

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

The Hon. Yasmin Catley MP
Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism and
Minister for the Hunter

Hearing: Wednesday, 3 September 2025

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Answers due by:
30 September 2025

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The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Yes, we all thank the police for the work they do. Minister, will you correct your often repeated claim of 700 antisemitic attacks, given that the acting commissioner has confirmed at an upper House inquiry that of the 700 so-called incidents, 41 per cent were antisemitic, 15 per cent Islamophobic and the rest classified as "other"? That brings the number down to 280. Of these, isn't it true that they should be more accurately depicted as reports of incidents, as they're essentially low level, like someone calling the police to say, "A car with a Palestinian flag drove past and someone yelled out something", or mentions of Hitler. Whether we like it or not, a lot of schoolkids engage in the dark humour about him. Will you correct the record of your claim of 700 antisemitic incidents?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I might just take that on notice for now, but I will come back to you because I do have that actual figure. If I didn't have the figure absolutely correct then, yes, I will correct it. But I will also make this point to you which I think is important. The number or the amount of antisemitic slurs and attacks on our community during that period would be way higher than 700, quite frankly. There were so many that weren't reported, and I know that because I've had those conversations with people myself when I have been out in the community. Look, I may have had the figure wrong—and if I did, I apologise to the Committee—but, quite frankly, there would be so many more incidents than have been reported. That I know for a fact.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Operation Shelter began on 11 October 2023. Since then, a spreadsheet has been maintained documenting all Shelter-related incidents that have occurred. The term 'incidents' encompasses Events, Intelligence Reports and Charges as recorded in COPS.

As of 26 March 2025, there were 815 incidents that were Anti-Semitic or Islamophobic in nature as well as other incidents that fell into neither category. The 'other' incidents related to events such as protest activity, political statements that did not amount to an offence or incidents that, upon review, fell outside the scope of Operation Shelter.

Of the total 815 incidents recorded:

- 38 have been classified as 'Islamophobic';
- 367 as 'Anti-Semitic'; and
- 410 as 'Other'.

The 'Other' incidents were further categorised as:

- 200 protest-related;
- 82 political statements - no offence;
- 87 outside of the scope of Operation Shelter;
- 13 mental health incidents; and
- 28 Operation Shelter - other offence (capturing graffiti/vandalism and other offences that potentially fit within Operation Shelter's Terms of Reference but lack clear Anti-Semitic or Islamophobic links).

Additionally, the Community Security Group has recorded 406 antisemitic incidents in New South Wales in 2024, not all of which would have been reported to the NSW Police.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Can you tell us then, Minister, as these numbers don't appear to be included in the annual report, how many police officers are currently on leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: You'll have to get that information from the deputy director.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I have a number of questions in relation to that.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Here it is—my apologies. Authorised strength is 18,398.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: You don't have to hand the number of police officers currently on leave?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: If you give me a moment, I will come back to you with that.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: That's okay. I can provide you with a list here because I've got quite a number of these. If we could have the numbers on leave; workers compensation; parental; long service; leave without pay; sick, including mental health—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: This question has been asked before, and I'm sure there will be clarity on that. It is difficult to answer, including mental health, so I think you need to just say sick.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Okay, we'll say sick; suspended, with and without pay; and terminated. I do have that list, so we can provide that so that it can be—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: No, we'll give the answers towards the end.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Please refer to the Minister's evidence provided on page 48 of the transcript. This question was also asked as a supplementary question (SQ147). A response to all supplementary questions will be provided by 21 October 2025.

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The Hon. MARK LATHAM: In your own assessment, serious attacks on property and serious attacks on people instigated by antisemitic ideology by people living in Sydney, how many of those have we got?

PETER THURTELL: I couldn't put a number on it.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Could you take that on notice?

PETER THURTELL: I'm happy to take that on notice, but even taking it on notice won't necessarily give me an exact number. But I certainly will take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Fourteen incidents were investigated under Strike Force Pearl, which were at the higher end of offending, being attacks on synagogues, graffiti, firebombings, attacks on cars and attacks on houses.

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Dr AMANDA COHN: In relation to that consultation—which the mental health Minister also spoke about when I asked her the same questions—how can people who are interested in this reform be involved? There are obviously particular stakeholders who must've been invited to participate but there's very little public information available.

DAVID HUDSON: That's a very good point. I will have to double-check that. Maybe we open up for public consultation, I am not too sure. I'll have to discuss that with Health. That had been discussed with me. There are an interested group of stakeholders that we do need feedback from, but broader consultation I don't think has been considered. We can certainly take that on notice and consider that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) Mental Health Command, through the Senior Officers Group and as part of the Health-Led Responder Model, is working with partner agencies to engage key stakeholders including the community about the appropriate response to mental health emergencies and psychological distress in the community. The working group is currently in the process of developing the consultation plan. Once endorsed, information will be provided via the three key agencies (NSW Health, NSW Ambulance and NSWPF) to the public over the coming months to inform how members of the community can provide feedback and participate in the consultation process.

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The CHAIR: We might recommence questioning with the crossbench, and that would be me. As you may or may not be aware, Minister, in the New South Wales firearms regulations there is a demerit points system for firearms licence holders that is similar to a driver licence. Licence holders have up to 12 points over a rolling five-year period. If they exceed those 12 points, their licence can be suspended or cancelled. Could you please tell me which firearms offences attract these demerit points?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm going to say to you, Mr Borsak, that I did not know there was a demerit system until you just mentioned it.

The CHAIR: That is the point.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes. Shall we ask Mr Hudson? He might be able to enlighten us.

DAVID HUDSON: I will take it on notice, Minister.

ANSWER

I am advised:

There is no demerit point system linked to firearms licensing.

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The CHAIR: In case they've slipped your mind, they relate to unsafe storage of firearms or ammunition; failure to notify the Firearms Registry of a change of address or circumstances; carrying or using a firearm contrary to licence conditions, e.g. hunting without permission; failure to produce a licence when requested by police; and some minor record-keeping breaches for firearms dealers, club armourers or security licence holders. Have they been used at all since they were introduced?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We will find that information out for you, Mr Borsak. I would be interested to know that as well.

The CHAIR: Perhaps you could move your microphone a little bit closer to you.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: My apologies.

The CHAIR: I have a reason. I've been shooting for 50 years and I'm deaf.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: In answer to your question, yes, we will take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Demerit points have not been used.

