queensland back on track. I have been working with the Queensland Police Service, the Queensland fire and emergency services and recently the Public Safety Business Agency to revitalise the state's front-line services. This process of revitalisation will ensure that our police can get on with the job of reducing crime and keeping pressure on criminals.

The Australian Crime Commission has released its Illicit Drug Data Report for 2013-14, and I encourage the member for Rockhampton to look at those dates and times. The report provides an overview of the national illicit drug market and helps to inform officers' understanding of the national context and collaborative approaches to tackling drug crime. The report shows that New South Wales and Victoria remain the biggest drug markets in Australia in the majority of drug types, and Queensland remains committed to tackling the issue of drugs in our community and those criminals who wish to harm the community through their particular activities.

Last year the government introduced tougher penalties targeting serious drug traffickers, ensuring their trade is stopped in its tracks. Those traffickers who wish to supply drugs to minors face penalties of between 25 years and life imprisonment. They will now be required to serve at least 80 per cent of their sentence before being eligible for parole—another step which puts the victim ahead of the offender, particularly after conviction.

The government is committed to working to ensure the QPS continues its great work in closing down illegal drug operations right across Queensland. The QPS works in partnership with other law enforcement agencies, government agencies and industry groups to combat dangerous drugs. I would like to thank all those other organisations for their commitment and partnership with law enforcement agencies here in Queensland.

The Queensland Police Service conducts drug operations of varying levels to tackle drug crime. The Queensland police regions conduct operations on a localised basis targeting drug crime supply networks. State Crime Command, through the Drug and Serious Crime Group, conducts protracted operations against criminal networks beyond the capacity of regional crime investigation branches. The group is made up of the State Drug Squad, the Organised Crime Investigation Unit, the Townsville and Cairns Drug Squads and the Gold Coast Major and Organised Crime Squad. The focus is to disrupt, dismantle and displace organised criminal networks involving high-level drug trafficking and production. I want to pay thanks to those dedicated officers from State Crime Command who are on the front line of Queensland's effort against these dealers.

In April we saw police undertake one of the largest drug operations in its 150-year history. That operation saw more than \$26 million worth of drugs taken off our streets and out of the future earnings of criminals. It means safer streets and communities and a better Queensland for families thanks to the Queensland Police Service. Between 1 July 2013 and 31 May 2014 the Synthetic Drug Operations Unit of the State Drug Squad attended and dismantled 312 clandestine drug laboratories in Queensland. The group also conducted extensive drug and clandestine drug laboratory awareness programs within the community and business organisations. For the sake of the committee, I say that those community awareness programs, particularly in the hospitality area in terms of hotel and motel units, and the tourist area, really get that information through about recognising many different things, from pill packages in rubbish bins, to smells, electricity use and so forth. That will protect not only them but also people visiting those particular establishments. It certainly gets the message out to those particular stakeholders as well as the community generally.

Significant clandestine drug labs dismantled in recent times have included a clandestine laboratory seized in February this year on Stapylton-Jacobs Well Road. Police found laboratory grade glassware, apparatus and precursor chemicals with a potential to produce multiple kilograms of methamphetamine. In April this year, a further significant laboratory seized in Kin Kin discovered

multiple improvised vessels, apparatus and precursor chemicals with a potential yield of multiple kilograms of methamphetamines. This discovery also resulted in locating two hydroponic operations. In May this year a similar clandestine laboratory seizure in Yeronga was found with a potential to produce multiple kilograms of methamphetamine.

In 2013 this government amended the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 and the Drugs Misuse Act Regulation 1987 to further protect the community from illegal drugs. These amendments included the addition of 31 new psychoactive substances as schedule 2 dangerous drugs in the regulation, an offence of trafficking in precursor chemicals and redefining dangerous drugs to capture the new and psychoactive substances as they emerge in the community.

I want to reiterate that the constant changing of these drug matrixes is a challenge to law enforcement agencies right around the world. We certainly have to be ever vigilant to ensure that we have the legislative flexibilities to keep up to date and on track with meeting community expectations in relation to these ever-changing drug types. These changes mean that if you are 'breaking bad', you are breaking the law and will certainly face the consequences. We need to ensure that those who wish to make money off the backs of Queenslanders' addictions are stopped through effective laws and policing. The government certainly has a strong plan for our future and safer communities, whether it be in Cairns or Coolangatta.

Before asking the commissioner to say a few words, I want to say that recently I have had meetings with other state and territory ministers as well as the commissioners from all the other states and territories. This particular area of synthetic drugs is certainly being taken seriously by not just the enforcers but also the law-makers to ensure we are ahead of other countries around the world. We have seen other nations, from the Irish model to changes in the New Zealand model, trying to keep pace. We know these particular drug rings and cartels operate on the pain and suffering of many innocent Queenslanders. We have to ensure we have the flexibility when we see these types of chemical changes that look for ways to get around legislation. I can assure all members today that we are doing everything we possibly can on not just a state level but also a national level to get rid of the scourge of these types of drugs that are infiltrating Queensland. Some of the chemical components are very easy to find; they are easily imported into Australia. That is why we are very thankful that the federal government has set up a task force that is situated in Queensland that is working on the ground with the Queensland Police Service, with Customs, with the Australian Taxation Office as well as the Australian Crime Commission and the Australian Federal Police to have a coordinated approach like never before. Queensland is leading the way in relation to its attack on these people who think that they can bring drugs into Queensland and into the nation. We are certainly going to ensure that our police agencies will be given whatever resources they need.

During my own time within the Police Service I have seen the scourge of these drugs and the impact they have not just on families, friends and members of the community but also the cost factor in terms of health, education and our community's ability to have a positive future life for young people. That is why I thank you for your patience in allowing me to answer this question in a quite lengthy way. I thank those members of the opposition and the Independent member for allowing me to detail all that we are doing in this area. Commissioner, would you like to comment?

Commissioner Stewart: With the indulgence of the committee, I thank you, Minister. There are only two issues that I wish to raise for the committee's edification. The first is that, unfortunately, Queensland has become very adept at identifying clandestine drug labs and following them up and dismantling them. We have a very good reputation of expertise within our State Drug Squad through the Synthetic Drug Operations Unit of identifying and following up evidence of potential drug labs right across the state. It is almost a daily occurrence, which is a critical issue for us. Anecdotally, it does not mean that Queensland has any more or less of a drug problem than anywhere else in Australia. What it does mean, though, is that your police department has become quite adept at the type of information that is necessary to identify suspects or where these drug labs may occur. As I said, our unit that looks after this is very, very experienced and it is a very dangerous area of work. Our officers are very highly trained in entering premises which are often very volatile environments in terms of both an explosive situation and a fire situation. So a huge amount of effort goes into it. That was the first point I wanted to make.

The second point relates to the actual question by the member, referring to the SDS, related to driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs. With the indulgence of the committee, I would like to talk about the Roadside Drug Testing Unit within the Queensland Police Service, which is very much a part of identifying the dangerous use of vehicles by people who are drug affected. It is a state-wide operation even though it is based in Brisbane. It supports regional crime and road policing

commands. Legislation allows for police officers to drug-test the saliva of a driver or a person in charge of a motor vehicle or watercraft. The initial roadside drug test uses a small portion of a person's saliva to test for relevant drugs, namely, cannabis, MDMA which is commonly referred to as ecstasy, and methylamphetamine. If this roadside test sample indicates positive to a relevant drug then another sample is obtained and tested by police. This further sample is analysed at the roadside and if positive to a relevant drug, the sample is sent for analysis by Queensland Health. A driver's licence suspension is applied to a person who tests positive at this stage. Police do not commence any prosecution of a driver until a positive result is confirmed by Queensland Health.

From 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014, 21,632 roadside saliva tests were performed in the state. Of those, 1,662 drivers tested positive, approximately one offender per 13 tests. Approximately 7.6 per cent of all roadside saliva tests were positive, an increase of approximately 2.2 per cent over the previous financial year when comparing the overall percentage rate of positive tests from the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 and 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014.

Police conducted 2,275 more roadside saliva tests during 2013-14 than they did in 2012-13 for those same dates. The increase is due to a range of proactive, intelligence-led policing strategies implemented throughout the year. There have been some improvements within the technology used for road saliva testing. The Roadside Drug Testing Unit has also been involved heavily with the south-east region's Operation Takeback from October 2013 to present. I make the point that we often use the Roadside Drug Testing Unit as a way of gathering intelligence and that has been highly successful. The unit's involvement in Operation Takeback has contributed to the increase in positive saliva detections which have assisted the south-east region in combatting crime and enhancing road safety.

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to our Police Commissioner. I refer you to the police minister's answer to question on notice No. 12. In substance the question was about what resources are available to make sure that investigations against high-profile people in our community and elected officials are conducted in a timely manner. The crux of the minister's answer is right at the bottom where he said—

Investigations with respect to elected officials are referred to the state crime command's initial assessment team which determines the course of action to be taken.

Commissioner, can you please comment on what resources are available to that unit if that is what happens? How does the unit prioritise investigations of these matters?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Mr Wellington, for that question. As a result of a number of investigations being referred to the Queensland Police Service involving political issues, we recognise as an organisation that the community would want those matters dealt with with some priority. In that regard, we created an initial assessment team within the State Crime Command. That is a small group of people. I think it is five at the present time. Their job is primarily to look at the matter that has been referred to us, whether that comes from the Speaker of the House or from a person such as yourself, to seek legal advice if necessary, to look at the implications of that and whether the jurisdiction is with the Queensland Police Service or with the CCC. We do work closely with the CCC in this regard. It does not mean—and please do not think I am saying this—that there are only five people available to investigate these matters. That is not the case. What we still will do as a priority for all of the matters that are referred to us in that way is look to bring in extra resources to investigate particular matters. I hope that that gives some indication of the—

Mr WELLINGTON: I have a follow-on question, Mr Chairman. In relation to those extra resources, how does the unit prioritise? We hear a lot about the bikies and the drug labs but what about the white collar criminals? What about the real concerns in the community about possible corruption involving senior public servants and members of parliament? We are hearing about the drug labs, but I am talking about white collar criminals that I believe have an equal focus of needing to be prioritised.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is a good question. It is probably worth another question on its own. We want to make sure that we get a good clear concise answer in relation to that. Before the commissioner answers, as an LNP government one of our election commitments was to ensure we had extra police officers—1,100 new police officers. We are putting new technology into the Police Service with iPads and iPhones. These matters have all created greater efficiencies for the policing operation. It is freeing them up from paperwork and other tasks and has allowed police to be on the front line to gather more information—not just information into minor offences but also major offences and take the pressure off our larger task force that is operating. The commissioner will go into that in a short period.

While we are doing that, we are implementing legislative changes. Whether it be criminal gang members or certain nationalities that operate in a crime network in the state, interstate or nationally, we always have to maintain a response and a coordinated operational response. When it comes to white collar crime, particularly in the area of fraud, we need to look at where the cash comes from and where it goes. No-one in this room is naive enough to think that when we talk about money going in, we are not talking just in relation to cash volumes. The movement of drugs and cash internationally as well as nationally does not just take the form of cash. As mentioned in parliament, we have seen it moved from the Darknet to Bitcoin and other banking agencies. We need to be able to show how that particular monetary amount is converted to an international trade item where someone at the end of the day can take advantage from someone else's pain and suffering.

That is why in Queensland—and I can say this to you as someone who has had experience in the police force—we are leading the rest of the nation in being on top of criminal gangs or what other avenue takes place in years to come, particularly in white collar crime. A particular area of white collar crime, as I mentioned, is fraud. We have seen a growth in that area. Thankfully we now have Chief Superintendent Brian Hay, who is renowned worldwide for his expertise in that particular area. While we target large white collar crime operators, we want to bring the community with us. We bring the community in so many ways, and that is about keeping everybody educated on the threats and risks that face Queensland and its future generations.

Mr WELLINGTON: I think our commissioner might be ready to answer now.

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you again, Mr Wellington. Could I clarify the question, through the chair, so I am absolutely sure of what you are asking me? Do I understand that you are asking me how do I prioritise the resources that I use, for instance, for highly sensitive political investigations or is this more generally right across-the-board of all crime that comes to us?

Mr WELLINGTON: No, this is high profile members of the community, businesspeople, political inquiries, elected officials, be they local government, state, federal or whoever.

CHAIR: I get the impression from the question that what he is saying is that, if you have 10 matters, and you have five people, and I know you have further resources, but you need to allocate which ones you consider have priority over another one. Is that the way to look at it?

Mr WELLINGTON: Well, it is because we have seen how you can have five police officers pull over a bike rider when we had the full steam ahead approach a few months ago, and yet we have complaints that I understand are currently with your office in relation to one instance I am aware of which has been publicised on the Sunshine Coast of a councillor which still has not been resolved. This matter goes back to the last council election. It comes down to priorities. I do not want to name the councillor.

Mr DEMPSEY: What we have now is a point of call. In the past you had different regional commands or districts who would receive a complaint and go through that. Now we have consistency to facilitate what the expectations of the community are in relation to those types of investigations. I am happy for the commissioner to speak more in relation to that, but I hope that alleviates some concerns as to what occurred in the past.

Commissioner Stewart: Can I start this part of my answer by saying that we take all crime very seriously in the state. Prioritising our investigations is something that we do on a daily basis. Before I get to the specifics of where you are heading, can I give a good example of that? The hundreds of police involved in the recent investigation of the Baden-Clay murder, for instance, was a very high profile case but it was high profile in that we had a missing person and we needed to try to find that person. When ultimately we found the missing person deceased obviously the other resources came to bear. This is no different from how we prioritise all complaints in Queensland. There are ones which obviously are sensitive because of the people involved—so political figures within the community. The community has an expectation that we will deal with these as quickly as possible and we do.

When I said that we put this team together at state crime we did that specifically so that we were not simply giving these investigations to officers who perhaps did not have the adequate resources to deal with it. The idea of the initial assessment team is to make sure there is nothing that will block or put unforeseen barriers—for instance, our relationship with the CCC where most of these go to in the first instance because the CCC does have primary carriage for high level allegations of corruption against official figures. We work very closely with the CCC. If they are referred back to us, the initial assessment team does not necessarily take a lead in the investigation. We actually give those investigations to teams of experienced officers. For instance, if it is a fraud matter we will give it

to the fraud squad and we will make a senior officer specifically responsible. It is then their job to manage the investigative plan. Often teams get in the road of that. It is about getting the correct material from the complaining agency or from the parliament, as has been the case in recent times where we have to wait for that material to come through from a committee or from the parliament itself. Then it is a matter of negotiating, often with legal representatives for people who have been named in those complaints. That takes some time, but we do it with all haste and we certainly give it what we believe are enough resources not to delay the process. Because at the end of the day our credibility comes down to making sure that any investigation is undertaken rigorously, professionally and lawfully. That has to be the benchmark for us. Whilst I know that sometimes these things do take what appears to be an extended amount of time, it is not for want of the right resources there. There are many competing factors.

Mr WELLINGTON: I have a follow-on question. The Keelty report recommended after the Fitzgerald inquiry that the service was to be at arms-length from the government of the day. The review team believes there are clear circumstances where such a direction is warranted. What he was getting at, I understand, was the opportunity for ministerial directions to you as the commissioner. That is the way forward, not to have this arms-length gap between the service and the minister's office. My question is: have you received any ministerial directions from the minister in relation to investigations?

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, no—well, sorry, if I can put this in context, certainly it is my job to keep the minister, as the government, abreast of our progress but not in an operational sense. It is about how we are progressing each investigation. That is simply an update that we have interviewed a number of people. We still have other people to interview. So there are no specifics about the actual information. That would be quite improper, as I think you are alluding.

But I have always understood that where a direction is provided to me from the Minister, there is a register and they have to be written and acknowledged. In relation to these matters the Minister has not provided me with any direction. Certainly the operations of the organisation are my responsibility, and I take that very, very seriously. Whilst obviously the government of the day is who I serve, and I serve the community through the government of the day, that gap, that separation between the operations of our organisation and the Minister, in my time has certainly always been there.

Mr DEMPSEY: Just to add to that as well, never before have ministers supplied their open diaries. That was never the case in the previous government, and obviously the RTI process is furthermore removed from ministerial offices like never before. The way that we go about our business, particularly in the area of law enforcement, certainly is an area where we must always maintain the integrity and support of the people of Queensland, so I thank the member for the question.

Mr DILLAWAY: Minister, page 6 of the SDS refers to the enforcement of more stringent reporting conditions for offenders under recent changes to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act. Could you please advise the committee what changes have been made to reporting conditions and, more importantly, why our children are now safer?

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chairman, I thank the member for the question. I particularly thank the member for Bulimba for supporting the legislation that passed in the House recently to strengthen reporting conditions to ensure that Queensland again leads the way in the reporting of child sex offenders and to maintain public confidence in the way that these matters are managed.

The Newman government is certainly committed to Queensland being the safest place to live and raise a family. We are committed to increasing the reporting requirements for sexual offenders and we have delivered on that. Recent amendments to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004 impose more stringent monitoring of sex offenders. The amendments strengthen the current reporting regime for child sex offenders by increasing the number of times offenders are required to report from annual reporting to once every three months. The number of times and the way in which these high-risk offenders are required to report will be determined also by the Police Commissioner, and that is on top of the minimum four-month reporting mechanism. Those offenders who pose a significant risk of reoffending will be required to report more frequently than ever before.

The Queensland Police Service plans to manage the new quarterly reporting requirement by the introduction of a kiosk reporting system which will identify offenders using biometric details like fingerprints. We are currently trialling that right across the state. The Queensland Police Service is looking at options for using other technology based systems to facilitate this process such as an

online reporting system and enhancing the use of the existing 1300 number. The amendments introduced are a raft of additional measurements for monitoring child sex offenders including imposing more stringent time frames on offenders to report changes to personal details, as well as entries and absenteeism from Queensland, and the expansion of personal details required to be reported to the Queensland Police Service by child offenders including information and—most importantly—passwords for any social media sites used by reporting offenders. Speaking from a practical sense, in my time in the Police Service tens of thousands of hours were wasted going through the computers of suspected offenders to gain information, and that is certainly time now saved to enable investigators to get out and help continue to protect Queensland's children.

The amendments will also allow police to take DNA from a reporting offender when DNA has not previously been taken in Queensland—that is very significant—and introduce changes to the Queensland Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to allow police to enter the premises of a reportable offender under certain circumstances to verify information provided by the offender. The amendments will remove the legislative requirement to destroy an offender's DNA in certain circumstances under the act and will allow us to collect DNA from interstate persons who are on reporting mechanisms if they are in Queensland for a period of time. We will be able to keep that DNA for life as well.

These amendments follow a number of additional child safety reforms passed in the parliament in March this year in response to recommendations from the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. The reforms focus on supporting vulnerable families to take care of their children and reforming the child protection system in Queensland to better provide for the safety, wellbeing and best interests of our most at-risk children when they cannot be safely cared for at home. This reduces duplication and better utilises resources. The acts passed by parliament transfer the existing functions of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian to other agencies. As a result, this statutory body ceased operation on 30 June this year. The Public Guardian Act 2014 established the position of the Public Guardian. The new Office of the Public Guardian is an independent statutory body reporting to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. It effectively combines child advocacy functions previously undertaken by the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian with those of the Office of the Adult Guardian.

The Family and Child Commission act 2014 creates the Family and Child Commission, a statutory body reporting directly to the Premier. The Family and Child Commission will take over some of the systematic oversight and research functions of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. It will provide cross-sector and whole-of-government leadership, advice and research for the child protection system.

The Child Protection Reform Amendment Act 2014 implements a number of other Carmody inquiry recommendations in relation to mandatory reporting regimes set out in the Child Protection Act 1999 and further reforms the oversight of the child protection system with changes to child death reviews, the Blue Card system, complaints handling and the court system. Of particular relevance is that in my portfolio the responsibility for the Blue Card system has been moved to the Public Safety Business Agency as of 1 July 2014. The Public Safety Business Agency is currently considering potential options to streamline the Blue Card system to improve its efficiency and address the comments provided by the Commission of Inquiry report.

This government is committed to making Queensland the safest place to raise a child, and these reforms will go a long way to ensuring the safety and protection of children right throughout Queensland. This is again part of a strong plan; it did not just happen by accident. These are matters of legislation and changes over the past two years to ensure that our young children and their families have a brighter future.

I also want to comment that our federal counterparts and ministers in other states and territories are looking at ways to have a more coordinated approach in relation to sex offender reporting. We have a national scheme, but Queensland has increased its reporting fourfold in comparison to that national reporting scheme. We are now able to take DNA and access the computers of reportable members like never before. I make no apologies for making sure that people who have committed acts of a sexual nature against our children have the most stringent reporting conditions of any state and territory in Australia. Commissioner, would you like to make a comment in relation to reporting?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister. This is a very, very important issue. I thank the committee for raising this issue. I would just raise three issues and touch on matters that the Minister has raised. In effect what has occurred through the new legislation is that we have moved away from

a one-size-fits-all arrangement. Previously our best efforts were based on checking everyone equally. We recognised that there was a flaw in that system, and we are very pleased that we have changes in the legislation which now mean that the higher the risk that the offender is on that register the more times that person is going to be checked by the police. I think that common-sense would dictate that that is the right way to go.

The second issue is I am really excited by the fact that we are moving to a potentially somewhat technical solution for low-risk people on the register being able to, from time to time, perhaps use an electronic kiosk to report. This will take a huge workload off Queensland police, leaving our resources better able to physically check the more high-risk offenders. I would reiterate that this does not mean that low-risk offenders in particular can simply just go and check in at a kiosk once every now and again and that is all that is ever going to happen. It would mean that through a risk profiling of these people—it might be three out of every four or two out of every four—sometimes they can actually report at a kiosk, but that alone takes a huge workload off our people.

I think the bottom line in all of this is that we are moving to that risk based approach for offenders and using technology to assist us in the workload demands that that brings. As the Minister said right at the very end, we are not alone in this. There is a nationally coordinated approach through the national register and Queensland contributes significantly. I just want to assure you that the Queensland Police Service is playing its part in keeping the children of Queensland safe.

Mr BYRNE: I will not necessarily hit the time to head on to the next subject, but I just want to follow on from something that the Minister said in his reply to that question as well as the Commissioner's revelations. You would be aware of the different views about the reduction to five years for the first offence that were expressed by us in opposition, but what disturbs me most about this information that's been brought to my attention subsequently is that there is a proven 10 per cent recidivism rate beyond the five-year mark for those people being convicted—that is data that has been presented to us from the independent academic sphere—and it still raises the prospect of someone who does not commit an offence for those five years. Ten per cent of those people by record are not going to offend in that five-year period and therefore they will be released without further supervision; is that the case? So there is a 10 per cent chance of that group being sent back free into the community with no supervision or oversight. How do you respond to that practical factual analysis?

Mr DEMPSEY: The member for Rockhampton voted against this legislation and then he did not even have the decency to speak to the clauses. Then in the operation of this committee he chose not to even go into it further in the open community forums and said that he would address it in Parliament House. Even today he still does not get it in relation to Queensland and the support that we have from academic areas with regards to this legislation. We will have more reporting than any other state or territory in Australia, we will be collecting DNA and we will be able to access their computers. At the time that the legislation was introduced into the House, every other member from all of the other parties and the Independents could see that this was for the betterment of the safety of the children of Queensland, and the member for Rockhampton still chose to vote against it. The fact remains that there is more reporting and better mechanisms. At the end of the day the Commissioner, from intelligence gathered by his officers as well as any other information, has it at his or her discretion to enforce even more stringent reporting conditions at any given time through the reporting process. I wish he could facilitate the thought process that this legislation is stronger than any other reporting legislation. It shows that, with the other changes to the legislation in relation to sex offenders and child offenders by the Attorney-General, which was not supported by the Labor government earlier, we make no apologies for getting tough on crime in relation to sex offenders as well as child reporting offenders. From the other ministers that I have spoken to, other states and territories are looking at how Queensland is capable of having this legislation, which meets more community expectations than ever before. So I hope that answers the member for Rockhampton in some way.

Mr BYRNE: Well, it does not. But anyway.

Mr DEMPSEY: I do not think the member for Rockhampton will ever be able to facilitate his left-thinking policies from his party.


Mr BYRNE: The recidivism rate is 10 per cent; that is the question.

