

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Questions Taken on Notice

**INQUIRY INTO THE NSW GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT OF THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

POLICE

Virtual hearing: Friday 17 September 2021

Answers due by: Monday, 15 October 2021

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The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Assistant Commissioner Cooke, would you be able to provide to the Committee—I do not expect you to be able to do this today; I am very happy for you to take it on notice—the breakdown of the infringement notices that have been given across the 12 local government areas of concern? Also, I am equally interested in not just those that have been issued and the value of those but also whether you do collate and whether you are able to tell us whether there have been warnings and cautions given so that we get a sense of how that is operating as well?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: I absolutely can do that. I will take that on notice. I can tell you, though, that across the three metropolitan regions, the numbers of fines across the three metropolitan regions are very, very similar, so there are clearly—no, in fact, more have been issued in the Central Metropolitan region than have been in south-western Sydney.

Answer

LGA	Date range	Included PACs	PINS issued in period
Bayside	12 August 2021 - 17 September 2021	South Sydney	703
Blacktown	24 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Riverstone	3,055
Burwood	12 August 2021 - 17 September 2021	Burwood	236
Campbelltown	29 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Campbelltown City	859
Canterbury-Bankstown	24 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Bankstown, Campsie	1,783
Cumberland	24 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Cumberland	1,359
Fairfield	16 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Fairfield City	1,231
Georges River	29 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	St George	1,661
Liverpool	24 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Liverpool City	1,575
Parramatta	29 July 2021 - 17 September 2021	Parramatta	1,010
Penrith (selected suburbs)	8 August 2021 - 17 September 2021	Nepean	837
Strathfield	12 August 2021 - 17 September 2021	Auburn	875

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I just wanted to come, Assistant Commissioner Cooke, to a couple of questions. The police commissioner, from Monday 23 August, has the ability to lock down apartment blocks. I just wanted to ask how many in your particular part of the world have been locked down under those powers?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: I would need to take that on notice

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Okay. Thanks very much. Perhaps you might want to take this one on notice as well. Do you have specific guidelines that are in place for when those apartment buildings are locked down or is it solely on the advice of NSW Health?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: There is a process which occurs generally at the LEMC level initially. So the Local Emergency Management Committee will become involved where a problematic premises might be identified as a result of testing. A process is then put in place which makes that determination as to whether or not it might be locked down by Health in those circumstances or by the police commissioner. I could take that—the detail that you require more—on notice. But it is certainly a process around [audio malfunction] risk of transmission and [audio malfunction] COVID cases within the premises.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Sorry, you just cut in and out there a little bit, Assistant Commissioner. Can you just say that last part again?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: I said, yes, it is certainly a process around and dealing with risk around the premises, the number of cases, swabbing and what results tell us that is occurring within the premises.

Answer

No apartment blocks have been the subject of a “High Risk COVID-19 premises” declaration made by the Commissioner of Police, under the Health Minister’s delegation of 6 September 2021.

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Anything additional that you could provide on notice around the process for actually locking down apartment buildings would be helpful. It has been publicly reported that there was at least one in Campsie, one in Campbelltown and one in, I think, Liverpool. What support was provided to those residents?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: Those premises, I believe you will find, were locked down, if you like, on the advice of Health—not exercising the current powers by the commissioner. That becomes a process that is managed at the Local Emergency Management Committee level, which comprises police, health, Department of Communities and Justice [DCJ] and welfare support to those people. So a process gets wrapped around the premises in terms of their health through NSW Health, their welfare from DCJ and NGOs working within the emergency management arrangements at the local level, supported by myself as the Region Emergency Operations Controller [REOCON] at the next level up, if you like.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Perhaps you could provide on notice what specific supports they were provided with. Were they provided with food hampers or groceries, taking out of rubbish? What was that specific support that they were provided with?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: All of those services are provided as part of that package around the premises and those within it to obviously reduce their mobility and see that they received the support that they required.

Answer

The NSW Police Force has nothing further to add.

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Thanks very much, Assistant Commissioner. Perhaps on notice you could provide us with a number of the infringement notices that have been handed out across the 12 LGAs for the breaking of the one hour of exercise rule?

Assistant Commissioner COOKE: Yes, I will take that on notice.

Answer

The NSW Police Force is unable to determine which infringement notices were issued for breaching the one-hour exercise rule, as there is not a specific law part code for this offence.