The table below provides the number of infringements issued for offences under the *Firearms Act 1996*, by law part title:

Law Part Title	Legal Action Year						Total
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (to15/9)	
Not prevent theft/loss of firearm - not pistol/proh firearm	14	10	13	9	18	7	71
Holder of Category A or B licence not have approved storage	53	91	64	64	45	26	343
Not keep firearm safely-not pistol/prohibited firearm	55	56	49	60	67	31	318
Not record prescribed info for acquisition of ammunition	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Possess ammunition w/o holding licence/permit/authority	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Category C, D or H licensee not comply with storage needs	11	13	5	2	1	1	33
Firearms dealer not ensure records sent to Commissioner	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Permit holder fail to notify change of address within 7 days	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
Allow unauth person possess firearm-not pistol/proh firearm	12	5	5	3	6	4	35
Licensed firearm dealer fail to ensure transactions recorded	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Licensee fail to notify change of address within 7 days	20	29	8	22	15	4	98
Not keep firearm safely-prohibited firearm	0	0	0	1	0	4	5
Not prevent theft/loss of firearm-pistol	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
Allow unauth person possess firearm-pistol	1	0	0	0	1	1	3
Fail to produce firearm licence/permit to police on demand	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Not keep firearm safely-pistol	1	1	2	2	6	1	13
Fail to enter record required under subsection (2) w/i 24 hr	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Grand Total	171	207	150	165	163	80	936

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The CHAIR: Could you tell me how many times demerit points have been used? Why do police immediately remove, suspend or charge licence holders over small infractions rather than saving the taxpayer and the judiciary time and money by using demerits and fining those licence holders, as was envisaged in the regulations? In other words, they go from nought to 100.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I was going to say, it does seem like a good system for that reason alone—as you quite rightly point out, instead of going through the process for quite minor infringements, having the demerit system. So this is something that I think is positive, and I am sure you would agree. I will certainly have a look at that as well. Perhaps we can have a meeting to discuss that because, as I said to you, you have brought to my attention something that I was unaware of.

The CHAIR: The reason I ask this is because of the avalanche of unfair charges I hear of. One farmer had his firearms stolen from a compliance safe by thieves and was installing a new, stronger safe when police arrived and charged him with unsafe storage. He is before the courts. Another licence holder informed police that his laptop and some other items had been stolen, but not his guns; they were safe. Instead, police conducted a search of his house, found two nine-millimetre rounds under a bed in a box—far from an easy discovery—and dragged him through the courts, only for his case to be dismissed and thrown out. Minister, is it fair to say that you are needlessly creating work for the court system and police?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I would like more information about the demerit system and to see how that would apply to the instances that you have just referred to.

The CHAIR: I ask these questions because, in the proposed changes to the regulations in the review, you recommended that fines on demerit points be doubled along with any other charges. But of course, as you rightly can see now, the system is not being used at all. We're just going from nought to 100, as I said earlier. Minister, I ask that you look at how the demerit points system is being employed and that you inform us why they aren't being used more often to take the pressure off the courts and the judiciary—and, of course, the police.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will look at that and report back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

There is no demerit point system linked to firearm licensing.

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The CHAIR: I never set anybody up; I'm the one that gets set up. Is it then reasonable for a licensed firearms owner to, with all the doors and windows secured in the home and no unlicensed individuals in attendance, remove firearms from the safe, unbolt the safe to dry it out, dry the carpet and the flooring, and then resecure it in the shortest time possible on the same day without breaching safe storage requirements?

DAVID HUDSON: Without knowing the individual circumstances to which you are referring, I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Without knowing the specific circumstances, an answer cannot be provided.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I look forward to seeing those and I will come back to you this afternoon. Minister, there's also been a number of high-profile instances reported in the media with police officers unlawfully using sensitive police information for an extended period of time, with really quite serious consequences for victims and victim-survivors. In many of those cases, police were made aware of the perpetrator's behaviour long before anything was done about it. What are you doing to ensure that actions are taken in every case as soon as allegations are known about these police perpetrators?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The New South Wales police don't tolerate that sort of behaviour. As you know, the commissioner has the opportunity to speak to those officers and to make determinations about their ongoing employment, depending on the severity of the complaint and the issue. But those being reported to senior police and action being taken within I think is something that Acting Commissioner Thurtell can certainly talk to. They do take these things very seriously and they do not tolerate or have time for that sort of behaviour.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: So, given that we've had these incidents reported in the last year where that has not occurred, what have you done to ensure that action is taken as soon as allegations are known to police?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm unclear of what incidents you're referring to.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: For instance, Constable Jordan Weston unlawfully accessed the police database to find out information about his victim and people associated with her, including an ex-partner; Constable Reuben Timperley, who was charged with DFV offences earlier this year after previously being found guilty of illegally accessing the police database to look up his partner; and recent media reports about former police officer Mohamad Jamal Soueid exchanging information with an alleged DV offender, including photos of official reports during hundreds of illegal searches of the New South Wales police system over several months, which involved looking up victim details. That's just three of them.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It might be better if we take that on notice and provide you with a response to those individual instances that you have referred to. Overarchingly, my initial comments are certainly what the expectation of the New South Wales police is.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) treats unlawful access to data from NSWPF systems seriously. When the NSWPF receives an allegation of unlawfully accessing/modifying information from NSWPF systems, an audit is undertaken on the NSWPF member (subject officer) against whom the allegation has been made. The audit is to confirm whether the subject officer has accessed the information they are alleged to, without a lawful reason. If the subject officer has accessed the information and it appears there is no lawful reason for doing so, an investigation is commenced. This investigation can take the form of a departmental or criminal investigation and will include the consideration of any interim risk management action that needs to be undertaken.

The actions taken are specific to each matter, based on the individual circumstances and can range from placing the officer on an interim risk management plan to suspending the subject officer from duty. At the conclusion of the investigation, if the allegations are proven, sanctions can include placing the officer on a conduct management plan, disciplinary transfer, reduction in rank (which has an impact on the officer's salary) or removal under section 181D of the *Police Act 1990*.

The management action is determined on the circumstances of each matter. However, if the allegation is proven, a majority of these matters fall within the context of serious misconduct

and will be referred to the Commissioner of Police for consideration of removal under s181D of the *Police Act 1990*.

Due to privacy reasons, information regarding specific individuals cannot be provided.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thank you. Perhaps on notice, if you could tell me how many police officers by rank have been charged with offences related to accessing or modifying restricted data held in a computer in the last five years, and how many were found guilty and how many were convicted.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes, I can.

ANSWER

I am advised:

From 1 January 2020 to 15 September 2025, 45 police officers have been charged with Access/modify restricted data held in a computer. Of these, 25 officers were found guilty, and 20 of those 25 officers were convicted. The table below provides a breakdown of offences by charged year and rank.

Charged year	Rank	No. of officers charged	No. of officers found guilty	No. of officers convicted
2020	Constable	1	0	0
	Senior Constable	2	1	1
	Sergeant	4	1	1
2021	Constable	4	3	2
	Senior Constable	8	6	5
	Sergeant	1	0	0
2022	Probationary Constable	2	2	2
	Constable	2	1	1
	Senior Constable	1	1	1
	Sergeant	1	0	0
2023	Probationary Constable	3	3	2
	Constable	3	3	2
	Senior Constable	4	2	2
2024	Constable	1	0	0
	Senior Constable	4	2	1
2025	Constable	1	0	0
	Senior Constable	3	0	0
Total		45	25	20

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay, I might come back on that. Minister, in answers to questions on notice that were provided in February of this year, it was disclosed that no police officer who had been found guilty of a domestic and family violence offence had had their personal firearm licence suspended or seized in the last three years. Do you know why that would be?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to ask the police to provide a response to that. Mr Thurtell?

PETER THURTELL: It depends if they even had a firearms licence to suspend or remove.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Perhaps you could clarify because—

PETER THURTELL: Yes, we'd have to find out.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: —in previous answers, we were given the figures for how many actually did have a firearms licence and just hadn't had it suspended.

