

# **Assaults on members of the NSW Police Force Legislative Assembly Committee on Law & Public Safety**

## **Police Association of New South Wales Response to questions on notice**

### **Question on Notice 1:**

Mr MARK TAYLOR: Dr Linklater, my understanding is there is a stable number of assaults taking place. Is it the case that assaults for attending domestic violence [DV] incidents has decreased?

Dr LINKLATER: I am not sure whether it is increasing or decreasing, I am aware that it is around 20 per cent.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: But, assaults for attending alcohol-related incidents has decreased?

Dr LINKLATER: That is correct. Over the years, I can take that question on notice to give you exact details, I know that has gone from 70 per cent over a number of years down to 45 per cent.

### **PANSW response to Question on Notice 1:**

The NSWPF submission to this inquiry indicates that assaults on police at domestic violence incidents has remained at around 20% of all police assaults between 2015-2019.

As per the PANSW submission and data obtained from BOCSAR, alcohol related assaults on police were at a high point between 2008-2011, with 74% of assaults on police being alcohol related in 2009. In 2020, this has reduced to 45%.

### **Question on Notice 2:**

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: In relation to workers compensation, can you tell us if there has been an increase in workers compensation claims due to stress associated with violence against police officers? You mentioned that workers compensation claims have taken too long to be processed but I am asking whether there has been any increase in workers compensation claims and do they have a cost to the police force?

Dr LINKLATER: The NSW Police Force might be in a better position to answer that question. My understanding is that it has remained reasonably stable as far as workers compensation claims but physical assaults have gone up. I am not sure if that answers your question.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: So you are saying that there has not been an increase in workers—

Dr LINKLATER: I am not sure. I would have to take the question on notice because I am not 100 per cent sure of the statistics—that comes from the NSW Police Force.

### **Response to Question on Notice 2:**

The PANSW understanding is that psychological workers compensation claims are not categorised in a manner that would enable reporting of statistical trends specific underlying cause to. Psychological injuries are often multi-faceted in their causes, meaning an in-depth case review of all police workers compensation claims would be needed to answer this question in any detail.

The NSWPF submission to this inquiry (page 26-27) indicates that the numbers of injury reports due to physical assaults has been stable around 1400 for the last five financial years. Each year, around 400 workers compensation claims were reported to be caused by physical assaults, and around 700 of these physical assault claims had workers compensation payment. These figures are not specific to psychological injuries.

### **Question on Notice 3:**

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: Thanks Mr King. In relation to one of the answers suggesting that there has not been any evidence-based research done, can you tell us why that is?

Dr LINKLATER: There has been research done in the United States. I understand another submission to this inquiry also relates to that kind of research. I suggest that New South Wales-specific research would be helpful.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: Why has it not been done in New South Wales? Is there any particular reason?

Dr LINKLATER: I do not know.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: That can be taken on notice, Chair.

### **Response to Question on Notice 3:**

The PANSW does not have information on the reasons why research is not conducted on any particular issue. Research tends to be conducted by government agencies or academics on these subjects.

### **Question on Notice 4:**

Mr MARK TAYLOR: You said that some of the previous offenders or repeat offenders had had criminal histories prior. Does the research show that they have criminal histories of violence or is there a propensity to violence in those?

Dr LINKLATER: I would have to take that question on notice. I am not 100 per cent sure.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: Yes, could you take that on notice for us?

Dr LINKLATER: Yes.

### **Response to Question on Notice 4:**

The data we presented in the PANSW submission is based on a customised dataset we requested from BOCSAR. This was the extent of the data they were able to provide on this topic. The data related to any proven court appearance

prior or subsequent to the assault police offence. When requesting this data we were advised there is no automated method to distinguish between offence types as requested.