CHAIR: Minister, you have 10 seconds to answer.

Mr DEMPSEY: I would just like to put on record the lack of support from the Labor Party and the member for Rockhampton. From the operational perspective I will ask the Commissioner to make comments in relation to that.

CHAIR: Thank you. The committee will now break for morning tea. The hearing will resume at 11 am with the continued consideration of the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units from the portfolio of the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services.

Proceedings suspended from 10.46 am to 11.03 am

 **CHAIR:** The estimates hearing of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee is now resumed. We will continue with consideration of the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units within the portfolio of the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. I call the member for Toowoomba North.

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chair, before going to the member for Toowoomba North, with your acceptance is it possible for the commissioner to finish what he was about to say when we broke?

CHAIR: Certainly. Commissioner?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you. I thank the member for Rockhampton for the question. If there is one thing that I think everyone in this room is in furious agreement about it is the need to take whatever action is necessary to protect the most vulnerable people in our community—that is, our children. I know that the member for Rockhampton has a passion in this area and I thank him for that passion and I thank him for the question.

I would like to add to the record, though, the research on which we base our reporting regime and our risk based regime. If I could just point out that in aligning our contemporary regime of reporting to a risk based arrangement the following sources were used to assist in developing the foundations of that regime: Australian Institute of Criminology research, the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal*, and *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*.

Research from these sources shows that reoffence rates in large combined samples of child sexual offenders are at their highest within the first three to five years after release into the community, with the rate of reoffending substantially decreasing beyond 10 years. The research further indicates that, of all child-sex offenders, the proportion of reoffending is shown to be around 14 per cent to 16 per cent in the first five years after release, four per cent to six per cent at 10 years after release and three per cent to five per cent after 20 years after release. The pattern of reoffending is consistent with recidivist child-sex-offender behaviour in Queensland.

Information on the Queensland component of the National Child Offender Register indicates that, generally, convicted child-sex offenders present the highest risk of reoffending within the first five years of their release from government detention. That is why the new legislation allows the Police Commissioner to vary the reporting conditions of any high-risk person or any person who is seen as a recidivist. I hope that assists the member.

CHAIR: Just following on from that, I am interested to know whether you are able to drill down to ascertain the particular attributes of the people who either do not reoffend or the ones who do reoffend in order to be a little more calculating on how you have them report?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you for that follow-up question. Obviously we are always looking for better ways of identifying those people who present a greater risk. Again, I think that was one of the reasons the legislation was changed—to give the Police Commissioner that ability, through a continuous improvement regime of research and analysis, to identify those offenders who are most likely to be recidivist after they have been released from prison.

I also inform the committee—I should have said so previously—that of all of the reportable offenders who are required to report in Queensland there are none who are not known to police in terms of their location and identity at the present time.

CHAIR: I think in the inquiry you indicated that in places such as America the undetectable rate is high because of the interstate movements and so forth.

Commissioner Stewart: That is exactly right. Of course, some of these people choose very nefarious means to try to get off the radar, to disappear from the system. Moving around the country is one reason a national scheme is so important to us. But in Queensland I am very pleased to be able to tell the committee that there is no-one who is 'missing' as a reportable offender.

Mr WATTS: Minister, my question relates to an area that is close to my heart. As you would be aware, I have worked in the hospitality industry for many years. I am also a father of four teenagers. I would like to ask some questions about the Safe Night Out Strategy. I should just mention that in Toowoomba Ian Reimers has worked very well in this area for many years. I am sure that the police force in Toowoomba is looking forward to this strategy rolling out.

My question relates to page 6 of the SDS and refers to implementing policy strategy in support of the government's Safe Night Out Strategy to address alcohol and drug related violence. As a chair of a liquor industry action group for nearly 20 years I know that a lot of strategies have been used. I am really interested in exactly the role the police will play in implementing some of the strategies and what those strategies will be in driving this cultural change for our teenagers and other young people in relation to alcohol and alcohol fuelled violence.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is an important question. We see the correlation between drugs and alcohol and violence and the effect that has not just on the initial person in contact but also on many lives and many generations. Similar to the member for Toowoomba North, I ran pubs from Moranbah to Dysart to the Inala Hotel. I certainly have a lot of memories. While I have fond memories, I certainly have a practical experience of the negative side of alcohol and how people can react in certain ways.

The Safe Night Out Strategy is a comprehensive strategy relating to drugs and alcohol. I am very happy with the overall direction we have taken. During my nearly 20 years working for police, I certainly saw a great deal of negative effects on families. For us as a government, this certainly is part of a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queensland families and will ensure Queensland is the safest state to live, work, visit and raise a family. This will affect future generations of families, as we have seen the effects of the scourge of alcohol on generations of family members.

In June, after extensive consultation, this government released the Safe Night Out Strategy. The government will invest \$44.5 million over four years to implement the Safe Night Out Strategy to deal with alcohol and drug related violence in entertainment precincts. The Queensland Police Service will receive \$5.3 million over four years to implement the strategy. This includes ongoing funding of \$1.1 million per year to conduct mandatory drug testing of people who commit serious violent offences and \$990,000 in 2014-15 to conduct a one-year trial of sober safe centres.

I had the privilege to go to New South Wales with members of the Police Service. We visited the sober-up cell facility in Sydney and saw the great work the officers are doing there. I also saw the great work of the non-government sector—of the people from health and equivalent community organisations who are directing people away from a custodial situation and into a care situation. Police on the ground are thankful for the sober-up cell initiative and can see that people having a great night out want to have a safe night out. Other members of community organisations and families are taking that person off the street in a care option before it is escalated to a custody option.

This is good for young people in Queensland. Members here might have family members who, whether it be through youthful enthusiasm or in other ways, might make wrong choices that are not always bordering on criminality. That can certainly affect their health and wellbeing and the health and wellbeing of others.

This strategy seeks to stamp out alcohol and drug related violence, restore responsible behaviour and ensure Queensland's night-life is safe for all. Fifteen safe-night precincts will be established across Queensland. Compulsory alcohol and drug education will be introduced in high schools under this wide-ranging state government action plan. Included in the 15 regions are Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Toowoomba and Gladstone. It is the most comprehensive action plan in the country dealing with the problem of alcohol and drug related violence. It is about protection, policing and prevention. The plan targets troublemakers and makes them accountable for their actions, while still ensuring the vast majority who do the right thing can have a good time and enjoy themselves safely.

The plan will ensure the QPS has the powers and resources to respond quickly and effectively to alcohol and drug related violence and antisocial behaviour where it is needed. We will do this by, obviously, strengthening existing move-on powers for police to direct a person to leave a place and not return within a 24-hour period; empowering police to issue banning notices to immediately ban a person from being in and around licensed venues, safe-night precincts or stated events where alcohol is sold; ensuring high visibility and rapid response to control incidences involving alcohol and drug related violence and antisocial behaviour in safe-night precincts; conducting drug operations, including tactical covert and overt strategies and drug detection dogs, where needed; linking police banning notice information with ID scanners in licensed venues trading after midnight in safe-night precincts to improve enforcement of banning orders; conducting high-profile operations with other jurisdictions to target alcohol and drug related violence and antisocial behaviour; and developing and implementing innovative policing strategies and technologies to support police presence on the ground in policing alcohol and drug related violence.

Other key elements of the Safe Night Out Strategy include local boards—and this empowerment is very important—to safely and effectively manage key entertainment areas across Queensland and continue funding to existing support services. Compulsory alcohol and drug education will be introduced in all Queensland schools from year 7 to year 12. There will be tougher penalties for people behaving badly or violently around licensed premises, including increased on-the-spot fines for causing a public nuisance, refusing to leave licensed premises and obstructing police. Coward punch deaths—and we have seen those tragic circumstances—will be punishable through a new offence of unlawful striking causing death, with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and offenders required to serve 80 per cent of their sentence before being able to apply for parole. There will be a 12-month trial of a sober safe centre in the Brisbane CBD where police can detain several intoxicated people in a secure supervised centre. We will have stronger and better coordination of action to ensure licensees provide a safe environment and comply with liquor licensing rules, including mystery shopper style testing. There will be an awareness campaign, including advertising to promote clear standards of responsibility and the behaviour for patrons, as well as licensees and the police. There will be an extension of the moratorium on decisions about late-night trading hours from 31 August 2014 to allow the measures in the action plan to be established and rolled out.

We will ensure the photograph and particulars of a person who is banned from a safe night precinct, licensed venue or stated event will be known to relevant licensed premises via the linked ID scanners. That is an important element to make sure we work in partnership with all stakeholders. By strengthening existing court banning orders, courts will be able to hand out lifetime bans from licensed premises. We will rigorously assess how the measures implemented through the action plan are working through a review of the action plan 12 months after its commencement. If people do go out and get intoxicated and behave violently, police will have the powers to deal with them and firm penalties will certainly apply.

Everyone has a role to play in tackling alcohol and drug related violence. Government, local businesses and local communities need to work together to achieve this, especially in late trading areas. A safe night out certainly is a great night out, and that is what we want for Queensland and Queenslanders. Most Queenslanders drink responsibly, but the actions of an irresponsible minority who are behaving badly means that alcohol and drug related violence is ruining things for everyone. The Safe Night Out Strategy aims to restore standards of responsible behaviour and respect, stamp out alcohol and drug related violence and make Queensland as safe as possible so people can go out and enjoy themselves. We want Queensland to be the safest place in Australia to enjoy not only a great night out but also a safe night out. It is our future for safer communities, right across this great state.

In giving the member for Toowoomba North some of the information about the Safe Night Out Strategy, I can say it is a comprehensive strategy in comparison to other measures implemented across Australia. It involves everything from education to enforcement and changes to environmental factors in those particular areas. It brings on board a partnership of the local communities and empowering them. We know that local communities will come up with their own local strategies. It gives us a funding model to be able to facilitate the wishes of the boards in a practical manner. Most importantly, besides having a reactive approach, it encompasses education and change of culture for future Queenslanders. Young people going through high school will have that opportunity. Some children do not often have a choice or a positive role model. If we are able to facilitate that in a way that helps their future endeavours, I think it is a good initiative.

CHAIR: Thank you for that.

Mr DEMPSEY: Commissioner, do you want to comment at all in relation to the operational side of policing?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister. Again, thank you for this very important question. I will make a couple of short comments. I think this new whole-of-government approach to the Safe Night Out Strategy will have an amazing and major impact: the involvement of the education department and the educational process for young people about the impact of drugs and alcohol on them; the fact that we have the justice department involved through the Office of Liquor and Gaming; the regulation of the club precincts, as well; and the involvement of the courts in dealing with some of the types of unacceptable behaviour. I think one of the best things of this new initiative is the stakeholder engagement for the community more generally, where the government has committed to assisting in the identification of everyone of unacceptable behaviour. What is the standard of conduct that is expected from anyone who goes out to have a great night and goes to one of these areas?

The responsibility is on them to behave appropriately and the government is committed to putting out basically a code of behaviour. I think that that will actually help people understand more carefully that if they do the right thing they do have a great night out and they do not need to interact with the police in a negative way. Whilst the government has also given us extra laws, we know that there is no such thing as one size fits all. Certainly with the extra banning notices that police will be able to issue, the fact that local governance is going to be involved through the local boards for these precincts, I think that we will get, again, a response that fits the location. Certainly in terms of the police commitment to taking firm action when people do not behave appropriately, it should not be doubted that we are committed to making sure that we do that. The other key issue for us, of course, is that the government has given us 1,100 extra police over four years and we are two-thirds into that program of growth. Those officers are very welcome on the front line to deal with these types of situations.

CHAIR: Thank you. I acknowledge the participation of Mr Carl Judge, the member for Yeerongpilly. Member for Toowoomba North?

Mr WATTS: I have a brief follow-up question. I am interested in whether there will be additional training for some of those front-line staff in relation to the Safe Night Out Strategy and working in the late night precincts?

Commissioner Stewart: Police staff, sir?

Mr WATTS: Yes, please.

Commissioner Stewart: We have comprehensive training both at our recruit level and at the in-service level and a range of strategies for dealing with intoxicated persons and people who are substance affected and, again, the other key one for me is the issue around dealing with people with mental health issues. Unfortunately, as we all know, if you combine some of that substance abuse with mental health issues you can get quite a volatile situation. Our people are trained very carefully in how to deal with that. I think the advent of the sober cells is a great initiative and one that will be evaluated very carefully. This is where people will virtually be detained. They get to pay for the privilege, which I think is a wonderful initiative. It does not mean that they end up with a criminal history or a criminal record as a result of perhaps overindulging, but doing it in a nonviolent way. There are those sorts of arrangements. Obviously, our officers are very carefully trained across that regime.

I think the other critical issue is that through our internal governance, working with those local groups—as I said, there is not one size to fit all. The safe night precinct, for instance, in Toowoomba is going to look a lot different from the safe night precinct at the Gold Coast or Cairns. Certainly, local arrangements and the briefing and the training of our people locally are very important issues for us.

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, just to elaborate a little more on that, the introduction of the iPads, iPhones and the more mobile tasking in relation to technology frees up police significantly in relation to paperwork and in relation to the issuing of notices and so forth into the future. We have had many opportunities, for example, with the Brisbane City Council, whether it be in the valley or the CBD, to link CCTV images into the police iPads. If they are not actually physically there, they are recording that advice. Sometimes in the past they may have been walking past the offender but had not received a proper description, whereas now they are getting clear imagery and the exact identification of offenders. The advantages of technology for the police are making our streets a great deal safer. Commissioner, is it possible for Mike Condon to come up?

Commissioner Stewart: I am sorry, Minister, but Assistant Commissioner Condon is not in the room. I am just alerting the minister to the fact that we consider this such an important strategy that we have actually asked one of our assistant commissioners to take the lead in relation to consultation right across the state. That has been occurring for some time and that is Assistant Commissioner Mike Condon.

CHAIR: Thank you for that. Member for Nicklin?

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. My question is to the Police Commissioner. I refer the commissioner to the Service Delivery Statement at page 5, where reference is made to the Queensland Police Service's mission statement in building relationships with our community. It goes on to talk about how this will be achieved by delivering service with fairness, integrity and collaborating with all sectors of the community to deliver a problem-solving approach to crime problems. I ask: Commissioner, what resources are available to make comment to a parliamentary committee that is considering proposed changes to the laws in Queensland that impact on policing activities in Queensland?

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chairman, obviously from my side as a minister, before the commissioner answers that one, we set the highest standards for our recruitment phase for Queensland Police Service officers. They take an oath to serve the people of Queensland without favour or affection and without malice or ill-will, and they take that oath very seriously. They know that with over 11,000 sworn officers and a bit over 15,000 members of the Queensland Police Service, they have to act in a professional and ethical manner at all times. They represent the police officers who have gone before them and, obviously, the police officers of the future. At times, the reflection of one individual officer can have an impact on the whole of the Police Service.

I would welcome the member at any time to come along to an induction parade and join me and all Queenslanders in thanking the police officers who make the hard decision to enter the Queensland Police Service. I always say, at the end of the induction, when you leave that parade ground as a fully sworn in police officer, you do not have a crystal ball or the power of hindsight, but through your training and your professionalism and your ethical behaviour you will certainly be able to fulfil the commitments of a modern Queensland. A modern Queensland is reflective of a modern Police Service. Those officers come from varying backgrounds, they are varying ages and they come from varying demographics and cultural experiences. However, when they leave that parade ground, they know that they have the same authority as the highest ranking police officer, the Commissioner of Police. With that authority comes a great deal of responsibility, because the rights and liberties of all Queenslanders are obviously to be taken at the highest value. A police officer, through his investigations, can have an effect on the rights and liberties of an individual. That is taken very seriously. What was the end part of your question, member for Nicklin?

Mr WELLINGTON: The question was: what resources are available to make comment to a parliamentary committee on proposed changes to laws in Queensland that impact on policing activities.

Mr DEMPSEY: Have you got any examples of that?

Mr WELLINGTON: It is the dissenting report, the dissenting comment that I made on a report on a private member's bill introduced by the member for Yeerongpilly. The bill was the child protection offenders reporting bill. The record shows that the Police Service refused to participate and the Premier of our state wrote to our committee and said, 'We will not be participating in the consideration of this bill.' This bill was about affecting the Police Service. It was about trying to improve the care and the monitoring of child offenders. We have heard this morning about the importance of all working together to deal with this concern that we all have and our Police Service was unable and not prepared to make a submission. More importantly, and more disappointing, Minister, was that our Premier of the state wrote to our committee and said, 'The government will not be making a submission.'

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. To answer that in particular, as just previously heard, the last question and the answer from myself and the commissioner was in relation to the introduction of the toughest reporting conditions in Australia in relation to child sex offender reporting. The government certainly had a bill that was put forward and supported even by the member for Nicklin and the member for Yeerongpilly. I thank them for their support. It was opposed by the Labor Party in relation to protecting those young Queenslanders.

But I say to the member that, obviously, in that process this committee certainly would have availed itself—and I am not completely au fait with his title, but George Marchesini certainly was available by the Queensland Police Service to the committee in relation to the private member's bill that was put forward or the government bill which was passed on the day. I thank the committee for the support for the government's bill on the day. We do certainly take the committee process very seriously and I hope that the member understands—

Mr WELLINGTON: With respect, Minister—

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes.

Mr WELLINGTON: The process did not reflect that on the day and the *Hansard* record does not reflect that at all, because the record shows that the Premier wrote on behalf of the state government saying, 'We will not be participating.' That letter has been tabled and the Police Service did not participate either. More importantly, when the government introduces a bill that deals with something similar, we have every police man and woman included and the government at our committee's disposal. The message that I am trying to get clarified by our commissioner when he finally has a chance to respond is that there appears to be no fair treatment of matters that are introduced into parliament by non-government members. This is one example that I am trying to refer

to. Perhaps if the commissioner can explain what resources are available. Was there any concern that perhaps your submission to our committee may contradict the position that the government may have had? We heard about how there have been no ministerial directions from the minister to you. You have spoken about how you do your work at arm's length from the government. If that is the case, I am keen to know why did you choose not to make a submission to a very important bill that was introduced that was modelled on changes to laws from other states of Australia?

CHAIR: Just before you answer that, member for Nicklin, I understand the position from which you are coming. The difficulty is that it really is now bordering on something which is not estimates.

Mr WELLINGTON: Sorry, with respect, it is in relation to resourcing. My question is: what resources are available to the Police Service to make comment to a parliamentary committee on proposed changes to laws in Queensland that impact on policing activities? The commissioner is prepared to answer the question. I urge you to allow him to answer the question.

CHAIR: I have stopped him from answering and I need to finish my statement to which you can respond if you so wish. What I said was that the matter you are talking about really is a matter of policy and not a matter for the estimates. I am more than happy to allow the commissioner to speak of what resources are available, provided it does not touch on matters of policy or directions et cetera. So commissioner, with that caveat, perhaps you might start, because there is a matter of policy which is not a matter for estimates. I must confine the commissioner's comments to one of operational matters and not to deal with government policy. So perhaps if you could continue, please.

Mr DEMPSEY: And I just want to clarify the fact that the member for Yeerongpilly's bill is still before parliament—is that correct?

Mr WELLINGTON: No.

Mr DEMPSEY: It has been withdrawn?

CHAIR: The member for Yeerongpilly is here. I personally cannot remember, but perhaps if you could comment. As I understand it, there is a duplication and your bill was discontinued when the government bill went through.

Mr JUDGE: The policy objective of the bill was to allow random auditing of offender reporters' residences. That has been adopted in the government's bill. The bill is still before the House, but effectively the policy objective has been implemented through the government's bill.

CHAIR: Okay. So that almost answers the question, does it not?

Mr WELLINGTON: No, it does not answer the question.

CHAIR: If you could rephrase the question, in fairness to you, just so that the commissioner can understand what you are asking of him.

Mr WELLINGTON: It is about resourcing by the Police Service so that they are able to respond to proposed changes to laws in Queensland that impact on our Police Service. So my question is: what resources are available so that you can participate in what we have been talking about all morning—about trying to make sure that everyone is safe in Queensland? So that we are not playing politics, I am not interested in the policy development. I understand that. This is about what resourcing. I flag that my follow-up question will be: are there criteria or conditions that are there which decide when you answer or when you respond to a proposed change or not? How do you distinguish between whether you are going to respond to a proposed change by a government or a non-government member? That has nothing to do with policy.

CHAIR: That is a fair question, because it does involve operational. There are a couple of questions in there.

Mr DEMPSEY: There is.

CHAIR: Are you happy to take those couple of questions or would you like them to be taken one by one?

Mr DEMPSEY: Just—

Mr WELLINGTON: Let the commissioner answer, with respect.

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy for the commissioner to talk on the operational side of it. I thank the member for Nicklin and the member for Yeerongpilly for supporting the previous bill.

Mr WELLINGTON: There is no relevance to the question, with respect.

Mr DEMPSEY: The content of the question—

CHAIR: Just a second, let the minister just proceed. If there is a question which is within your umbrella of activity, could you please make your answer succinct and then we will leave it to the commissioner to do those operational matters. That would greatly assist.

Mr DEMPSEY: Just very briefly, I thank the member for supporting the government's bill in this particular regard. If the member is able to refer to the SDS statements in relation to this question—

Mr WELLINGTON: I will repeat it, if you like. Page 5 of the Service Delivery Statements says—
The QPS mission is to stop crime, make the community safer and build relations with the community.

It then goes on and says—

Reducing and preventing the incidence of crime, public disorder and road trauma.

The next line is—

Delivering its services with fairness and integrity.

So my question is: where is the fairness, where is the integrity when on the one hand you were happy to have every police officer available to attend our committee to speak about a government proposed bill but you were not prepared to have any police officer attend or make a submission in relation to a similar proposal introduced by a non-government member?

CHAIR: Okay. That is where I am drawing the line. Resourcing, I have no problems with, but when it comes down to asking the commissioner about a policy of government in directing us to what resources, you cannot answer, but resourcing you can. I do not know whether I have made it unclear or clearer, but if you could confine your answer to the resourcing issue only.

Commissioner Stewart: I thank the chairman for his guidance and I thank the member for the question. I will do my utmost best to try to give you some indication and understanding of the resourcing issues. Can I first thank the member for the question on the basis that you raised. The philosophy and the focus of the Queensland Police Service since I became the commissioner is three things: to stop crime, to make the community safer and to build relationships every day. They are the three requirements that I make of the organisation, or the expectations that I make of the organisation. To do that, I ask our people to display courage, fairness and pride. They are the three characteristics that are needed. To do all of that, there has to be an underpinning commitment to a philosophy of continuous improvement. We do that every day, sir. We have people in the organisation, in specific areas and more globally, who can be considered experts in their fields. They are always looking at new ways of doing business in terms of process, new tactics—so procedures—and ultimately new equipment that we get from time to time.

Technology has been touched on a number of times today in the way that we go about doing our job. The reason I raise that is that, specifically in the area of reporting and auditing of child sex offenders, I think technology is going to play a major role into the future, not just the fact that we will use electronic recording through publicly available kiosks but also the implementation of things like facial recognition and potentially voice recognition into the future, which will complement the already available DNA and fingerprint technology. So we, particularly in our hierarchical structure, look to developing people with expertise in particular very, very complex crime types and, in the area of sexual exploitation of children in particular, we do have people who have become, as I said, both nationally and internationally renowned.

You mentioned George Marchesini. There are others. Cameron Harsley is another one. So it is not that we are not always looking for that. We do make people available to the lawful direction of the government and to the parliament. We would never do otherwise. I cannot answer whether or not the Queensland Police Service was invited to participate.

Mr WELLINGTON: They were.

Commissioner Stewart: And I take you at your word.

Mr WELLINGTON: As far as I know of.

Commissioner Stewart: The resources would have been available. I would have to look to the government for direction on the decision around whether we participated.

CHAIR: There is a demarcation.

Commissioner Stewart: Yes.

CHAIR: That is not operational and the question of resources, obviously, went on the government bill in any event. So I do not know that that really gets us any further.

Mr WELLINGTON: I would like to do a follow-up question, with respect.

CHAIR: Sure.

Mr WELLINGTON: It deals with the issues.

CHAIR: Okay.

Mr WELLINGTON: If I can continue on. It also says that the Queensland Police Service's mission will be achieved by—

Collaborating with all sectors of the community to deliver a problem solving approach to crime reduction.