PETER THURTELL: We will take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This question was also asked as a supplementary question (SQ122). A response to all supplementary questions will be provided by 21 October 2025.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Maybe we can come back to that this afternoon as well. Finally, Minister, there are still an alarming number of misidentifications of the primary aggressor in domestic and family violence matters. I note that there is an update to the SOPs. Has there been anything in addition in those SOPs to cover police incorrectly and inaccurately identifying victims when they go to a domestic violence incident?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Police will have to answer that directly, in relation to the change to the SOPs, but I think it's important, as an overarching factor, to remember that police will just police the evidence before them and what the crime is. Mr McKenna might like to talk more to that.

PETER McKENNA: We have done lots of work in our training around misidentification, the problem being that no-one has actually been able to tell us what the definition of misidentification is. We see there is some dispute about whether there is some self-defence or whether it is retaliatory violence, which really has to be broken down. I have had our police prosecutors branch do a review across the whole of the State. They tell me this is not an endemic issue at all. There are some isolated cases but, where they are isolated, they actually have been lineball calls because, whether we like it or not, sometimes we end up in situations of cross AVOs. It is rare, but we do have that.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: It is not rare. Mutual ADVOs are actually quite common.

PETER McKENNA: I would have to take on notice the numbers, or you could tell me some numbers if you like.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 18 September 2025, there are:

- Current enforceable ADVOs (overall): 71,490
- Current enforceable mutual ADVOs: 6,129 (9%)

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Minister, given the campaign launched today on warning students about knife crime, obviously there are concerns. So what weapons are police finding in schools or on school grounds?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I can't pinpoint directly to on school grounds. This is an education program to prevent children from actually going down the pathway of committing the crime. What we are trying to do is educate kids, just like we do about any type of crime, but in relation to knife crime. We are seeing more and more young people out and about with knives, and that needs to stop. That's what this is about.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Out and about. Are there any instances of knives being sighted, brought to or suspected on school grounds, specifically?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: You'll need to ask the education Minister that question.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Why wouldn't I ask the police Minister that question? Wouldn't police be called to attend in such matters?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Most likely they would be.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Can anyone answer whether there have been any instances?

PAUL PISANOS: Definitely there are instances. I would have to get back to you on numbers—

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: That would be helpful.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This question was also asked as a supplementary question (SQ192). A response to all supplementary questions will be provided by 21 October 2025.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: But I would appreciate that, Mr Pisanos. Nothing more serious—guns? Are there any instances of sightings or suspected sightings of firearms?

PAUL PISANOS: Replicas and gel blaster types of things, yes. Again, the frequency, I can't tell you, but it does happen—people believing they are sighting a water pistol, reporting it and it ends up being a toy. People bring toys to school, yes.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I would be interested to hear some more information if you are able to provide that, even later in the day.

PAUL PISANOS: We can get back to you on that. Maybe not today, but we can certainly get back to you. I will take it on notice.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I would appreciate it as soon as you can, thank you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This question was also asked as a supplementary question (SQ192). A response to all supplementary questions will be provided by 21 October 2025.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Minister, were you involved in consultations with your Government's decision to abolish the use of ankle monitoring for persons on bail?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: No.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Nobody consulted you or sought police input in relation to that decision?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Police may have. Are you able to—

PETER THURTELL: As far as I am aware, no, we weren't consulted on the removal of it—but I stand to be corrected on that. I can find out for you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I suppose my next question—which is what modelling was done on risk to community safety by the police—is otiose if you weren't even consulted. No modelling—

PETER THURTELL: As I've said, as far as I am aware, we weren't consulted on the removal of it, but I will find out for you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) was consulted by the Department of Communities and Justice concerning the proposed approach to implementing the Government's intent to ban private electronic monitoring for people on bail. The NSWPF participated in these consultations as part of standard consultation that occurs regarding the development and implementation of legislative proposals. This included providing advice to agencies and Ministers to support the Cabinet process. Advice related to Cabinet matters is Cabinet-in-confidence.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I will go to a quick one while we pass that around. Can you tell us, Minister, the funding that was allocated to the Blayney Police Station—how much was that?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It was \$8 million, I think, or \$7.2 million.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: It was \$8.695 million actually. How much was spent?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I assume it was all spent. It looks fantastic. You should go and have a look. In fact, the police on the ground there are very happy with it.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I will. I am in the area regularly.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I extend an invitation to you to go and have a look.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Thank you.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The police there are very happy with it.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: You are suggesting that the \$8.695 million was all spent.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I would have to check with the police.

PETER THURTELL: That's not my understanding. I don't think there was that much spent on it. It might have been allocated but I don't know if that was spent. I would have to take that on notice and get back to you with the exact amount that was spent.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Please refer to the evidence provided on page 35 of the transcript.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: What is the authorised and current strength for the Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will get that to you. I do have it, but it's in my big folder, so I will just pull it out. I will give it to you before we finish.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: What is the specific budget for counterterrorism operations?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Again, that is something we will have to get to you.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Can you confirm—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Do you mean for the unit?

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Yes.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: To pay for the staff in that unit? Is that what you're saying?

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: The specific budget for counterterrorism operations. I don't know—perhaps any of you might be able to address that. Is there a specific budget allocation for counterterrorism?

DAVID HUDSON: There is a Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Can we add Special Tactics to it, then?

DAVID HUDSON: I don't know the exact numbers—it's somewhere over 600.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: I've got it there: Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command. It's what I mentioned in the first instance.

DAVID HUDSON: It's about 600 strong. There is a variety of units, including the tactical operations group, the rescue and bomb disposal unit, the public order riot squad, plus countering terrorism investigators, the security investigations unit, and other bits and pieces—protected operations and so on and so forth. Each unit has a budget, which is combined up to make the counterterrorism and special tactics budget.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: So that is a separate allocation, as such?

DAVID HUDSON: It's a separate allocation of that command. It's one of six commands that sits under me, yes.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: So you have those answers now; I don't have to provide them?

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: No, I'd like to know what that figure is.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Please refer to the evidence provided on page 42 of the transcript.

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The CHAIR: Minister, did the Firearms Registry use a risk assessment matrix or methodology when handing out conditions this way?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to check with Mr Hudson if it's referred to as a matrix.

DAVID HUDSON: As I said, each case is different and is treated on its own merits. I know that the Firearms Registry, in conjunction with the police area commands and districts, explore each individual case before imposing special licence conditions. There are criteria that they look for in relation to what would trigger a special licence condition. I don't have those with me. Whether you'd refer to that as a matrix or not, or a risk assessment—

The CHAIR: What recognised or scientific methodology does the Firearms Registry use to assess risk in general, or is it just a come-by-chance situation?

DAVID HUDSON: It's not a subjective test. There are guidelines that the Firearms Registry issue for consideration, and they are taken into consideration when making those determinations.

The CHAIR: Could you give us a copy of those guidelines?

DAVID HUDSON: We can, yes. We'll take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Firearms Registry Decision Making Guidelines are available on the NSW Police Force website:

https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/647028/Firearms_Registry_Decision_Making_Resources_Guidelines_interactive.pdf

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The CHAIR: There are plenty of circumstances where we've seen that there's no way that New South Wales police could get access to the sort of medical information that these people have held privately for themselves, but have been disclosed to Service NSW for driver's licence purposes. My question is does the registry seek the permission of licence holders before they access medical details on a person's driver's licence through Service NSW?

