

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 3

Monday 25 June 2001

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

POLICE

The Committee met at 7.30 p.m.

MEMBERS

The Hon. J. Hatzistergos (Deputy-Chair)

The Hon. M. J. Gallacher
The Hon. J. R. Johnson
The Hon. G. S. Pearce

Ms Lee Rhiannon
The Hon. H. S. Tsang

PRESENT

The Hon. P. F. P. Whelan, *Minister for Police*

Ministry for Police

Mr L. Tree, *Director-General*

Police Service

Mr P. Ryan, QPM, *Commissioner of Police*

Mr P. Bhatt, *General Manager, Finance*

New South Wales Crime Commission

Mr P. Bradley, *Commissioner*

Police Integrity Commission

Mr G. E. Sage, *Assistant Commissioner*

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I declare this meeting open.

Mr WHELAN: In relation to the Chairman of the New South Wales Crime Commission in the past he has not been personally been identified by photographs or television. Can that still be the case?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I see no reason why not. I welcome you to this public meeting of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3. I thank the Minister and his departmental officers for appearing today. At this meeting the Committee will examine the portfolio area of police. Before questions commence, some procedural matters will be dealt with. Part 4 of the resolution of the budget estimates committee requires evidence to be heard in public. The Committee has previously resolved to authorise the media to broadcast and film its proceedings. Copies of the guidelines for broadcasting are available from the attendants. I point out that, in accordance with the Legislative Council's guidelines for broadcasting proceedings, only members of the Committee or witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photographs. In the event that Mr Bradley is to give evidence, he should not be photographed.

In reporting the proceedings of this Committee, you must take responsibility for what you publish and what interpretation you place on anything that is said before the Committee. There is no provision for members to refer directly to their own staff while at the table. Witnesses, members and their staff are advised that any messages should be delivered through the attendant on duty or through the Committee Clerks. I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. For convenience I ask members to try to direct their questions first to the Police Integrity Commissioner and the Commissioner of the New South Wales Crime Commission.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I have a couple of questions for the Commissioner of the New South Crime.

Mr WHELAN: Do I not have the right to make an opening statement?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Yes, you may make an opening statement.

Mr WHELAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy-Chair, for the generous opportunity to make this opening statement. The total Police Service budget at \$1.607 billion is the seventh record budget in a row under the Carr Government. The budget represents a massive 48 per cent or \$520 million increase over the Coalition's last police budget. The underlying police budget without Olympic-related expenses has increased by \$57.8 million or 3.9 per cent from 2000-2001. The recurrent budget once again provides \$50 million for an increase of 200 police, in keeping with the Government's commitment to increase police numbers by 1,000 at the end of 2003. The additional police will be allocated to high crime Local Area Commands and Crime Agencies to combat drug-related crime.

The civilianisation program goes into its third stage with 159 police positions to be released to the front line. Additional recurrent funds have been provided to innovative programs designed to strengthen ties between police and the community; \$485,000 has been provided to the Police and Community program or PACT. PACT brings police, youth and community groups together to jointly identify crime prevention and community safety initiatives. Funding for this program will ensure that this project continues and others can be commenced in other areas of the State. Workplace training for Policing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity is another program funded in the budget; \$224,000 has been allocated to this program. The primary objective of the workplace training program is to initiate a research project to build an inventory of police-practitioner experiences of the needs of culturally diverse client groups. This will be used to create appropriate workplace training for police on policing in a multi-cultural environment.

The \$66 million capital budget shows an overall increase of \$7 million. This will allow the Police Service to continue to focus on smarter policing, using sophisticated equipment to improve efficiency. New capital projects to commence this year are \$1.9 million for the adoption of e-business practices to facilitate the execution and serving of warrants, orders, summonses and subpoenas electronically; \$0.226 million to build a missing persons intranet DNA database; \$3.4 million to enhance the computerised operational policing system; \$1.1 million to allow for the electronic tracking of court notices as part of the ongoing improvement of the criminal histories system; \$2.8 million to further enhance the award-winning e@gle.i investigation management system—this system enables all material from police investigations to be online and accessible from any police station in the State, saving valuable police time and improving management of investigations; \$6 million to improve the Police Service's country radio network, thus improving officer safety and police efficiency; and \$800,000 to purchase a scanning electron microscope to assist in the examination of forensic evidence.

The capital works already commenced will continue with the \$33.6 million provided. Highlights include \$3 million to complete the \$7 million project to fit operational police vehicles with mobile data terminals [MDTs]. These in-car computers have changed forever operational policing. Police vehicles become virtual police stations.

Police are able to enter and retrieve data from the police databases from their vehicles. They do not need to return to the police station to do this. This means that they are on the streets ready to respond to calls for assistance. The Service will also begin an in-car video trial via MDTs to give instant vision as well as facts and figures from car mobile computers. The \$8.1 million project for the relocation of the Infringement Processing Bureau to Maitland will be completed in 2001-2002. This will mean an additional 150 jobs in the Maitland area, which has been very well received in the local community.

Construction of new police stations at Kogarah and Waratah at a cost of \$8.4 million will continue. An amount of \$2.5 million is provided for cell improvements across the State. The cell improvements program gives priority to locations that have been designated for the transfer of responsibility for prisoner escorts to the Department of Corrective Services. This in turn, as members will know, releases police for operational duties. There will be \$3 million for the continuing roll-out of the revolutionary Livescan fingerprint equipment—an inkless, electronic fingerprinting system. Some of this funding will be used to integrate Livescan with the national CrimTrac system as part of New South Wales' contribution to future nationwide access to suspects' fingerprints. A further \$16.4 million will be provided for minor works to improve Police Service accommodation and purchase and replace minor items of equipment.

Minor works for 2001-2002 will include \$2 million worth of specialist scientific instrumentation for the forensic services group and this will enable that group to carry out examination and research into evidence in-house. It will also allow the Forensic Services Group to review and screen trace evidence so that items can be eliminated from further examination. This will speed up the investigative efforts by allowing police to concentrate on crime-related items likely to give the best value. The long-term trend of increasing police budgets has been maintained. The budget continues to establish the Police Service in the forefront of policing services worldwide in the use of technology to fight crime. Thank you for the opportunity to make this opening statement.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I have just a couple of questions for Mr Bradley. In relation to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14-8, how much money was spent prosecuting high-level drug traffickers and persons involved in organised crime in relation to the failed charges against John Preston relating to the importation of cigarettes into New South Wales from Queensland to avoid duty? How much money was spent on legal costs in pursuing this matter and how much was paid or is likely to be paid by way of damages, or compensation for that matter?

Mr BRADLEY: As to the prosecution costs, you would have to refer to the Director of Public Prosecutions [DPP]. No damages or other legal costs were paid by the Crime Commission. What was the other part of the question?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Compensation.

Mr BRADLEY: Or compensation.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: So will you be able to give us the figures on the legal costs?

Mr BRADLEY: I think you should refer to the DPP for the legal costs.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Did you engage lawyers yourself?

Mr BRADLEY: We were one of the parties represented by the Crown Solicitor, and I think it was dealt with as part of the core work in the Crown Solicitor's Office and therefore no fees were rendered. I think that is the position.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: If it is not, would you let the Committee know? Would you also—and perhaps you will have to take this on notice—let us know how many man-hours, investigation hours and Crime Commission hours were spent on this matter, which could have really been focused on fighting organised gang crime related to drug trafficking?

Mr BRADLEY: I do not have those, in addition.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Perhaps you could take those on notice.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I have a question to the Commissioner, and I am referring to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14-31. In the New South Wales Crime Commission's Annual Report 1999-2000, comments are made regarding the increase of violent crime by organised gangs. Included in the report is

a statement that there is an increasing incidence of violence and murders and that "these types of crimes are usually attributed to disputes amongst rival groups for control of criminal enterprises, usually drug trafficking, gambling and prostitution". Why is it, therefore, that the budget is down this year on last year, and what is it about the Crime Commission's budget that would have been Olympic related?

Mr BRADLEY: I am not aware that there has been a reduction in expenditure on crimes of violence amongst gangs. There is a range of areas of activity. I think there are currently 20 criminal investigation references that the Crime Commission has undertaken, and there has been no specific reduction in expenditure on those criminal investigation areas.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Was any of the Crime Commission's budget Olympic related?

Mr BRADLEY: There would have been a small amount of funds devoted to that. The precise amount I cannot tell you. I am not even sure that it was separately represented in the Commission's budget because it was mainly reserve facilities in the event of an incident. There were specifically identified facilities.

Mr WHELAN: The issue of legal costs was not taken on notice, was it? That is a matter for the DPP.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: The Commissioner was going to check whether the Crown Solicitor charged any legal fees.

Mr WHELAN: To the Crime Commission?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: The Commissioner thought it was part of the core work.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: My question is to Mr Tim Sage. Mr Sage, in relation to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14-5, and the Government's claim that the Service is addressing the long-term organisational reform issues identified in the Royal Commission, is it of concern to the Police Integrity Commission that the independent audit report found on page 30 that it could find no reference to the leadership principles required to implement and sustain reform in the Commissioner's two key reports Reform of the New South Wales Police Service phase 1 in November 1996 and Reform of the New South Wales Police Service for the next phase, January 1998?

Mr SAGE: It is concerned in the context that the Police Integrity Commission is the agency that manages the audit and the Police Integrity Commission is now involved in the appendix 31 reform committee that is advising Commissioner Ryan on reform, and we still have the audit being conducted. So that is our concern and the way we are dealing with it. We are still managing the audit. It is now in its second year. It has a third year and possibly into the fourth year to run. As I say, the recommendations that the Police Integrity Commission made on the first year's audit have been adopted by government and approved by government, and one of those was that a committee be set up, and I am on that committee.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: When did that take place?

Mr SAGE: The committee was formed in—I think it was late February early March. It has been meeting and has made a number of recommendations to Commissioner Ryan. It is continuing to meet and develop a plan for reform of the Police Service based on appendix 31 recommendations of the Royal Commission final report.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: And have you put deadlines in there for certain outcomes to the Commissioner in relation to this committee.

Mr SAGE: We are not quite to that point at the moment. There is a further meeting next week and the plan is being developed now through a consultant approved by Commissioner Ryan, and that will be one of the areas that is covered, the setting of the timetable.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: That consultant is obviously external to the Police Service?