You want to talk to who you choose but you do not want to talk to non-government members when there is a proposed change to—

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, that is an opinion and it should be struck out.

Mr WELLINGTON: Let me rephrase it. I will rephrase it.

CHAIR: Hold on. Let us just do it all slowly so that I can understand and absorb what is going on. I uphold the minister's objection, because it is.

Mr WELLINGTON: I will rephrase the question.

CHAIR: Indeed, thank you.

Mr WELLINGTON: Commissioner, can you please comment on what resources are available in the Police Service so that collaboration can happen with non-government members of parliament in relation to proposed changes to the law that want to improve the safety of Queenslanders? What resources are available to assist non-government members when there is a proposal to improve the laws for Queenslanders?

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, I know 115 is in relation to repetition. However, for the clarity of all members of the committee and everyone in this room, the commissioner has answered in relation to the operational side of supporting the legislative investigations. However, what needs to be also focused on before the good member goes into ducks and drakes and emotion is the fact that the member for Yeerongpilly was a member of the Queensland Police Service. In that time, he worked in the legislative area and particularly had a focus on this particular area. That is correct?

Mr JUDGE: Correct.

CHAIR: When he was a member of the government, he also had an interest in that and spoke to me quite a number of times about his reflections on changes, of what he would like to see in that particular area of legislation. The member for Yeerongpilly in his own words just many minutes ago said—if he would like to repeat it—words to the effect that he withdrew his legislation finding that a number of those matters had already been covered in the government legislation. Is that correct?

Mr JUDGE: No—

Mr WELLINGTON: That is not the case.

CHAIR: Just hold on a moment.

Mr DEMPSEY: Sorry, I was going on a statement.

CHAIR: I know, but you have to direct a question through me and I will decide whether, in fact, he is able to answer or not.

Mr DEMPSEY: Sorry, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: I think we have spent something in the order of 25 minutes on this and I really think it needs to come to a head. I understand what you are saying, Minister. I think you have made some points there. But I think it is a reasonable question to ask of the commissioner as to the resources available. I think that is an operational issue. I think you can answer that. But what you cannot comment on is matters of policy between you and your minister. This is the direction of resources to an operation matter.

I think the question ultimately came down to—it changed; it metaphorised—what would occur if an MP approached you for some assistance. I think that is really what the last question was asking. I do not think that is unreasonable. If an opposition member wanted assistance from the Commissioner for Police and his resources, is that available and how does that happen? How do you handle that? Is that a fair assessment?

Mr WELLINGTON: I will take that as the best we can go with, Mr Chairman. I know we want to move on. Commissioner, over to you.

Commissioner Stewart: I thank the member for the question and the chairperson for his guidance. The reality is that on a day-to-day basis our police officers speak to members of the community. I would imagine they would speak to members of the government or local members not necessarily on a daily basis but certainly quite regularly. There are always police available to talk to their local member. It has always been my understanding that if a member of parliament wishes to interact formally with the Queensland Police Service they do so usually through the minister's office. That has always been my understanding.

As an organisation we are always open to new ideas and to better ways of doing business. I suppose the real answer to your question is that there are 11½ thousand sworn officers and about 3½ thousand others in our organisation. Every one of those people is open to new ideas and the ability to speak with their local political representative.

CHAIR: I will perhaps encapsulate this so that we move on to the next issue. So what you are saying in terms of MPs is that you do have resources, they probably are available and the protocol says that they go through the minister. Does that answer your question?

Mr WELLINGTON: That is probably what happened. But we did not get a response. We got a response from the Premier on behalf of the government saying, 'We are not going to participate.' We got a response from the Police Service saying that they were not going to participate either.

CHAIR: I think we are passed that one. Effectively, I have ruled that some of those matters relate to policy and cannot be dealt with in estimates. There is a place that is called parliament and some of those issues can be raised there, but they cannot be raised here. Estimates is fairly confined.

Mr WELLINGTON: Mr Chairman, with respect, you know we can ask whatever question we want in the House and the minister can choose how to answer it and there can be no direction by the Speaker on the issue of relevance. They have total discretion to answer it however they choose. This is an opportunity we have to ask important questions about the operation of the Police Service. My question was about the operation of the Police Service. Why did the service choose not to make a submission to a committee which was investigating a proposed change to the law in Queensland which sought to improve the safety of children in Queensland? It is on the record. A report tabled by this committee in parliament identified that both the Premier chose not to respond on behalf of the government and the service chose not to respond. I even moved a dissenting report in relation to that matter.

CHAIR: We are going over old ground. I did rule that the reason the Police Commission and the Queensland Police Service did not respond to the member for Yeerongpilly's bill is a policy matter. I made my ruling on any question in relation to that. In terms of resources that the Police Commissioner has at his disposal to use on matters raised by the opposition and independent members of parliament, that is an operational matter and one that can be answered. If I could perhaps paraphrase, effectively what he is saying is that yes they are available but the protocol is that you go through the minister.

Mr WELLINGTON: Quite frankly, that happened and nothing was received by our committee. There was no submission. Our committee is required to make an investigation—

Mr DEMPSEY: If we are going to keep this rambling and ranting from the member for Nicklin—

Mr WELLINGTON: The records speak for themselves, Minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: Rambling and ranting.

CHAIR: Minister, thank you very much for your assistance, but I would like to move on—I really would.

Mr WELLINGTON: I am happy to move on too, Mr Chairman. Thank you very much for that member for Nicklin. I invite the member for Bulimba to ask a question.

Mr DILLAWAY: Page 8 of the SDS refers to Queensland targeting hoons with Australia's toughest vehicle impoundment laws. Could you please outline what effect these impoundments are having on the rate of hooning behaviour and how the legislation is making our roads across Queensland safer for all users?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. I thank him for supporting road safety initiatives within the Bulimba electorate as well as his community engagement in terms of the SES and fire service. It is certainly noted. I pass those comments back to the member and thank him for his support in the electorate of Bulimba.

During the last election campaign the Newman government committed to getting hoons off our roads as part of our Safer Streets Crime Action Plan. We took that commitment to the 2012 election because as the LNP travelled across Queensland we found that the state was covered in more burnt rubber than new roads, frankly. There were communities that recognise the sound of tyre squeals more than the sound of a quiet neighbourhood. Certainly that was the situation left to us by Labor when we came into government.

I am pleased to report that we are delivering on our election commitment following the introduction of Australia's toughest antihooning laws. Under the previous government offenders received either a fine or a slap on the wrist, not a proper deterrent. It took an officer approximately an entire shift to process a hooning offence under the previous government. That was for type 1 offences. Under this government it takes under 30 minutes. That has resulted in real red-tape reduction. It is helping officers and keeping Queenslanders safe.

The antihooning legislation commenced on 1 November 2013. These laws aim to put the brakes on hoons and other reckless offenders and are designed to improve road safety, to deter repeat offenders and to stop offenders by taking their cars away. That is the simple fact. These provisions meet part of the government commitment to ensure the safety of families through the Safer Streets Crime Action Plan and putting the brakes on hoons. Queensland will now see serial hoons' vehicles sold or crushed.

From the commencement of the legislation in November 2013 to 31 May 2014 there were 36,374 motor vehicle impoundment related offences reported state-wide. Some 2,908 were type 1 offences and 33,466 were type 2 offences. Of these, there have been 7,751 vehicles subject to impoundment or immobilisation, including those vehicles eligible for forfeiture. As at 31 May this year there were 798 vehicles eligible for forfeiture and type 1 and type 2 vehicle impoundment offences. Of these, regional vehicle impoundment officers advise that there have been 154 vehicles returned to the owner via an application for early release, 26 vehicles returned to a finance company via application for early release, 180 forfeited as the matter went to court and the offender was found guilty of all charges, 28 vehicles involving an offender who failed to appear in court and a warrant was issued when the vehicle is forfeited, 227 vehicles signed over to tow or storage companies in lieu of fees, 94 disposed of by way of auction, 11 vehicles sold for parts, one returned to the owner where the matter went to court and there was no finding of guilt and one vehicle forfeited and disposed of by way of a donation to an organisation for the purpose of training Indigenous participants in a driver education program. One vehicle impounded since the amendments were enacted on 1 November 2013 has been crushed. This vehicle has been signed over to the tow company in lieu of fees. However, due to the condition of the vehicle it was disposed of by way of crushing.

A significant public education campaign preceded the commencement of this legislation. That campaign continues to be successful. The figures I have outlined show what has occurred with vehicles that have been forfeited such as the money being allocated to driver education programs and keeping Queenslanders safe on our roads.

The 'Go too fast lose your car' public education campaign utilised both mainstream and social media to get the message out to the public. There was significant community engagement conducted by the Queensland Police Service with community groups, including motoring enthusiasts, prior to the commencement date. There continues to be ongoing dialogue between the QPS and the public regarding the new legislation.

Hooning in the suburbs is dangerous and places the lives of all road users at risk. In the past we have seen hoons lose control of their vehicles before ploughing into yards and houses. Hoons have injured innocent people—innocent Queenslanders. As a former police officer I have responded to traffic crashes as a result of dangerous driving. I wish that incident on no Queenslanders.

The new penalty sees people committing two serious type 1 hooning offences in five years having their vehicle forfeited to the state, sold or even crushed. The two-strike approach will apply to those committing type 1 offences which include—they are very serious offences—the dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, racing and speed trials on roads, wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke and evading police. These are serious offences.

Persons committing four or more type 2 offences within five years are eligible for vehicle forfeiture. These offences include unregistered and uninsured drivers, driving whilst unlicensed, driving while disqualified and restricted, high-level drink driving of 0.15 and above, failing to provide a specimen of breath or blood, driving under a 24-hour suspension, driving an illegally modified vehicle and high range speeding—40 kilometres above the limit.

These new penalties will see drivers' cars put off the road for 90 days after committing the first type 1 offence and confiscation and sale or crushed if they commit a second hooning offence within the five year period. The government has also increased impoundment periods for type 1 offences from 48 hours to seven days for the second offence and 90 days for the third offence. Police now have the tools to put the brakes on hoons.

Members of the public can also report hooning to their local police station via the hoon hotline. Since the hoon hotline was established, from December 2010 to 31 May 2014 over 25,580 calls from the public have been answered on this service.

Policelink has also launched the online hooning reporting system which has received 5,160 online hooning complaints from September 2012 to 31 May this year. These changes mean, wherever and whenever, any Queenslanders can report a hoon via phone or online and make our streets safer. The more information the Queensland Police Service has the better their response can be tailored. The police are only as good as the information they receive. Now they can receive information even quicker.

I want to thank the officers of the newly established road policing command who are working to ensure laws and policing delivers results and safer communities. The results to date certainly have been significant and send a clear message. As the Minister for Police, I would be happy if police did not have to issue one traffic offence or if they did not attend one fatal traffic incident. Other members of the committee and members of the Police Service and other emergency services have seen the effect of deaths on our roads. The tragedy affects not only the individual but their families, police officers, emergency services crews and the community in which that fatal or serious injury occurs. There is nothing worse than a police officer having to go to a person's house—as I have done on a number of occasions—and tell a family that their loved one will not be coming home.

What strikes at the heart of road safety—and one of the initiatives of this government—has been increasing the Fatal Four to the Fatal Five. When we look at the Fatal Five—whether it be speeding, seatbelts, inattention, drink driving, drug driving or fatigue—and we see the statistics year in and year out, they are all quite avoidable incidents. They are Queenslanders making the wrong decision, whether it be not wearing a seatbelt, speeding, driving for too long or drink driving. They are quite avoidable.

I will ask the commissioner, as well as the officer in charge of Road Policing Command, to make some comments. But I do implore all Queenslanders to work in partnership. Police are doing as much as they can. We have more police officers out there. We have the toughest legislation in the whole of Australia. But there are still people dying on our roads for reasons that are quite avoidable. I make this plea to members of the community and to all members here: obviously we make no apologies for enacting road safety initiatives, but it is incumbent on the community to play their part and keep their loved ones safe, because road safety is their future. It is as simple as that. I get very emotional in this particular area. Commissioner, you would like to make some comments?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister, and, through the chair, thank you for this question. It is a very, very important question. I will just make a couple of quick comments. Then, with the chair's indulgence, I will ask Assistant Commissioner Mike Keating, who is in charge of our new Road Policing Command, to make any comments that he wishes.

To the committee, I would just like to touch on the issue of automated number plate recognition. This is a technology that we have been using now since March 2012. The impact that this is having on road safety, I think, should not be underestimated. During the first 28 months of operation of the ANPR devices, we have monitored 13.7 million vehicle number plates in this state. This has resulted in just under half a million alerts to police of potential offences—so we actually have a strike of up to half a million alerts; 4,165 notices to appear in court on matters directing related to offences identified by the ANPR; 15,992 traffic infringement notices issued; but, most importantly, and the reason I raise this is, 580 vehicles have been impounded under hoon legislation because of that technology in that time. That is just an outstanding number. Again, the leveraging of our capability and our resources by using technology to make the roads safer in Queensland is shown.

I also mention our traffic camera program. Again, I hasten to reiterate something that the minister said—that is, that the reality is that breaking the road rules is something that can be avoided. It comes down to decisions by drivers. So no-one needs to be given a ticket at all if they obey the rules, and that makes it safer for everyone. Certainly, the camera detector defence infringement notices issued for the period 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014 include over 442,000 mobile speed camera

operation tickets, 122,000 notices from fixed speed cameras and 26,000 from red light cameras. The numbers vary slightly from that, and I am happy to give them if you wish. I just think again the leveraging of police effort in regard to road safety through technology is quite outstanding.

The Road Policing Command came into being as a result of the renewal projects we have undertaken since November 2012. They do a marvellous job on behalf of the community. I know that these things are variable and can change in the blink of eye, but can I just mention that currently as of this morning the road toll in Queensland was at 113 deaths on our road. Every death is a tragedy, but that is in fact almost 50 fatalities less than at the same time last year, which is an absolutely outstanding result. I thank the community for heeding the message, doing the right thing, and assisting and working in partnership with all of the agencies involved in road safety to make our roads safer. We have never, I believe, in the history of record keeping in this state for fatal road accidents had a drop like that.

The challenge obviously will be to determine the causal factors—why we have seen such a major drop. There have been other initiatives undertaken by your police department in that time, particularly in relation to the reduction in tolerances for our devices, our speed camera devices. That is a major one, and we do think that has had a major effect. But the fact that the fatality level has dropped so dramatically I think speaks loads for common sense and good driving in Queensland. With your indulgence, sir—

CHAIR: Before you go on, I do have something I would like you to comment on briefly because it is not that important. It is something that interests me. You mentioned ANPR and that 580 vehicles have been impounded. I am just looking at the causal connection between the ANPR and having vehicles impounded. How does that operate?

Commissioner Stewart: Certainly. As Mr Keating is in charge of Road Policing Command, he may be able to give you a more fulsome answer. I believe I know the answer, but if it is okay I will hand over to Mr Keating.

CHAIR: Thank you. Do you understand my question?

Assistant Commissioner Keating: Yes, I do, Mr Chair. Thank you for that.

CHAIR: If you could keep it brief, because I do not want to take up the committee's time. But it interests me to see what the causal connection is between ANPR and having 580 vehicles impounded.

Assistant Commissioner Keating: In relation to that specific question, the likely trigger for those impoundments would be the ANPR detection of an unregistered vehicle or an uninsured vehicle in combination. Therefore, the driver would be the subject of the provisions of impoundment in some category in what we classify as a type 2 offence.

CHAIR: I see.

Assistant Commissioner Keating: It is the detection of the offence.

CHAIR: I must admit I was blinkered by the fact that I thought it was skidding and people with video cameras who dobbed people in. You have clarified my thoughts about that.

Assistant Commissioner Keating: Under the type 2 offences, the trigger point allows for the detection or the immobilisation impoundment as a result of a person recidivist offending in relation to road safety issues for those category of offences.

CHAIR: You wish to make a brief statement and then I will hand you over to the member for Rockhampton.

Assistant Commissioner Keating: In relation to the comments already made by the commissioner and the minister, I fully support the tone of their comments and the accuracy of their comments. In relation to the road toll this year, certainly we have achieved across the state, with the great cooperation of the motorists and the excellent work done by road enthusiast groups, motoring groups and the great community we have, the figures that we see today, and we are working very hard to continue that for the balance of this year. When we look at those figures on five- and 10-year average trends, they are remarkable, and we hope certainly to continue that trend across the balance of the year.

For the Road Policing Command, working cooperatively across all of the regions of the state, we have adopted a philosophy since 1 July last year of really enforcing high visibility policing strategies. There are a number of operations that I can refer to. One is Operation Menzel, which is

focused on using random breath testing as an engagement strategy with the community to enhance road safety. We also have Operation Barrier, which is highly visible highway patrols and presence on our highways and arterial roads. The third one is Operation Plough, which is extending our visibility to the community through operations based on high visibility patrol using police motorcycles.

Each region, each district, also operates their own programs of road safety. In particular, the Central Region Road Safety Week is a very clear example of what can be achieved with the synthesis of local resources, district resources, regional resources, working cooperatively across the community but also with the resources of the Road Policing Command. So we are committed to our national operations such as Operation Crossroads, which is the operations for the major campaign periods at Christmas and Easter. We also run back-to-school operations which we are in at the moment. They are essentially about improving our visibility, getting to a situation where we will have the community expect to see the police on the highways and encourage safe driving behaviour as a result of that expectation.

One of the great achievements, I believe, that has contributed to the road toll this year is the arrangements and cooperative arrangements that we have been able to set up not only with agencies like Transport and Main Roads, who are a key partner of ours, but importantly with agencies such as the RACQ, who are the largest representative community group in the state. We are working very closely with the Queensland Trucking Association. We have a good relationship with the bicycle sector, both Bicycle Queensland and Queensland Cycling. We also have a very effective program up and running in relation to rail safety, with Rail Safety Week coming up in August. So the great credit really goes to the community for the contribution they have made to road safety.

CHAIR: Thank you. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Minister, despite some of the quite positive crime statistics—

CHAIR: Do you want to ask any questions of Mr Keating?

Mr BYRNE: No. My question is to the minister. Despite some of the obvious positive statistics that have been presented recently and have been quoted by the various ministers, there are some crime statistics that give me considerable concern. The first is the homicide rate. I am sure the minister would be aware of the homicide rate for 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14, as represented in the budget papers. While I know that the Police Service has no role other than to investigate those, I know you are backed up by a highly professional, well read and aware organisation. I am concerned about the dramatic increase in that most heinous of crimes and I am wondering if the service has an explanation.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. Just before I turn to the commissioner for the operational side, I want to alleviate some of the concerns of the member for Rockhampton. I acknowledge his positive comments for the great work that the police are doing in this state. In the area of homicide, whether it be from some of the great work that the police have done most recently, from the Baden-Clays to the Daniel Morcombes, to other significant and major crime operations, we may see a statistic that appears in one particular part of the year when it is solved but it may have emanated from previous years when it was committed. What we see is obviously the culmination of a number of offences that may have been solved in a particular year.

Mr BYRNE: You are telling me that the data presented in the budget papers last financial year does not represent a doubling in the murder rate in Queensland. Is that what you are telling me?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy to go to the commissioner for the operational side. I am just saying that, as with any figures and the fluency of those figures—and you only have to turn to the member for Yeerongpilly right next to you who understands—

Mr BYRNE: These are published budget numbers. They are not just on a website.

Mr DEMPSEY: That is correct. From the fluency in those figures, you will see that for the estimates process, whether it be from hospital details and statistical data that are collected from up to December last year to other areas such as the report of government services, which ends in March this year, we have to make sure we avail ourselves to provide everything possible in relation to those figures for the SDS. On the homicide figures in particular, Commissioner, would you like to make a comment in relation to that?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister. Thank you for that question, member for Rockhampton. If I could just put something into context before I start, and that is the SDS figures relate to the first three-quarters of the statistical year. The figures that I have in front of me relate to 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014, so it is almost the entire statistical year. The SDS figures are based on an

estimate only. The figures that I have in front of me suggest that a decrease was reported in the rate of homicide offences, being 23 per cent for this period as opposed to the period reported in the SDS, which equates to 10 offences in terms of raw numbers.

There are many reasons for this. We may have had an ongoing investigation for many, many months that ultimately comes to fruition at a particular point in time and that has an impact on the results that we get, particularly in a category like homicide. The Morcombe case is a classic example of one where we had an offence way, way back and we get an outcome much, much later. So there can be quite stark variances, particularly when you are talking about low numbers. Thankfully in this state homicide is one of those categories.

Mr BYRNE: I am rather perplexed, Commissioner. I am none the wiser as to how the estimate represented in the budget papers can be doubling the estimates from previous budget papers essentially in the rate per hundred thousand. I am none the wiser. Has the murder rate gone up or down in real numbers? I am still none the wiser. You said there was a reduction over the reporting period. If that is the case, why are we estimating a doubling in the budget estimates papers? This does not seem to line up to me. If in the reporting period you said there was a 23 per cent reduction, how does that end up being four in a hundred thousand represented in the budget papers?

Commissioner Stewart: I am not personally aware of all of the criteria used in the development of the crime stats for the SDS. I can certainly find that out for you and give you an understanding of that.

Mr BYRNE: I can only go on what the government gives me in the budget papers, and it says to me that there is a doubling in the murder rate. I ask a question and now I find out it does not reflect anything.

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, with respect, that is at a point in time and it provides an estimate of where the trend line is going. What I am able to do for you today is give you accurate figures for that period.

Mr BYRNE: I need accurate figures for what happened in 2011-12, actual murders; 2012-13, actual murders; and 2013-14, actual murders.

Commissioner Stewart: All I have in front of me are the figures that tell me there were 10 fewer offences for the period 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014 compared with exactly the same dates the year previous, so for that same period in 2012-13.

Mr BYRNE: So someone gave information to the minister or put into estimates that there is a doubling.

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, I am sure that in relation to all of the crime stats that were provided at that time they met the criteria required to be placed in the SDS, and it is an estimate. These are the actual figures that accrue from that. That occurs for a whole range of reasons, and one is that there may be a lag in offences being committed or reported on in the two periods. So it is possible there is a variance.

CHAIR: I want to follow on from what the member for Rockhampton raised. One thing that we found in our inquiry process is the data seems to be all over the place, and I think you have made comment on that. I am interested in this: could it be the case that one is convictions and the other one is committed? In other words, it might be clear that one is a murder for a purpose and for a different purpose you want to record convictions of murder. Is it really just a case of mismatching of data?

Commissioner Stewart: No, Sir. There are very specific rules about identifying reported crime. It can change if an initial case that was reported as perhaps an unlawful killing is then found to be a murder at the end of the day. That is the creation of a second report in relation to the murder. That is possible, but in real terms we are talking about reported offences and this is no different from last year, the year before and the year before that in terms of how these are reported. We follow very specific rules about what we provide to the government for the SDS.

Mr BYRNE: I do not doubt that. All I am saying is that the information that is available to me is essentially in the SDS. That is what we are investigating here—the SDS. That is the material we assume is credible, grounded, researched and thorough. I am not contesting that.

Mr DEMPSEY: It is the same information that has been provided to other governments over many years. There is an explanation in the SDS of how those figures are gathered and the commissioner will speak about that shortly. Obviously this is a matter that has gone on from Labor governments to LNP governments to have that statistical data.

CHAIR: Minister, there are two issues that seem to be coming up. One is the actuals for 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14. That can be taken on notice I would imagine if that is the information required. The second thing is criteria for deciding what is in the SDS; is that really what the essence of it is?

Mr BYRNE: I need to educate myself obviously.

CHAIR: Well let us put it on the table. Unless there is anybody here not able to answer that question, can we take it as a question on notice in respect of the accuracy of the data—

Mr DEMPSEY: There is criteria and the criteria is in the actual capitals in the SDS, and it says the 2013-14 estimates actual figure is based on the extrapolation of July 2013 to March 2014 data, as is very similar to the ROGS report which most of the SDS has been gathered on for many years previously. Performance is reported against a range rather than a single figure. The target range for 2014-15 takes into account recent results and any known factors that are likely to have an impact on the forthcoming 12 months. The range is standardised so that the upper end of the range is consistently 25 per cent higher than the lower range and has been for all previous estimates processes. The individual circumstances, which is what the member for Rockhampton wants, are outside of the SDS and what is being regularly provided year in and year out in previous estimates. If he wants certain individual figures within certain time frames, I am more than happy to provide those.