DAVID HUDSON: I'd take that on notice, but medical information is protected.

The CHAIR: It certainly is, Commissioner. There are plenty of circumstances, in our view, where that seems to be a breach and we can't ever get to the bottom of how that happens. Are you aware that this breaches section 11P (9) of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act?

DAVID HUDSON: I am well aware of those Acts, and we abide by those. I will check to ensure that we are not breaching those particular Acts, but I would also suggest that you're basing your questions on individuals who have provided information to you.

The CHAIR: I'm happy to provide privately information in relation to those people. If you want to have examples, I'm sure we can get their permission to provide that to you to talk about it because it seems to be happening far too frequently.

DAVID HUDSON: That is more useful than generalisations.

ANSWER

I am advised:

All firearms licence applicants must complete a declaration allowing the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) to verify the accuracy of the provided information. Consequently, the NSW

Firearms Registry will conduct all necessary enquiries to ensure the details submitted are true and correct. This includes verifying the existence of any health conditions that may prevent the applicant from exercising continuous and responsible control over firearms. This process ensures the Commissioner can be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person, capable of possessing firearms without posing a danger to public safety.

The NSWPF has broad exemptions from compliance with the information protection principles, including section 27 of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. Transport for NSW is lawfully permitted to disclose information to NSWPF in accordance with various exemptions under this Act, including where disclosure is made for a law enforcement purpose (section 23(5) and (6A)), where applicable, or where the person involved has consented to disclosure for certain purposes (section 26(2)).

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The CHAIR: On another matter, regarding the firearms clubs portal process, where is the implementation of the portal up to?

DAVID HUDSON: I'll have to check the latest status on that. Obviously, it is a desire of ours to get better coordinated with the clubs, including the ability to record and document those individuals that shoot at ranges and clubs.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force launched Phase 1 of the Clubs and Ranges Portal on Gun Safe in December 2024 with a Registration of Interest sent to clubs in November 2024 in preparation. As at September 2025, there are now over 74 clubs, with over 130 issued Club Approvals for shooting or pistol activities, either fully or in the process of being onboarded.

Club and dealer engagement events have been conducted in Sydney, Bathurst, Albury and Coffs Harbour where over 400 representatives attended. At the events, the Firearms Registry provided information on the Clubs Portal, in particular how clubs can onboard onto the system. The Firearms Registry is currently collaborating with these stakeholders to facilitate their onboarding to the Portal.

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The CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner. Just to turn now to Tenterfield Police Station, a station that requires eight police officers has been reduced to four. Why?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: They have been advertised, those positions, and they are unable to fill them. But we did have some good news recently. I think they got a couple of the probationary constables that were going to go there, but I will have to check that unless—do one of you know?

PAUL PISANOS: No.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I was with Mr Holland, and he was talking to me about it because we were talking about it specifically.

The CHAIR: You're saying the strength is maintained at eight, but you can't fulfil the extra four?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes, that's happening quite a lot right around the State, unfortunately, Mr Borsak. There's vacant positions that are unfilled, have been advertised time and time again, and are difficult to fill. People are not applying for them.

The CHAIR: There is no way people can be taken from within the existing—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: That's what I was just saying. The command received a number of probationary officers and I'm pretty sure—but I want to check; I don't want to mislead the Committee—that at least one of the probationary officers were going to go there or they were thinking about a more experienced officer who is at another police station within the command, transferring them there, and backfilling that position. I'm happy to come back to you on that and just get clarification.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Please refer to the evidence provided on page 49 of the transcript.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: That is an entirely different matter that is being looked at in the upper House. We'll move on with your noncommittal answer. How many murders are currently listed as unsolved in New South Wales?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I can give you that. The homicide squad—739 unsolved cases.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: And how many of them relate to young women?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It's all Ivan Milat.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'm unsure about that, Mr Latham.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Can you take that on notice?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Of the 739 unsolved cases, 79 relate to young women ('young women' defined as females aged between 16 to 25 years old).

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The CHAIR: After 5.00 p.m. police simply don't go out unless it's an absolute catastrophe. Residents ring the police. The station at Glen Innes answers and they refuse to send out police who are on call. Instead, they say it'll take an hour to send a police officer from Glen Innes and so they don't turn up. Local criminals are not stupid. They wait until 5.00 p.m. and do their crimes outside of office hours. Minister, why are officers on call in a town not responding when residents need them to?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: That is news to me, and I think I've spoken to the same person that you've spoken to in relation to this example because I've heard this exact story.

The CHAIR: You may well have.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will follow that up with the commander of that command, but that is news to me. I am told that there's a 24-hour police response in every police district. That's the police model. Can I add here, too: There aren't two extra positions; there was one extra position filled, so five of those positions are now filled in Tenterfield.

The CHAIR: Five, okay.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Of the eight, yes.

The CHAIR: Can you tell me what the strength at Glen Innes is?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I'd have to check for you.

The CHAIR: You'll take that on notice?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Yes, of course.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 14 September 2025, Glen Innes Police Station has 14 authorised police positions and a headcount of 11 officers.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Acting Commissioner Thurtell, can I ask you to go back to the matter of Hannah Thomas, the young woman who was injured at the protest. I just want to go back to the circumstances around that in terms of the police communication that took place after that event. Again, Assistant Commissioner McFadden—who's not here—did say in the media, quite forthrightly, that he had reviewed the video footage and that he saw no police misconduct or untoward police behaviour. Did he see different video footage to what the lawyers of Hannah Thomas saw?

PETER THURTELL: He may well have. I'm aware that there are multiple body-worn videos—footage from different individual officers—in existence. I don't know what ones Assistant Commissioner McFadden viewed. From memory, what he said was that at this stage there was no evidence of misconduct on the police part. But the footage he viewed may well have been different to the footage that Ms Thomas's solicitors viewed.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Would you be able to, for the benefit of this Committee, take that on notice and provide some clarity about whether we are talking about different body-worn video footage? Where I'm coming from is the concern about such a forthright statement being made and being so inconsistent with another statement that I think has a lot of credibility—the latter statement that there was evidence of police wrongdoing.

PETER THURTELL: It's hard for me to take that on notice. What I can say is that there is a critical incident investigation, and there is a complaint investigation being conducted by Professional Standards Command. If that critical incident investigation identifies any issues, procedural or otherwise, outside of the actual incident, then it would be a matter for that critical incident investigation team to either make a recommendation for that to be examined and/or to look at it themselves.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: What I'm asking, though, is slightly different to that. I appreciate that these matters are being looked at, and the critical incident means that the LECC will have oversight. This is more about Assistant Commissioner McFadden's statement that he made to the media and that a lot of people relied upon, and whether you would be able to take on notice to ask him whether he viewed footage that is separate or different to the footage that the lawyers of Hannah Thomas viewed. It's quite a straight—

PETER THURTELL: Yes, I get the question. We can certainly do that—find out what footage was viewed by both parties. But it does form part of the investigation—all the footage.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: I understand that. When you go back and inquire in order to provide an answer, if there is advice that that is material that is under investigation and that question itself is under investigation of some sort, then obviously that's the answer. But it may well just be a discrete, completely independent component, and that's the question I'm asking that can be answered. If there is sensitivity around it, of course we understand that.