Mr SAGE: Yes.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Have you any idea how much it is costing for the consultant to assist the Police Service?

Mr SAGE: No, I do not have that figure. That is a matter that is being attended to by the Police Service.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Could you explain to the Committee why you would need a consultant to do something I would have thought the Police Integrity Commission would have been spearheading following the Royal Commission's findings?

Mr SAGE: No, it is not within the function of the Police Integrity Commission. It is quite clearly within the Police Service. That was one of the recommendations that the Police Integrity Commission made in addressing the year one Qualitative and Strategic Audit of the Reform Process [QSARP] Report. It was a recommendation that the Police Service engage external consultants to do this work. This was the first engagement of the consultant, and the consultancy is to develop a plan for reform.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Could you just tell the Committee when exactly was a decision taken in relation to the need for the consultant?

Mr SAGE: The recommendation identified that there is a need for external consultancies to be engaged to assist the Police Service in those reforms. So this is the first of what I would anticipate would be a number of consultancies that will be engaged to do the work over a long period of time. As Commissioner Ryan has stated on many occasions, and as did the Royal Commission, the reform of the Police Service is ongoing and it will take many years to achieve. It will not happen overnight and it will be a very detailed plan that will be put to Commissioner Ryan to assist him in that reform process.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: In relation to Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14-5 and the Government's claim that the service's key priorities include continuing improvement in cultural and workplace reform, does the Police Integrity Commission agree with this comment on page 61 of the independent audit report:

The style of the OCR meeting, in our view, reinforces the culture of fear and punishment that is said to be a characteristic of the past.

Mr SAGE: The OCR meetings are not something that the Police Integrity Commission would comment on. We do not participate. That is an observation and comment that the auditors have made in their auditing of the reform of the Police Service, and it is not for me to comment on.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: To the Minister, what are your specific instructions to the Commissioner and Deputy-Commissioners to improve their behaviour at OCR meetings in line with the concerns expressed by the independent auditor?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: You are moving now to the OCR which Mr Sage says he has nothing to do with. Does anyone have any questions of Mr Sage?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I have one other question. Mr Sage, in relation to page 14.10 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, what is the Police Integrity Commission doing to refocus the reform of the Police Service Co-ordination Unit back to the Royal Commission recommendations and away from the Commissioner's A1 reform priorities as identified in the independent audit report?

Mr SAGE: We are doing what I have just stated. We are a member of the appendix 31 reform advisory group and our input will be into that process.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: One last issue—

Mr SAGE: Could I make a further comment. The Commissioner's reform and the appendix 31 reforms, as far as the PIC and the committee are concerned, can run together. In fact, in lots of respects they complement and dovetail into each other and it is important to realise, I think, that the Commissioner has an ongoing responsibility for reform. Appendix 31 reforms, as you draw those initiatives from appendix 31, are what the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service identified as being reforms that were necessary. So the ongoing reform of the Police Service is a matter that is important and needs to run together with appendix 31.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: An illuminating issue last year was the number of firearms that had gone missing. Could you give the Committee an update on the number of firearms that have gone missing, if any, during the past 12 months?

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Missing from whom?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: From the New South Wales Police Service.

Mr SAGE: I am not aware. Again, I could take this on notice, but I am not aware that any have gone missing since the last meeting.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I direct my question to the Commissioner of Police. Did the Police Service provide individual security for One.Tel directors Jodee Rich and Brad Keeling in the recent episode that they had?

Commissioner RYAN: No security was provided to those gentlemen during that episode.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: So there were no police officers there of any kind?

Commissioner RYAN: As far as I am aware, and I have been advised that whilst we have reviewed the actions of police I am satisfied that their response was appropriate. I am further advised that the status, wealth or suburb of those seeking assistance from police has no bearing on the police response. As far as I am informed, the police were called to the residences as a result of obstructions to the roadway, media cameras going over walls, cherry pickers with media cameras on board and neighbours and others were complaining about the general large crowds assembled outside the residences. Police attended. No special protection was given.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: So they were there in terms of the issue of property, not in terms of the individuals. Is that how you saw it?

Commissioner RYAN: They were there in terms of making sure that the streets were free for traffic and pedestrians and as a result of the residents complaining that they could not leave their homes.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: What do you estimate the total cost to the taxpayers was in providing that service?

Commissioner RYAN: I think it was a normal police response to members of the public requiring police assistance. We do not cost them on that basis.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I would like to move on to the situation at Tumut. Is the officer who killed James Hallinan on 24 February still on active duty and, if so, is he still working for the State Protection Group and available for siege-type situations?

Commissioner RYAN: I will have to take that question on notice. I do not know.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: To the Minister, will the Minister assure the Committee—I understand that the Commissioner might have some information about the earlier question I asked.

Commissioner RYAN: It does not add anything other than there is a coronial inquiry and, therefore, we cannot discuss the details of it, but it does not add to my answer. I do not know if the officer is on duty and I do not know if he is available for siege situations. I will take it on notice.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you. Will the Minister assure the Committee that the Crimes (Forensic Procedures) Act will not allow matching of DNA in the families of missing persons with crimes scenes stains thought to have been left by offenders and the possible use of such information in tracking down offenders? Are you really confident there is a separation there?

Mr WHELAN: Yes, I must say I am confident in the sense that the forensic procedures legislation is built on the absolute integrity of the system. The issue you raised is one that I have not put my mind to. If you are suggesting by your questions that there will be cross-referencing of people with the criminal database, then that would occur only if they were of reasonable suspicion under the Act and just because they were missing could not disentitle police, if they had reasonable suspicion that a person, whether or not they were missing, was involved in the commission of an offence to seek information. They would be entitled to seek that information. However, what the question does raise is whether that information should be available to police because that is not the purpose for which the DNA was first given.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: That is what I am trying to explore.

Mr WHELAN: I will take that on notice, but I think in rare cases that it will apply. I might have a look to see if the Act covers that circumstance, but the Act is built on the integrity within the system. If there is any question of integrity, we will amend the legislation but I think you will find it is already covered.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I would like to ask the Commissioner about some of the situations with Glocks. How many New South Wales police have been killed or injured by the accidental discharge of service Glock pistols since they were introduced and how many police have been killed or injured by the deliberate discharge of firearms by offenders since the introduction of Glocks? So it is both the police in terms of their own Glocks and also how they are faring in terms of offenders now the police have Glocks.

Commissioner RYAN: I do not have information on the number of people who have been injured. We certainly have not had any officers killed as a result of the use of Glock pistols—either use by the Police Service or use by anyone else. We have had officers injured during training. It is unfortunate, but it does happen. It is difficult to train people who have never handled firearms before to handle them safely, but I can let you know how many people have been injured.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Have any been injured while they are on service?

Commissioner RYAN: None that I am aware of, no. They have usually been during training exercises or other than when they have been—let me go back again. We have had one officer who was killed, I am sorry, in a police station with the use of a service Glock. Yes, we had one. But in relation to injuries, it has mainly been as a result of training. I am not aware of any who have been injured on duty under normal circumstances whilst using a pistol, but I can check for you and let you know.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you. The other part of the question was about the police who have been killed and injured by the deliberate discharge of firearms by offenders since the introduction of Glocks. So what I am obviously trying to explore there is how police are faring now they have this upgraded weapon.

Commissioner RYAN: We have been using Glock pistols since about 1995 on the special tactical groups, but the general issue of Glock pistols only started two and a half years ago. Officers have been killed, as we have mentioned. We had the one killed in a police station. But in terms of being killed or injured as a result of being issued with a new pistol, I do not think there have been any that have been directly linked to that cause.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Perhaps I am not understanding you correctly. What I am trying to explore there is whether Glocks are providing greater protection to police officers.

Commissioner RYAN: They have certainly provided a greater degree of protection. They are a far more versatile weapon than a revolver. They hold more bullets and they are more accurate. But in terms of officers using them to defend themselves against firearms being used by an opponent, I do not know the number of times we have drawn weapons and used them under those circumstances, but I can take it on notice and make a note.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you.

Mr WHELAN: Could I add to that? You might be interested to know that there was a task force formed in 1992 called task force Alpha, and in that task force the Police Service weighed up the merits and demerits of various weapons that were available and came down in favour of the Glock weapon over Smith and Wesson and other types weapons for police purposes, so it was a decision made by the Police Service after their experts had trialed, retrialed and examined it over many years. It was not a decision that was made overnight. That was the weapon of choice of the Police Service, and a recommendation was made to the Government accordingly.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, what is the current strategy being adopted by the Police Service to attract new recruits, particularly people of non-English speaking backgrounds?

Mr WHELAN: Police education and training has been improved with recruit training now being provided by Charles Sturt University in partnership with the Police College's Goulburn campus. It is mandatory for all future police officers to successfully complete a tertiary education course approved by the Police Service. This gives recruits the necessary training and skills to support their entry into operational policing. The Diploma of Policing Practice serves as a primary educational pathway to police recruitment. In order to maximise the number of appropriately qualified recruits Charles Sturt University now offers an enabling program for potential police recruits who have been excluded from policing because they have not satisfied the minimum academic criteria for enrolment. Successful completion of the enabling program allows access to the Diploma of Policing Practice.

Other tertiary education programs such as the University of Western Sydney's Bachelor of Policing and Charles Sturt University's Bachelor of Justice Studies also serve as academic pathways for a police career. Potential recruits who successfully complete this tertiary training are eligible for recruitment through the Service's Constable Education program. A total of 591 students have enrolled in the Constable Education program this year—329 in the January intake, 262 in the May intake. There are high levels of interest in the Constable Education program, with

2,370 applications having been received by Charles Sturt University this year. The decision to offer the Constable Education program by distance education has opened policing up to a wider range of potential applicants.

The distance education program, which began in 2000, targets mature-age students and those unable to relocate to Goulburn for long periods of time. It is particularly appealing to women applicants. In the September 2000 intake, there were 29 distance education students. In January this year, 123 students commenced the course, far exceeding Service expectations. A further 109 students commenced the course in May 2001. Scholarships are available to undertake the Constable Education program. The Police Service provides the funds for the scholarships, which are allocated by Charles Sturt University, based on academic merit and financial need. A significant number of applications for the Constable Education program were received after promotion of the program at career days.