Mr BYRNE: The other issue is that the commissioner has just given us actuals or the numbers—

CHAIR: With respect, Minister, the actuals in respect of this estimates period is relevant if you compare with the SDS, and it is a matter of process when you want to compare one estimates year with another. I think that is quite permissible. I am just wondering whether we take it as a question on notice for accuracy of 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Mr BYRNE: Can I add that number includes attempted murders, too, in the SDS, doesn't it?

CHAIR: And conspiracy I suspect.

Mr DEMPSEY: I am more than happy to provide them.

Mr BYRNE: Murders and attempted murders; isn't that in the same category?

CHAIR: It is in the SDS. The member for Bulimba has pointed out to me that towards the end there is a definition as to what it means. If we have not got the information here, the question is do you want to take it on notice?

Mr BYRNE: I would like that.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy to take that on notice?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy to take it on notice.

CHAIR: Let us move on. Do you have a question?

Mr BYRNE: I will move on to the recent murders that have occurred in the CBD of foreign students that have been highly controversial. What additional measures have been put in place by the Queensland Police Service in response to the recent high-profile murders of two students in the CBD of Brisbane?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. In a short period of time we have had not just two but four tragic events occur in relation to international visitors to Queensland. From the ministerial side when we looked at each case—and I will get the operational side from the commissioner—I remember doing a large awareness program in the Sunnybank area in relation to the Asian community and personal safety. That was broadcast through the one cinema complex in that area.

The loss of life is a tragedy. Whether they be from certain contractual arrangements that were made to domestic violence incidents, when we look at them separately we understand that while they are tragedies I can certainly comfort those international students and members of the international community that the state government is doing everything it can to protect their citizens while they are here in Queensland, to ensure they have a very good stay while they are here in Queensland but also to ensure that they can have peace of mind when they send a young one here from overseas. With regard to these particular instances in the Brisbane area, the Brisbane City Council, the state government and the federal government are working to make sure that Brisbane is an even safer city in the future. It is a safe city already. We will continue to make it safer.

From the operational side, I will have the commissioner comment in relation to things that we have done on an ongoing operation, with areas covered by CCTV to community engagement and awareness. Again, I had the privilege with other members of the parliament of walking with members of the community and taking part in the candlelight vigil for one international visitor who tragically had their life taken. That is the other side of everything: police and the community working together. We have to be ever vigilant, but Brisbane and Queensland are the safest places to come to study and to work. We are going to make it an even safer place in the future. Commissioner, can you comment on the operational ones we have at task?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister. I thank the member for the opportunity to provide some context around these very tragic events. Firstly, let me say that our hearts go out to all of the families involved. This was particularly difficult bearing in mind that these families were from overseas. That provided some extra work for us in making sure that our normal strategies of support for those families were undertaken.

The reality is that every one of those events—and there were four of them involving overseas students—have been solved. The perpetrator has been caught in relation to each of those. We put significant resources into them, as you would expect us to do. I am very grateful for the good work that the officers did who followed up. We practise assurance policing in this state. Community policing is perhaps the overarching philosophy and model. That means that we engage with the community. The community is made up of a whole range of diverse groups, both ethnically and culturally different. We are very much aware of that and we have programs in place to deal with that.

As soon as each of these events took place, our engagement through our cross-cultural liaison officers was immediate in terms of reaching out to cultural communities here in Queensland, talking to the relevant consular corps or embassy in Canberra. We have very good relationships with all of those parties, and we do a lot of work in maintaining the relationships between us and the very diverse cultural groups across the state.

We reached out to our overseas counterparts once we identified that we had people from overseas involved, and we worked very hard in terms of building bridges between us and the families concerned because in Queensland we would assign a family liaison officer who would deal face to face with the family. In this case much of the interaction was by telephone or videolink to the families overseas. I personally spoke to at least one of the families overseas, giving them an update and the condolences of our organisation to try to reassure them that we would do everything to bring the offender to justice, and we have been able to do that.

I would also point out a very, very important point and that is in each of these four cases, these most recent cases, there is no evidence of any racially or culturally motivated violence. These were random attacks and that is a very sad fact of life. It could have been any member of the community in Queensland who was in that situation as a result of the violence carried out on them. We do know that there was no hint that the person was targeted as a member of some other culture.

CHAIR: So it was opportunistic?

Commissioner Stewart: It was opportunistic.

CHAIR: How many of those—

Commissioner Stewart: Sorry, I will not say opportunistic and I will not go into that because these matters are still before the court, but what I will say is that we know from the evidence that there is no racial or cultural motivation to the offence.

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, I have a number of answers. One is in relation to question on notice No. 3 in relation to what I previously stated in relation to the Sunnybank communications strategy and messaging to international visitors and one is a previous question on notice from Ms D'Ath in relation to this particular issue, and the response to that is very similar. Obviously we have a strong plan for a brighter future, but we are delivering on our commitment as well by having an extra 1,100 new additional police officers on the beat. Between 1 April 2012 to May this year, this government increased the total number of officers across the police division of Brisbane city, Fortitude Valley, South Bank and West End by 42 officers. A dedicated city police operational team, known as Operation Brisbane, has been established. This team, which includes 11 bike squad officers, provides a safe and secure environment for people who reside, work and travel on public transport or visit the entertainment precincts in the CBD, South Bank and Kangaroo Point areas. They maintain a high level policing profile in key locations including educational institutions, transport hubs such as rail, bus and taxis, park and recreational areas and entertainment precincts; increase interaction between

police officers and members of the community; provide personal safety and security advice to the public; and increased levels of customer focus at points of contact with members of the public, including front counters and police beats. Police are continuing to engage with TransLink and Queensland Rail in conducting both uniformed and plain-clothes operations on public transport so that both compliance and public safety issues are addressed. A dedicated police officer is based in the CitySafe CCTV office at peak times, enabling the efficient and rapid identification of public safety issues in the Brisbane city and Fortitude Valley areas. This is coupled with improved access for police to enhanced technology with the introduction of a number of, as I have previously stated, mini iPads, enabling remote access to CCTV imaging in city areas like never before. So we have more eyes on what is happening in the community with that partnership with the Brisbane City Council than ever before.

The Police Service is also continuing to engage the Brisbane City Council and other stakeholders with a rolling program of crime prevention through environmental design, audits and implementation of associated strategies in public spaces. The program assesses safety and security risks and addresses issues such as lighting, which is a particular issue in the CBD area, CCTV and aspects of space. In the past 18 months reviews have been conducted in the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens, Roma Street Parklands, Bedford Park in Fortitude Valley, the Go Between Bridge and river walkways between Captain Burke Park, Thornton Street and the Kangaroo Point cliffs. The QPS has pursued community engagement opportunities by conducting over 40 presentations to student groups in north Brisbane districts since October 2013; chairing the inaugural meeting on 10 April 2014 of the Safe City Action Group, which involves all key stakeholders from government and non-government service providers; conducting the Sunnybank community safety seminar on 27 March this year in partnership with the Brisbane City Council; partnering with the Griffith University community liaison group, which has included the implementation of a buddy scheme involving mentors partnering with newly arrived international visitors, and I complement them on that initiative; delivery of targeted personal safety program sessions to 365 community members since 28 March 2014 to an audience involving international students, Southbank TAFE students and workers and residents within the Kurilpa Park precinct, with a further 1,100 community members having been reached by this program in non-targeted sessions; and the development of a community flyer in Chinese languages and English containing information to address street robberies in international student communities.

Crime prevention officers and police liaison officers have been deployed to major transport precincts and university campuses to deliver their personal safety brochures and other information to both domestic and international students. Additionally, the QPS has partnered with the Brisbane City Council again in the development of the Sunnybank project that I mentioned before to address offences against international students, particularly in the Sunnybank area, and resources such as the Safer Living booklet, which has been developed to address the safety issues with material translated in Chinese and to be translated into Korean as well. Two short advertisements on personal safety and road safety have been developed for release at the Sunnybank cinemas, which I recently attended. This government is certainly dedicated to protecting our community and delivering on its commitment to make Queensland the safest place to live and raise a family. The safety and peace of mind of our international visitors is of foremost importance for this government. We will continue to do whatever we can both in a proactive and reactive way to ensure their safety because international visitors are very important to a modern Queensland. We certainly appreciate their communities and their loved ones sending a son or daughter to Brisbane and Queensland. We have to maintain that safety and we certainly will, but I reiterate that Brisbane and Queensland are safe places for students to come and expand their learning opportunities.

CHAIR: Thank you. I call the member for Yeerongpilly.

Mr JUDGE: Thank you, Chair, for allowing me to participate. My question is a little bit long winded, but I will get to the point. The SDS talks about the enforcement of more stringent reporting conditions for offenders under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act. The purpose of the act is to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of reoffending. My concern relates to reducing the likelihood that offenders will reoffend. On that point, I acknowledge the Newman government's pledge to make Queensland the safest place to raise a child. Queensland child protection offender reporting effectively commenced on 1 January 2005 and since then we are up to about 4,500 offenders or thereabouts on the child protection offender reporting register. In response to question 504 on 5 June 2014, it was reported that the risk of reoffending by reportable offenders was between 14 per cent and 16 per cent at five years after release and that reduces down to four per cent to six per cent at 10 years after release. Bearing that

in mind with the reduction of monitoring in most cases down to five years, was that move made by the Queensland Police Service through the Newman government effectively because the number of reportable offenders on the register is in fact exceeding the capacity of the police to monitor reportable offenders in the community? The question is to the minister of course, but the statistics would indicate that if you are monitoring for 10 years you are going to reduce the risk of reoffending down to four per cent to six per cent as opposed to having it at 14 per cent to 16 per cent at five years.

CHAIR: So have you just answered your own question or are you—

Mr JUDGE: No, I have not. The question quite—

CHAIR: If you could just put the question to him.

Mr JUDGE: The question quite frankly is: at five years there is a risk of reoffending at 14 per cent to 16 per cent. If you wait another five years after that at 10 years, it is four per cent to six per cent. Why was there a reduction in the reporting periods down to five years in most cases, bearing in mind that dramatic statistical reduction in the risk of reoffending?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am not wanting to distract from the member's attendance here, but as all members of the estimates process here know we have already answered that particular question. I know the member was not here at the time and there are probably many other reasons why he could not have been—from family to health to whatever—and I do not want to make any presumptions in that regard at all because we have certain rulings of the parliament. But that question was certainly answered—

CHAIR: Minister, I appreciate that. But if you would not mind, he has asked it—

Mr DEMPSEY: No, I am happy to—

Mr WELLINGTON: If I can just make comment, this government chose to hold all of these hearings on two days. This is not about the member's—

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, that is a comment and not a question.

CHAIR: Hold on. I do not want to open the gates up, but in fact I think we have sort of gone there. We could argue a lot of reasons as to why it is better than before, but—

Mr WELLINGTON: He has tried to cast aspersions on why the member for Yeerongpilly was not here.

Mr DEMPSEY: No, we were not.

CHAIR: I do not think he did.

Mr DEMPSEY: No way in the world.

CHAIR: I did not take that as being the case, because I know he has to be in other places as well.

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes, exactly right.

CHAIR: Minister, if I could just ask you to answer the question and that way we can move on and have a great lunch.

Mr DEMPSEY: In finishing what I was saying, we had previously answered a number of those concerns before.

CHAIR: I understand.

Mr DEMPSEY: I hope the member makes himself available to what was said before, because I am sure that would answer what he has asked. However, for the sake of the member for Yeerongpilly and his interest in this particular area, I am more than happy for the commissioner to answer the operational side of it. As we mentioned in the previous answer, we actually have a greater deal of reporting than ever before. It still is at the discretion of the commissioner to increase that. It is supported by the academic research as supplied in the previous answer, but I am happy for the commissioner to answer.

CHAIR: There might be a subtlety between the two answers, so for the purposes of clarity and for fullness, Commissioner, if you could perhaps answer. Do you need the question restated?

Commissioner Stewart: No, but if I could just clarify with the member.

CHAIR: Just excuse me; just give me a little bit of indulgence. Member for Yeerongpilly.

Mr JUDGE: I will clarify this a little bit more. The reporting period was effectively reduced in most cases down to five years. That just went through parliament as a government bill. At that point in time the risk factor for reoffending post release is between 14 per cent and 16 per cent. If you wait another five years to 10 years, the risk factor for reoffending post release is in fact four per cent to six per cent based on research. My question effectively is: is the reduction in reporting time purely because the Police Service lacks the resources to monitor the dramatically increasing number of reportable offenders going on to the child protection offender register each and every year?

CHAIR: I understand the question. Do you understand it?

Commissioner Stewart: Absolutely I do.

CHAIR: Then over to you, Commissioner.

Commissioner Stewart: I thank the chair for his clarification, I thank the minister for his comments and I also thank the member of the committee for raising what I think—and I said this previously—is probably one of the most important issues facing all of us in this community, and that is the protection of the most vulnerable class of our community, and that is our young people. So I thank you for the question and I know that you are very passionate about this and I respect that passion. The answer to your question is no. Thank you.

Mr JUDGE: Following on from that, what is the rationale for reducing the reporting time?

Commissioner Stewart: With respect, that is the answer I gave before. I am happy to go through the brief, but what it will do is simply reiterate all of the research that you have already espoused—that is, that we now have a risk based approach whereas previously we had an approach where one size fitted all. If I can give you an indication of what I am talking about, previously an offender reporting under the old system for eight years would generally report to police eight times annually after making his or her initial report. That same offender reporting for five years as a result of the new arrangements means that that person will have to report a minimum of 20 times during the reporting period after that initial report. So what we are saying is, yes, we have increased the reporting regime for all of these people and the government by changing the legislation has given my position—the commissioner's position—the ability based on a risk assessment to vary that meaning in that if I have any concern at all about the potential for the person to reoffend then obviously on advice I could vary it up so that the person would have to report more often.

The other critical issue—and I raised this previously in answer to Mr Byrne's question—is that technology is now playing a major impact and we are able to leverage that technology to minimise the impact on the workload of police officers. With the vast increase in the number of reporting times for the persons at the lowest end of the risk scale, we are able to use technology so they could possibly report at a publicly available kiosk. We are also looking at using facial recognition and other types of technology based recognition arrangements to ensure that it is the person who is reporting. They might have to do that a couple of times a year and then have a face-to-face at the other end of the scale. We have our police auditing these people regularly in a face-to-face arrangement. I hope that that meets your needs.

Mr JUDGE: If I can clarify, the concern I have is that it is premised on reporting being the panacea to someone not re-offending whereas, in fact—

CHAIR: You have mentioned this before with the likelihood of deterrence, if it is higher—is that what you are saying?

Mr JUDGE: That was only a previous bill about random reporting, and that has not been withdrawn from the parliament—

CHAIR: Sorry, I interfered with your question. Just restate it.

Mr JUDGE: That bill has not been withdrawn, but it has been addressed through a government bill. You are premising reducing the risk of reoffending through reporting conditions alone. There is research that would indicate that more sophisticated approaches are required to ensure that offenders do not reoffend. It would seem to me as though there is little work being done by the police around that area. In fact, in all due respect, the police do not hold the expertise to assess an offender's likelihood of re-offending. That might be something that needs to be done by a psychologist or a psychiatrist. It seems to be a fact that is ignored over and over again. If we are going to reduce the reporting periods, how are we ensuring the reoffending rates are going to be handled properly and that more children are not going to be offended again in our community? How is that being managed through the police?

CHAIR: Did you understand the question? I think it was about resourcing.

Mr JUDGE: It was about relying on police—

CHAIR: Only—

Mr JUDGE:—only to deal with this issue. In fact, it is quite more complicated than that I would suggest.

CHAIR: I understand, but you have the question. Are you able to answer it, or are there caveats to how you can answer it?

Commissioner Stewart: I am happy to try to answer the member's question if that is okay. Thank you for that follow-up question. We are not the experts in the mental condition of child sex offenders. That is not our expertise and we do not purport to do that. What we purport to do is to work with professionals in a whole range of fields to find the best way to manage these people once they are released from prison. Our part of the bargain is to do the checking mechanisms within the lawful framework that has been provided to us by the legislation by the Queensland government. We are always looking for better ways to protect children, but the Queensland Police Service cannot be the sole arbiter or function that is responsible for that. There is a whole range of other players or stakeholders in this field including—I probably do not need to go into that. We will do our bit. We take this very, very seriously. We will do everything we can within our powers, within our lawful discretion, to make sure that these people are deterred from reoffending through the reporting process.

Mr JUDGE: Minister, that is my exact point, that the police cannot deal with this alone. These are the reports—and the reporter wrote to you back in 2012—stating that it requires a more holistic look. The Newman government has now had two years to do that and has done nothing about it—

Mr DEMPSEY: That is a statement, Mr Chair.

Mr JUDGE:—other than decreasing reporting periods and increasing the number of reports being made each year. It goes against the Newman government's claim of making Queensland the safest place for children to live.

CHAIR: That was a statement and the report is not with us.

Mr JUDGE: It is not funny.

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chairman, the question—

CHAIR: Let's just cool it down a bit because we are here to ask questions and the commissioner will do the best he can. I need to find out from you is there a question that you would like to ask him, or is it rhetorical? I know you wrote a report, but that is not helping us today. Is there a further question embedded in that statement?

Mr JUDGE: What is the government doing to make Queensland the safest place—

CHAIR: He has already answered.

Mr JUDGE:—for children to live?

CHAIR: He has already answered that so we will move on.

Mr JUDGE: Nothing? Okay.

CHAIR: It is not helpful to make comments. Let's move on. We have to keep this pace going. I call the member for Ipswich West.

Mr CHOAT: Unashamedly, I will make reference to my own community because I am certainly very interested in pursuing their interests and they do reflect the wider Queensland in any case.

CHAIR: It might be helpful if you ask a question.

Mr CHOAT: With reference to page 2 of the SDS, what are the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Police Service doing to enhance community safety in the region, that is Ipswich and the Somerset?

Mr DEMPSEY: Sorry, there was interference there in the back. Can you repeat the question, please?

Mr CHOAT: What are the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Police Service doing to enhance community safety specifically in the Ipswich-Somerset region?

CHAIR: Good question, member for Ipswich West.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is an important question. I would like to thank him and his constituents for their concerns for the safety of the people of Ipswich West and for working with the Newman government to ensure the safety of all members of the community. It is disappointing that we hear from other members here today who do not recognise the great work that the police, fire and emergency services workers are doing in relation to making sure they have the correct technology as well as the resources—the extra 1,100 police officers we have made a commitment to providing. We have also made changes to the legislation regarding the reporting mechanisms to protect children throughout this great state—the toughest reporting conditions of any state or territory in Australia. In addition, we have ensured that those reporting conditions are supported by mechanisms which allow the retrieval of DNA and access to offenders' computers as well as more mobile and technical efficiencies to increase that reporting mechanism. It is great to see the member championing the safety of his community, not just from a police perspective but also in relation to the areas of fire and emergency services. I have been lucky enough a number of times to come to the electorate and see the great work that you are doing on the ground.

The Queensland government certainly has a strong plan for safer communities in Ipswich. Whether it be safe streets in Booval or safe homes in Brassall, we are committed to revitalising those front-line services right across the whole of Ipswich. We started that process in 2012 by renewing the focus of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to front-line services delivery. That process is delivering results for Ipswich families. I am proud to be able to report that not only is the rate of offences decreasing but also those that are committed are being solved faster than ever before. The total number of personal safety offences solved increased by 14 per cent from 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014. There has been a nine per cent decrease in total property security offences in the Ipswich Police District when comparing the period 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014 with the same period last year. Once again, not only is the rate of offences decreasing, but those that are committed are being solved faster than ever before. The total number of property security offences cleared has increased 20 per cent over the same period. If we look further into the detail of these decreases during this time, there has been a 16 per cent decrease in the rate of break and enter offences, a 15 per cent decrease in the rate of other property offences and a 16 per cent decrease in the rate of unlawful use of motor vehicles.

Police divisions in Ipswich have benefited from an increase of 86 police officers from 1 April 2012 to 30 June 2014. That is because we are committed to revitalising front-line services and undertaking the largest recruitment drive in Queensland Police Service history. If we look locally, we can see those suburbs benefiting from more feet on the beat. The Goodna division increased by 19 officers, Ipswich by 31 officers and Springfield by 18 officers. The actual police numbers within the police area was 234 in April 2013, and there are now more than 320 officers. That is an increase of over 36 per cent.

In addition to officers stationed within police divisions in the Ipswich area, the area has access to specialist police services. Police within the Ipswich district are committed to working in partnership with local government and non-government agencies to enhance the security, safety and wellbeing of members of the Ipswich community. The Ipswich Police District has implemented a number of proactive policing strategies which involve highly visible patrols. For example, in February this year the Ipswich Police District commenced the operation of a local proactive enforcement team which is focused on high visibility patrols and enforcement within the Ipswich Police District area. This includes a focus on peak times for commuters and business employees, road safety within school zones and after hours patrols of surrounding parkland, car parks and identified trouble spots. This means safer streets, businesses and commuters because we have officers out in the community.

In May this year the Ipswich Police District also implemented a permanent CBD beat crew between nine and five each weekday consisting of six officers. The focus of the CBD crew is to provide a highly visible presence in the Ipswich CBD during the main business hours. The Ipswich Police District has also implemented a permanent night crew consisting of five officers working between 9 pm and 5 am each Friday and Saturday and a 3 pm to 11 pm shift on Sunday. These crews ensure that there is a quick response to any request for assistance from local businesses or residents.

Community safety in Ipswich is greatly enhanced through the strong partnership between the Ipswich police and the Ipswich City Council. This has been assisted by the Safe City CCTV network, the network of cameras which are consistently used by police and local officers to detect and prevent crime in public spaces. On 1 July 2014 a greater police presence with support from the Specialist Services Branch mounted unit commenced with two mounted police patrols of the Ipswich CBD and

surrounding suburbs. Through partnership with the Ipswich City Council, a three-person, all-terrain, or Viking type vehicle, was purchased for the Springfield division to provide greater access of the diverse parklands and bush reserves around the Springfield division. Joint patrols with council park rangers have provided a greater policing presence in parklands and natural reserves. This complements the Rhino, which is a two-person off-road vehicle, purchased for patrols through the CBD and Riverlink Shopping Centre. The QPS Specialist Services Branch recently opened a new Railway Squad police office at Ipswich Central Railway Station, enhancing safety for train commuters from Rosewood to Wacol. I was happy to be there on the day with the local members and the Minister for Transport. It was a great announcement.

The Ipswich District Crime Prevention Unit conducts regular crime alerts in identified crime hot spots consisting of letters which are sent to residents with advice on personal safety and security. 'Lock it or lose it' patrols continue in each of the local railway car parks with notices left on both secured and unsecured vehicles. Ipswich District Crime Prevention Unit currently has 14 active volunteers in policing who assist in various crime prevention strategies such as shopping centre statistics displays, local shows, letter drops and other types of community engagement providing information on personal safety and property security. All of these strategies are regularly reviewed and modified, if required, to enhance the security, safety and wellbeing of members of the Ipswich community. This policing effort is making Ipswich an even safer place to live, work and raise a family.

You also asked questions in relation to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. They are also actively working to enhance community safety in Ipswich. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services implements a scheduled building inspection program that identifies and prioritises at-risk buildings in the area, especially in the Gatton area. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services also works with owners and occupiers of high-rise office and residential buildings to ensure fire compliance is achieved along with assisting with practice evacuations and high-angle rescue exercises. Operational staff organise promotions, information sessions and pamphlet drops about preparing for wildfire or even flood seasons.

A pre-season volunteer briefing was held on Saturday, 21 June at Ripley involving 300 volunteers from across the Ipswich area in joint preparation for the storm and fire season ahead. The Ipswich State Emergency Service unit consists of four groups: Marburg, Rosewood, Goodna and Ipswich. I have lived in those four areas and they are great communities. Ipswich has five operational flood boats supplied by the government. Should any disaster event exceed the capabilities of the Ipswich SES, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services—

CHAIR: Minister, I might interrupt for one moment. Do you have very much more in answering this question? It is one o'clock.

Mr CHOAT: There is always lots to say about Ipswich West.