PETER THURTELL: I'll take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As the matter is subject to a critical incident investigation oversighted by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, I am unable to comment further.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are you saying to us that we need to consider changes to the law so that if something is perceived to be a terrorist symbol as well as being an actual symbol, it should be prohibited?

PETER McKENNA: That's a matter for politicians.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Are we hearing that that stops police enforcement of what could be terrorist symbols and could be perceived by other people to be terrorist symbols?

PETER McKENNA: All we can say is that it's either an offence or not an offence under the law.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: If somebody is walking across the bridge with a hoodie that says, "Death, death to the IDF", is that permitted?

PETER McKENNA: Again, we'd take legal advice on that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And did you?

PETER McKENNA: I'm not aware of the situation you're talking about—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I've got a photo of it here.

PETER McKENNA: Well, I'd have to take it on notice if the police saw it or didn't see it.

ANSWER

I am advised:

"Death to the IDF" would not satisfy the elements of an offence, as the statement targets the Israel Defence Force, which is an organisation, not a race under section 93ZAA of the *Crimes Act 1900*.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Perhaps on notice you could provide advice from your legal people about whether that chant does fulfil the criteria, especially in light of the statements of the Prime Minister that were made in relation to the proposed recognition of Palestine and his statements that, clearly, the Hamas slogan "From the river to the sea" envisages the non-acceptance of Israel as a state.

PETER McKENNA: It's got nothing to do with what the Prime Minister has or hasn't said.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: That's the meaning of it, isn't it?

PETER McKENNA: It's either an offence at law or not, so we can certainly take on notice if that chant is an offence at law or not.

ANSWER

I am advised:

"From the river to the sea" has a number of meanings and various inferences can be drawn from the words. The context in which the words are spoken will determine whether or not an offence is committed.

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Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Commissioner, where would you say that police cultural awareness training in NSW Police Force is right now?

PETER THURTELL: In specifically what culture—Aboriginal culture? Are we talking about multicultural training?

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Specifically First Nations culture, given they're still overpoliced at rates—

PETER THURTELL: We have cultural awareness training conducted for our students at the academy. We have cultural awareness training conducted for our officers. We have induction programs in police districts, where new arrivals to the district are inducted into the local Aboriginal cultures. We've got extensive training on cultural awareness.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Would you measure it as extensive?

PETER THURTELL: Extensive availability of cultural awareness training, yes.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: That's good to hear it is extensively available. In terms of a mandatory component or the uptake of that, would you say it's a high level?

PETER THURTELL: I would have to take on notice the mandatory nature of it. Certainly for our student police officers, that's obviously part of the completion of their course. It's strongly encouraged in a lot of areas and mandatory in others. I'd have to take on notice the compulsory training component.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Cultural Awareness training commences at the NSW Police Academy. The Associate Degree in Policing Practice includes mandatory lessons pre- and post-attestation. This training is reinforced throughout an officer's career. The table below provides an overview of mandatory training:

Learning Product	Course Information
Commissioner's Training Directive - Recording Aboriginality in NSWPF Systems 2022-2023 (Mandatory)	Published on 9 May 2022, this course is available for all sworn and unsworn NSWPF employees Learning outcomes: • Appreciate the importance of collecting Aboriginal data of crime victims and offenders • Recognise when to ask and be mindful of cultural sensitivity • Correctly record Aboriginality in COPS and custody • Understand how Aboriginality is reported by NSW Police.
Commissioner's Training Directive - Engaging with Aboriginal Communities - Working Together 2024-2025 (Mandatory)	Published on 29 October 2024, Engaging with Aboriginal Communities - Working Together aims to showcase Aboriginal cultures and identity to officers of the New South Wales Police Force. It highlights the enduring effects of colonisation and government police on communities today. This course seeks to enhance officers' skills and understanding of Aboriginal culture within their roles in their local community. This course is available for all sworn and unsworn NSWPF employees.
Employee Acknowledgement - Aboriginal Strategic Direction (ASD) (Mandatory)	Published on 27 March 2024, the ASD provides a way for the NSWPF to improve the lives of Aboriginal people by working in a way that unifies the two in decision making processes moving towards a better future for NSW. The document details how we strengthen our relationships by working in collaboration with the Aboriginal community, government, and non government agencies to achieve these outcomes, aligning with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. This employee acknowledgement is available to all NSWPF employees.

Note: The learning events detailed in this spreadsheet are specifically focused on First Nations peoples. While other NSWPF learning events may include topics relevant to First Nations persons, they are not exclusively dedicated to this focus.

Further, the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) has committed to delivering Cultural Immersion training targeting senior leaders and executives, to give them a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture. A two-hour Cultural Immersion webinar, designed specifically for senior leaders, has been developed in collaboration with the NSWPF Aboriginal Employment and Engagement Team to provide executive staff with an impactful learning experience which will improve cultural insight. This is scheduled for all Senior Executive in October 2025.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I think you just said they might be put on for a shift because of the understanding that protest activity is occurring. If they're not doing a shift for that, then presumably they'd either be off-shift or the shift would be for some other policing work. Is it possible to determine how many shifts were specifically arranged? I'm sorry, I don't know the right verb.

PETER THURTELL: We can certainly take that on notice. The number of shifts that are dedicated to protest activity per year, I suppose, is what you'd like to know?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes, that would be very helpful. Also, I'm very conscious of the strain on police officers and the number who are called in off-duty or when they have a reasonable expectation of rest. So if you could also look at overtime, people called in for duty?

PETER THURTELL: If I use Shelter as the example of that, you have that amount of money for officers that are engaged in those Shelter protest activities over the past couple of years. Those officers come in, effectively, on a cancelled rest day, but they're not forced to come in. Usually, the officers put their hand up and say, "I'd like a bit of extra money. Yes, I'm happy to work on this particular day to come in and do the protest work." But just going back to the issue of the number of shifts, the difficulty with giving you a financial figure on that is that we would have to then go to the pay scale of every individual officer. I think the best we could do there would be an estimate based on a mean value.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Given the significant amount of manual review and resources required to assess all protests, a response is unable to be provided.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'd be very happy with that. It would be good to have a firm-ish indication, without wanting to put you to extravagant amounts of work. I don't know whether this question is for you, Acting Commissioner, or you, Mr McKenna. In relation to the flags that might be close to being proscribed, I was reminded that we'd actually drafted legislation which we were hoping to bring to Parliament. Was anyone in the Police Force asked to advise in relation to that draft legislation?

PETER McKENNA: I certainly haven't been advised of that. If anyone, it would have been our legal people. We could take that on notice if you want us to.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes, if you could, that'd be great.

PETER McKENNA: No problem at all.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) understands this question to be in relation to the Private Member's Bill titled "Summary Offences Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025", which was introduced into the NSW Legislative Assembly on 13 February 2025. The NSWPF is routinely consulted for their advice on Private Members' Bills. That advice is Cabinet-in-confidence.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Deputy Commissioner Hudson, if I could ask some questions of you, please. Mr Thurtell has raised constantly monitoring groups and the potential for terrorism threats. Are you able to provide figures of perceived terrorism threats that have been registered by New South Wales police surveillance in 2023, 2024 and so far this year?