The Police Service, Charles Sturt University and the University of Western Sydney have jointly conducted policing-as-a-career days at Wollongong twice this year; Newcastle; the New South Wales Police College at Westmead twice this year; and at Orange. Further days are planned for Coffs Harbour, Wagga Wagga, Westmead and Newcastle. There have been a number of new marketing initiatives that have been undertaken to promote the Constable Education program. These include advertising on a number of Internet sites, such as the Fairfax My Career site and the Nine MSN sports page; advertising in metropolitan newspapers such as the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph*, targeting both graduates and those seeking a career change; and advertising in regional newspapers.

The Service is committed to promoting diversity in recruitment, to come to the second part of your question, so that police will be better able to respond to the diversity of the New South Wales community. The Service continues to target women, gays and lesbians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people from non-English speaking backgrounds for recruitment. Priority is given to schools, career markets and cultural events that provide opportunities to target culturally, linguistically, racially and religiously diverse groups. The proportion of female police officers recruited to the Police Service is increasing. In 1999-2000, 41.9 per cent of all probationary constables were women, compared with 40.7 per cent in 1998-99, 36.4 per cent in 1997-98, and 34 per cent in 1996-97. In May 1999, over half of the new recruits being attested were female.

What we are trying to do is to ensure that the Police Service and its officers reflect as closely as possible, without compromising standards, the cultural and linguistic composition of Australian society. The Police Service ensures that all recruitment policies, practices and standards are equitable and free from any racial or cultural bias. The figure of 4.6 per cent for linguistically diverse applicants certainly underestimates the value that officers from a wider specifically culturally diverse background may bring. These current figures only indicate those applicants who speak a language other than English in their home. Future figures will indicate what percentage of applicants themselves, parents or grandparents were born in a non-English speaking background country. This mix will better identify the intrinsic benefits brought to policing by officers from non-English speaking backgrounds.

I went over the issue of recruitment, but staffing within the Service represents a range of different cultural backgrounds. There is attendance at meetings of community leaders and ethnic community liaison officers [ECLOs]; attendance at cultural days and career markets; ongoing media strategies throughout the whole of New South Wales, and particularly in ethnic publications; the use of Internet networks, ethnic community liaison officers, Aboriginal community liaison officers, police TV, the *Police Service Weekly* magazine, and the use of the Internet to promote recruitment and provide information not only through the police web site but through various universities and career sites.

There has been a recent four-week marketing campaign utilising major Sydney regional newspapers, mainstream ethnic newspapers and ethnic radio. That resulted in 3,814 applications being sent out by the recruitment branch and that means a total number of applications sent out this year to be 9,811. That compares to a figure for the year 2000 of 1,600. So there is a great deal being done particularly in that area of attracting culturally diverse communities. Advertisements were specifically developed to target applicants from Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic backgrounds. Just to give you some indication, Sydney career day attracted over 1,000 people interested in applying to the Service. It gave interested parties the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the Police Service and lodge an application that day. So to answer your question, a great deal has been done.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Minister, what is the current status of the informant management system?

Mr WHELAN: One of the strategies used by the Service to achieve its corporate mission is the use of criminal informants. Informants can provide valuable information to police about crime, criminal activities and criminals. However, informants may be criminals themselves or associate with criminals. They may be potentially dangerous to police. They may provide or have provided in the past unreliable information. They may have a vested or sinister interest in providing police with information about criminals in order to pursue their own unlawful

activities and, as I am sure you are aware, can place police in risk of physical or corruption harm. These risks require management and minimisation.

Over the past decade there has been several reviews of the informant management policy and related processes. I am advised that the informant management manual is revised approximately every two to three years to reflect amendments in corporate policy governing the administration of the police-informant relationship. The current manual was released earlier this year. I understand this revision addressed issues arising from internal and Police Integrity Commission investigations as well as issues raised by the Royal Commission. One of the findings of the Wood Royal Commission was that the service must improve its management of information, including information derived from criminal informants.

The current informant management process uses paper-based forms and secure handling at regions and specialist operations commands for registering and managing informants. The Service maintains a central register of informants at the Information and Intelligence Centre. This Centre receives the paper records and uses the stand-alone PC with Microsoft Access database to record all registered informants. The Service recognises that the current process does not provide the optimal functionality, accountability and linkages with other corporate systems for the most effective and ethical management of informants.

The Government recently funded the Police Service to develop a new IT-based system that will provide a secure system for this type of highly sensitive data as well as data transmission and storage, increased information collection on informants, improved capability to assess the risks associated with managing an informant, accessibility to informant information on a 24-hour basis, intrusive auditing of input and inquiries on the system, links to other corporate systems as appropriate, including the Police Service Intranet, major crime investigation system, e@gle.i and COPS, and integration of the process with the rewards and evaluation committee process. It will include the potential to include locate information for the geographical information system mapping of informants to improve executive decision making about these resources, the ability to identify trends in registration of informants across crime categories to improve the planning of police operations, encryption standards which are aimed to meet those set by the Australian Defence Signals Directorate and improved flexibility in accommodating policy amendments to the management of informants.

I am advised that stage one of this system will be completed by 30 June this year at a cost of \$400,000. This stage includes a strategic direction paper, feasibility study and user requirements. Stage two is scheduled to commence on 1 July this year. This will enable purchase-build of the new IT system, development of new work practices across the Service and implementation. Criminal informants frequently provide police, as I am sure Hon. John Johnson is aware, with information about current or impending criminal activity. Pro-active investigations initiated after contact with a reliable informant can present a desirable and demonstrably improved law enforcement position. As a result, the improved management of informants can reduce, as a consequence, investigative costs, time, and trauma, particularly to members of the community. I am advised that the improved system is aligned with the Police Service strategic goals and key priorities, the Service's information and technology strategic plan and the Government's vision for information management and technology.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: What initiatives are planned, Minister, by the Police Service for 2001-2002 to ensure that better police services are delivered to people living in rural and regional areas of New South Wales? I have no pecuniary interest in that question.

Mr WHELAN: In line with the Government's commitment to rural and regional areas, the 2001-2002 budget includes \$485,000 for the Police and Community program for 2001-2002. Funding of \$224,000 has been included for the Workplace Training program across the State to address cultural and linguistic diversity issues. The primary objective of this program is to build an inventory of police-practitioner experiences. Communication in country areas is another issue. A total of \$6 million has been allocated to improve radio communications in country areas. That is part of a three-year program of \$20 million to improve radio communications in rural New South Wales. Though not specific to non-metropolitan New South Wales, \$16 million will be spent on new technology works across the State. This will significantly improve communications, police investigations and management to create a more efficient Police Service.

Police in regional areas will directly benefit from this investment in technology, which includes \$1.1 million for computerisation of criminal histories-court results, \$1.9 million for the enforcement notices [E-Notices] database, \$800,000 for the purchase of a forensic scanning electronic microscope and \$6.2 million for the enhancement of the COPS and investigation management e@gle.i systems. Other initiatives that will benefit rural and regional areas include continuation of the capital works program, which will total \$3.9 million in 2001-2002 for new or improved police stations and accommodation. Ongoing projects include the development of Waratah police station and police accommodation in remote areas, including Walgett and Bourke.

The Government will continue to work with Wellington Council to provide a new police station and transfer the existing station to Council. I note that is an issue that has been raised in the upper House. My understanding is that the Ambulance Service, the Council and the Police Service are working on an arrangement with the new police station, the new ambulance station and the Council taking over the old police station will be virtually at a nil cost except for what has been allocated, and \$1 million has been allocated for Wellington police station. I hope very soon to be signing an agreement between the three parties.

There is a strong focus on improved technology in the provision of policing across the State, including \$150,000 for the provision of electronic recording of interviews, \$1.3 million for the forensic services laboratories and systems, \$3 million for the Livescan fingerprint computer system, \$3.2 for radio and telephone equipment, \$20,000 for the upgrade of the criminal suspect identification system, \$1.4 million for digital film processing to support digital speed cameras, \$1.3 million for the Informants Management System and \$7 million to be provided across the State over two years, including the Hunter and the Illawarra, to install mobile data terminals for operation in police vehicles. A minor work allocation of \$16.4 million will also be used across the State for the upgrading of police accommodation and facilities, the purchase of smaller items of operational plant and equipment, the replacement of road safety equipment and for minor computer programs.

Others include \$8.1 million to upgrade the Infringement Processing Bureau's technology and facilitate the Bureau's relocation to Maitland, creating up to 150 jobs. That site has already been earmarked, and the Police Service has employed under contract for public works and has selected the company named Hunter Link—I think that is what it was called—in the Hunter Valley to start that work. I believe it is going to start at Maitland in eight weeks, and it has scheduled a six-month completion day. As I mentioned earlier on in my opening statement, that will create 150 jobs in Maitland. There are likely to be up to 30 people transferring out of the Infringement Processing Bureau in Sydney, so that is 120 brand new jobs for Maitland, which is good news for Maitland. There is \$175,000 to upgrade technology for the Firearms Registry in the Tweed, \$315,000 to replace bicycle patrols in Local Area Commands and \$2.5 million to upgrade police station holding cells across the State. Those are just some of the issues that I am sure you would be interested in.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Commissioner, who paid for your trip to Madrid last month?

Commissioner RYAN: I did.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And the accommodation at the Palace Hotel?

Commissioner RYAN: No, that was provided in turn for me giving lectures and taking part in a workshop.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What sort of workshop was it?

Commissioner RYAN: I do not know whether this is a proper question, Mr Deputy-Chair. What I do on my own annual leave and in my time has got nothing to do with this Committee.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Minister, did you approve this arrangement?

Mr WHELAN: Yes.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Was this a period when you were on annual leave?

Commissioner RYAN: I was on annual leave.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: How is it relevant?

Mr WHELAN: Particularly when the cost to the New South Wales taxpayer is nil.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: He was addressing, participating in a conference for an international insurance or financial services company, delivering a motivational lecture, or various motivational lectures.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I do not see that it has anything to do with the budget estimates.

Mr WHELAN: Yes, you are right.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I want to pursue the issue of the amount of time that the Commissioner was out of Australia.