Mr DEMPSEY: Ipswich is such a great spot. I have fond memories of Ipswich, and I want to make sure it is contained and safe in the future. After lunch, if it is possible to avail the two commissioners to make comment in relation to what they are doing on the ground—

CHAIR: You can finish off the question and we will go to that. Then we will go to the member for Broadwater. The committee will now break for lunch. The hearing will resume at 2 pm with the continued consideration of the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units within the portfolio of the Minister for Police and Community Safety.

Proceedings suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm



CHAIR: The estimates hearing of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee is now resumed. We will continue with the consideration of the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units within the portfolio of the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. The committee again welcomes the attendance of the member for Yeerongpilly, Mr Carl Judge, who has joined us again. Rather than call a member, I understand, Minister, you are finishing off a question and then you are passing the operational response to Commissioner Johnson?

Mr DEMPSEY: Thank you, Mr Chairman and committee members. Just to finish off the previous bit, I want to thank all the emergency service workers for what they do. In particular, I thank our Rural Fire Service workers for the job that they do. They are out there fighting bushfires and other local rural fires. They do a magnificent job on the ground. We have to be constantly reminded that those officers are volunteers. At times they leave their homes and their families to help the community. They might leave a plate at the table during meal time. They might leave loved ones to look after themselves at home while they go out and help others in the community. I pay particular

tribute to them. I know, Mr Chairman, as the member for Ipswich, the support that you give to local SES units and hardworking fire officers is well noted by members of the community, as is the support from the member for Ipswich West. I would ask the Commissioner for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to make a comment in relation to the operational side.

Commissioner Johnson: Thank you very much, Minister. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on community safety activities within the broader Ipswich area. Every day our firefighters, including our paid staff, part-time paid and volunteers, are undertaking activities in some shape or form. Paid firefighters conduct building inspections, as the minister talked about earlier. That is mitigation, if you like, to prevent tragedies from happening through an enforcement of the building fire safety regulations. We do that on every shift. There are a number of buildings in the Ipswich CBD of reasonable rise and we make sure we keep a very close eye on those, as well as the ongoing development in the broader area.

As well, local fire management groups are active. Currently, we are in the middle of an operational period we call Operation Cool Burn, which is designed to help mitigate the state's risk from bushfire. The key component of that role, really, is to engage all the landholder agencies, engage the volunteers and engage a wide range of stakeholders to make sure that they proactively look at the risk that is in their area or the hazard that exists from bushfire, and set out in a coordinated way planning to undertake hazard mitigation activities. There has been quite a bit in the Ipswich area done by the firefighters there. Recently, a preseason meeting was held in June at Ripley at the Cityhope Church, which is right next to the new Ripley fire and rescue station and complex. Cityhope Church is very supportive of emergency services and policing in the Ipswich area and we appreciate their support. Over 300 volunteers from across the Rural Fire Service and the State Emergency Service, plus paid staff members, attended that session. It was to make sure that everybody was across the operational priorities for the upcoming fire season and then that flows on into the storm and what we call the severe weather season. That has been very proactive in the Ipswich area.

As well, as you know in the new portfolio arrangements Queensland Fire and Emergency Services now I think would be best described as an umbrella organisation that encompasses our fire and rescue firefighters, emergency management specialists, the Rural Fire Service and the State Emergency Service, as well as support to other volunteer associations such as the coast guard and volunteer marine rescue. It is a very comprehensive service or department now in its whole structure. As such, we have responsibility across a large number of hazards. For the first time, personally as the commissioner I have now taken over responsibility and accountability for the State Emergency Service and emergency management generally in support of Queensland's disaster management arrangements, working very closely with our colleagues in the Queensland Police Service and, of course, local government. I have to report to the committee that that transition into this new environment is working exceedingly well. The volunteers, particularly SES volunteers, are very keen to become part of the bigger department and we are working steadfastly through the necessary arrangements to make all that happen in a more permanent way.

Locally at Ipswich, the SES has five flood boats which have been recently supplied and we have, of course, a network of support from other SES units in the surrounding south-east corner. Importantly, we will refocus and redouble our efforts as we have merged what was formerly EMQ into QFRS. There will be an increased focus on our support to local disaster management groups, as well as supporting the disaster management arrangements at the disaster district level and, of course, our role at the state disaster level and State Disaster Coordination Centre. There has been a lot of work done, particularly with the Ipswich government, and Somerset as well. I think I am due to meet the mayor at Somerset in the next week or so. I have recently met with the Mayor of Ipswich and apprised him of the changes to the new department and the portfolio model.

A lot of training has been going on. One of the features that I really like to promote within the Rural Fire Service is the Volunteer Community Educator program, which has been running now for a couple of years and it has been highly successful. One of the benefits of our volunteer agencies coming much closer together is that that model or that type of volunteer community educator program is going to be taken up by the SES. That provides an avenue for people who may not necessarily want to be on the front line in operations, but they want to be a member of their SES or the rural fire brigade. They can participate in keeping local community members informed of what is going on, for example, during a bushfire in a particular neighbourhood, by doing door knocking and ensuring community education and messages get out. As well, prior to an incident actually occurring, their role is very much making contact with community members and running prepare-act-survive programs which we do at many community functions throughout the Ipswich area, as well as the rest of the

state of course. At things such as shows, fetes and fairs, our Rural Fire Service volunteers have a very high profile and now are joined with their SES colleagues. There is quite a lot going on in the broader greater Ipswich area. I am very happy, particularly with how the volunteer arms are very proactive in helping to prepare their communities, whether it be for bushfire or storm or flood. Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you for that.

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Minister, for this opportunity. I wanted to quickly comment on two things. As I mentioned earlier today, one of the key facets of our focus as an organisation is to build stronger trust relationships with the community. I am very proud to say that the relationship with the Ipswich community is a particularly strong one. I would give evidence of that through two programs. Every year the local Rotary club provides us with a police officer of the year award to our staff for some of their outstanding work in the area. Commissioner Johnson just talked about the Cityhope Church, which runs a wonderful program each year called the Day of Honour. It is a Sunday service. They invite all senior management of emergency services and they honour both Police, Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Ambulance Service during that service. It is very moving but very telling support for all of the emergency services in that community. I think those things are worthwhile putting on the record to show how strong that relationship is with the community.

Personally, I have toured the Ipswich CBD with local government, having a look at their CCTV program. They probably have one of the best in the state. Certainly I have always been available. Last weekend, in fact, I visited Ipswich again for an annual match between the Ipswich Jets and the Logan Rugby League team. That is the second year in a row that I have been to that. Again, that is about showing the support of the Queensland police for that community and for those teams. That was during NAIDOC Week. It is a particularly important game that they play every year. I have had the privilege of being invited twice and attending twice. I intend to keep that relationship going as well.

Mr CHOAT: Go the Jets.

CHAIR: Unfortunately, I think they lost, didn't they, Commissioner?

Commissioner Stewart: They did, by two points.

Mr CHOAT: Let us not dwell on it.

CHAIR: I might announce that there seems to be a consensus for the committee to not have afternoon tea. Does the minister have a view about that, in other words, finishing 15 minutes earlier?

Mr DEMPSEY: We are happy to coincide with the wishes of the committee and the chair.

CHAIR: Does anybody wish to dissent? We will go through afternoon tea and we will finish at 4.45. Thank you very much for that indulgence. We all want to get away with the traffic and so forth; that is all I am thinking about.

Mr DEMPSEY: Mr Chair, I am happy to stay, even if we stay for another couple of days. Certainly, this is an opportunity, but I will follow the direction of the committee.

CHAIR: Thank you for that sacrifice, Minister, but there is no need to make it on this occasion. Member for Broadwater?

Miss BARTON: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I preface my question with an appreciation to Commissioner Johnson. A couple of months ago, a family member who had been a long-time fire at Kemp Place and then stayed on in an admin role, Pat West, passed away. His son is also in the Fire and Emergency Services. It was a great pleasure for our family to see the guard of honour that your officers provided and also one of your officers spoke on your behalf at the service. I know that it meant a great deal to our family that that tribute was paid, so thank you very much for that.

Commissioner Johnson: Thank you.

Miss BARTON: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS, I was wondering if you could update the committee on what the QPS and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services are doing to enhance community safety in the Gold Coast region?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for Broadwater for this question. In an open forum such as today's, I acknowledge the work that she does for Fire and Emergency Services and, in particular, the Police Service. There are a few wants with certain structures to be moved in the local police station. Those wishes have been put forward to the Queensland Police Service. We will see what happens in relation to that maintenance issue in the coming months, maybe in 12 months or so.

For your particular question, obviously, the government has a strong plan for a brighter future and part of that strong plan is for safer communities on the Gold Coast. Whether that be safer waterways on the Broadwater in your area or safer roads in Southport, we are committed to revitalising front-line services right across the Gold Coast.

We started a process in 2012 by renewing the focus of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to front-line service delivery. That process is delivering results for Gold Coast families and I am proud to be able to report that, from 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014, there has been a 13 per cent decrease in the rate of total personal safety offences in the Gold Coast Police District when compared to the same period last year. There has been a 15 per cent decrease in total property offences in the Gold Coast Police District when compared to 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014 for the same period last year. If I may detail further those decreases for the committee, we have seen a 27 per cent decrease in the rate of break and enter offences, a 20 per cent decrease in the rate of other property damage offences and a 27 per cent decrease in the rate of unlawful use of motor vehicles. These are quite outstanding results by the Police Service and the community.

At the last election we committed to providing an additional 1,100 police officers across Queensland over four years. We committed to additional police officers and resources for the Gold Coast, which obviously had fallen down by the previous government. We have delivered on those commitments. The police divisions within the Gold Coast have benefited from an increase of 68 police officers from 1 April 2012 to 30 June 2014. The camera division increased by 18 officers, the Coomera division increased by 18 officers and the Southport and Surfers Paradise divisions each increased by 14 officers. The balance of the increase was distributed across the whole of the Gold Coast area. The actual police numbers within police divisions in the Gold Coast area was 510 in April 2012 and there are now 578 officers.

Our commitment to additional officers does not stop there. In addition to the abovementioned officers allocated to police divisions, I recently officially launched the Rapid Action and Patrol Group, formerly Task Force Takeback, to provide a more flexible and borderless policing response. You would have heard comments from the deputy commissioner previously. The Rapid Action and Patrol Group commenced working out of a dedicated hub facility located at Varsity Lakes—not 'Verity' Lakes; Varsity Lakes.

Miss BARTON: We can rename it if you want to.

Mr DEMPSEY: The Rapid Action and Patrol Group is a 100-strong unit with a mission to initiate appropriate tactical policing options targeting offenders and suspects for serious crime and suppressing crime to keep the streets of the Gold Coast safe. The RAP provides an increased police presence with rapid response capability, meaning that if families call, police can respond quicker. We are also targeting serious and major crimes through dedicated resources for all of these types of offences.

The Major and Organised Crime Squad, along with three criminal investigation branches, continue to target serious criminal offences and organised crime, including drug, property and violent crime. It means that we are targeting offenders who risk life and property across the Gold Coast. A range of strategies have been implemented, overt and covert methods, working with other state and federal agencies, including the Australian customs and the Australian Federal Police. I want to thank those agencies for their ongoing cooperation and assistance with investigations.

A recent success was Operation Kilo Fraction, where Gold Coast CIB detectives, in partnership with other agencies, closed a major, long-term covert operation. It was one of the largest operations ever undertaken by the Queensland Police Service on the Gold Coast and one of the most successful. The operation resulted in the arrest of members and associates of criminal motorcycle gangs and associates. The charges brought as part of Operation Kilo Fraction included drug trafficking, supply, and possession. Police not only just shut down their operations but also removed \$26 million in drugs from the street and seized \$6 million in property from these offenders—quite outstanding.

The Major and Organised Crime Squad coordinated the closure of Operation Kilo Zurich. On 15 and 16 April this year, Major and Organised Claim Squad officers, in partnership again with other enforcement agencies, raided 13 Gold Coast addresses as well as properties in Victoria and New South Wales as they closed a 12-month operation. It will be alleged that one syndicate that was dismantled had smuggled an estimated 1.5 tonnes of high-quality hydroponic cannabis grown in Victoria, worth an estimated \$18 million into Queensland in eight months. That represents a quantity of drugs which will not be accepted on our streets. I certainly thank police for their hard work in these vital operations.

As a government, we are providing officers on the front line with the equipment that they need to do their job to keep our community safe. We have delivered something that the previous government refused to do so for years regardless of the pleas from the community, officers and the Queensland Police Union. The skies above the Gold Coast now have a dedicated police helicopter assisting officers perform their duties and catch offenders. We committed at the election and delivered this in our first year—something that has assisted police to detect drug crops, catch dangerous drivers and monitor major events. PolAir 1 has been operating from the Gold Coast district, providing air based policing support in relation to traffic safety, drug and property crime in both an overt and a covert capacity. From 1 July 2014, PolAir 2 has been launched covering the Brisbane area. This will ensure that PolAir 1 is available to provide a more dedicated response to the Gold Coast area, ensuring public safety on the streets of the Gold Coast and Logan.

Since its introduction and as of 31 May 2014, the Gold Coast helicopter has undertaken 2,405 cumulative flight hours; 3,816 planned operations; 2,376 tasks and response to calls from the community, being the first police unit to arrive at the scene on over 75 per cent of the occasions; 726 traffic related tasks; 2,157 crime hot-spot patrols; and 982 responses to community complaints, including offences such as public disorder, assault, home invasions and shootings. This is from the sheer capacity of one helicopter and the effect that it is having on not only organised crime but also safety in those areas. This resource means that families in the Broadwater area are safer.

Additional resources are not only seen in the air on the Gold Coast but also in the hands of officers from Coomera to Coolangatta. The Gold Coast district continues to embrace modern technology and has recently purchased another 80 iPads on top of its current holdings, which will be issued to officers on the ground. This provides officers with the ability to complete immediate checks on persons, view mug shot photographs, review emails in the field, with further advances due in the next 12 months. This means more police on the street and not having to return to police stations to complete paperwork. It also means that police are more capable of catching offenders due these increased capabilities. It saves times on the front line and it allows police to ensure that, if they respond, they can deal with the matter on the spot. Every officer from the Rapid Action and Patrol Group is issued with this type of technology.

The residents of and visitors to the Gold Coast will see the benefits of the government's Safe Night Out Strategy. The Broadbeach-Surfers Paradise nightclub areas have been identified as Safe Night precincts. This means that those on the Gold Coast who wish to go out and have a good night can now enjoy a safe night out. This is complemented with a strong partnership that has developed with the Gold Coast police and the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. This partnership continues to work with the industry and adheres to community expectations and standards of service of alcohol and zero tolerance to alcohol fuelled violence.

The Gold Coast City Council is also committed to assisting police with providing state-of-the-art CCTV monitoring equipment in the Southport, Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach and Coolangatta CBD areas. The camera monitoring staff are extremely skilled and capable in utilising the equipment to provide police with a proactive crime deterrent. Police regularly rely on archive footage to assist in solving crimes through the identification of suspects and vehicles used in offences. We are also working with the Gold Coast multicultural community to ensure that we deliver safer communities, with the Gold Coast recently welcoming its first police liaison officer. That officer is of Muslim descent and will work to enhance the relationships between police and the Muslim community to better build relationships with the police.

Our commitment to the Gold Coast includes safer streets and better responses for the future. That is why we are working proactively with the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for better responses. We are actively working to enhance community safety on the Gold Coast. We are promoting preparedness and fire safety messages by supporting local show days, using the kitchen fire demonstrator and the QFES staff who distribute fire safety information at these events. We are taking fire safety directly to those who live there. That will certainly save and assist in the protection of lives. The more education, the better.

The Gold Coast SES unit consists of five very proud groups: Southport, Runaway Bay, Carrara, Coolangatta and Springbrook. The unit has five operational flood boats supplied by the state government. Over the past two years community presentations and events have been conducted in areas identified as high risk under the Gold Coast local disaster management plan, which has increased community awareness about being disaster prepared.

An important initiative being undertaken by the Gold Coast City Council and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is the development of community disaster plans for at-risk gated communities. This is a great initiative. This initiative works directly with communities to form small emergency watch groups and develop community disaster plans tailored specifically to the needs of that community. The plans are community driven and allow the community to become self-reliant before, during and after disasters. To date, we have two communities that have completed plans and a further two are undertaking the process at varying stages.

Other initiatives include the establishment of the community education subgroup of the Gold Coast local disaster management group. This newly formed group was established to establish terms of reference and invite members of the local disaster management group to participate in a holistic approach towards improving community education as well engagement in relation to disaster preparedness. This group will certainly assist the local community.

These are great results to make sure that communities right across the Gold Coast are better prepared. It means that the future of the Gold Coast will be one of safer streets and safer communities for residents and visitors.

Mr Chairman, if I could get Commissioner Lee Johnson to make some comments and maybe we could be availed of the opportunity after that for the Inspector-General of Emergency Management, Iain Mackenzie, to say a few words about how we are preparing for disaster management and so forth in not just those areas but a little bit about the operation in that particular area.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Commissioner Johnson: Thanks for the opportunity. On the Gold Coast, one of the important features, of course, is the growth of very large buildings. We have building approval officers who are very active in the design work and the prebuilding stage through to the construction stage and the commissioning of high-rises and large commercial and industrial complexes. This is a very important part of our work, because it helps get things right from the get-go. We have an ongoing regime of building inspections carried out by our firefighting crews on a daily basis, which I mentioned earlier, but it is important to recognise the great work that our building approval officers do in terms of not only aiding and supporting the development and construction industry but also making sure that the buildings that are built and subsequently occupied are both safe for the occupants and the community and our firefighters, should the need arise.

Also very active on the Gold Coast is the local fire management groups and the local Rural Fire Service group. Our structure there is very, very proactive. It would be fair to say that the hinterland of the Gold Coast and similarly the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast are potential areas of very high fire risk in Queensland and we closely monitor those. One unique feature is that we have embedded in the Gold Coast City Council two of our officers who are in the planning and development area who give guidance and direction and support to the local government on planning approval regimes for new developments. So again, we are able to put mitigation efforts in right from the start of any new housing development in those areas. That greatly assists all of us going forward. Also, there is a high level of exercise regimes and they will continue to ramp up now, particularly in the disaster management space. The inspector-general may comment on that.

The other feature I would like to draw people's attention to is not directly related to the Gold Coast. Earlier today the issue of clandestine drug labs was raised. This is not to take away from the Queensland Police Service, but I just want to make the committee aware that Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has a very high level of support for our police officers in this area. The commissioner mentioned that they are very volatile and dangerous premises to enter. Only yesterday I think in Brisbane there was a high level of hazardous materials, breathing apparatus and scientific support to our police officers to enable them to go about their duties safely. We also train many police officers in the wearing of breathing apparatus. This has happened quite a bit in the area we are focused on at the moment—the Gold Coast.

It is important to recognise that the alignment of the portfolios of Police and Fire and Emergency Services is further strengthening that close working relationship and bond between us and the police. Some of that, of course, also has been reflected for many years in preparations for things like schoolies, the upcoming G20 event—police will no doubt talk about that later—and suchlike. The committee can be assured that operationally our firefighters, our police and our emergency services volunteers are working together very collaboratively, always looking for opportunities to improve how we do business. I am very proud of those people.

Recently another slight change in the Gold Coast area has been the movement of our specialist technical rescue vehicle from the Robina station. It has now been relocated to the Nerang station to give it a better location and coverage of the whole coastal strip. That vehicle contains highly specialist technical rescue, urban search and rescue and swiftwater rescue equipment and staffing. That move took place earlier this month.

Mr DEMPSEY: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr Chairman. I just thought this was a good opportunity for bringing together the Inspector General Emergency Management to, whilst making comments in relation to this particular aspect, give a slight overview of the role of the Inspector General Emergency Management.

CHAIR: Minister, that is fine, as long as there is not any duplication.

Mr MacKenzie: Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Mr Chairman, for your indulgence to do that. I am Iain MacKenzie, Inspector General Emergency Management. I introduce the office for the first time to this committee.

The office has been formally established by changes to the Disaster Management Act. This formally took place on 1 July this year. My charge and the charge of the office is essentially to enable confidence in the emergency and disaster management arrangements across the state and to do that by designing and implementing the means of providing that assurance to the governments of Queensland—local government is, of course, at the forefront of any disaster management arrangement within the state—and providing the means of introducing standards and how to review the effectiveness of those standards.

Through those changes to the Disaster Management Act I can advise that my main functions and the functions of the office are to regularly review and assess the effectiveness of disaster management arrangements by the state—at the local, district and state levels—by making and regularly reviewing and assessing entities against disaster management standards. That is the first time, certainly within Queensland, there has been the opportunity to make standards around disaster management and possibly the first time across Australia. We will also work collaboratively with agencies to improve the arrangements across the state but, most importantly, to identify opportunities where partnerships can be formed. I would like to talk about that in a moment.

The office came together informally late last year and we have been working around a particular piece of work in the first six months of this calendar year, but we recognise the very real risk of our office being seen as a bureaucracy—as another level of checking that was unnecessary. We certainly could have written our strategic direction in isolation, but we considered it essential to involve stakeholders from the beginning, so we went about not just consulting but truly collaborating with a large number of stakeholders in delivering our strategic plan.

I can advise some of the stakeholders that we involved. We involved the Local Government Association of Queensland, representing as many local governments as they could across the state, but also involved particular local governments. Certainly in relation to this particular question Gold Coast have been an absolutely fantastic support. They have presented to their local disaster management group with their mayor and discussed with their CEO and their disaster management officers. Particularly, Peter McNamee is to be congratulated in helping us through our formation work.

We have had representatives from the Australian Defence Force; Brisbane City Council; Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience; Premier and Cabinet, of course; Transport and Main Roads; Energy and Water Supply; Natural Resources and Mines; State Development, Infrastructure and Planning; Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts; Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services; and Queensland Audit Office. I single them out as they have been a tremendous support to me in the formation. We have formed a good alliance with the Audit Office, to the point where one of my staff is actually seconded to the Audit Office at the moment. The purpose of that is to learn from them in terms of how they conduct performance reviews and bring that back to us. So we are using that very high standard and indeed training our staff. Also obviously there are our partners within the portfolio—the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Public Safety Business Agency.

The key roles of the office and in a strategic direction are articulated to provide independent assurance and advice about emergency management in Queensland; and to provide authoritative reporting that is utilised. Indeed, one of my measures in the Service Delivery Statements is the number of recommendations that are accepted. We see that as important, to make sure our recommendations are meaningful and are able to be implemented. Another key role is to drive a culture of excellence across the sector and to do that in a very collaborative manner.

The major piece of work that we have introduced and will be introducing through the rest of this year across the state is what we have termed the emergency management assurance framework. This is how we are introducing the concept of standard. These are outcome based statements and not prescriptive and compliance in nature, to make sure we bring the councils particularly along with us. To do that, we are framing that on some basic principles and doing that around leadership, public safety partnership and performance as the key, and articulating a series of shared responsibilities—not in a general sense, where we are talking about, 'We all share a responsibility to achieve something,' but making it very clear that, 'I in my organisation have a responsibility to do X.' We will do that through producing outcome statements. In fact, those outcome statements have been written by the sector themselves—by the practitioners—not by my office. We did that in a workshop in May, when we brought together 70 different practitioners from a very broad range.

The idea of those outcome statements will be that they are scaleable, adaptable and fit for purpose. So we are not saying that what has to be done in, for example, the Brisbane City Council area is the same as what has to be done in Amby. It is fit for purpose, and how they achieve the outcome is certainly up to that local group. So we are identifying those good-practice attributes, being very clear that there are accountabilities around these—it is certainly contributing to the government measure of accountability—and being clear about what dimensions that will be measured against and how we will do it. That is the key to introducing some assurance activities across three tiers, the simplest being a self-assessment level to what would be more commonly called an audit. We have already embarked on that path. The first one we are doing is the disaster management plan assessments that happen annually. Our assessments and estimates are in that space. We will reduce the amount of, in an FTE sense, involvement to do those planned assessments by over 80 per cent this year—so it is a reduction from over 1,300 hours work to about 220—without losing any of the effectiveness.

