Question on Notice
No. 398
Asked on 24 March 2011

MR ELMES asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (MR ROBERTS)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Weapons Licensing Branch of the Queensland Police Service—

(1) What was the total operating budget and actual acquitted expenditure for the branch in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 (reported separately by year, budget and amount spent)?

(2) What was the total staffing (FTE) for the office as at 7 March 2011 and what was it at the same point in 2010, 2009 and 2008 (reported by rank, grade and whether police or staff member)?

ANSWER:

The Weapons Licensing Branch (WLB) is a work unit within the Administration Division of the Queensland Police Service (QPS). WLB is responsible for administering all aspects of the Weapons Act 1990, Weapons Regulations 1996 and Weapons Categories Regulations 1997. This includes the issue and renewal of all licences, permits and exemptions, and the maintenance of the Weapons Licensing Management System (WLMS).

WLB provides licensing and permit services direct to members of the public and regulates businesses involved in the use of firearms. WLB also provides support, training and advice to internal operational units of the QPS and external clients on weapons control matters.

WLB is made up of a number of sworn (police officers) and unsworn (administration) members specialising in different areas. It also co-ordinates the QPS Firearm Security Inspection and Audit Program which requires the inspection by operational police of the licence holder's safe storage facilities.

(1) The following table outlines the total operating budget and actual acquitted expenditure for the Weapons Licensing Branch in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Budget Period	Expenditure	Operating Budget
2010-11	3,381,295.00*	5,223,036.00
2009-10	5,030,467.00	5,074,422.00
2008-09	4,980,535.00	5,006,937.00

*Amount spent in 2010-11 is as at 28 February 2011.

Funding for additional resources and overtime associated with the implementation of the WLMS is subject to separate allocation within the QPS and does not form a part of the WLB operating budget.

The WLB is currently operating within its allocated operating budget and it is anticipated that it will come under budget at the end of the 2010-11 financial year.

(2) The following table outlines the total staffing (FTE) for the Weapons Licensing Branch as at 7 March 2011 and staffing during 2010, 2009 and 2008.

Positions	**2011***	**2010**	**2009**	**2008**
Inspector	2	2	2	2
Senior Sergeant	1	1	1	1
Sergeant	5	5	5	5
Constable / Senior Constable	3	3	3	3
A06	1	1	1	1
A05 Permanent	4	4	4	4
A05 Temporary	1	0	0	0
A04 Permanent	6	6	6	6
A04 Temporary	0	1	1	2
A03 Permanent	8	8	8	8
A03 Temporary	31	0	2	3
A02 Permanent	26	56	56	56
A02 Temporary	2	3	2	11
TOTALS	**90**	**90**	**91**	**102**

* Approved staffing as at 7 March 2011

The Queensland Police Service advises that the detailed information you have requested in relation to the same point in time for 2010, 2009 and 2008 is currently not readily available.

With the advent of the new WLMS, a staffing review was undertaken to determine the most efficient and effective structure to complement the new system. It was determined that a staffing restructure was required to reflect the improved roles and responsibilities of persons processing and approving information under the new system. In effect, the new system allowed the QPS to remove a layer of bureaucracy allowing it to process applications more efficiently.

Further, in response to the accumulation of weapons related licence applications during the system transition, the QPS assigned additional resources to provide assistance. This included the temporary reallocation of 20 staff members from the Police Contact Centre and the temporary employment of up to 10 external staff members. These are in addition to the staffing levels indicated above and do not form a part of the WLB operating budget.