

**Question on Notice
No. 465
Asked on 7 June 2013**

MR KAYE asked the Minister for Police and Community Safety (MR DEMPSEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline (a) the number of additional police committed to the South Brisbane district since March 2012, (b) additional funding committed to recruiting new police officers as part of the recent budget and (c) the government's approach to tougher penalties for offenders?

ANSWER:

- (a) The Queensland Government has given a four year commitment to increase police numbers by 1,100 officers (over and above attrition), with a surge of 300 police in the initial financial year.

The Commissioner has advised that the promised growth of 300 police officers for the 2012-13 financial year is on target to being achieved. This growth is over and above police separations such as resignations or retirements.

As at 1 March 2012, the actual strength of the South Brisbane District was 446 police officers.

As at 1 June 2013, the District boasted an actual strength of 465 – an increase of 19 police officers.

- (b) The 2013-14 Queensland Police Service Budget of \$2.001 billion provides funding to continue revitalising frontline policing services and tackling crime. The Budget includes \$63 million for an additional 300 police officers recruited in 2012-13 and a further 267 police officers in 2013-14, as part of a \$358.3 million commitment to provide an extra 1,100 police officers over four years.

- (c) Since taking office in March 2012, the Government has introduced tougher penalties for offenders across a range of portfolios. In relation to legislation administered within the portfolio of Police and Community Safety, I am pleased to outline the following approaches to tougher penalties for offenders:

- In August 2012, a mandatory minimum penalty of \$5,000 and two years loss of licence was introduced for evading police. At the same time, the maximum penalty for certain types of serious assault offences committed against police officers was doubled from 7 years to 14 years, and a non-parole period of 25 years was introduced for the murder of a police officer.
- In November 2012, the Queensland Government cracked down on illegal firearm use with the introduction of tough new penalties targeting the trafficking, supply, unlawful possession and use of illegal firearms. The changes included introducing:

- A mandatory minimum term of five years in custody for an adult offender convicted of unlawfully trafficking weapons if one of those weapons is a category H or R firearm.
 - A mandatory minimum term of three years in custody for an adult offender convicted of unlawfully supplying five or more weapons and at least one weapon supplied is a short firearm.
 - An adult offender convicted of unlawfully possessing a firearm, other than a category A or B firearm, that is used in the commission of an indictable offence will serve a mandatory minimum term of 18 months in custody.
 - An adult offender who unlawfully possesses a firearm, other than a category A or B firearm, for the purpose of committing or facilitating the commission of an indictable offence, will serve a mandatory minimum term of one year in custody.
 - An adult offender convicted of unlawfully possessing a short firearm in a public place will serve a mandatory minimum term of one year in custody.
- In April 2013, the Queensland Government passed Australia's toughest hooning laws which will now see hooning vehicles sold or crushed sooner. The new penalties will result in cars being taken off the road for 90 days for the first offence, and forfeited if a second hooning offence is committed within a five year period. The two strikes approach will apply to those committing Type 1 offences which include:
 - Dangerous operation of a motor vehicle;
 - Racing and speed trials on roads; and
 - Wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke, in circumstances that involve a speed trial, a race between motor vehicles or a burn out.

The new hooning laws will commence in the second half of 2013, to allow sufficient time for logistics to be finalised and community education about the new penalties as requested by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

Additionally, I refer the Member to the Government's *Final Report Six Month Action Plan (July-December 2012)*, which outlines initiatives implemented in other portfolios that have resulted in tougher penalties for offenders. This report can be accessed via the Internet at <http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/plans-and-progress.aspx>