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Police Commissioner. Commissioner, you do not need 20 minutes, five minutes or two minutes and I am happy for you to take the question on notice. It is in three parts. It relates to page 5 of the Service Delivery Statements. At the bottom of the page it is stated that one of the key challenges and strategic risks that may impact on the Queensland Police Service during 2014-15 is 'continuing the delivery of the renewal and transformation programs'. How many police and what rank are on contracts of employment? What is the approximate annual cost of these contracts? What is the normal duration of the contracts of employment and could you provide a sample of the standard contract? I am happy for you to take that on notice so members can ask other questions.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy for that to happen?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy, if the commissioner is happy, to take them on notice.

Commissioner Stewart: In two parts.

Mr DEMPSEY: In two parts, yes.

Commissioner Stewart: I am happy to comment quickly on some of it. The senior executive of the Queensland Police Service are on contract—for many years. They are the only officers. So that is assistant commissioner to commissioner and any directors of that level. So any people in the Queensland Public Service who work for us are on contract at the SES levels. There have been marked changes in that through the renewal program because of the reduction in the number of assistant commissioners—with the reduction in the number of regions but also the movement of people between our agency and PSBA. So there have been some changes in that area. I do not have the costs, I am sorry. We can get that on notice for you. And you wanted a copy of the standard contract? It is a standard Public Service contract.

Mr WELLINGTON: On the issue of renewal, is there any intention of expanding the category of officers that will be on contract—bringing it further down the seniority chain?

Commissioner Stewart: That is not in our plans. Certainly we are always open to suggestions of different ways of providing the policing model in Queensland. You may be aware that in other places they have certainly tried contract employment for all police officers. For instance, the Australian Federal Police went through a phase where all officers were on contract. That has not been the intention of the Queensland Police Service.

Mr DEMPSEY: We have no intention, from a government perspective.

Mr WELLINGTON: That is reassuring. I had concerns.

CHAIR: The normal contract period in respect of—

Commissioner Stewart: It varies. The only contract which is a contract with the government is mine. All of the other contracts are between the officer and myself. It was set up that way for obvious reasons.

Mr JUDGE: I note that in 2014-15 \$4.3 million has been allocated to continue the crackdown on dismantling and eliminating criminal motorcycle gangs across the state. How does this compare to 2013-14 and how many arrests and clear-ups have occurred through increased police resources enforcing previously existing laws? How many arrests and clear-ups are directly attributable to the so-called VLAD laws?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. I am happy to go through it. I will just seek direction from you, Mr Chair. Do you want to go through it as concisely as we did previously, this morning, or do you want to—

CHAIR: We want to try to get it as concisely as we can, because there is a little bit of duplication happening. But there were multiple parts to that question.

Mr JUDGE: I can break them down, if you want.

CHAIR: I am happy for you to ask the question, get the answer and then ask the next question et cetera. I am happy to do that.

Mr JUDGE: I note that in 2014-15 \$4.3 million has been allocated to continue the crackdown on dismantling and eliminating criminal motorcycle gangs in Queensland. How does that compare to 2013-14?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy for the commissioner to answer in an operational sense in relation to that question.

CHAIR: Just while that is being considered, we need to close for two minutes for Hansard purposes around 3.30, so just understand that will happen and it must happen.

Mr JUDGE: If it makes it easier, Commissioner, I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, thank you. We did give quite a fulsome answer to this question this morning, and I would be happy for Deputy Commissioner Pointing to come forward and just give the base stats again if that would assist, because we have all the figures here. I have a very fulsome brief that I could—

CHAIR: If you could just summarise it that would be great.

Commissioner Stewart: Sir, with your indulgence I would ask Deputy Commissioner Pointing to come forward.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: With respect to the first part of the question, the government allocated \$20 million for the campaign to eliminate criminal motorcycle gangs in Queensland. In essence, \$4.3 million in 2014-15 is the balance of unspent moneys out of that \$20 million, the \$15 million or so that's already been spent. That has really gone to a whole range of initiatives: \$1.6 million, for example, has gone to purchasing state-of-the-art equipment for the Technical Surveillance Unit; \$1.7 million for enhanced intelligence capabilities, additional funds for surveillance; also funding to establish the Rapid Action Patrol Group on the Gold Coast. Infrastructure costs have been paid out, and the remainder will fund the personnel costs for both Taskforce Takeback and Taskforce Maxima. That will allow them to continue their campaign through the 2014-15 financial year.

Mr JUDGE: And in terms of arrests, I will split this up. How many arrests in total have been made through the operation, if you like; and then a more pointed question is how many of those are directly attributable to the so-called VLAD laws?

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: I will answer that as comprehensively as I can. Since the start of the campaign in October 2013, 1,113 CMG participants have been arrested on 2,786 charges. I mentioned earlier this morning that 43 per cent of those have been for what is termed serious criminal offences; in other words, they are defined in the Criminal Organisation Act as offences that would attract a period of imprisonment of seven years or more. Out of all those offences, 84 persons have been arrested on 124 charges under the new legislation. Out of those, 40 are attributed to the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Act. Now, of course there are no new offences under that act. Under the VLAD, it is simply a sentencing regime or a circumstance of aggravation.

Mr JUDGE: Just so I am clear, 1,113 bodies, if you like, and 40 that have had the VLAD penalties applied to them.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: That is correct.

Mr JUDGE: And a final question, Chair. What is the percentage contribution of criminal motorcycle gangs to organised crime in Queensland; do you know? Or what percentage would you estimate that they contribute towards organised crime? Clearly there are other organised crime bodies in Queensland. What percentage would you allocate to criminal motorcycle gangs in terms of that broader makeup?

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chairman. Just before answering that question, as highlighted by Deputy Commissioner Pointing in answer to other questions this morning, over the last seven years we saw an almost 50 per cent increase in criminal motorcycle gang members through their organisations. Even prior to the VLAD laws and so forth from intelligence from all agencies, both state and federal, this government was making the election commitments of 1,100 new police officers, two helicopters and changing the legislation to free police up from being behind desks, removing 200 officers from nonoperational duties to operational positions. When we see the figures and results in relation to criminal motorcycle gang members, obviously in previous questions the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner alluded to the direct correlation between the significant drops in crime figures right across the whole of the state. It is quite phenomenal. I know the Deputy Commissioner has been able to say that from when the criminal motorcycle gang legislation was invoked and the operations commenced, there was an even more significant reduction in what may be termed break and enters to offences against the person and property. I will just ask the Deputy Commissioner to speak a little bit more about that.

CHAIR: Deputy Commissioner, the specific question is in terms of your experience. You can put it in any way you wish, but that is effectively what the question is.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: I understand the question. The Australian Crime Commission reports that organised crime costs Australians about \$15 billion a year and that criminal motorcycle gangs are very much—and these are their words from their reports—the ‘public face’ of organised crime in Australia. In fact, they are one of the few organised crime groups that proudly display that they live outside the law. In answer to the question, it is very hard to quantify the slice of the cake.

CHAIR: Ballpark?

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: It is very difficult.

CHAIR: Have you got a ballpark percentage?

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: No, I would not even attempt to because there are known knowns and there are known unknowns, I guess. So it is very difficult. But certainly in the Australian landscape they are very, very prominent across all categories of serious crime. We have seen that a large percentage of our serious offences have related to the drug trade in particular, but it includes trafficking in weapons and includes being involved in extortion and a range of serious crimes.

CHAIR: One of the papers that I read said that things like stealing copper, stealing plant and equipment out west—I mean, it permeates our society in all different ways.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: It does. I think it is an important observation that whilst a lot of our work has been focused on the Gold Coast, we have seen significant arrests throughout the length and breadth of Queensland in 40-odd clubhouses in all major areas around Queensland. So it is certainly a state-wide problem. But to be able to accurately apportion the extent of CMG involvement in organised crime is very, very difficult. What we have seen I think is a dramatic escalation in violent crime, and we have seen that through 2013 and 2012 in particular. In fact, I think from my perspective in 2006 when I was still in charge of the Gold Coast we saw the incident at Royal Pines, where it was probably the first time we had seen rival gangs taking that violence into the public. Since then of course, particularly in 2012 and 2013, it just simply got out of control. I think that is a fair observation. We saw the murder of Max Waller on the Gold Coast; the murder of Jack Lee on the south side of Brisbane; tattoo parlours being torched and a whole range of other serious crimes. So 2013 to me was really the watershed when the dramatic growth in CMGs started to occur and the very, very serious crimes relating to that became very public. I think there is probably no greater example than the innocent bystander who was shot during the incident at the Robina shopping centre—

CHAIR: I think the Sydney airport was also a bit of a watershed for all of us.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: It was very dramatic, and I think that brought the problem into everyone's living rooms. We had seen a lot of activity not just in Queensland, but throughout the whole of Australia. These groups are well established all throughout Australia and many of them have international chapters. We are starting to see other states, territories and certainly the federal landscape changing and joining with us in this campaign.

Mr JUDGE: I respect the comments that were made and I acknowledge them. In 1997 we saw a shootout in Mackay. This has been an issue that has been growing over time. I accept that it has sort of increased in recent years, but it is an issue that is very much out there in the spotlight. We are all talking about it and reading about it in the media. But online fraud and the good work by Brian Hay in the Queensland Police Service is an area that is of significant concern. Organised crime does occur in those types of areas as well with the large deposits of money into bank accounts from international sources in recent times that were reported in the media. The focus does not seem to be as sharp on those types of areas. The allocation of resourcing to those areas by government seems to be, in my observation, placed secondary to motorcycle gangs. We are not saying that we should not concentrate on those, but I was interested genuinely in the percentage. I appreciate that you may not be able to quantify that precisely.

CHAIR: Have you got a question?

Mr JUDGE: I am getting there.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr JUDGE: And that was the nature of the question. So in terms of proceeds of crime, are you able to articulate the proceeds of crime that are being seized from the criminal motorcycle gangs as compared to other areas of organised crime like fraud, for example?

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chair. Just before getting those details—and I will certainly refer that to the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner—but it was alluded to and discussed by the member for Nicklin about what we are doing in the area of white collar crime this morning. We spoke about the great work by the likes of Brian Hay and others in those particular areas and the need to be ever vigilant from a government and police perspective. Whilst there are criminal motorcycle gangs out there, we want to make sure that attention is given to other aspects of criminal activity and other serious areas, both interstate and overseas. We spoke about the changes and modification to money laundering this morning and we went fairly in depth into that. But I would like to get an answer for your particular question.

Deputy Commissioner Pointing: Thank you for the question. There are a couple of interesting points, and I think the first one is around the VLAD legislation. The inherent incentives and disincentives that are in the VLAD actually apply to all criminal organisations, so they do not only apply to members of criminal motorcycle gangs. I think it is an interesting point that the disincentives to committing crime actually apply to all people who form criminal associations, which I think is very powerful.

Secondly, in terms of establishing the strategic direction of Operation Resolute, we established a Criminal Economy Unit to focus on unexplained wealth and it has been very successful. In addition to seizing motor vehicles and a whole range of other goods, they seized \$1.7 million in cash from gang members and they have also made \$3.5 million in referrals to the CMC to have moneys restrained. So in that short period that they have been in place I think they have had a significant impact in terms of chasing unexplained wealth. In terms of comparing that effort to the rest of the service, I would really have to take that on notice.

CHAIR: Do you want to do that?

Mr JUDGE: Yes, I would ask for it to be taken on notice.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy to take that on notice?

Mr DEMPSEY: I would just want to know his exact question through you, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Could you re-state the question for me, member?

Mr JUDGE: I will re-state the question. Minister, the proceeds of crime that have been derived through the operations targeting criminal motorcycle gangs and the proceeds of crime that have been recovered through other organised crime syndicates, if you want to put it in that context, can you break that down into fraud? Are you happy with that?

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy to take that on notice. Is that for the period in relation to the SDS?

Mr JUDGE: I suppose realistically it would be beneficial to go back to 2012-13, 2013-14 if you could. That would be beneficial.

Mr DEMPSEY: I think we will just stick to the SDS. That will be great.

CHAIR: That is noted. Are you happy with that, member for Yeerongpilly?

Mr JUDGE: As happy as I can be, yes.

CHAIR: That is good to see. Member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Thanks, Mr Chair. Minister, it is SDS page 11, but there are many other references to domestic violence and performance metrics for the service. I refer to domestic violence statistics which state that the number of police applications for domestic violence went up by 9.54 per cent from 2012 to 2013. To what extent has domestic violence continued to rise in 2014, and why do you believe domestic violence is apparently rising so sharply?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is a very important question. We all know how domestic violence has impacts on all members of the community right across the whole of the state. In simplistic terms, when we look at the results from the implementations that this government has put forward for a strong plan for a brighter future, part of that is ensuring the safety of our most vulnerable people. Domestic violence certainly is one of those particular areas. For us as a new government we certainly ensured that we had more police on the street than ever before—1,100 new police. We have already achieved more than 800 police so far to date. That is extra police on top of normal attrition rates. I do not have the exact figure with me at the present time but that equates to around about, over the last two years, approximately 1,400 to 1,500 officers going through our academies, let alone our other programs that we have been able to recruit police officers from, those returning to police and so forth.

We have changed the legislation to free up our police officers so they are not sitting behind desks. We have given them the latest technology. Part of that technology we have just mentioned before, the iPads and iPhones, allows police officers to not have to return to the station or even going backwards and forwards through their radio communications. It means that officers are able to get those details to hand whilst they are out in the particular vehicles. You have to take this in the context of hooning legislation. Imagine a previous officer in charge with, say, two or three vehicles in their operation on a night shift. If one intercepted a vehicle they would be out of operation for anything up to seven hours. If they did another job in relation to Facebook parties or noise parties, they would have to be taken off their operational duties for set periods of time. Whilst we have introduced the technology, we are changing the way in which police are able to be freed up and be able to be out on the beat like never before.

Part of that proactive police response, and I want to state this to the committee, is not just the figures in relation to domestic violence. You will see that in relation to drug crime and other offences in particular. We have to take that in the overall figure rate as well. When we see the report on government services, and domestic violence is part of that, we will see the reactive policing, where police are responding to offences, coupled with the proactive offences. So, reactive offences are down. Proactive, from police being out on the beat like never before, has increased. What we see then from the report on government services is an equalling of those types of figures and statistics. The reality is that police are out there more than ever.

In relation to domestic violence, simply because of there being more police out there, there are more occasions on which police are attending more domestic violence than ever before. What I also want to say is that the occurrences of, as we mentioned before, murders, rapes and sexual offences in relation to domestic violence are down severely as well. From my perspective of previously being a police officer of 20 years attending many domestic violence, each domestic violence is so serious. Now as a member of parliament and minister I see police out there attending and meeting community expectations. The community like never before is reporting domestic violence. Stepping up to the mark and saying that domestic violence is not condoned in any street or in any home in Queensland is a great credit to the community and a great credit to those police officers. We are going to continue as a government to look at ways of reducing the paperwork for police and whilst doing that ensuring that we maintain the highest standards in relation to domestic violence to make sure that we protect families, the person who is offended against, which is predominantly more female than is male and, most importantly in this aspect, the innocent children. We certainly go about that business on a day-to-day basis. The Commissioner may like to comment on some of those particular domestic violence figures. But I want you to please take that into the context of now police having more hours and more time than ever before to get out there and get to more DVs and certainly be able to get

people enforced, as well as the education side of it as well. I will give you another example. What you will probably see in the SDS is reporting of drive-offs. What are the main reasons? Are there any more people doing it than previously before?

CHAIR: For the sake of the transcript, could you please define drive-offs?

Mr DEMPSEY: Petrol drive-offs from service stations and so forth. Now we have Policelink where service stations are more able to report those occasions than ever before. There was certainly a lot of unreported crime and, dare I say, maybe not as much confidence in what was going to happen with those reports, whereas now we have a modern technological way of reporting those drive-offs through Policelink and people are certainly reporting them more than ever. Commissioner, if you would like to comment on the operational side?

CHAIR: Did you need the question restated or are you happy with it?

Commissioner Stewart: No, I am fine, thank you, Chair. Mr Byrne, thank you, and I note that your interest has been long in this area. I would say, and it is an unfortunate fact, that the Queensland Police Service is dealing with the consequence of a whole range of social issues that are the causal factors of domestic violence. We work very hard with many of the other stakeholders, particularly domestic violence support centres and legal centres, to try to ameliorate the impact of domestic violence in this state. It is true that there has been a trend of recent years to see a rise in the rate of reports of domestic violence. I actually think that is from two main reasons. One, I think there is a greater confidence in the Queensland Police Service to actually do something to be able to provide for the safety of the family involved, particularly the aggrieved person who is usually the wife or spouse or female partner. The second one is that there is a very, very strong domestic violence support mechanism right throughout the state. I think that particularly women who suffer from domestic violence themselves or who are trying to protect their children are more apt to utilise those services and those services then refer them through to us. I actually think it is a confidence issue that the police have seen growing over a long period of time and that is one of the reasons why we are seeing that rise. Certainly a lot of work goes into the preventative side of this type of violence, as you are probably well aware.

Mr BYRNE: Thank you, Commissioner. There are a couple of bits of that I would again draw a question mark behind. The idea from the minister that we are proactive policing, I understand the logic, I understand the sorts of offences where that would apply, where I can accept that line of explanation, but by direct inference you are suggesting that for many years a rate of domestic violence was unreported or unattended because the Police Service did not have the capacity to accurately service the need that was there. That is the only conclusion that I can draw from the minister's statement about proactive policing, therefore we have got a greater rate and availability of police. That then suggests that there must have been an underlying rate that was unattended by the Police Service over an extended period.

Also the other explanation, can it be conceivable that the social circumstances of declining economics and social malaise with increasing unemployment and all the other social pieces that are out there—like 6.3 per cent unemployment—might have something to do with the fact that the rate of domestic violence is increasing, given that usually happens in the home not in the open street and that money is often part of the problem?

CHAIR: What I am trying to get out is that there was an underlying premise and I am not sure that you accepted that. Perhaps before we proceed with the question can I get you to comment on the underlying premise that you perhaps questioned and then you can answer the question. I need to understand where we are going.

Mr DEMPSEY: Just to go down that line, and it is a shame as I have been trying all day not to involve politics in issues that are very important to the people of Queensland—the Commissioner may make comment on the greater efficiencies and the renewal of the Police Service and the borderless policing approach that we have now, as well as the types of technology and the community support—but for us as a government when we first came in, as you know, one of the first statements from the Treasurer of Queensland, from the independent financial advisers, was that the current financial state of the books of Queensland would be unsustainable. We set about, as a government, addressing the financial debt that was left by the Labor Party. Why I mention that is in today's—

Mr BYRNE: I made no political comment at all. I said that a 6.3 per cent unemployment rate must be a factor in domestic violence.

Mr DEMPSEY: You did.

CHAIR: If you could summarise it briefly. I understand where you are going, Minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: Briefly, Labor's neglect, debt and deficit that they left this state, \$450,000 every hour of Labor debt, would recruit and train eight new police officers. It would procure and fit out nine extra police vehicles. It would recruit and train nine new fire officers. It would also procure and fit out three new rural fire vehicles. Twenty-four hours of the Labor debt that was left this government and this department, which had to rely on money being borrowed from overseas because we could not obviously facilitate the loss of our AAA rating, one day's interest, would mean three extra police helicopters in the sky. Why I want to reiterate that is—

CHAIR: Just make it brief, Minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: Very briefly, through you, Mr Chairman, obviously we have set a course of making sure we have more police, more technology and greater strength in our legislation to be able to have more police out on the beat than ever before. I say to the member for Rockhampton, if we had not been in such dire straits with the financial situation that was left by the Labor government how many more officers, how many more jobs would police have been able to be out there assisting their communities, how many more resources would be going out to the community sector in relation to domestic violence and so forth? It is all right for him to scream about one angle and then blame, but he has to remember his history when he comes to this committee—through you, Mr Chair.

Mr BYRNE: You are saying there is no connection between unemployment and domestic violence?

Mr DEMPSEY: You can give it, but you cannot take it.

Mr BYRNE: Is that the statement?

CHAIR: Gentlemen, hold on for one moment. I understand where you are coming from, but I think the question is with Ian Stewart, the Commissioner. There was an underlying premise I wish you to accept or reject and then we will get on to answering the second part of the question so that we can get this back on to estimates. Now, do you accept the premise that was put forward or is it something that needs to be commented on; can we do that first?

Commissioner Stewart: If I may be given the opportunity to comment, Chair, and thank you for that opportunity, and again thanks, Mr Byrne, for the question. I know how passionate you are about the safety and security of our most vulnerable people in our community who are our young people, but then probably the second most vulnerable are our women and our elderly. I would like to assure this committee, I would like to assure Mr Byrne, that there is no lack of capacity within the Queensland Police Service to deal with calls for assistance from people in strife, people who are being bashed, people who are being harassed in their homes by a partner or another loved one. That has never been the case. The oath of office that we swear as police officers says, primarily, we are responsible for the safety of our community and that will always take precedence over any other job. I talk about boundaryless policing as part of our overall renewal and our philosophy and I want to assure you that that is the case. But it is also boundaryless in terms of when we prioritise our calls for service the safety of individuals always comes first. A stealing or a break and enter will potentially be at lower priority than a call for service where someone is in danger. I want to give you that assurance that it has never been a capacity issue. What I am saying very clearly is I honestly believe, through my experience throughout my service, and I would hope that my colleagues would back me on this, I honestly believe that there is a rise in confidence in the service to deal with domestic violence appropriately. I think that is one of the reasons—one, not all, one of the reasons—why we are seeing at the moment a rise in domestic violence reports to the Queensland Police Service. And we will always deal with them.

Mr BYRNE: Thank you for your rational answer, Commissioner.

CHAIR: Is all that part of it satisfied?

Mr BYRNE: That is fine.

CHAIR: I have a couple of things. I talk with my local inspector. Prior to that, I have always been concerned—and I think the minister touched on it—with the amount of paperwork to deal with domestic violence.

Commissioner Stewart: Yes.

CHAIR: I will leave that aside just for one moment, because you did help us in this committee's inquiry on strategies for prevention of crime.

Commissioner Stewart: Yes.

CHAIR: You mentioned that you worked intimately with Griffith University and obviously that issue came up about data. Really what I am trying to get at is: are you equipped or does there need to be further legislative intervention in terms of the money we are spending on domestic violence to try to drill down as to what is happening in the community and formulating preventative measures by which we are able to help families get back on to a rational path?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, sir. Can I just say that since the minister took over this portfolio he has insisted that we follow up on our procedures with domestic violence and the administrative side of it, because it is an issue and we have a review afoot at the moment. The government have stated a number of times to me personally but quite publicly that should we need legislative support to do things better they will always look at that favourably. I am very hopeful that, working with all of the key stakeholders—because this is a very big issue. As I said, we end up dealing with the consequences. There are other parts of this equation that I think need to be looked at and, to the minister's credit, he is supporting that very, very strongly. So that is in train.

Ultimately, and I should have said earlier, it is not just about the confidence in the Queensland Police Service. I think the community is actually changing and I think the culture in the community is changing. We now have people who have the courage to stand up for themselves and come forward, whereas before I do not know if that always occurred. I think this is a cultural thing.

CHAIR: Member for Rockhampton, would you like to ask a further question in relation to the review? He might have a better handle on how to express it.

Mr BYRNE: Commissioner, the Domestic and Family Violence Strategy 2009-2013 is the strategy that is being reviewed, I assume? That is to be reviewed in 2014—the Queensland Police Service Domestic and Family Violence Strategy 2009-2013.

Commissioner Stewart: Yes.

Mr BYRNE: The commitment I recall was to review it in 2014 with a view to developing another strategy or another way forward.

Commissioner Stewart: Yes.

Mr BYRNE: How close is that review to delivering recommendations or a roadmap or whatever you are going to create?

Commissioner Stewart: We are certainly down the track of developing a draft strategy and certainly new ways of us potentially looking at handling domestic violence. There are other models out there and there are other thoughts on how to best intervene in a very positive way to stop this very insidious type of assault and crime occurring and offence occurring within that context.

Mr BYRNE: What is the time line for the new way forward, the new strategy?

Commissioner Stewart: I do not have that at my fingertips and I am very sorry for that.

Mr BYRNE: It is not critical. You can take it on notice.

Commissioner Stewart: Can I assure you that this is one area that has been exercising our minds for some time and continues to do so because we always want to try to get better our response to domestic violence.