Mr WHELAN: He was on leave. He can swim the English Channel if he likes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: They are the questions that I wish to ask him. If he does not want to answer them—

Commissioner RYAN: I am afraid, you know, the standing orders of this Committee do not allow you to ask questions about my private life when I am on leave. It is about budget estimates.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Were you on leave when you went to Athens on the Athens leg of the trip?

Commissioner RYAN: No, I was not.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Can I ask you about that leg of the trip?

Commissioner RYAN: You can ask me about Athens.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Who paid for that trip?

Commissioner RYAN: The International Olympic Committee.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Both your air fare and accommodation?

Commissioner RYAN: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What about last November? Were you on leave then?

Commissioner RYAN: No.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Who paid for that trip?

Commissioner RYAN: The International Olympic Committee.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Salt Lake?

Commissioner RYAN: We paid for some of that, yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: "We" meaning yourself?

Commissioner RYAN: "We" meaning the Police Service and some of it was paid by the—what do you call it—Olympic Committee for Salt Lake City.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Minister, did you approve each of those trips?

Mr WHELAN: Yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And that payment?

Mr WHELAN: Yes, I am sure I did.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: How much was the payment?

Commissioner RYAN: I do not know. I can let you know. I can take that on notice.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: How much time have you spent overseas since last June, Commissioner?

Commissioner RYAN: On official business, you mean?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Yes.

Commissioner RYAN: On official business, probably 15 days but I can give you that if I have some notice.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That includes your time in Athens, twice, Salt Lake?

Commissioner RYAN: Salt Lake City, yes.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And any other trips for the Athens Games?

Commissioner RYAN: Not for the Athens Games, no.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What is it that requires your personal attendance at all of these meetings? I understood that Mr McKinnon did most of the work for the Sydney Olympics. I just cannot quite understand why you are required to be in these cities.

Mr WHELAN: Are you asking me or are you asking the Commissioner?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am asking the Commissioner but you can answer, Minister.

Mr WHELAN: I would be pleased to. I think it has been a great honour for this country that a public servant has been asked to give advice in relation to security for Athens, and whether you like it or not, New South Wales and, indeed, Australia received great acclaim and great applause from the world for the way in which they handled the Olympics and particularly for the way in which the security for the Olympics was handled.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: But my question is why did the Commissioner need to go when I understood that Mr McKinnon did most of the work?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Let us have one question at a time.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Because of his expertise.

Mr WHELAN: There was one head and one security chief for the Olympics, and part of the original Olympic document undertaken by the former Liberal-National Government provided that the police Commissioner for New South Wales would be the head of Olympic security, and Commissioner Ryan was the head of Olympic security and was the man who was in charge. Notwithstanding that I have high respect for Paul McKinnon, if he was here he would tell you, as I will, that Mr McKinnon worked for Mr Ryan, not the other way round.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Commissioner, what arrangement or understanding do you have with those associated with the Athens Games for you to work there in 2004?

Commissioner RYAN: None. I am not employed. I am not working for the Athens Games at all. I am acting as an adviser to the International Olympic Committee on security matters affecting the Athens Games as a result of my experience here in Sydney and by agreement with the Premier, which was announced shortly after the end of the Olympic Games last year.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Commissioner, were you or anyone associated with you paid for your participation in the conference in Madrid?

Commissioner RYAN: No. I was not paid, no. This was when I was on leave.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Was anyone associated with you paid?

Commissioner RYAN: I did not get paid.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Was anyone associated with you paid?

Commissioner RYAN: Mr Deputy-Chair, this is absolutely disgraceful.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: We are not going to have questions about what the Commissioner did on leave.

Mr WHELAN: Yes, exactly.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am sorry, Mr Deputy-Chair, but I would have thought that the Commissioner should have been in the Cabramatta inquiry, which he was asked to attend, as you well know.

Commissioner RYAN: I was not asked to attend the Cabramatta inquiry.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And instead he chose to go on leave, to take a paid holiday in the Palace Hotel in Madrid.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Which he is entitled to do.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Just a moment. We are not going to have any questions—

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Point of order: Mr Deputy-Chair—

DEPUTY-CHAIR: We are not going to have any questions about the Commissioner's leave. Matters relating to the Cabramatta inquiry are still before that inquiry and also cannot be the subject of questioning because they anticipate what the committee may or may not determine.

Commissioner RYAN: As a point of clarification, Mr Deputy-Chair, I have never been asked—never been asked—to appear before that inquiry.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: You do not have to clarify it. I would appreciate it if you did not respond to the questions.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Commissioner—

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I ask the Hon. Greg Pearce to confine his questions to issues that relate to the budget specifically or to the Police Service and not to ask questions of a personal nature.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Minister, if I can take you to page 14-20 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, I would like you to tell us or explain to us how you can get possibly anywhere near your election commitment to increase police numbers when average staffing numbers across all programs within the Police Service are budgeted to be up by only 65 this year from 17,170 to 17,235.

Mr WHELAN: Do you know much about the commitment?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: He is the one who asked the question.

Mr WHELAN: The question displayed a certain lack of knowledge about it. I just do not know—

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That is what a question is, Minister. Perhaps you could enlighten us.

Mr WHELAN: I have got a detailed response but I thought if you knew a little bit more about it, it would save the time of the Committee.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am just trying to get the police numbers.

Mr WHELAN: The answer to the question you have asked me is long and involved, and I will give you the answer. In November 1994, towards the end of the last Coalition Government's term, the total number of police was 12,678. On 31 May 2001 the total number of police was 13,660. That is an increase of 982. The Government has made a commitment to put a further 2,110 police on the front line in its second term, and the date of commitment is 31 December 2003. This is going to be achieved by employing an extra 1,000 sworn police officers over four years and freeing another 1,110 from desk and other administrative duties. This will be done through the release of 500 police, by the use of state-of-the-art technology in the Police Assistance Line, 610 police by using more civilians in clerical jobs and transferring prisoner escort duties from police to Corrective Services staff. As the Police Assistance Line is now fully operational, the equivalent of up to 500 police have been freed up in Local Area Commands for pro-active crime prevention and other operational duties.

The Police Service advises that more than 60 police have now been released from escort and prisoner management duties. The Government has also provided additional funding for the civilianisation of a range of duties currently performed by sworn police. The Commissioner advised that he has a staged plan for the allocation

of additional police. Stage one of the plan has provided 400 police, enabling the Service to deploy flying squads to target crime hot spots. Stage two of the plan will tackle serious crime and repeat offenders with the appointment of an extra 150 detectives to the Police Service's Crime Agencies Command. These police will target drug dealers who prey on young people, track the diversion of legal drugs and precursors into the illegal drug market, focus on gangs and gang-related violence, attack drug-related robberies, especially those criminals going for so-called soft targets such as small and family businesses, and concentrate on other serious crimes that create public concerns such as organised robbery or car stealing rackets.

Under stage three of the plan, 450 additional sworn officers will be placed directly in Local Area Commands to ensure a more visible police presence and a quicker response to crime. The Commissioner advises that this will occur over three years, starting with 100 in 2001-2002. Also under stage three, 350 civilians will be employed to move more police currently behind desks performing clerical duties onto the front line. The Police Service budget for 2001-2002 includes funding of \$15 million for salaries and training and equipment for 200 additional police to meet the commitment of an additional 1,000 by the end of 2003. This is the third stage of the Government's four-year commitment to increase numbers by 1,000 by the end of 2003 and it is 200 for three years, 300 in the fourth year and 100 thereafter.

Not only are we increasing the number of police, but more of them are going to operational policing than ever before. Earlier I indicated that in May one of the biggest attestations took place at the Police Academy in Goulburn, marking the entry of 282 new recruits into the service, bringing us closer to our targets. This is proof that, not only is the Government achieving its commitment to fund extra police, but it is also delivering on its commitment to get police out from behind desks and into core policing operations.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Just to finalise an issue that was raised a few minutes ago, and I do not intend to ask the Commissioner any questions about what he did whilst on annual leave, could the Commissioner indicate to the Committee how long he was in fact on leave for?

Commissioner RYAN: As approved by the Minister, 15 days.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: He already answered that before.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: He did not say 15 days.

Commissioner RYAN: You never asked me. If you asked a question pertinent to what we are here for, which is estimates, we might get somewhere.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: If I can clarify one thing, Commissioner, is it a normal procedure for New South Wales Police Service personnel to have to report additional sources of income to their superiors outside of the Police Service? If they get additional sources of income do they have to report that?

Commissioner RYAN: No. The policy is that people can enjoy secondary employment with the authority of the Commissioner of Police.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: They have to notify you of that?

Commissioner RYAN: Not me, but one of the departments. Human resources deals with that.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Commissioner, you should not be offended by us asking questions about you receiving—

Commissioner RYAN: I have not received any additional money for anything.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: You did say you got your accommodation paid, so it is class or kind, Commissioner.

Commissioner RYAN: I am there with the permission of the Government.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: We are merely asking questions about your receiving gratuities other than cash. Do you not believe that we are entitled to ask those questions?

Commissioner RYAN: I do not know that it is the business of this Committee. I will take advice from the Deputy-Chair.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I think it is a relevant issue.

Mr WHELAN: It is not relevant at all and you know it is not relevant. What he does during his holidays is his business.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: A matter was raised a few moments ago—

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Mr Deputy-Chair, I have a question to ask.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Mr Deputy-Chair, you have taken the point of asking us whether we had further questions. It was an interesting question raised by the Hon. Greg Pearce and I am merely for the purposes of the Committee—

Mr WHELAN: Then you tell us what you did on your holidays. You are both unemployable. That is why you are here.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Ms Rhiannon, do you have a question? You have had the least amount of time.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: My question is to the Minister. Considering that at last Tuesday's picket of Parliament House senior police officers and representatives of the Labor Council had established protocols to allow members of Parliament to enter via the Hospital Road entrance, why was the decision taken to enter via the Macquarie Street entrance?

Mr WHELAN: I took the advice of the operational commander and my staff. As astute as they are, I will read you out what the Commander, City East Region, said. This is dated and issued at 1.30, Thursday 21 June. City East Regional Commander, Dick Adams, was commander of police operations during Tuesday's blockade at the New South Wales Parliament. "Commander Adams has confirmed that he made the decision following the discussions with those involved for Labor MPs to use the front (Macquarie Street) entrance of the Parliament. Similar discussions were held with the Opposition and other MPs." The only thing that I can add to this is that the other members of Parliament had a much better chance of getting into the Parliament than could a member of the Labor Party.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: What consideration was given to ensuring the safety of the general public, the protesters and the MPs considering that there is less traffic on Hospital Road and the protocols were in place?

