

**Question on Notice
No. 644
Asked on 19 April 2007**

MR MALONE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE) -

QUESTION:

With reference to her answer to Question on Notice No.279, asked on 7 March 2007 would she now answer the question previously asked of her-

What initiatives, policies and procedures has her department in place to deal with the increasing rate of organised crime in Queensland?

ANSWER:

I reiterate my previous answer. What evidence does the Member use to support his claim that there is an increasing rate of organised crime?

The Queensland Police Service defines organised crime as criminal activity involving two or more people conspiring and/or acting with one another in a criminal enterprise in an ongoing capacity to participate in activities that are illegal either directly or indirectly for gain.

The Queensland Police Service, like other Australian police jurisdictions, collects crime statistics relating to victims, offenders and offences – it does not collect statistical data on organised crime per se, which may fall into any number of offence categories.

On 6 March 2007, I tabled the Queensland Police Service's mid-year statistical review in State Parliament. The mid-year review revealed that between 1 July and 31 December 2006, the rate of reported offences per 100,000 people in Queensland decreased:

- 3% for drug offences
- 9% for robbery
- 9% for unlawful use of a motor vehicle
- 7% for arson
- 2% for assaults
- 1% for sexual offences
- 27% for drug trafficking
- 29% drop in prostitution offences

Based on the results achieved by the Queensland Police Service the assertion that there is an increasing rate of organised crime in Queensland is both unsubstantiated and unhelpful to the ongoing crime fighting efforts of Queensland Police.

The Queensland Police Service has embarked on number of initiatives to deal with organised crime, for example, in September 2006, as part of a Beattie Government election commitment, and Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established to specifically target the organised crime activities of Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMCGs). The Taskforce is responsible for coordinating the statewide management of intelligence holdings on OMCGs and to investigate and overview incidents involving OMCGs. Taskforce members have developed strong strategic and operational

partnerships with other state, federal and global law enforcement agencies to share information and identify best practice nationally and internationally.

The Queensland Police Service has established a Heavy Vehicle Investigation Unit within its State Crime Operations Command to focus on statewide investigations of organised crime within the transport industry. The Heavy Vehicle Investigation Unit is involved in a multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional approach which uses a coordinated enforcement strategy to address organised heavy vehicle theft, criminal activity, including transportation of illicit drugs, stolen property and other contraband, facilitated by organised crime groups.

The State Crime Operations Command works in partnership with the Australian Federal Police, Australian Crime Commission, Australian Defence Force and Australian Customs to combat organised crime networks.

The Queensland Police Service also works in partnership with key stakeholders in the Pharmacy Guild, Queensland Health, Department of Mines and Energy and the banking industry where organised criminal activity can perpetuate.

The Australian Bankers' Association Security Issues Forum and Australian Bankers' Association Safety and Security Taskforce are attended by representatives of each state law enforcement agency, various national financial institutions and the Finance Sector Union. The meetings identify national trends, facilitate the exchange of information and identify technological advancements in the banking industry. Participating in these types of forums assists the Queensland Police Service to maintain currency of knowledge regarding complex fraud offences and recently helped police to identify and arrest an English citizen on the Gold Coast who was using stolen overseas banking details and duplicated cards to steal cash from accounts.

The Queensland Police Service has an ongoing inter-agency commitment to assist enforcement agencies such as the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission and Australian Crime Commission to investigate and identify organised criminal networks and take immediate action to prosecute offenders. Recently, a joint operation (Operation Danson and Operation Navan) resulted in the arrest of 49 people for 163 offences, including 26 drug trafficking offences. The operation, which targeted an OMCG, was run jointly between the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission, Australian Crime Commission, New South Wales Police Force and New South Wales Crime Commission.

Between June 2006 and March 2007 the Queensland Police Service undertook 13 operations targeting organised crime, which culminated in the arrest of 44 persons on 266 charges and the seizure of: \$940 908 in illicit drugs; \$649 757 in cash; \$544 110 in property; and \$40 850 in firearms.

The Beattie Government also continues to monitor and review legislation and powers conferred to police officers in Queensland to ensure organised criminal activity in Queensland is successfully targeted and prosecuted.