DAVID HUDSON: I can take it on notice. We can provide the investigations conducted under the Joint Counter Terrorism Team, the Terrorism Investigations Squad and the security investigations unit of counterterrorism, by number, which deal with threat at varying levels.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force Counter Terrorism and Special Tactics Command undertakes assessments on all referrals that are received:

- 2023 – 2,415
- 2024 – 3,213
- 2025 (as at 22/09/2025) – 2,020.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Can I also ask—again, probably, on notice—how many potential attacks have been prevented by New South Wales police surveillance in those same three years, '23, '24 and '25?

DAVID HUDSON: Yes. We've done preventative investigations and made arrests which have prevented significant incidents, and that's quite frequent. But we can provide those details as part of that investigative download.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: And possibly a bit of a breakdown in that—how many individuals have been arrested in relation to terror offences in those time frames as well.

DAVID HUDSON: Certainly.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As there is no agreed definition for 'potential terrorism attack', the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) is unable to respond to this question directly.

The number of individuals charged with terrorism offences in NSW:

- 2023 - 0
- 2024 - 8
- 2025 – (as at 22/09/2025) - 4.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: A last question on numbers, probably to you, Ms Conroy. Are you able to give us the numbers of FTE working police, not authorised strength, per police district?

RASHELLE CONROY: Yes, I can. I can read that out at the region level, if you'd like?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes, that would be great. Thank you.

PETER THURTELL: That's 56 read-outs, do you realise?

RASHELLE CONROY: I can just read it out at the region level, if you'd like?

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: We'd like it per police district. Are you able to provide it on paper, perhaps? Is that possible?

RASHELLE CONROY: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The tables below provide the headcount of officers at each Police Area Command (PAC)/Police District (PD) as at 24 August 2025:

North West Metropolitan Region

PAC	Headcount
Blacktown PAC	162
Blue Mountains PAC	97
Hawkesbury PAC	101
Ku-ring-gai PAC	120
Mt Druitt PAC	169
Nepean PAC	263

North Shore PAC	177
Northern Beaches PAC	207
Parramatta PAC	125
Riverstone PAC	113
Ryde PAC	167
The Hills PAC	108
Specialist Units	90
Region Office	7

South West Metropolitan Region

PAC	Headcount
Auburn PAC	147
Bankstown PAC	195
Burwood PAC	200
Camden PAC	129
Campbelltown City PAC	247
Campsie PAC	132
Cumberland PAC	210
Fairfield City PAC	228
Liverpool City PAC	234
Specialist Units	99
Region Office	7

Central Metropolitan Region

PAC	#Headcount
Eastern Beaches PAC	166
Eastern Suburbs PAC	183
Inner West PAC	184
Kings Cross PAC	122
Leichhardt PAC	126
South Sydney PAC	183
St George PAC	211
Surry Hills PAC	122
Sutherland Shire PAC	205
Sydney City PAC	211
Specialist Units	122
Region Office	9

Northern Region

PD	Headcount
Brisbane Water PD	179
Coffs-Clarence PD	187
Hunter Valley PD	171
Lake Macquarie PD	195
Manning-Great Lakes PD	119
Mid North Coast PD	171
Newcastle City PD	226
Port Stephens-Hunter PD	193

Richmond PD	173
Tuggerah Lakes PD	186
Tweed-Byron PD	166
Specialist Units	47
Region Office	14

Southern Region

PD	Headcount
Lake Illawarra PD	204
Monaro PD	104
Murray River PD	177
Murrumbidgee PD	107
Riverina PD	173
South Coast PD	231
The Hume PD	177
Wollongong PD	185
Specialist Units	53
Region Office	9

Western Region

PD	Headcount
Barrier PD	88
Central North PD	116
Central West PD	171
Chifley PD	151
New England PD	179
Orana Mid Western PD	203
Oxley PD	167
Specialist Units	30
Region Office	7

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PETER THURTELL: At the start of when Task Force Atlas was formed, there were 213 matters that were yet to be reviewed. A significant number of those have been reviewed. I do have the stats in here; I'll turn to those in a minute. At last count, three of those matters had been referred to the unsolved homicides unit for reinvestigation. I will get that, but a significant number of the 213 have been reviewed.

Dr AMANDA COHN: I appreciate you might be about to take numbers on notice, but how many of those 213 have yet to be examined?

PETER THURTELL: Yes, that's what I was saying. I'll get that for you in a minute.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Please refer to the evidence provided on page 68 of the transcript.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I want to talk about the police's use of facial recognition technology, which we've discussed in previous estimates. In response to some questions I put on notice, I was told that although New South Wales police were using a commercial product from Cognitive Systems, there have been updates that the NSW Police Force didn't subscribe to. And then you said, "In February 2025, a decision was made to disable this capability within the suspect identification system." I understand that the Cognitec software is integrated into PhotoTrac. Can you tell me exactly how you can turn off that facial recognition component within the software?

PETER THURTELL: Unless Mr Hudson has an answer, I'd have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The facial recognition function is not used by the NSW Police Force. The function was removed from the Cognitec user interface by the vendor.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Do you know if Cognitec technology is still being used in some form in the PhotoTrac system?

PETER THURTELL: No, I'd have to take that on notice as well.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Cognitec facial recognition function is not being used by the NSW Police Force.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I understand that in 2018 NSW Police Force employees that were attached to the Strategic Intelligence and Capability Command internally adapted an existing open-source facial recognition system called FaceNet, and the system, adapted for use by the facial recognition unit, was internally branded as NYX. Is there some form of facial recognition being used within FaceNet or the NYX systems within the Police Force?

PETER THURTELL: I apologise, but that's another one I'm going to have to take on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

FaceNET is the opensource facial recognition application that was adapted for use by the Facial Recognition Unit and given the name NYX. This application is currently only being used by trained facial examiners in the State Intelligence Command's Facial Recognition Unit and Real Time Intelligence Centre.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Do you know, just on a high-level basis, if facial recognition is currently being used within the NSW Police Force in any form?

PETER THURTELL: We do at—do you want to answer that?

DAVID HUDSON: I can, Commissioner. We've used facial recognition capability within New South Wales police since 2012, I think, in different forms. It depends upon what you're talking about. The facial recognition unit will compare photographs to our criminal history photos—photographs taken at the time of charge—and we've had some success with that. For those old records—we don't run it against broader databases, only what we currently have on record from offender photographs.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I raised it a couple of years back because there had been research showing that Cognitec in particular had a racial bias built into it. That was the reason for asking about its use then. I know, from the answers that we were provided then, that New South Wales police were using it. I understand if you need to take this on notice, but are you able to let us know exactly why it was suspended? Was it because of the racial bias? Was it because you moved to a different product?

DAVID HUDSON: I think we moved to a different product. But you must bear in mind that whatever product is generated through facial recognition is not evidence; we use it as intelligence. There needs to be a human factor in it. It might give us investigative leads that need to be pursued, but it's not used as evidence before a court to say that photo and that CCTV capture is this person on our records, and therefore we prosecute that individual just based on that evidence. Obviously, it's a line of inquiry provided to investigators, which they can pursue.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Suspect Identification System (SIS) used a Cognitec Systems algorithm from 2011. In February 2025, the Cognitec function within SIS was deactivated and all facial recognition services were centralised within the State Intelligence Command's Facial Recognition Unit and Real Time Intelligence Centre.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Can you tell me about the police's use of Fivecast's ONYX platform?