CHAIR: I call the member for Toowoomba North.

Mr WATTS: I appreciate the opportunity to ask a question. Minister, and also to the commissioners, I, along with my colleague in Toowoomba, John McVeigh, am very interested in the different things that the Queensland Police Service is doing to enhance community safety in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. With reference to page 2 of the SDS, I am interested in, as I am sure my colleague John McVeigh would also be interested in, what Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Police Service are doing for our community in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. I thank the member and Dr John McVeigh for all the work that they do in keeping their community safe and also for giving me an update and advice on other ways that we can help protect the communities of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs in particular. Obviously our government certainly has a strong plan for a brighter future for the people of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs, and one of those areas is that of safety, making sure that whilst we have a great state we also have a safe state and a safe Toowoomba and Darling Downs community.

Whether it be officers in Toowoomba or safer farms on the Darling Downs, we are committed to revitalising front-line services in the region. We started that process in 2012 by renewing the focus of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to front-line service delivery. I just want to reiterate that when I wake up every morning—and as every member here from the LNP recognises—and we talk about supercharging the Queensland economy, for me, as a minister with the privilege to have this portfolio, it is about ensuring that we have not only the safest state in Queensland but also the best services of any police, fire and emergency services in the whole of the nation. We continue to work towards the delivery of that and making sure that we have the resources on our front line.

As mentioned before, the process of service delivery is achieving great results for local families. I am proud to be able to report that from 1 July 2013 to 31 May 2014 there has been a three per cent decrease in the total rates of offences against a person in the Darling Downs police district when compared to the same period last year. There has also been a two per cent decrease in total property offences in the area compared to the same period last year. In terms of subcategories within total property offences during this time, there has been a five per cent decrease in the rate of break and enters, a five per cent decrease in the rate of property damage offences and a seven per cent decrease in the rate of unlawful use of vehicles.

The division certainly has been successful in securing many officers. The area has benefited from an increase of 31 police officers from 1 April 2012 to 30 June 2014. So the Toowoomba division has increased by 22 officers and Gatton by four officers. The balance of the increase was distributed across the Toowoomba and Darling Downs area. So the actual numbers within the police divisions in the Darling Downs area was 245 to April 2012; now there are more than 276 officers. The Darling Downs police district aims to deliver safer communities as well as on the enforcement side a number of initiatives in relation to education.

There have been some magnificent results in relation to traffic enforcement right through to Adopt-a-Cop and our school based police officers. We made an election commitment of 15 additional school based police officers. We have delivered on two school based police officers for the Darling Downs—one being for the Lockyer District High School, and I know the member for Toowoomba North was pleased to be able to deliver one of those additional officers for the Toowoomba State High School in his own electorate. There are many things I would like to say, but I would like to pass to Commissioner Lee Johnson, the Commissioner for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

Commissioner Johnson: Thank you, Minister. In the Toowoomba and Darling Downs area we have had a very proactive campaign based on principally our Rural Fire Service and volunteers of late to get the 'Prepare.Act.Survive.' message out. In particular, letterbox drops and supporting information have been conducted within the Toowoomba Regional Council area including Crows Nest, Millmerran, Gowrie Junction, Gowrie Mountain, Meringandan, Jondaryan and Ravensbourne. This ensures that the message of preparedness is delivered to those people who need it most.

Recently, from talking to some people in that area, this rather much colder snap than we have had for a while is probably having quite an effect on some of the grass land in that area. Already recently we have seen some early fires—Peachey State Forest last week—and a number of fires in the area. The ability for encouraging people to take hazard mitigation activities is paramount in our mind, and we are working with stakeholders and community members to ensure that that does happen.

Our response capability has certainly also been strengthened in the greater district with the recent completion of a new fire and rescue station at Clifton. I will be attending—and I think Assistant Minister Malone will also be attending—there on Saturday morning for the official opening. Captain Peter McKenzie, well known in the Clifton area, and the staff there are already enjoying a brand-new facility. As well, a new station for Pittsworth is under development and part of the capital works program. Certainly we are also improving our vehicle fleet in that area.

Part of our operational vehicle capabilities that have been upgraded include the development and construction of a new command support trailer to enhance incident management within the Darling Downs and the installation of thermal imaging cameras on all fire appliances in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs to enhance fire service operations. That basically allows us to, if you like, see through smoke and helps very much in both search and rescue in a structure fire, but also locating the seat of a fire during fire operations enables us to target more effectively our firefighting and fire suppression operations. So that technology boost has been well received.

Additionally, on a slightly different note, in the Warwick area, together with Ergon, we have been utilising the Ergon digital radio network for a trial mainly with our Rural Fire Service volunteers in a new band just to look at potential opportunities that may arise or where we may further go with enhancing radio communications at a later stage. That trial has been very well received and supported by both our paid firefighters and our volunteer firefighters.

We have also had a focus on preparedness and prevention, including an additional water supply has been established to enhance firefighting operations during bushfires—that is, water tanks or water points have been installed through a collaborative effort with the Toowoomba Regional Council for firefighting purposes on the Darling Downs and Western Downs. The number of volunteer community educators has been increased in the region, increasing QFES capacity to engage in and inform the community especially during bushfires.

I mentioned earlier about the volunteer community educator program and how important it is. In fact, one of the very clear results that came out of the royal commission into the Black Saturday fires in 2009 was the fact that, if you like, what we might describe now as information operations are just as important as firefighting operations, if not more important. The most important thing in some of these circumstances is that it is not unrealistic even in Queensland for bushfires to be of such an extent that trying to actually combat them in any form of direct firefighting is just not possible. It is more important to keep the community informed about where the fire is going and where it is likely to be within different time zones. So the community educators have a very key role in that operational sense, working with our public information officers as part of our incident command system to inform people. Whilst firefighting is obviously important, keeping people informed, and even more importantly helping people to prepare their properties before a fire even starts, is equally as important. That group of our volunteers has done outstanding and sterling work.

Also, we are very active in the disaster management space. A community engagement officer has recently been appointed to liaise with local governments in the area to develop community engagement initiatives and to develop and deliver disaster preparedness messages. We participate in all sorts of community activities—things like workshops, community promotional days and getting that message out. You will often find today Rural Fire Service and SES volunteers side by side at those sorts of community fairs and community events contributing to delivering a very broad-ranging hazard awareness and safety message. They do a great job.

More flood boats will be delivered to Dalby, Warwick and Miles to support the SES groups. The Toowoomba Regional Council disaster management plans have been reviewed to ensure that appropriate arrangements are well documented. Disaster management training is continuing to be delivered to local government and key stakeholders to enhance their preparedness and response capabilities. We are also working with the Goondiwindi Regional Council to undertake a restructure of the SES out there to improve their operational capabilities.

I have already met a number of the mayors across the Darling Downs and Western Downs. Part of my visit is to reassure mayors and local governments that during the change to the QFES we will further reinforce our support to local governments and not let them down and we will be right beside them in assisting them both in developing their disaster management plans and also, importantly, engaging in multiagency exercising and testing of those plans. That is critical. I am sure the inspector general will be keeping a very close eye on our progress in that area and how we go about delivering not only support to our local governments but also contributing to the whole performance of the disaster management arrangements in Queensland.

Proceedings suspended from 3.32 pm to 3.39 pm



CHAIR: I call the member for Toowoomba North.

Mr WATTS: I wanted, if I could, to let the Police Commissioner comment on my last question. Did you want me to repeat the question?

CHAIR: I think that would be wise.

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy for you to move on to the next question. The fire and emergency services commissioner has outlined his areas of responsibility. I have reported on the additional police officers for the area. The figures speak for themselves in relation to the decrease in crime. Have you got an additional question?

CHAIR: I think the member for Toowoomba North wanted an additional question. If you might ask it briefly then we will move on to the member for Bulimba.

Mr WATTS: My additional question ties in with my question from earlier today which related to the Safe Night Out Strategy. Could you outline how the legislation will address out of control parties? This is particularly with reference to page 8 of the SDS where it refers to developing strategies to address unacceptable behaviour at out of control parties. I see the relationship between the Safe Night Out Strategy and where people concentrate their socialising activities. I would like to understand how the legislation will help keep control of out of control parties in suburbia and make sure that people in suburbia can have quiet enjoyment of their homes. The CBD is the appropriate area for people to have a good time late at night.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. Recently we introduced changes to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act which addressed the issue of Facebook parties and noise abatement for out of control parties and events. We have given police this additional legislation as well as, as I said in answer to your other question, increased numbers of police officers along with additional infrastructure and technology for Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. We are ensuring that police are not behind desks, to use simplistic terminology, for a greater period than they need to be.

We have seen a dramatic reduction in the number of Facebook parties. Police officers and the community have embraced the change in the noise abatement provision from 24 hours to 96 hours. I will ask the commissioner to make some comments on that because there is a distinction between the Safe Night Out Strategy and dealing with out of control parties in neighbourhoods.

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you for the question. These are quite distinct areas of operations for the Queensland Police Service. There are some interesting crossovers. I mentioned this earlier today. One of the great initiatives that goes with the Safe Night Out Strategy is the education that will go into all schools. I personally believe that that will have a major impact on the types of parties that we are talking about here that occur out in the suburbs.

I do not have the figures with me, and I am sorry about that, but anecdotally I can tell you that prior to the implementation of the extra legislation around out of control parties I was personally seeing what we call significant event messages every weekend. I would see two or three of them where we would have a major issue. I cannot remember the last time I actually saw one. It would be months. To me that is an indication that this issue is being dealt with very successfully with the new legislation. Again, it comes down to increasing respect through the deterrent effect of the legislation. Our officers are being able to respond very quickly to these parties.

I will say that in the cooler months we do see a reduction in the number of large gatherings, particularly of young people, out in the suburbs. So maybe I am being a little bit too optimistic, bearing in mind we are in the middle of winter. Certainly, the police on the ground anecdotally are very comfortable with the new legislation on the suburban out-of-control parties and that they can finally attack the root causes. The root causes particularly are these individuals, in many cases, who are actually making money out of those parties, but had absolutely no responsibility at all. Is that enough information for you?

Mr WATTS: Yes, that is good, thank you.

CHAIR: Member for Bulimba?

Mr DILLAWAY: Thank you, Chair. To keep in line with some of the questioning from my colleagues on the committee, Minister, I would reference again page 2 of the SDS. What are the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the QPS are doing to enhance community safety across Brisbane's southside?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. As a government with a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Police Service are committed to enhancing community safety in South Brisbane and surrounding areas. From 1 July to 31 May, there has been a 10 per cent decrease in the rate of total personal safety offences in the South Brisbane district when compared to the same 11-month period last year. There has been a 16 per cent decrease in total property offences in the South Brisbane district for the same period. In the categories of total property offences, we have also seen a 19 per cent decrease, equivalent to 1,306 offences of unlawful entry. That is a large decrease in that particular area. There is a 17 per cent decrease in other property damage, a 21 per cent decrease in unlawful use of a motor vehicle and a 14 per cent decrease in other offences. Those are certainly quite remarkable achievements. We have seen officer numbers increase by 112 police officers, from 1 April 2012 to 30 June. The Inala division increased by 15 officers, Upper Mount Gravatt by 14 officers and the

balance is spread across the South Brisbane area. We are making sure people can get on with their lives and work and raise a family in South Brisbane. The actual numbers for the South Brisbane area were 615 in April 2012; there are now 727 officers. That ensures the safety of all people in those areas. We have the Adopt-a-Cop program and other crime initiatives on the ground.

One of the most pleasing aspects is that our police liaison officers have been able to work with diverse cultural groups, attending forums and sharing information. Cultural groups from Chinese, Indian and African nationalities are certainly represented. Our officers are doing a magnificent job in all those areas. I have a large brief before me and I could talk about some of the successes of policing in South Brisbane, which is coupled with the great effort that the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services have been doing. We have dealt with matters on the Brisbane River to coordinating the response of over 300 SES workers deployed for the G20 event in November this year.

From a whole-of-government perspective, these things are not happening by accident. It is happening because we have a government that is committed to a safer Queensland and a government that is certainly into action and making sure that we empower our emergency services and give them the respect and the equipment that it is needed for them to serve their communities. We see such figures from the Gold Coast to the Darling Downs and South Brisbane. They are significant figures and they certainly are a testament in themselves. Obviously, we recognise the great work that the officers are doing and also the community in which they serve. I am a proud Queenslander and I want to make sure that we have a better Queensland for future generations. Police Commissioner, would you like to make a brief comment?

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister, and it will be brief. There is one issue that I would like to bring to the attention of the committee and it relates to some wonderful work that the police have done in the South Brisbane area more broadly. Task Force Integrate is a multiregional, multidisciplinary borderless property crime operation that ran from 1 July 2013 to 30 March 2014. It was based on the South Brisbane, Logan, Gold Coast, North Brisbane police districts and Ipswich. Our primary focus was the South Brisbane and Ipswich areas. The task force used a collaborative approach to stop offending, increasing community safety and reducing demand on policing services more generally. The task force trialled some new and expanded current methodologies and technologies. They were one of the first to take on board the use of the mini iPad technology that we are now rolling out more fulsomely. They also used ANPR, which I commented on earlier today. It had aerial support with the police helicopter and it had a dedicated intelligence cell incorporating an evidence-collection component.

The task force contributed to a significant reduction in reported offences across South-East Queensland in a range of offences including unlawful entry, unlawful use of a motor vehicle and evade police. The operation saw 555 persons arrested in relation to 2,508 offences. The template has now been used a number of times for other task forces throughout the state. We are very proud of the work of Integrate and the ongoing effect, I believe, it is having on property crime in the South Brisbane area. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner. Member for Nicklin?

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I will be brief. I would like to put a question to our Commissioner of Fire and Emergency Services. Commissioner, I take you to page 37 of the service delivery statement. At paragraph No. 7, reference is made to the Police and Community Safety Review, which identified the higher rate of system initiated false alarms as a major current inefficiency. My question is pretty specific: have any resources been allocated in this budget to investigate how other states manage this inefficiency and this cost to the service?

Mr DEMPSEY: Just before answering that, it is a great question and one that we have been following up for a number of years. As part of the overall restructure of this portfolio, it was certainly highlighted that the sheer amount or the percentage—

Mr WELLINGTON: Waste of time—

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes. Attendances at these false callouts, coupled with the flippancy of certain people on the other end, really makes you shake your head at times. Commissioner, are you happy to comment in that regard?

Commissioner Johnson: Thank you, Minister. Thank you very much for the question. This is an area of great concern to us and also one of the recommendations as a result of the PACSR review. A project team has been allocated to undertake a range of options to help reduce this. Before

I mention that in a bit more detail, just as an example, we had been doing a range of activities in this space, primarily with the commissioning of new buildings and what could be done to avoid and reduce unnecessary false alarms being transmitted. For example, in 2005-06, there was an average of 3.67 unwanted alarms per signalling device. As a result of the work that we have done to date, in 2013-14 that is now down to 2.47 per cent. That was in relation to changes to the building design approval system and a few other activities.

We have also monitored this phenomenon, if you like, right across the world. We have been looking at and interpreting different ways that action can be taken to reduce our attendance at these calls. The project team that has been established as part of our transition team and for the implementation of the PACSR recommendations is very well advanced on a range of options where we can reduce our attendance. For example, in the United Kingdom, there are a number of fire and rescue services that no longer attend the premise during daylight hours. They require the occupant to dial 999 or, in our case, 000. Rather than having, for example, a full crew respond to each and every call, particularly in the inner city areas, we are looking at a different type of response model or, in fact, different arrangements that can be put in place to allow the building occupants to better check. These include a very simple mechanism. A lot of the fire alarm systems now, of course, are moving from analogue-type technologies to digital, so that the programming of when the signal is transmitted to the fire department, if you like, can be delayed. In the building process of certain premises, we can approve a little bit more time being given to check whether they actually want the full alarm to proceed through the system.

Thank you for your question. In response to that, there is a great deal of work going on in this space. The project team is well engaged in both consulting with our staff and unions and our stakeholders about what is acceptable. Over time we have increased our false alarm billing charges to try to say to people, 'We would prefer you spent the money on maintaining your alarm system rather than paying us a fee'. Unfortunately, some owners just pay the bill and we still get the alarm. We also have a false alarm response team, led principally from the state community safety unit from a state perspective, but also reaching out into the regional community safety units where they target the top 10 or 20 buildings in a region and go very hard on working with the owners of those buildings and showing them how they can reduce their false alarms. On some occasions, we will waive the fees that would be normally prescribed to encourage them to invest in and upgrade a little bit more their system and improve its reliability, if you like. There is a great deal of work being done. We are very focused on reducing that core volume, because we believe (1) responding to what subsequently turns out to be false alarms continues to expose people to a greater risk from having to drive under lights and sirens; and (2) our firefighters really could spend their time in a better way.

CHAIR: I think if somehow owners were able to pass that levy on to tenants, you might have a different approach. That is just a comment from me. Member for Ipswich West?

Mr CHOAT: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to take us to a slightly different area, if that is okay. The Railway Squad is an area that I have some personal interest in, having been formerly of the railway myself. I refer the minister to page 5 of the SDS, which talks about using technology and innovative strategies to be more mobile, flexible and capable of working across boundaries. We have heard a bit about that today. Would you be able to tell the committee about the vital work being done by the railway squad to keep people on our train network safe? Can you give an overview of the staffing, bases and operations that we have in that area?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is an important question. As minister, I work with the Minister of the Department of Transport and Main Roads to ensure that we no longer have a system such as under the previous government where government departments worked in silos. We are working together. The Railway Squad provides a dedicated visual uniform police presence on Queensland Rail's city network to promote passenger and rail safety and security. I was thankful to be with the commissioner the other day in Melbourne to see some of the initiatives that they have in that particular state. We have to be ever mindful of the changing needs of people on our transport network. The Railway Squad is made up of over 60 sworn members and includes a dedicated intel. unit, a crime prevention coordinator, a police liaison officer and a firearm explosive detection dog capability. Officers operate across the regions in eight districts. There are four police regions in the south-east corner of the state. Their prime responsibility is for the investigation of all criminal incidents that occur on those particular networks.

It certainly is a large area to cover when you think there are 146 railway stations over in excess of 400 kilometres. Wrapped around that is also a lot of major events that take place in those particular areas. As I mentioned before, I had the privilege of attending the official opening of the Ipswich line in

the centre of Ipswich. It was great to be able to be in the centre of Ipswich. I have fond memories of being there when the Reeds and a couple of other shops were just down the road. I would often catch the train into Ipswich and bring groceries back home for my parents and so forth. I am not going to go down memory lane too much but suffice to say it is a safer mode of transportation these days than it was then. We will continue to evaluate the needs of railway users because the more people who use those networks, the fewer people there will be on our busy roads, and that means a safer community.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for that. I call the member for Rockhampton.

Mr BYRNE: Minister, this question is pretty broad, but it goes to the very centre of the future of the entire department and the services that support it, particularly in relation to the performance statement, which I will come back to. I note that the department was not subjected to the recent audit, the Auditor-General's review of performance standards across the rest of government. I think it was deliberately excluded because of the transition it is in. The Auditor-General made some interesting observations. He stated—

The lack of a balanced suite of efficiency and effectiveness standards for 72 per cent of the budget—

and he is referring to this recently published state budget, and most of the people in the room would be aware of this—

makes it difficult for the Parliament to hold departments fully to account.

There is no reason to suggest from that level of evidence and other things he has said that similar observations would not have been applied to the broader department if it was looked at, particularly in light of the comments made by Mr Keelty in his review. Some may be aware that I am not necessarily the greatest fan of parts of Mr Keelty's review. Some things that were said were quite reasonable. In reflecting on the way that resources are allocated and the measurement of things, Mr Keelty said—

The problem is that these increases—

and he was talking about manpower—

have not been based on any knowledge of the unit cost of a Queensland police officer or a detailed understanding of the costs or demand pressures, as discussed above. The Queensland Police Service would greatly assist government decisions by being able to quantify demand, and provide information on the effectiveness of its demand management strategies.

He also talked about new integrated systems being needed and a systems approach to these things. We have heard today the inspector-general talking about standards that he is going to roll out to particular emergency responses and management. I see in one of the performance matrices here that we have language that talks about continuous improvement. So far today I am not sure what system is actually being rolled out as part of this initiative. My first question is—

Mr DEMPSEY: I am not going to ask you to repeat it.

Mr BYRNE: I am painting a context. I need to understand the system that is being run out here. I understand the intentions and the language. Is the system that is being embraced particularly in terms of continuous improvement or quality systems or standards compliant with ISO9000?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. Most of what he has stated was fact, although there were a few falsifications in the member's statement before he asked the question. I would like to reiterate that part of our strong plan for a brighter future is making sure that we have the most open and accountable departments than ever before from the minister's office right through to all the other government agencies—

Mr BYRNE: Do you know what ISO9000 is?

Mr DEMPSEY:—and the department that comes under the portfolio. In June 2014 the QAO finalised its report and review of the service standards of 20 core Queensland departments as reported in their 2013-14 Service Delivery Statements. In relation to my portfolio, the review reflects the agencies that existed before the recent machinery-of-government changes. The first recommendation is that departments only group services together where they contribute to common objectives and outcomes. I am pleased to say that the agencies in my portfolio already do this.

The second recommendation is directed towards the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Queensland Treasury and Trade. The QAO suggests that they review their guidelines. I will ensure my portfolio continues to comply with the guidelines issued by those departments. Finally, the QAO suggests that departments be required to publish an audited performance statement in the annual report to complement their audited financial statements. Again, this is adopted and I will ensure the agencies in my portfolio comply. Again, if we need to make alterations and if there is a need to have this adopted, this certainly will be adopted.

My agencies will continue to develop robust and transparent measures of performance in line obviously with good governance right across the board and practices as well as the QAO recommendations and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and QTT guidelines. In relation to some of the other matters you asked, I would like to refer to Kelvin Anderson from the Public Safety Business Agency.

Mr Anderson: We are very new. We were fully formed on 1 July. You will see from the statements that part of our job is to develop performance frameworks. We were not included in the audit and neither were IGEM; we were still being stood up. Having formed first in administrative orders in November, we commenced work. Our act received assent in April and we were fully formed on 1 July. So we are very new. During that period we have already started work on the performance framework and have commenced work on cost attribution models. The creation of the Public Service Business Agency has taken the corporate effort for the portfolio and located it in one place. The side conversation is that there are some other services that we provide which are operational in nature. So we have just created, for example, the Queensland Government Air Service, which is the consolidation of the police and the government air wings and what was Emergency Management Helicopter Rescue. We also have the state government security service and we have just accepted the staff from the blue card.

If I leave them aside as an operational part, your question is more about the corporate part of our business. It has allowed us to focus on the good business processes that would support our two primary partners, our two commissioners. An example of that is around the information communication technology part of the business. We have already looked at all those policies and realigned them in that short amount of time with an ISO accreditation. For the first time we are able to bring the expertise, if you like, into one area and then apply the international standards. It is not a requirement that we go for an ISO accreditation, but we thought that that was best practice.

Similarly, we are working the same with finance and with HR where we have been very, very fortunate to collect together I think one of the best executive teams around government. Each of them has this sort of expertise so that we can free up our commissioners to focus even more on the front-line services. If you look at the current SDS statements as they sit, you will see there are both efficiency and effectiveness measures in there. However, I have to say that because of the nature of that work, the one for the inspector-general is more about effectiveness than efficiency. They do not control any resources; they are more about the assurance that we can have that the right arrangements are in place.

When we look at the performance measures that both police and fire have had over time, they have been good, solid measures because they measure things like the time of attendance and how many attendances there are. These are the kinds of measures that the QAO report thought were good examples and not a kind of very nebulous or a soft sort of measure; they are very, very firm measures. As we go forward, you will see the development this year of the performance framework for the portfolio, but increasingly cost attribution models will be developed. One of those models has already been well and truly developed: the internal resource allocation model. We are currently testing that against police and then, hopefully, we will be able to roll that out over in fire. Already the ICT is a prime example of ISO accreditation.

Mr BYRNE: That is refreshing to hear. Is it your intention to have the entire PSBA—all of its processes—mapped and accredited?