Mr WHELAN: I am sure the police took that into consideration when they were making their operational decision and when they tendered the advice. I am sure public safety and the safety of members was foremost in their minds when they made that operational decision.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: How could that be when it would have been much safer to enter via the library as senior people such as the Premier had entered? How can a comparison be made?

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: How do you know that?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I am asking the Minister.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: And I am asking you.

Mr WHELAN: I do not know about the entrance to the library. This is a bit far away from the budget. I do not know anything about entering Parliament through Henry Parkes' secret tunnel to the library.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I was not talking about the tunnel.

Mr WHELAN: I can only answer by saying that if police made a decision that Labor members of Parliament would be best using the library, that would have been the decision made by the operational police.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: What role did you have in making that decision?

Mr WHELAN: It was a decision made by operational people. As I have said to this Committee before, my name is Paul Whelan, not Ted Pickering.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I am asking you as the Minister, playing a central role from what we understand on that day. What role did you have in making the decision of what entrance MPs, including yourself, came into this building on Tuesday at around 2 o'clock? What role did you play in that decision?

Mr WHELAN: I cannot see the relevance of this to the budget papers.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: It is highly relevant considering how many police were involved.

Mr WHELAN: I have answered that.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: There would not have been so many police if all your supporters had not been out there.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: My question is quite simple. What role did you personally play in making that decision?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: He has answered that. I think he said he had none.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: If he says none I will be interested to hear it. He has not said that.

Mr WHELAN: This has nothing to do with the budget.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: It has many things to do with the budget when you consider how many police officers were employed for the day and many more were needed because of the actions in Macquarie Street when it would have been much calmer if it had been handled on Hospital Road.

Mr WHELAN: That is your view and your view is contrary, with respect, to that of the operational commander.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: My question is simply about your involvement on the day with regard to the point of entry for your colleagues and yourself. Were you involved in that decision?

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Point of order—

Mr WHELAN: I said it was an operational decision made by the police. I am not a police officer.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: If all of your usual troops were there—

Mr WHELAN: They make decisions about operational issues. You take the advice. You asked me do they take public safety and members' safety into account. I have answered that. Yes, of course, it is a very relevant factor—very, very relevant indeed. I am sure the police, in doing their job, took all those matters into account when they made the operational decision about what should happen, so I think you just may not understand operational decision making by the Police Service.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: You would not have needed half of them if all your troops had stopped at home.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I am concerned that you could not give a clear answer on that but I will certainly move on.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: The Hon. Henry Tsang has a point of order.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Point of order: The Government has been here for one and a quarter hours. We only have 50 minutes of question time. I think it is about time we had a question as well.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: You will get the next question. The Committee will take a break shortly.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: The Federal Justice Minister, Senator Ellison, I understand, has said that he wishes to appraise the status of hand gun laws and availability during the Australasian Police Ministers Conference, which I think may be in Canberra this week. Given your Government's repeated refusal to ban semi-automatic hand guns,

can you tell the Committee what the cost of hand gun related crime is in New South Wales and what proportion of this cost comes from guns which originate their life cycle in Australia as legal weapons?

Mr WHELAN: Can you just refer me to the budget item? I am very happy to answer a question about it, but there is nothing in it. If you want a general policy statement about it, I am happy to talk about hand guns.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: You do not have to cite a budget item.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: That is very disappointing, Minister.

Mr WHELAN: I will not disappoint you. The APMC is meeting this week. In fact, it is tomorrow. Unfortunately, the decision to have that was made when our parliamentary sitting days were there, and just like the prospect of my going to Canberra for the launch by the Prime Minister of CrimTrac, it was aborted as a result of the problems with landing in Canberra. I think tomorrow will be exactly the same. However, we have the toughest firearms laws in Australia—and I think you will have to acknowledge that—and we are making them tougher. We are determined to limit both the opportunities for criminals to obtain firearms and to introduce greater deterrents against the criminal use of firearms. Increased specialist enforcement personnel and increased police powers to target firearms traffickers will reduce the availability of firearms to criminals. To discourage their criminal use, higher penalties of up to 14 years for the illegal possession of a pistol or a prohibited firearm are being introduced. The Government's continued efforts in this area make it clear how seriously it regards the illegal possession of a firearm.

The Firearms Trafficking Bill 2001 increases penalties for the illegal possession of a pistol or prohibited firearm from 10 years gaol to 14 years gaol. The bill also makes it illegal to supply or to take part in the supply of firearms to any person not authorised to use firearms, an offence that will carry a 20-year prison sentence. It also makes it illegal for a licensed firearm dealer to wilfully record false details in firearms transactions, an offence that will carry a 14-year gaol term. The bill also makes it illegal for an eligible person to obtain a licence to act as a front for an illegal firearms dealer. It also makes it illegal in New South Wales to conspire to traffic illegal firearms, even if such conspiring takes place outside New South Wales. The bill provides police with the power to demand all firearms and parts for inspection from suspected firearms dealers. It introduces compulsory registration of firearm frames to curb the illegal trade in firearms.

The bill also introduces an extended definition of "possession," which requires the owner, occupier or person in control of premises on or in which an illegal gun is found to explain to the court why that person should not be found guilty of unauthorised possession of a firearm. In 1999, the Firearm Trafficking Unit was created to target illegal firearms trafficking. In 2001, the unit had conducted 13 major strike force investigations targeting individuals and organised crime groups. The investigations resulted in 31 arrests, the preferment of 503 charges, the confiscation of 441 illegal firearms, plus 366 firearms frames and a variety of firearms parts. Amongst the firearms seized were 151 pistols, four machine guns and an anti-tank rocket launcher. Explosives and detonator cords were also recovered in 11 instances, and \$347,100 in cash has been seized.

It is important to recognise that hand guns are made overseas, and I make the plea to the Commonwealth Government that all weapons—and they are all imported into Australia—should be ballistically identified. In New South Wales, we have the Ibis system, which is the equivalent of DNA for guns, and I see no reason why the Commonwealth cannot have the DNA, the Ibis system, operate for all guns imported into Australia. The Glock manufacturing company in America has DNA for their guns. In other words, they do a ballistic test and it goes on their computer base. I see no reason why other weapon manufacturers, particularly hand gun weapon manufacturers, cannot do exactly the same thing. I have stressed to the Commonwealth Government that it should not only be tough in our nation's laws in relation to customs but also in relation to the adoption of ballistic testing for all imports into Australia.

I know I am supported in this by the Commissioner and I make no apology for saying this publicly, but in December last year the Commissioner and I had a stand-up fight with other Police Ministers to ensure that they understood the difficult problem that Australia and New South Wales were facing in relation to hand guns and their usage throughout Australia. There has been a proliferation of hand guns, and we should do everything we possibly can to toughen penalties for the illegal use of hand guns. That is why the Government has introduced the tough Cabramatta package.

I am going to finish the answer on one thing. I am going to make a plea to Members of the Upper House. There is a Bill that you have rejected and amended in the Upper House, and I want you to rethink your position on it. It relates to drug houses. You asked me a question about when police go into a drug house. The Upper House has sent back an amendment to hold the Crown responsible for damage if a court does not define the premises as a

drug house. I think you have made a serious mistake. I think you have not been listening to operational police. I think what you have done is to disable police who may find these people who are operating these drug houses, who may have cash and weapons, including firearms and drugs.

If police get a warrant and they are able to use all the rest of the listening devices to find out that a house is a drug house, what you have done by this amendment is to stop police getting into those premises or, if you have not done that, what you have done is that you have made police responsible for the repair of any doors they have knocked down or any plaster walls, ceilings or floors that they have had to smash into to try to find the incriminating evidence. I do not know how individual members voted for the amendment. I have just been advised that an amendment was moved by Richard Jones. I think the Upper House should think very seriously about that. I think you have done a terrible disservice to operational police, and I just hope that the parties will rethink their position.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I take that on board, but can you just give us a simple answer as to why you agreed to ban long arm semi-automatics but not pistols? A short answer will suffice. I would really like to know what your logic is on that one.

Mr WHELAN: That was the National Firearms Agreement made in 1996.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I know that, but you were part of that.

Mr WHELAN: John Howard introduced the national legislation. We provided a template for the rest of the nation. It dealt with military-style weapons, and \$1.5 million of the nation's taxpayers' money was used and applied towards the repurchase of hundreds of thousands of military-style weapons, thus making our community a great deal safer.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: You will not comment on the flawed logic, then? That is all I am asking.

Mr WHELAN: There is an issue. There is a national agreement. It resulted in the confiscation and removal of hundreds of thousands of military-style weapons. We have the toughest laws in New South Wales in relation to firearms. The honourable member asked me a question about missing persons and DNA.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes.

Mr WHELAN: Can I give you the quick answer?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Okay.

Mr WHELAN: Part 11 of the Act—or part 2 of the Act I think it would be—refers to a number of indices, including a crime screen index, a missing persons index, an offenders index, a suspects index, an unknown deceased persons index, a volunteers (limited purposes) index, a statistical index and any other index prescribed by the regulations. Section 93 of the Act outlines the situations in which the matching of DNA profiles from index to index is permissible. It provides a table. Your question addresses the issue of whether someone such as a blood relative of a missing person may have their DNA sample matched with another index. I understand and am advised that under the legislation a relative who offers a personal DNA sample in this specific context would in most cases be identified as a volunteer for limited purposes.

Section 77(2)(b) of the Act requires that a volunteer or parent or guardian of the volunteer must be informed if it is intended that the information is to be placed on the volunteers (limited purposes) index of that system, or the purpose for which it is to be placed on that index and that the information may be used only for that purpose. As such, with reference to the table in section 93, such DNA sample could only be matched against an index where the matching is carried out for which the DNA profile was placed on the volunteers (limited purposes) index, in this case for the location of a missing person. That sounds like a lot of gobbledygook, but unless you consent for that purpose then the limited purpose cannot be extended. The answer to your question is that relatives cannot be checked on the criminal index without the relatives' consent.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you, Minister.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, what equipment and benefit has the Police Service retained as a result of the Olympic Games? As the 2000 Games were the best ever for security, is there any other Olympic benefit for the Police Service, for instance possible security consultancies for future Olympic cities?