PETER THURTELL: I can't, but we can take it on notice.

DAVID HUDSON: It's a product that the State Intelligence Command do use, but I'll have to get back with some specific details.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I understand that Fivecast ONYX is currently being used by the Trump administration to scrape and analyse open-source data, including social media, to assist ICE agents in detaining people that the Trump administration has decided should be detained. This is a predictive, broad analytical tool. Fivecast say that they have built it in collaboration with Australian authorities in order to build person-of-interest networks. Is that what the New South Wales police are using it for?

DAVID HUDSON: We use a range of products available in the intelligence function to generate intelligence and link individuals. But, as I said, like all intelligence, it's not used as evidence; it's used to give investigative direction to certain matters. We don't use capabilities without human intervention. It's part of our ethical framework. Whatever leads intelligence capabilities might deliver to us, they still need to be humanised through an investigative focus.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Did police have to get legal advice from the Premier's Department on the use of ONYX?

DAVID HUDSON: I'll have to take that on notice. I'm unaware.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Fivecast ONYX is not used by the NSW Police Force.

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Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: That's interesting because I know we asked a couple of years ago about the use of predicting emotions in, I believe it was, the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. We asked and we got sort of told that perhaps it was being used there, and we did ask questions about whether it was being used. Do you remember if it was being used then? Maybe take it on notice.

DAVID HUDSON: As I said, we've trialled a number of different things at different times of our organisation's history in relation to getting products that can assist us in ensuring public safety. But I couldn't tell you which ones at what times at this stage.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: But you're using Fivecast to predict protests?

DAVID HUDSON: I'm not too sure what components of Fivecast we're using. The company produces various different capabilities, like most companies do in the intelligence field. I think we are a client of Fivecast, but I'd have to get back to you on the exact nature of that relationship.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I understand there has been quite a lot of criticism of the use of mood and sentiment analysis in surveilling protests and things, and that it's not actually a very good tool. I'd be interested to see, perhaps on notice, if you could let me know where it's being used and on what basis it's being used.

DAVID HUDSON: We can do that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force does not use Fivecast ONYX or live stream footage in facial examinations.

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PAUL PISANOS: If I can start with drug-involved fatal crashes, over the five-year average up to 2023, which is how we and Transport work across that five-year average, 24 per cent of fatalities had a drug-associated factor as being involved, so cannabis to the tune of 69 per cent; methamphetamine to 43 per cent; cocaine, 7 per cent; and ecstasy, 5 per cent. That's to that total of 24 per cent involvement in fatalities for that five-year average. Alcohol, obviously, played a significant role as well. Forty-one per cent of fatalities over that five-year average involved speeding. In terms of our RDT—random drug testing—we're tracking again towards two million-plus tests for this year. We're well on target, and we still have a strike rate of one in 10 tests are leading to a positive reading for some prohibited drug. That's the current statistics from Traffic and Highway Patrol, and Transport.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Mr Pisanos, did you have the figures for alcohol-involved fatalities?

PAUL PISANOS: Yes, I do. I'm just going to have to skim my notes. I've got a bit of a summary here. Just give me a moment.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: I'm happy to get it on notice if that's more convenient.

PAUL PISANOS: I've definitely got it here. I can come back to you with it.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: The other thing—perhaps this is also on notice—is what are the KPIs or the benchmarks to evaluate the effectiveness of police road safety operations in New South Wales?

PAUL PISANOS: We have a multifaceted approach. RBT is one significant factor of what we do. We certainly work largely towards 3½ million tests—that's where we're tracking again—plus targeted speed enforcement, plus random drug testing, certainly following the intelligence around regional and metropolitan locations where we have hotspots for serious collisions and fatalities. One of the big things that we're seeing emerging as a theme is, generally, driver behaviours, particularly around novice drivers and young drivers in speeding. Some of the significant speeds we're seeing—that definitely forms part of our targeting in terms of the way we're enforcing, certainly recognising the strong general deterrence of random breath testing on the side of the road, but understanding that we're targeting certain locations. Seventy per cent of fatalities occur in regional and remote roads. We definitely have targeted enforcement in those locations to track those areas where we are seeing those serious collisions and fatalities.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Reducing the impact of death and serious injuries on NSW roads is the primary focus of the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. A visible presence in the areas of road trauma, effective engagement and the full range of enforcement action targeting the causative factors are the benchmarks for ensuring effectiveness in providing safer roads across the communities of NSW.

NSW has the lowest fatality rate per 100,000 of population in Australia over the last rolling 12-month period (excluding the ACT). Additionally, the number of fatalities involving P Plate drivers during the first six months of 2025 is down by eight people, compared to the same period last year, evidencing that action being taken by the NSWPF to mitigate this risk cohort is having a positive effect.

The NSWPF takes a multi-faceted approach, utilising the following successful strategies to prevent and reduce road trauma:

- In 2024, a total of 3,432,589 Random Breath Tests (RBTs) were conducted, of which 13,314 resulted in legal action (0.38%).
- Between 1 January 2025 to 31 July 2025, 2,144,899 RBTs were conducted with 7,936 resulting in a legal process (0.36%).
- Addressing the escalating risk to road safety from drug driving, Random Drug Test (RDT) legal actions have continued to climb since 2019 (9,095 positives from 169,079 tests = 5.3%), to 2024 (19,001 from 231,258 tests = 8.2%), with 2025 projected to be higher again (currently 11,262 from 114,060 tests = 9.8%).
- The NSWPF is tracking to meet and exceed its goal of 200,000 RDTs for 2025. As of 31 July 2025, projections of positive drug tests are expected to be in the vicinity of 19,308.
- Stationary and mobile speed enforcement.
- High visibility patrols of known street racing/hoon driving locations, as well as monitoring of social media for organised events of the same nature.
- Vehicle compliance operations in many cases in collaboration with Transport for NSW vehicle inspectors.
- Regular mobile and stationary duties within gazetted school zones.
- Promotion of the involvement of all police personnel in road policing activity—particularly during state-wide operations.

- Operation CROSSROADS developed in 2023-24 and continuing in 2025-26, designed to deploy metropolitan-based resources to regional areas experiencing elevated levels of road trauma, with a focus on alcohol, drugs and speed as the main causal factor of fatal crashes in regional areas.
- Operation RAID (Remove All Impaired Drivers) developed in 2024 and continuing in 2025-26, a high-profile statewide operation focussing specifically on drivers impaired by alcohol, drugs and fatigue. Between 21-23 August 2025, Operation RAID delivered:
 - 87,105 RBT for a total of 186 Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol (PCA) offences (0.2%) were positive.
 - 9,166 RDT for a total of 660 positive RDT (7.2% were positive)
 - 5,577 traffic infringements notices issued, including 1,342 for speed related offences, 217 for mobile phone usage, and 71 seatbelt/helmet related offences.

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The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: What's the ratio of highway patrol officers to vehicles on New South Wales roads and how has that changed? Are we trending up or trending down or static?

