

Question on Notice

No. 406

Asked on Thursday, 13 March 2008

Mr CHRIS FOLEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland (Mr Shine) -

QUESTION:

Minister, having received a number of constituent concerns recently over either the inability or lengthy wait times to contact the State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER), what plans does this department have in place to amend these lengthy wait times?

ANSWER:

The SPER Call Centre is currently experiencing a high volume of incoming calls. The increase in call demand is attributed to a higher lodgement rate of fines to date this year, a higher than normal attrition of staff and the ongoing recovery from traditional Christmas/New Year backlogs in mail.

The Call Centre's staged recruitment strategy has resulted in induction training for five Client Service Officers who commenced on 25 February 2008. These officers have finalised training and commenced in the Call Centre on Friday, 14 March 2008.

This staged recruitment will continue to address staffing levels by actively recruiting additional staff over the coming months to maintain levels required to service call demand. The next scheduled induction of additional Client Service Officers is 28 April 2008. It is anticipated these officers will commence servicing calls from 26 May 2008.

SPER answered 20,208 inbound calls and made 5,237 outbound calls in the month of February. Thirty-two Client Service Officers working a variety of shifts within our operational 10 hour period being 8:00am to 5:45pm serviced these calls.

For March 2008, the Call Centre has answered 11,080 inbound calls. With the addition of the five new Client Service Officers who started this month the current staff capacity of the Call Centre has increased to 37 staff members.

Officers are performing additional hours within the operational period. In addition, SPER is temporarily trialling extended hours of operation, and the Call Centre was open on Saturday 8 March 2008 to assist with servicing these calls.

It is important to note that in January 2008, the call centre increased its queue capacity from 15 up to 25. This increase has allowed an additional 40 per cent of SPER clients to call and queue to be serviced by an officer.