Mr WHELAN: That is a good question. Mr Deputy-Chair, I indicated earlier in an answer that if the world has given us a gold medal for the Sydney Olympic Games, then our legacy is a gold medal for a safer New South Wales. The Police Service has retained an Olympic legacy ranging from police boats to state-of-the-art computer and electronic equipment. This legacy will bolster frontline policing, helping police tackle crime across New South Wales and ultimately this equipment will ensure that the people of New South Wales continue to benefit from the 2000 Olympic Games. I repeat, if the world has given us a gold medal for the Sydney Olympic Games, then our legacy is a gold medal for a safer New South Wales.

The Police Service achieved an outstanding recovery rate of more than 98 percent of Olympic assets. The equipment included various marine assets such as four tactical assault class rigid hull inflatable boats, 23 5.8 metre rigid hull inflatable boats, four Kevlar catamarans and eight jet skis. The total purchase price for these vessels was approximately \$1.7 million. Computer assets retained included 597 desktop computers as well as a number of scanners, laptops and other equipment at an overall cost of approximately \$3 million. The Police Service also retained specialist equipment, including police radio assets and 2,879 portable radios, and civilian and counter-terrorist equipment.

Other assets and general stock items obtained for the Olympic Games totalled \$7 million. Most of the equipment purchased by the Police Service has now been distributed across the State to Local Area Commands. This means that frontline police are already benefiting from this equipment. In addition, funding provided for Olympic security included the development of the Olympic Precinct and Regional Operations Centre [OPRO]. Located on level 4 of the Sydney Police Centre, the OPRO houses technology that centralised the capture of operational information through radio communications, CCTV and audio conferencing, making the Olympic environment highly visible. I am advised that all equipment purchased for the Olympics which was used in the OPRO will remain as a legacy to the New South Wales Police Service.

It is now a state-of-the-art, world-class command centre for any large event. It has already been tried and tested, not only during the Olympics but as a command centre for the Mardi Gras parade, New Year's Eve celebrations and other major events. It will help police commanders make better strategic and tactical decisions by keeping them better informed about crowd numbers, traffic management, police and emergency services, movements and available resources. I am advised that approximately \$1.8 million was allocated to training for Olympic-related purposes. The training provided for the Olympics will also provide a lasting legacy.

Training was provided for the entire police presence of approximately 5,000 officers and specialist training was provided for divers, the explosive detection dog squad, marine boat coxswains, intelligence analysis, driver training for personal protection of visiting VIPs, and bomb squad members. I am advised that special operations training was also provided for 100 senior police who were Venue Commanders and Deputy Venue Commanders during the Olympics. As a result of Olympic security funding, the Police Service now has a lasting legacy of better training facilities and equipment to enhance operational capability.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, what is the Police Service doing to address cultural and linguistic diversity issues and to enhance community involvement in crime prevention and community safety initiatives?

Mr WHELAN: I did deal with this issue before, but it is probably worthwhile going through some of the programs that the Police Service has. Earlier I mentioned PACT. The purpose of PACT is to increase, as the honourable member knows, police awareness of local community needs and experiences and to enhance community understanding of police roles and responsibilities. It has primary objectives to reduce crime by bringing together police, young people and community groups in jointly facilitated sessions to identify innovative strategies. It provides reciprocal training opportunities for police, young people, community groups, non-government and other government agencies on issues related to public safety, police community relations and the causes of crime and antisocial behaviour. The Government has extended PACT funding for the next three years with almost half a million dollars allocated in the Police Service 2001-2002 budget. This will fund additional projects as well as two coordinators, one project worker and two culturally diversity workplace trainers.

The following principles underline the PACT program. It is at a local level that problems between the community and the police develop, so it is at that local level that solutions should be found and put into practice. The very best kind of training is the kind developed and controlled by the learners themselves. In this case the learners are the police and the community. The resources and models produced by local PACT projects are designed to address local needs but also have relevance to police and community relations right throughout the whole of New South Wales. Projects have been established across 10 Local Area Commands and they include Auburn, Marrickville, Cabramatta, Campsie, Penrith, Kogarah, Parramatta, Bankstown, Fairfield and St Marys.

Some of the outcomes of these projects include dialogue and partnerships between a range of stakeholders who have not previously come together to jointly address local issues and concerns, increased reporting of crime, unique training and educational resources and models designed to improve understanding between police and communities, improved relationships between police and young people impacting on crime prevention in the area, fewer community complaints against police, innovative crime prevention strategies, greater confidence and trust on the part of community members of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to be involved in public safety initiatives, and successful application of concepts such as community development, experimental learning, place management and the whole-of-government approach.

In 2000 the Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre was contracted to undertake an evaluation of PACT. Its final report has been released and supports many of these findings. Recommendations of the evaluation report produced by the Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre [DAMEC] will be taken into consideration and implemented in the new funding round of the PACT program. We have also provided \$224,000 for the workplace training program in the Police Service 2001-2002 budget. The primary objective of this program is to build an inventory of police practitioner experiences in servicing the needs of culturally diverse client groups. This will be used to devise appropriate workplace training on policing in a multicultural environment.

We have recently doubled the number of ethnic community liaison officers [ECLOs] from 11 to 22. The ECLOs have been allocated to Ashfield, Campsie, Hurstville, Flemington, Kogarah, Green Valley, Liverpool, Mt Druitt, Parramatta, Rosehill and Holroyd Local Area Commands. The Service has also appointed a statewide ECLO co-ordinator to provide support for the ECLO program. You would be aware, as I indicated earlier, that the Service continues to target people from non-English speaking backgrounds for recruitment. Priority is given to schools. The next phase of recruitment of ECLOs will take place in March 2002 for a further 10 ECLO positions with a further four positions to be advertised in late 2002, and it is by March 2003 that we anticipate 36 ECLOs will be employed within the Police Service. As I was saying, the service continues to target people from non-English speaking backgrounds for recruitment. Priority is given to schools, career markets and cultural events that provide opportunities to target culturally, linguistically, racially and religiously diverse groups, and the Police Service works in partnership with ethnic media groups to promote police recruitment and other police activities, as I have previously mentioned.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: How does the Government—

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Point of order: If you look at the time that the Minister is taking in answering the Government's questions, if we are to have an equal distribution of the remaining time available, Mr Deputy-Chair, the Opposition should now be able to ask questions for 15 minutes, then the crossbench for 15 minutes, with the remaining 15 minutes for Government members instead of what we have now. At least 20 minutes so far have gone to the Government in this current round, and we are about to get another question with another lengthy answer. In fairness, Mr Deputy-Chair, the remainder of the time should now be distributed.

Mr WHELAN: How do you know it is going to be a lengthy answer?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I will not waste time. I have not asked a question since we started but, leaving that aside, so far Government members have had 28 minutes and the non-Government members have had 52 minutes. The last answer took 10 minutes. It started at 8.55 and finished at 9.05. I was going to balance it out by giving another five minutes to the Government and then go to the Opposition.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Would you give us a guarantee, Mr Deputy-Chair, of 15 minutes each, then?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: There has been 28 minutes for Government members and 52 minutes for the non-Government members

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Mr Deputy-Chair, as you are aware—

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I will go to the Government and then I will come to you.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Thank you.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: How is the Government addressing the problem of firearms trafficking in New South Wales?

Mr WHELAN: I did take the opportunity to refer to that in a previous question.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: I thought you might want to elaborate.

Mr WHELAN: I did elaborate on it in rather lengthy detail, including a plea that members of the upper House, who in my view voted foolishly for an amendment, come to their senses.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Do you want a substitute?

Mr WHELAN: No, I am happy with the range of questions and the answers that I have given, and I would not want to keep the Committee any longer in its deliberations.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Mr Gallacher?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I defer to the Hon. Greg Pearce.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Can I ask Commissioner Ryan a question?

Mr WHELAN: It is not where he was on holidays in the year 2000, is it?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No, it is the next holidays. I can take you further on that, if you like. I was going to ask the Commissioner in relation to public confidence in the integrity of police officers how many complaints have there been and how many inquiries are currently under way to investigate allegations made in relation to the New South Wales police academy at Goulburn—I think it is now the Police College—and when will the findings be made public?

Commissioner RYAN: In relation to the Police Academy internal affairs inquiry, a number of allegations concerning the appropriateness of conduct at the police academy were raised last year. These matters were referred to a special crime and internal affairs investigation. A number of recommendations were made to improve management processes and to provide additional management training for former Academy staff. I am advised that Deputy Commissioner Jarratt had prepared a schedule for actioning in the recommendations made by special crime and internal affairs. Since the time of the issues investigated there has been a complete change in the management and organisational structure of the academy. It is now known as the Police College, Goulburn and Westmead Campuses, and in January of this year Chief Superintendent Dave Madden was appointed as Principal of the college. Chief Superintendent Madden is implementing a range of risk-management and conduct-related strategies to minimise the opportunities for inappropriate conduct at the college and in relation to the number of complaints. If you give me a moment I will see if I have the details on the table. I am sorry, I have not got the details of numbers of complaints.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Commissioner RYAN: I can tell you how many.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Aside from the internal affairs findings against Mr McMahon and Mr Tomkins, have there been findings against other Police Academy staff and, if so, what have those adverse findings been?

Commissioner RYAN: I am unaware of any adverse findings directly affecting other Police College staff.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: But there are still ongoing investigations, or is Deputy Commissioner Jarratt's investigation the conclusion of it?

Commissioner RYAN: The way we operate with complaints in the Police Service is that I am not directly involved in the notification of complaints. People do not come to me and say, "We have had a complaint against this officer or that." That is for a particular reason, and the reason is that there may come a stage downstream at the conclusion of a complaint when I am expected to make a decision on punishment, or removal from the Service in particular. Therefore, I view it as inappropriate that I am told in advance that a complaint has been made, which might then colour my judgment for when the final report is presented to me. Instead of actually knowing about a complaint and then waiting for a report to come, I await the report to have been actioned by whichever deputy

Commissioner is available, and the deputy Commissioner will then notify me as to the action thought to be appropriate in such cases if it needs my personal attention.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I draw your attention to page 14-3 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, which states that at the end of January 2001 there were 13,605 police. How many of those police were on long-term sick leave in January and how many of these are on long-term sick leave now?