PAUL PISANOS: As of September 2025, we had 7,441,475 registered vehicles on New South Wales roads, which is an increase of 1½ million vehicles since 2022. That includes, in terms of New South Wales licence holders, 7,082,123 licence holders across the spectrum in New South Wales as of September 2025. That's an increase of 156,000 since—sorry, it's an increase of 439 licensed drivers, permit holders, heavy vehicle licence holders since 2022. The Highway Patrol Command—in terms of staffing, I'll come back to you in a moment but it's currently, like everywhere, carrying some vacancies. The command is spread out right across New South Wales, performing a whole range of tasks.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 26 June 2025, Traffic and Highway Patrol Command has a headcount of 1,210.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Mr Thurtell, can you let us know how many probationary constables are leaving within the first 12 months?

PETER THURTELL: I can certainly take it on notice. Rashelle, do you know that?

RASHELLE CONROY: I don't have those in front of me.

PETER THURTELL: We'll take it on notice and get back to you for sure.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The number of separating Probationary Constables in a calendar year is as follows:

- 2023: 114
- 2024: 78
- 2025 (to 14/09/2025): 53

Note: This data is not specific to Probationary Constables leaving within their first year. Most Probationary Constables become Constables after 12 months, however, a significant number remain Probationary Constables beyond 12 months. Of those, some do become constables, some separate.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Thank you. When recruits are coming to the academy, is there an analysis done on where they're coming from, their previous backgrounds, if it's not school or uni graduates?

PETER THURTELL: We may have that. I'd have to get back to you as well, but you've only got to go to one of the graduation ceremonies to see the racial diversity of the people that are there.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: We love to see it. It's great to see that they are coming from backgrounds that are very diverse and a range of them. The question that I'm getting to with this, and coming back to your point about Corrective Services and the additional pressure of other roles on police—do you have an idea of how many former Corrective Services officers are moving into the police force?

PETER THURTELL: No. We'll take that on notice as well. I'm not sure it's even a statistic that we would capture. From my experience, not a whole lot.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) captures the following data regarding recruits:

- Gender
- Age
- Basis of admission (University Certificate in Workforce Essentials (UCWE) admission/VET qualification/Higher Education), Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery (IPROWD)
- First Nations status
- Country of Birth
- Language
- Home Region
- Entry type (direct entry/Prosecutor Program/Forensics Program/Charles Sturt University Bachelor/Western Sydney University Bachelor)

The NSWPF is not capturing the number of Corrective Services officers moving to policing.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Mr Pisanos, could I just quickly come back to you, please. We mentioned earlier about the detection of weapons at schools specifically. Are there protocols in place between New South Wales police—the education Minister referenced Education—and the Department of Education for responding to potential or perceived threats or sightings when it comes to schools?

PAUL PISANOS: There is a protocol.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: There is. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

PAUL PISANOS: We second police officers to the School Safety and Response Unit. There is an escalation model that applies where there is direct contact across the police. Again, like many things based around the threat or the risk of a particular situation, it can culminate in a shutdown or lockdown of a school.

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Has that occurred in recent times? Let's say the last 12 months.

PAUL PISANOS: I'd have to get back to you. Certainly there is a history of schools being locked down and us being notified, but not necessarily police being part of lockdown decision-making. That is obviously made by the school leadership. Generally, we're notified through the MOU and through School Safety and Response to respond—or a 000 call—based around risk.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force Incident Support Unit, embedded in the Department of Education, investigates and manages issues and incidents involving school violence, criminal behaviour, security and emergency management. The Unit monitors police call outs and attendance to school lockdowns but does not capture data. Police are not generally involved in the initial decision-making processes until notified. Questions regarding school lockdowns should be directed to the Minister for Education.

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The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Because of information that we're attempting to determine through this about the protocol between police and the Department of Education and how that might be undertaken. More specifically than that, are they consistent across all public and private schools, or do these protocols apply to public schools only?

PAUL PISANOS: It's a good question, I'll have to come back to you. I can certainly speak to private schools, but I think it might be more inclusive than that. I just need to come back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Memorandum of Understanding between the NSW Police Force and Schools applies to both government and non-government schools.

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The CHAIR: Commissioner, do New South Wales police have any officers who identify as trans women?

PETER THURTELL: Good question. I'm not 100 per cent sure on that, but I can certainly find out. Are trans women—

The CHAIR: A biological man who is identifying or transitioning to be a woman.

PETER THURTELL: I'm not sure.

The CHAIR: Any sworn officers?

PETER THURTELL: I don't know of any off the top of my head.

DAVID HUDSON: We used to. I'm not sure about now.

The CHAIR: What about the opposite—identifying as trans men.

PETER THURTELL: I'm aware of one, but I'm not so sure if there are others. We'll have to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: One. Thank you. Are there any special arrangements made in relation to that person to do their duties?

PETER THURTELL: I'd have to take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: Are there any applicants in the academy of either category at the moment?
PETER THURTELL: I'd have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Gender data is self-reported as Male, Female and Non-Binary. The NSW Police Force SAP system does not capture 'transgender' status.

Page 83 – Regional Coordination

Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Perhaps we can ask a couple of questions about Newcastle. I understand that the estimated total cost of the new basketball stadium at New Lambton is \$82 million. Can you confirm if that's correct?

KATE MEAGHER: I'm going to have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Perhaps you can also take on notice the factors that have contributed to the increase in project costs from \$30 million to \$82 million over the past five years, or is that something you can help us with now?

KATE MEAGHER: No, I'm afraid I'm not briefed on that particular facility.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: There is a number of other questions about that, so perhaps they should all go on notice.

KATE MEAGHER: Do you mind? I'm sorry.

ANSWER:

I am advised: In accordance with the supplementary questions, this falls within the remit of the Office of Sport and is therefore a matter for the Minister for Sport, the Hon. Stephen Kamper MP.

Page 83-84 – Regional Coordination

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Can you help us in relation to the Broadmeadow precinct affordable housing and use of public land? How many of the proposed 3,200 homes in the Broadmeadow precinct are currently earmarked as affordable or social housing?

KATE MEAGHER: I'm just having a quick look at my note on that. I don't have a breakdown as to the number of affordable housing, the allocation for affordable housing, but very happy to take that on notice. Twenty thousand dwellings and 15,000 jobs is the vision, but, as I say—

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: You don't have the breakdown of affordable or social housing?

KATE MEAGHER: Sorry, no.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: There is a number of other questions in relation to that we'll also put on notice. Can you help us with the proposed sale of Warabrook road reserve land? I am wondering why the Government is proceeding with the sale of public land at Warabrook that was previously reserved for the Wallsend to Mayfield arterial corridor?

KATE MEAGHER: That may be a question better directed to the Roads portfolio, but I'm more than happy to go back through our regional coordination team to get an answer for you.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Yes, if you could. Can you confirm whether the Government has received formal requests from the Lake Macquarie City Council for funding or support to deliver the long-promised Cardiff Town Park?

KATE MEAGHER: I'll take that on notice too, Ms Carter. next step given the scale of some of the things that you're mentioning.

ANSWER:

I am advised: In accordance with the supplementary questions, this matter relates to Planning and is therefore the responsibility of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon. Paul Scully MP.