Mr Anderson: Mapped—certainly. Accredited—I think we will do that unit by unit. The way we have started with the process though is—for example, one of the areas that we needed to put a lot of attention to is HR. For those who know, any uniform service—and I am afraid I come back from that background—we do over time manages to layer process on process on process, particularly around selection, recruitment, discipline and those kinds of matters. Already we are going through the HR policies and rewriting all of those and condensing them. You should not consider the Public Safety Business Agency as a shared service because we are not charging our agencies a fee for service. What we have done is develop a series of service catalogues and all but one of our units has now completed those service catalogues. So if our partner agencies want a service, they simply go to the catalogue and say, 'That's it.' Those catalogues would probably form the basis of the first requirement of any good accreditation against standards.

Mr BYRNE: Who owns the money? You say you go to a catalogue. I understand these things, but who has got the delegation on the choice? Let's say we are going to buy a new truck for anybody in the room. Who has the money to make the purchase? Is it the commissioners or is the PSBA? Who owns the delegation?

Mr Anderson: This is a really important point obviously. Commissioners will continue to hold their delegations and be held accountable under the Financial Accountability Act, but I also have my delegations and I have my responsibilities under that act. Each of us has an appropriation. Some of that appropriation comes directly to me and in other cases I am collecting from the partner agencies to provide a service on their behalf. So the assets—you used the example of trucks. If Commissioner Johnson wanted a particular type of truck, he would specify that for me and I would go and buy it.

Mr BYRNE: So he is not going to end up with a wheelbarrow?

Mr Anderson: No. The critical part is that we simply are a service to our agencies and not in other forms of procurement around services where the procurer became more important than the services. The services will specify what they require. Our job is to provide it on their behalf and to do the best deal we can come up with. An example of that, again in ICT, is we have heard a bit today about the rollout of the mobile data for police. We are now trying to work out back of house how we can leverage that for fire.

Mr BYRNE: At what stage do you think you are going to have the process mapping—at least the first cut—completed across all areas of responsibility?

Mr Anderson: I would think that the service catalogues do that pretty effectively already. We could easily show you the one for the financial and business services where our service map is quite detailed for all of the financial accommodation services—

Mr BYRNE: So we will be able to see this in, say, estimates in the future if we choose to? We will see an input, a process, an output, an outcome and a measurable parameter? Is that what we are heading towards?

Mr Anderson: In short, yes. In fact, if we look at the model we have just built for internal resource allocation, we are for the first time starting to look at what resource has been allocated and linking it to an outcome. So what is the crime clearance rate by region? How does that apply to the resources given to that region? So this is built on data for the first time. In terms of my business, we would map out what is the business process for each part of either HR or finance or ICT.

Mr BYRNE: One final question, I suppose. The Queensland performance management framework clearly is a critical component, an overarching driver in many ways. Who is the officer accountable that leads within the department or the entire entity? Is it individual compartments, or is it PSBA, or is it the minister's office?

Mr Anderson: I should say that it has just occurred to me that assent to my act was actually May and not April. I think I said April, so I am sorry if I led you astray.

The way this will occur is that each CEO—in this case in the portfolios there are four effectively—their delegation and obligations have not changed, so performance will sit clearly with each of those CEOs. My task is to help build the framework that allows them to exercise those delegations and those accountabilities. So instead of four versions of it, you might have one with some variant to it to suit the particular business unit.

CHAIR: If I might, Mr Anderson, just to follow on from what the member for Rockhampton was saying—and it is probably not his question—but is this in concert with the QAO?

Mr Anderson: Yes.

CHAIR: Obviously they have to do audits and so forth in the future. I would not want to hear in 12 months or two years' time that you are out of kilter with each other.

Mr Anderson: No, that is right. In fact, we regularly test with the QAO our approach. There is a single audit committee. QAO is represented. We engage with them about all of our developments and we have been to them talking about our business models and the like, and we will continue to do that.

CHAIR: I just might ask the Commissioner. I know that in my regular consultations with my inspector in Ipswich for some time we have had the analogue system—well, we have only had the analogue system, and clearly with that system of radio contact I have heard about our officers using mobiles phones at night so that criminals do not know that they are coming and so forth. So is the digital system anticipated in the future? And is it the near future?

Mr DEMPSEY: Just before the Commissioner answers that, obviously that is part of the overall government wireless network: almost half a billion dollars for the next 10 years. I will get the Commissioner to comment on that. That will allow not just our agencies to go with other areas of digital, but also to be able to talk between departments for the first time ever. We have had testings across different parts of the portfolio and it is phenomenal to see where we are going to be taking technology and also communications, because that will certainly have an impact on officer safety as well as communications. Commissioner, if you would like to talk about the—

CHAIR: It is only a brief response, because I think the Minister has answered it, but I would be thankful for a time line.

Commissioner Stewart: Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Chair, for the opportunity. The Minister is quite right: the government wireless network is an investment in communications for the future for all government agencies, in particular though for emergency services. The initial phase is to manage the development of the network for the G20 and there are many reasons why that is needed, particularly in the area of security and intra-area operability. They are the two key factors. What will occur after that phase so that this major area here that will be covered by the G20 will be in place for the G20, so that is by November this year, and then the next phase is the rollout in the South-East Queensland area.

CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner, very much. Member for Broadwater.

Miss BARTON: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. Minister, I might just turn to Neighbourhood Watch, if I might. It is particularly pertinent given that I am going to the Runaway Bay Islands Neighbourhood Watch meeting tonight. I just refer to page 6 of the SDS, which refers to funding in 2014-15 of \$1 million for the third year of the government's commitment to provide \$4 million over four years to revitalise Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers. I was just wondering if you could please outline for the benefit of the committee in what ways these programs are being revitalised under this funding and how these new initiatives are benefiting the community.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. Through you, Mr Chair, the government, as part of their strong plan for a brighter future, is obviously committed to community engagement and the enhancement of Neighbourhood Watch and we will continue to revitalise front-line services for families. Whether it be from the Cape to Coolangatta, these families are those in our neighbourhoods who show the true Australian spirit of looking after your mate through organisations particularly like the Neighbourhood Watch. We know the true value added by dedicated community members and communities, and that is why this government is providing, as you alluded to, \$1 million per year over four years to renew Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers initiatives.

The myPolice Neighbourhood Watch blog was officially launched on 14 December 2012 and the renewed blog model went live on 18 March 2014. There are numerous blogs in the Neighbourhood Watch sector. They have had over 110,000 visits since March this year; 3,000 published posts, 170 community authors, 55 police authors and 21 community members have joined as online members since 16 June. I would just like to reiterate that. That is 2,100 community members, and it just shows the level of community engagement like never before.

I had the privilege of officially launching the Neighbourhood Watch model in Townsville this year in addition to being a member of a number of traditional Neighbourhood Watch groups. It is great to see them conversing and coming on with this online approach to reengaging in the community. It is a phenomenal tool for police. As we know, police are only as good as the information they receive. Neighbourhood Watch is valuable. There are currently 419 Neighbourhood Watch groups across Queensland communities, and there are three groups that are in the formation stage with expressions of interest for another six. The Torres Strait northern peninsula area and the Weipa e-Watch are the state's first community based e-groups. It is great to see them coming online in such a significant way. All of these facets, from Neighbourhood Watch to myPolice blog and the Queensland police Facebook site—which I believe is the largest of any law enforcement agency in the world—are quite significant. This is all part of what we do are doing as a government to make sure that communities are kept safe.

There are a number of initiatives that Neighbourhood Watch rolls out on a regular basis, but I particularly want to thank the hardworking volunteers. I would like to reiterate the great work that Crime Stoppers do. It has been phenomenal. Crime Stoppers has collated over 201,300 pieces of information from in excess of one million contacts from members of the community since its formation to 16 June 2014. It certainly has got magnificent results in that period of time since its inception to 16 June. It has seen 26,935 people apprehended; over 70,000 charges; 25 murders solved; 20

attempted murders solved; more than \$620 million worth of drugs seized; around \$3.9 million proceeds of crime seized during that time; as well as \$10 million worth of stolen property being recovered. This is quite significant, and I particularly want to thank all the staff, the volunteers and the CEO, Trevor O'Hara, for his dedication and hard work. We will continue to work with Crime Stoppers and Neighbourhood Watch because when we go back to the modern inceptions of policing, the fundamental principles were obviously police are as good as the community, and the community are as good as the police that serve them. So we certainly have to ensure that police and the community work in that ever-increasing partnership and are not drawn apart.

CHAIR: Member for Yeerongpilly.

Mr JUDGE: Minister, I acknowledge the difficulty of the role that you have and also the Commissioner and the executive of the Police Service. I want to talk about operational issues, because really that is the ultimate outcome of the organisation—service delivery in terms of collaborating with sectors of the community to deliver problem solving approaches to crime. When we look at communities like Cairns and Aurukun and we look at the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people in the disability sector and seniors, these are very vulnerable groups of people, particularly in relation to personal and property crime. I am particularly interested in the allocations being made by the Queensland Police Service to deal with those particular groups and strategies to improve the sense of safety and security of those people.

Mr DEMPSEY: Through you, Mr Chair, there were actually a couple of questions all rolled into one.

Mr JUDGE: I will break them down for you.

Mr DEMPSEY: I am happy to answer all of the questions and go through them systematically.

Mr JUDGE: I just wanted to give you an appreciation overall.

Mr DEMPSEY: And I do appreciate that. If the Commissioner would just like to start and comment in relation to people with disabilities and how we are availing ourselves from a community policing aspect to being able to have more police out there. I think the member for Yeerongpilly would appreciate that if we were both back in the Police Service, he's going back many year to those days when police had the time to stop and talk to the milkman, the taxi driver and different members of the communities over the fence. Today we are certainly seeing a reintegration of that community engagement like never before, because certainly with the technology that we predict over the next two and a half to three years, there is almost a 20 per cent increase in efficiency across an organisation; that is, one fifth of police time is now going into other areas, and that is at a minimum. So it is quite significant. Commissioner, if you would like to comment on that to start with.

Mr JUDGE: If you like, Minister, if you could just deal initially with disabilities, seniors and ATSI. I know I spoke specifically about Cairns and Aurukun because they have been in the media lately, but the disability sector is particularly vulnerable to personal and property crime. How are we allocating resources through the police to deal with that cohort in the community?

Commissioner Stewart: Through the chair, Mr Judge, thank you for that important question. I hope that everyone is prepared to stay for about three hours, because this is all good news. I have Deputy Commissioner Barron in the room who can talk at length about the Safer Streets program in West Cairns and Aurukun. That in itself is just an outstanding piece of work from a whole-of-government perspective that is led by the Queensland Police Service, and Mr Barron is actually the Premier's champion for that particular project so I will ask him to come to the table in a moment. But I also wanted to talk to you about how exciting it is to be in this sort of situation as a police department that is really embracing technology to assist people with disabilities.

It is not widely known, but we are doing a lot of work behind the scenes in the Queensland Police Service at our Policelink facility, which is our nonurgent call-for-service facility out at Zillmere. It is a whole-of-state approach to that arrangement and the work that they are doing in meeting the needs of people with significant disabilities, including people with speech defects and disabilities, blind people, people with visual disabilities and people who are disabled and cannot leave their house, that sort of thing.

In the main, the way we are now able to interact with them, with different types of technology, is quite outstanding. They can use that and feel that their connection with the Queensland police department and, through us, other agencies becomes almost seamless. The disability can almost disappear by the use of technology. So this is an amazing story.

The other area I would quote—the minister just touched on it—is the extra money not for Crime Stoppers in particular but for Neighbourhood Watch and the move for Neighbourhood Watch to be technology enhanced. In other words, people in homes use technology to take photos, send those stories and report suspicious activity—and contact us of course. But particularly that has been part of the funding that has been provided in recent times to revitalise Neighbourhood Watch. Again, one of the great tragedies is that we have many Queenslanders who are virtually locked in their homes because they are disabled or they are elderly. They are not able to move around like probably everyone in this room is able to. So these are all good-news stories in the way the Queensland Police Service is moving forward.

We also regularly provide advice to seniors and elders in our community on better ways to protect themselves. I am sure that everyone in this room is aware of cases of elder abuse. This is a growing concern to the community. We are working very hard, through our crime prevention staff, to advise and educate the community to these sorts of issues and to ways of minimising the risk of that. Again, the Queensland Police Service is taking a lead in this area, together with other parts of the government.

In terms of probably the most important area that you touched on, sir, with the chair's indulgence I will ask Deputy Commissioner Barron to come forward to talk about the work that is being done in west Cairns, particularly Aurukun. Quite honestly, I think you will all agree once you have heard that it is just magnificent, the work that is being done there—not just by the Queensland police but also by a range of agencies. Chair, if you will indulge me, I would be happy if the deputy commissioner could come forward.

Mr DEMPSEY: Just prior to that, chair, I mention some of the other aspects across the portfolio relating to disabilities. We have the new SES app. Instead of people having to call by phone, they are able to save footage and images. When the SES turns up that helps them deliver emergency services. The technology is there for people to report through Policelink and so forth and provide digital type information. A picture paints a thousand words.

Recently I had the privilege of attending the Mobile in Moreton initiative. That is an initiative directed at people in wheelchairs, delivered in conjunction with the regional council there, to provide education to people in nursing homes and people with disabilities—about how to get out in the community and get access but also about their rights and the rights of other users of pathways and roads. That is all about improving quality of life. Certainly it was a very successful day. It was great to see people being able to get out in their community and also to take away some of the frustrations those particular users experience on a daily basis.

Before handing over to Deputy Commissioner Peter Barron in relation to the member's particular question I will say that—not wanting to steal your thunder, Deputy Commissioner—even before we were elected we set about addressing the significant rise in crime rates across Cairns generally. On coming to government we activated a number of task forces in that area. We immediately put extra police into that area. Police resourcing comes from the Commissioner of Police, and he allocated officers to that particular area. We have seen significant results, whether it be in existing programs or with the Cairns Safer Streets Task Force. Instead of governments working in silos, we are seeing them working together for the first time. Certainly more will be coming out of this initiative in the future.

Mr JUDGE: Just before we continue, Minister, to cut to the chase, statistically are we seeing a reduction in crimes against seniors and people with disabilities? Is there evidence to that effect?

Mr DEMPSEY: I know there is right across-the-board but particularly for those groups. I am more than happy to take that on notice and get that to you as well.

Mr JUDGE: Are you happy to take that on notice?

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes. Across the state?

Mr JUDGE: If that is all right, yes. Thank you.

Mr DEMPSEY: Yes, will do.

Deputy Commissioner Barron: Thank you, Minister, and good afternoon, Chair. My name is Peter Barron. I am the Acting Deputy Commissioner, Regional Operations. The government has put me in charge of the Safer Streets Task Force, which is being rolled out in Cairns and other communities throughout Queensland at the current time.

I will provide just a brief piece of history in relation to this strategy. In the early part of last year and leading up to about May, there had been a number of crime related issues and homelessness and public drunkenness related issues in and around Cairns. There was nothing new about this; this had happened historically and had been dealt with effectively but it was starting to materialise again. The government brought together the Cairns Safer Streets Task Force. This was quite unique. It represented the first time in history that the three tiers of government were involved and a multiagency approach was adopted to deal with the issues in Cairns—in particular in relation to the dysfunctional issues in west Cairns, which was recording some significant problems.

Just to give you some insight into the structure of this one-government approach and the other tiers of government that were involved, the task force involved Prime Minister and Cabinet, Cairns Regional Council, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Communities, Education, Housing and Public Works, Health, DATSIMA and QPS, to name a few. In terms of the chair of this task force—again, to my recollection it would be the first time in history—a member of parliament, Mr Gavin King, the member for Cairns, was placed in charge of this task force. He heads up that task force. I am a member of it along with the district officer of Cairns, Acting Assistant Commissioner Paul Taylor. We basically run that task force. We deal with all the issues around Cairns. That is one part of it. There is a particular focus on west Cairns and getting right to the heart of the problem in west Cairns. We put a hub there, which is represented by about 20 different government agencies working directly out of west Cairns to deal with the issues. We launched that hub in December last year. We invited the community to the launch of that hub. We also had a range of other cultural events that took place that night in the park. We had over 1,000 people turn up for the launch of that hub—1,000 people who are committed to seeing change in their suburb of west Cairns. That just indicates the type of commitment we have from those people.

The Safer Streets Task Force in Cairns was subsequently extended to encompass the whole of Queensland, to wherever there are issues in a particular community. The government is in the process of trialling this project in eight other communities apart from west Cairns. I am now at liberty to divulge part of what was a cabinet-in-confidence document. I can state that there will be directors-general or deputy directors-general placed in charge of task forces in all those communities as champions for those particular communities, to deal firsthand with the problem. That will be a multigovernment approach, like it is in Cairns with the multiple agencies working together. They will bring all those agencies together to work on those communities, to deal with those issues that are unique to those particular areas. Of course, the community will be involved in that—with the relevant mayors, councillors, elders and the like.

I cannot go into the exact statistics of what has occurred in recent times, but I can say that in west Cairns since the project has been in place there has been some significant change in the statistics in that area, in the quality of life. There have been particular significant drops in armed robberies and unlawful uses in that particular area in the short time that task force has been working out there. Perception of crime has been greatly enhanced in a positive sense. People feel safe to go about their business there. I visited the suburb just recently and it has a totally different atmosphere to what it did, say, over 12 months ago. It is a beautiful part of the world. The community is working with us to enhance the quality of life in that particular suburb.

I will just digress a little in relation to another operation that is run on the back of the Safer Streets Task Force, because it just indicates the diversity of the project and the type of work we are doing across Queensland and will do across Queensland in the months ahead. In the early part of this year and the latter part of last year Townsville was experiencing significant increases in two particular categories of crime—that is, unlawful use and break and enters. In fact, crime had continually grown in that city for a period of five years. The community had had enough. We were called upon to do something through the multiagency task force, and we did. We formed a partnership with a number of the other government agencies there—Housing, Corrective Services, the local council—and brought the local members of parliament on board.

I can report that over the six months that that operation has been in place in Townsville we have seen the most phenomenal reductions in crime. We have seen a 56 per cent reduction in unlawful uses for the last six months and a 49 per cent reduction in break and enters for that same period. That corresponds to 267 fewer cars being stolen in that city in the last six months and 684 fewer break and enters occurring in that city for that period of time. There have been dramatic reductions in crime again, I would say. That is only for that six-month period. So when it is extrapolated over the 12 months it is still a good result.

That operation is Mike Adamant. It is still going. I got the results only today and they show that the break and enters for the week just gone are half what they were for the same week in 2013. That demonstrates some of the positive work we are doing through this task force. We are identifying these areas, moving into them, applying a one-government approach—a multiagency approach—and then applying that approach and deriving those results.

In relation to the other communities it is early days. We are only starting to work in there. When the directors-general come on board and we bring together all these agencies, I feel positive that we will get good results there, too.

CHAIR: Thank you very much, Deputy Commissioner.

Deputy Commissioner Barron: The commissioner has asked me to talk about Aurukun briefly.

CHAIR: Yes, by all means.

Deputy Commissioner Barron: Aurukun is part of the initial safer streets strategy and task force. It was initially Cairns, with an emphasis on west Cairns, and Aurukun. In recent months in Aurukun we have worked very closely with the mayor, the council and the elders. David Edwards, who is the director-general of State Development, has worked with us. We have identified a number of issues that we can work on. One of the biggest problems is a lack of opportunities for youth in that town. Through our partnership with Prime Minister and Cabinet we have raised almost enough money—I think it is around \$1½ million—to put a PCYC on the ground in Aurukun. We will be able to run all our youth activities from that PCYC. The mayor and the council are over the moon about that particular facet of what we are doing there.

We have also gone on the front foot with the police in particular there and other government agencies. We do not have a PCYC at the moment, naturally enough, but we have appointed a senior sergeant from Weipa to run youth programs there and we have put a female CPIU officer up there to deal with child abuse and related issues in the community and to work with the community for the kids to gain confidence to come forward and make complaints, whereas at the current time we are not getting those types of complaints to the volume that we should.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for that. Member for Bulimba, if you have a question that can be answered in under five minutes, you have the call.

Mr DILLAWAY: Well, that is entirely up to the minister, I guess, isn't it? Minister, I just want to refer to page 6 of the SDS, referring to the second police helicopter. Could you please detail the ways in which the second helicopter will be used and how the existing helicopter has contributed to the QPS's capacity to prevent and of course detect crime?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question. It is important in particular for his electorate but also all of Brisbane. The first helicopter started down in the Gold Coast area. The second one is for the Brisbane greater metropolitan area, out from Ipswich to Redlands and up past Caboolture. Obviously if it is necessary to go a little bit further afield, depending on the operation of course, it will be used in those particular areas. We are seeing some significant results. Bearing in mind this was an election commitment. We said we would deliver two helicopters. We have delivered the two helicopters. It is a magnificent partnership with Surf Life Saving Queensland. I want to particularly thank their board and their volunteers for working hand in hand with the Queensland Police Service to get a great result for these two particular helicopters, PoAir 1 and PoAir 2.

I want to reiterate that all the great work is indicative of what this commitment was about. I will go through some of the magnificent jobs that they are doing on the ground, but it is the peace of mind for the community. Criminals know that they cannot get away any longer. Whether it be these two new police helicopters, the three brand new catamarans that we are delivering in Cairns, Townsville and the Whitsundays, or the new electronic devices, what we are doing is going out and, as the Deputy Commissioner alluded to, with those programs and task forces that we have in the state getting rid of the silos of government departments and working across to get results. This portfolio certainly is getting those results.

The helicopters have been involved in everything from arsons to street complaints to dangerous drivers. One of the greatest aspects, and what the Queensland helicopters have in comparison to other helicopters elsewhere in Australia, is their technology. A lot of the time the offenders just simply do not see them. They are able to work in both daytime and night-time. They are able to basically read a number plate at anything from up two to three kilometres away. I use that as a reference. The intel gathering capacity to keep men and women on the ground safe is phenomenal. It will only be a greater asset as it continues to protect communities right around Queensland.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for that. The time allocated for the consideration of the proposed expenditure of the relevant organisational units within the portfolio of the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services has expired. On behalf of the committee, including our unofficial guest, the member for Yeerongpilly, I thank you and your advisers for your attendance. Minister, I remind you that your answers to questions taken on notice at today's hearing will be provided to the research director by the close of business Tuesday, 22 July 2014.

I only wish to make a comment for the purposes of *Hansard* in that there has been a criticism levied in the paper, I believe it was SBS or something, about my chairmanship. I just wish to put on record in respect of Tuesday that my notes are that, in fact, it was about equal. Today I put the time and the questions down. The questions for opposition is about 200 minutes in time, the government was about 156. I just simply wish to note the record because it is rarely that I am ever asked for an opinion as to what actually happened and I do not want to let the facts stop a good story. I do thank Hansard staff and my good friend, Peter, for helping me and us as a committee to perform this statutory task. I now declare this public hearing closed.

Mr DEMPSEY: Can I say a few words?

CHAIR: Indeed. I do not close it, I leave it to you, Minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: As briefly as possible, I would like to thank all the committee and staff involved in conducting this estimates committee. It is a great privilege and honour to be the minister of a portfolio. This portfolio has gone through the most significant change of any portfolio in a generation. We have seen the movement of ambulance from one area and corrections and prostitution licences move to the Attorney-General. We have set about a mechanism to get the best value for dollar. We have two operational commissioners and the Public Safety Business Agency to get the best value and best consistency of equipment and assets across the whole of the portfolio which makes sure that front-line services to Queenslanders increase. I want to particularly thank all the commissioners, Lee Johnson, Kelvin Anderson, PSBA, Ian Stewart, Iain MacKenzie, Inspector General Emergency Management, all the other deputy commissioners, my Assistant Minister, Ted Malone, all staff from all the agencies who have contributed today—obviously 'light fingers' Angus we have here today. It has been a pleasure. This area and the people in it are achieving great results for Queensland.

I thank you for this process where we have an opportunity to tell a little bit about what we are doing. I think it is indicative of the people in these agencies, whether it be the Rural Fire Service, the SES our more structured areas. They have the intestinal fortitude to achieve results. Part of that make up, besides always doing the right thing, is to make sure we get the best dollar value for every Queenslanders. We will certainly keep to that target for the days, weeks, months and years to come.

CHAIR: I would like also to thank the committee members as well. Thank you for your cooperation and help. I really appreciate it. I now declare the public hearing closed.

Committee adjourned at 4.51 pm