Commissioner RYAN: I have not got the numbers of people who are long-term sick. The number is quite high. It is in excess of 600—probably 700 depending on time—but again I can find out exact numbers for you.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Has it gone up or changed at all?

Commissioner RYAN: It has remained relatively constant for quite some considerable period of time. It tends to be older officers and it tends to be in the northernmost part of the State as opposed to the metropolitan areas of the State.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: North Coast, north-west?

Commissioner RYAN: Central and upwards, yes.

Mr WHELAN: Central Coast.

Commissioner RYAN: Central Coast.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: And South-West Sydney.

Mr WHELAN: South West Rocks.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: South-West Sydney. In relation to seizure of knives, why is it that the offence category of robbery with a weapon, not a firearm, increased in 2000 compared to 1999?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: What was that again?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: The offence is called robbery with a weapon not a firearm. There was an increase in that offences from 1999 to 2000.

Mr WHELAN: It is more than a knife.

Commissioner RYAN: It covers "other than knives"—baseball bats and any other implement, iron bars that people want to carry. A general increase seems to be repeated across the whole of the country in the need to use weapons to perpetrate violence. It seems to be an extension of just ordinary violence. People are moving towards weapons, firearms in particular, as a form of threat in a robbery incident.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: In relation to Budget Paper No. 3, volume 2, page 14.4, how do you reconcile your comments last year to the Committee that the vast majority of Police Assistance Line [PAL] calls are answered almost instantaneously with the Government's recent concession that over 25 per cent of PAL calls take more than five minutes to answer? Has there been a deterioration in ability of the Police Assistance Line to pick up those calls more quickly or was the information given to the Committee last year incorrect?

Commissioner RYAN: No, the information given to the Committee last year was correct. PAL had just been launched and knowledge of it in the community was quite small. Now it is dealing with in excess of 50,000 calls a month, whereas then I think it was dealing with far fewer calls.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Commissioner, in relation to comments appearing in Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14.3, to what extent is the Service's claimed response time of 85 per cent within 12 minutes dependent upon the practice of police referring assault, robbery and ram raid victims to the Police Assistance Line, thereby altering the nature of the call and making an urgent response unnecessary by the way it was handled?

Commissioner RYAN: I think there were only 172 in three months or something like that out of, I do not know, 150,000 calls approximately. Whilst the Service was aware that some inappropriate referrals were being made, we took immediate steps as a result of an audit that we conducted to inform the Service that inappropriate calls were being made, that they should not do it and what they should do when they received calls at the police station. Some

of the inappropriate calls were made by members of the public as well. As a result of that notification to the Police Service and publication in the *Police Service Weekly*, a series of newspaper articles appeared which made it look as though the Police Service had not discovered this at all, that it was something wonderfully magic discovered by an investigative reporter. It was discovered by our own audit systems and we were taking positive, active and direct steps to remedy the situation.

I think PAL operates particularly well. It is a very big initiative. We are improving all the time the technology being used in it. We have just had a complete review, again, of all the technology to make sure that any allegations of calls not being answered can be properly explored. For example, people say they have called and got nothing. We discovered that in fact what could happen in rare circumstances between the individual's phone and before it gets to PAL, it drops off on the national telephone system. We have installed new monitoring equipment and more equipment is being ordered to make sure that all calls are answered as fast as possible and, certainly, we do not miss any because of equipment failure, losing the calls somewhere in the computer question.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: My next question is addressed to Mr Bhatt, General Manager of the Finance Division of the Police Service. Is the Finance Division of the Service monitoring the level of police officers currently leaving the Police Service on HOD?

Mr BHATT: The scheme that the Police Service currently runs is, as you know, for the pre-1988 employees and that is being monitored as a financial cost by the Financial Department, correct, but who are on HOD and their activity is handled by the HR Department, so it is a combined operation.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Is there anyone here from the HR Department who can indicate certain information in relation to HOD? How many former police do we currently have receiving HOD pensions in the system?

Mr BHATT: I would not know the exact number of the people.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: What about the overall costs of HOD pensions?

Mr BHATT: The overall costs of the HOD service is around \$6 million dollars per annum.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Is that growing compared to last year? What was it last year?

Mr BHATT: No, these are incidental costs, not the salaries of the people themselves. They have been static for the last couple of years.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: What is the salary cost of the people themselves?

Mr BHATT: I will have to take that on notice. I do not have the exact number.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Would it be your division or HR that is monitoring the distinction between pre-1988 police officers going off on HOD and post-1988 police officers who are having to leave the Police Service because they are incapable of continuing on with their duties?

Mr BHATT: That is built into our system so that as soon as a police officer is on worker's compensation or HOD it will tell us whether it is a pre- or post-1988 employee.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Could you report to the Committee the number of police officers pre-1988 on HOD as opposed to the number of police officers post-1988 who are on worker's compensation or who are no longer in the Police Service because of injury and are incapable of continuing with their duties?

Mr BHATT: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Is there any cut-off date in retrospect?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Just the current figure, 2001, would be the best idea.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: No, in retrospect.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: No, if they are still alive they are still there.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I ask a question of both the Minister and the Commissioner. On page 14.3 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, there is a description of the use of powers under the Police and Public Safety Act. Why is it that violent crime and gang-related activity is on the rise as disclosed on page 8 of the latest Crime Agencies Annual Report?

Mr WHELAN: Ask me a question about the budget.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Well, answer the question I asked you and then I will move on to a question about the budget.

Mr WHELAN: You have asked me a question about Crime Agencies, human resources—

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Go to page 14.3 of Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, and you will see the heading "Use of New Laws to Improve Public Safety." You included it in the budget papers and so I am asking you a question about it.

Mr WHELAN: What you will find if you look at that budget is that it includes 150 officers to the Police Service Crime Agencies to fight drug-related, organised and other serious crime. The Annual Report of Crime Agencies that you referred to shows the tangible benefits to the people of New South Wales from such policies. For those unfamiliar with this unit, the Crime Agencies Command was established by the Commissioner in 1997 as a centralised unit to prevent and investigate major crime, including murder, child abuse, fraud, extortion, kidnapping, terrorism and organised crime.

In the 1999-2000 financial year, Crime Agencies increased its major crime arrests by 6.5 per cent to a total of 1,284 arrests and preferred 5,068 charges. It made 595 arrests for child abuse offences. It charged 53 people with murder, disrupted or dismantled more than 15 organised crime groups, increased drug seizures by 53 per cent and seized \$291 million worth of drugs. It dismantled 20 clandestine drug laboratories, initiated the forfeiture or confiscation of over \$9.7 million in assets. It seized over 700 illegal firearms and reduced fraudulent credit card transactions in New South Wales by 90 per cent.

It had some significant operational results throughout the year, including Strike Force Massat, which targeted an international credit card fraud ring and resulted in the arrest of 24 people and the preferment of 80 charges for offences to the tune of \$100 million. Since the conclusion of this successful operation, credit card providers have reported a 90 per cent reduction in credit card fraud in New South Wales. Strike Force Lambay was an ongoing operation targeting drug trafficking between New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria and resulted in the arrest of 89 people, the preferment of 133 charges, and the seizure of \$8.7 million in cash and drugs.

The Strike Force Paatsi targeted a outlaw motor cycle gang and resulted in the arrest of 19 people, the closure of two clandestine drug laboratories and the recovery of 50 stolen motor vehicles. The overlapping strike forces of Lancer and Mask, which targeted organised drug trafficking and 18 shooting incidents and murders extending from Kings Cross to the south-west and western suburbs of Sydney, resulted in the arrest of 39 people, the preferment of 83 charges for murder, attempted murder, drug trafficking and firearms offences. However, these operations represent only a fraction of the work performed by the Crime Agencies Command during the year.

The Child Protection Enforcement Agency responded to 3,422 cases around New South Wales and established an Internet investigation capacity. Crime Agencies involvement with the Joint Asian Crime Group, together with the Australian Federal Police [AFP], Customs, the Crime Commission and the National Crime Authority [NCA], resulted in the seizure of 460 kilograms of heroin, \$3.7 million in cash and assets, 17 arrests, and the preferment of 42 charges. Special units have been established within Crime Agencies to focus resources and expertise on problem areas. In November 1999 the Firearms Trafficking Unit was established to develop new methods of tracking the supply of guns. The unit is focused on the identification, investigation and prosecution of those involved in the illicit trafficking of firearms and targets illegal firearms trafficking by tracing guns recovered at crime scenes, targets suspected drug traffickers, increases surveillance of gun shops suspected of illegal gun trafficking, and develops information on gun trafficking patterns so investigations can be launched.

At May 2001 the unit had conducted 13 major strike force investigations targeting individuals and organised crime syndicates involved in the illicit supply of firearms. This resulted in 31 arrests and the preferment of 503 charges. I have indicated earlier the results of cash and firearms. I believe the Police Service is to be commended on the results achieved by Crime Agencies, which focus on building on the guidelines laid down by the Wood Royal Commission to achieve continuous improvement in policy and in practice.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Thank you, Minister. I am very pleased that your staff have such a good understanding of what is happening.

Mr WHELAN: I have a very good staff.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: What was the total cost of the investigation into the disappearance of Mrs Kerry Whelan?

Commissioner RYAN: I am sorry, I do not know. I can find out.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Take that on notice.

Commissioner RYAN: And take it on notice.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Minister, I would just like to return to the question that I asked you re matching DNA from families of missing persons through crime scene stains. I am just checking up on some of the information that I have. I am wondering if the information that you supplied was misleading, and I just wanted to get to the bottom of it. I understand that section 93 is unambiguous in allowing profiles on the missing persons index to be matched against all profiles contained on the crime scene index and for new crime scene profiles to be matched against those on the missing persons index. So section 93 seems to be quite clear on that point and at variance with the information you provided to us earlier.

Mr WHELAN: I did indicate to the honourable member that the answer earlier on, which, whilst I admit it was complex, was the best I could do in view of what she raised as an ambiguity, or asserted the ambiguity, I can take on notice and provide her with a written answer.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you. Minister, I would just like to go on to the issue of random drug and alcohol testing. How much has been budgeted for random drug and alcohol testing of all officers since 1996?

