

Question on Notice

No. 770

Asked on Friday 18 June 2004

Mr SEENEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Welford) -

QUESTION:

- (1) For each financial year since 2001-02 and including the year to date, what is the number of offenders convicted of a serious offence?
- (2) For each of those listed in (1), what number of those received the maximum sentence possible?
- (3) For each of those listed in (1), what number received a custodial sentence?

ANSWER:

As the Member is not clear about which 'serious offence' he is referring it is not possible to answer this question in any detail. However, it may help the Member if he refers to my answer to Question on Notice 1237 (10 September 2003) asked by the Member for Southern Downs.

Each year for the past three years, the Opposition has asked me questions of this nature. And each year, the Opposition has ignored some fundamental aspects of our criminal justice system to use the answer to concoct some bizarre scaremongering media story to suit its political purposes.

For example, the Opposition continually fails to recognise that in sentencing any offender, the court must give regard to s.9(2) of the Penalties and Sentencing Act 1992. I detailed this section in my answer to QoN 1237 last year.

And as I have repeatedly stated, the judiciary in all states, including Queensland, is bound by principles authoritatively stated by the High Court of Australia regarding the imposition of maximum penalties. Specifically, a maximum sentence should only be imposed in the very worst category of cases.