Mr WHELAN: Since 1996?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes.

Mr WHELAN: I honestly cannot give you tonight the figures since 1996.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Minister, you have been having a go at us about the budget, so I have got to say that is surprising as I thought it was your favourite budget question.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Not in retrospect.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I will take it for one current year also, but I thought this was a question that would make you happy.

Mr WHELAN: Make me happy?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Considering you have been asking for budget questions.

Mr WHELAN: It is kind of you to think about my welfare. The question of allocation relates to the Government's policy relating to drug and alcohol testing. There have been some announcements made recently, and the funding is provided for it. From 1 September there will be random drug testing in New South Wales. We have already had random alcohol testing. The only issue is the methodology for blood testing, and what is to be included or excluded. I indicated what my personal views were, but that is not the Government view. The Government will be considering that matter when I put it to Cabinet, and that is that if there is a critical incident and someone is injured or killed and there is a description or definition of "critical incident," then my view is that those officers should be the subject of blood testing because it comes into the argument—and then for a lesser degree I think there is a very strong case for blood testing for the critical incidents.

I think there is also a very strong test that can be met when you are dealing with internal affairs inquiries by the Police Service, but I think if you talk about random testing of police you have to understand that 14,000 police can be random tested—\$500 per unit of cost for blood testing as distinct from hair or for urine. They are much simpler, less costly. I think the prevailing opinion of the pharmacologists is that blood is the best to determine the

drugs that are in people's bodies and the number of drugs that may be available that can be covered by blood are more than can be covered by urine or by hair. I am really not interested in arguing about those sorts of things, but the Government will be making a decision about it. But they are the parameters upon which we are involved in it, and I can assure you that the money will be in the budget to meet the Government's expected outcomes.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Considering that they were recommendations of the Royal Commission into police, can you take it on notice to supply information about the budget for testing and also how many police officers have been randomly tested since 1996?

Commissioner RYAN: Perhaps I could help.

Mr WHELAN: I have got it here. The Special Crime Internal Affairs Branch carries out targeted testing of officers allegedly involved in illicit drugs. Tests can be by testing either urine or hair. Between 1998 and May 2001, there were 84 targeted drug and alcohol tests and 17 officers tested positive to illicit substances. That represents 20.23 per cent of officers tested. There has also been one follow-up test with a negative result. Fifteen tested positive to cannabis. Two tested positive to amphetamines (speed), ecstasy and cocaine. One of these officers also tested positive to benzodiazpine. In relation to critical incident testing the Coroner recommended mandatory testing of all police officers involved in critical incidents following the shooting of Mr Roni Levi at Bondi Beach in June 1997. This testing is in addition to random and targeted testing. Mandatory alcohol and drug testing started in July 1998. Drug tests, as I indicated it the Committee, can be either urine or hair.

At the end of March, 584 officers have undergone mandatory testing in critical incidents. Six officers have returned positive drug tests following critical incidents—so that is six out of 584, and that represents 1.02 per cent of officers tested, or 99 per cent of officers tested negative in a critical incident. Five of the six tested positive to cannabis. One tested positive to morphine. In alcohol, since September 1997, 25,253 random alcohol tests have been conducted—31 positives. This represents 0.12 per cent of officers tested. That is 31 out of 25,253. Thirty-two targeted alcohol tests have been conducted with 10 positive results. That represents one-third.

Fifty-one follow-up alcohol tests have been conducted, with one positive result, and that represents 1.96 per cent, or roughly 2 per cent of officers tested. In targeted drug testing between November 1998 and May 2001, of the 584 tested, 17 tested positive in critical incidents. From July 1990 to March this year, of the 84, six have returned positive drug tests and, as I said, that is one per cent, and of those six, five tested positive to cannabis and one tested positive to morphine. That may well be some derivative pain killer. It could have been anything. But that is the result of the test and, as I say, in alcohol, 25,253 random alcohol tests were conducted and 31 police officers failed that test. That is less than 0.12 of officers tested.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you, Minister. Could I ask a couple of questions about the Walker building at Mascot? How many police are working out of that building at present? I would like to know how many people are working out of the building and how many can work out of it? What is the total that it can hold?

Commissioner RYAN: I do not know the exact numbers, but it is a whole Local Area Command which was moved from the old Mascot police station, together with highway patrol officers. It is also a base for some of our targeted action group squads. It is a building which can be expanded. It could probably take up to somewhere in the region of about 250 to 300 police officers.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Considering the events in Redfern and Waterloo last week, are you still considering moving Redfern police station operations to the Walker building?

Commissioner RYAN: No. I would like to clarify something. We were never thinking of moving Redfern operations to the Walker building. The original plan was to find a more suitable location for Redfern police station, hopefully near the railway station and that big junction where it is very open to members of the public with all the operational police working out of there. The only people who would have moved to the Walker building would have been administrative support staff, who would have been brought together. But there was a lot of misleading information around at that time.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: So you are planning to move it closer to Eveleigh Street?

Commissioner RYAN: We were. We were hoping to move the police station to a more visible location. Its current location, of course, is down a narrow back street, very dark and dingy. You would have to be brave to go there at night. We want to put it in a more visible location, and that was the original plan, but that was all skewed in the rhetoric about the whole of the proposed restructure.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Where is it up to? Your language is sounding as though it is not going to happen on Eveleigh Street?

Commissioner RYAN: Well, we are still discussing—

DEPUTY-CHAIR: What was going to happen at Eveleigh Street?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: The way the Commissioner was structuring his answer, it sounded as though it was not going to happen in Eveleigh Street, and I was just seeking clarification. That is why I directed the question—

Mr WHELAN: The only one talking about moving Redfern was the Opposition.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: And the Police Commissioner in the past five minutes.

Mr WHELAN: No, you are not taking what he said in context.

Commissioner RYAN: There was a lot of discussion that Redfern police station was going to close and the officers moved to the new police station at the Walker building. I am saying that was never the intention at all. If we were going to do anything with Redfern police station, we were going to move it to a more readily accessible and visible location, preferably somewhere near that railway station and the big junction complex, out of which all operational police officers would have worked and the administrative side, the support side would have gone to the Walker building rather than move with them.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: So some operations would have gone to Walker?

Commissioner RYAN: No, no operations, just support people, roster clerks, and that sort. But all the operational types would have worked out of any new location we could find. But that was an "if" scenario. There was no intention whatever to close Redfern police station or ever to take a police station out of Redfern.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It sounds like you were going to make Redfern a shop front.

Commissioner RYAN: No, it was not a shop front, not with 90 police working out of it. You would need more than a shop, I think, to hold them. It needs a proper purpose-built station.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Commissioner, I remind you of your appearance before the Committee last year when you said that the result of this collaborative work was the creation of the Crime Management Support Unit. Evidence under oath later given to the Police Integrity Commission by the former head of internal affairs contradicts your statement to the Committee last year in that there was a mad scramble to set up the CMSEU simply to show this Committee last year that you were doing something in response to media concerns. Commissioner, what confidence can this Committee have in your answers this evening?

Mr WHELAN: Hang on, a PIC inquiry into this has been going on for probably two or three months and it has acknowledged that the Police Integrity Commissioner is considering all of these issues and that is where it is. We have a PIC inquiry. Your question is out of order.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: If I can conclude with the final part of my question, what confidence can the Committee have in all of your answers this evening?

Commissioner RYAN: You can have every single confidence in my answers now and in the past.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: What was the total cost to the New South Wales Police Service of transporting and protecting Ivan Milat for his recent court appearance at Toronto?

Mr WHELAN: That is a question for the Minister for Corrective Services. I will pass it on. There were police involved in a minimal way.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I have asked Corrective Services and the Attorney-General. We are trying to get a total cost.

Mr WHELAN: We will take that on notice and ask the Commissioner to find out the costs of police involvement.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Another question, perhaps, to take on notice. What has been the total cost of legal services provided by Mr Ian Temby Q.C., to New South Wales police officers giving evidence before the parliamentary and Police Integrity Commission inquiries during the 2000-2001 financial year?

Mr WHELAN: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Does the Commissioner agree to the Committee tabling a number of questions on notice?

Mr WHELAN: Not if they are inflammatory or defamatory.

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: No, these are nice questions.

Mr WHELAN: We will look at them.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Would you also provide to the Committee the cost of answering these questions that are placed on notice?

The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: Democracy is not cheap.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: There were almost 400 questions put on the notice paper by one person last year—not this Committee.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: How much of the police budget has been allocated for the sentencing project whereby convicted people can argue for DNA testing in order to determine their innocence? Have you an allocation for that yet?

Mr WHELAN: Yes. The Innocence Panel was and is, hopefully, to be set up by 1 July this year. It's budget will be encompassed in the budget of the Police Service and the Ministry. It is an important body. As I indicated when I introduced the bill, it is not only a powerful tool in investigations, but it can also be used to free the innocent. We will be the first State in Australia to set up an innocence panel. It will be a high-level, impartial panel that will receive applications from persons who consider that DNA evidence will prove their innocence. The panel will provide an independent process by which persons can apply for a post-conviction comparison of their DNA with DNA from the crime scene.

I stress that the panel will not act as an advocate for convicted persons who claim that they are innocent, nor will the panel conduct judicial hearings. It would not be appropriate for an administrative panel to determine something as important as guilt or innocence. This State has already established a system for the granting of pardons or the review of convictions or sentence if fresh evidence comes to light, and the Wood Royal Commission endorsed this system. It is not intended to take over that existing law.

Depending on the result, post-conviction DNA comparison may provide the fresh evidence that could be used to feed into the existing system of review. It will differ from the programs in the United States, which are oftentimes called innocence projects. They are based on law schools and use law students and professors to represent and provide investigative assistance to inmates who are challenging their conviction on the basis of DNA testing. Only two States in the US—New York and Illinois—provide inmates with the right to obtain DNA tests. The co-founder of the New York innocence project at Cardozo Law School, Barry Scheck, has described obtaining a DNA test for an inmate as "like a war".

You might recall that Clyde Charles was released from Louisiana's prison just before Christmas 2000 after a DNA test, conducted 18 years after he was sentenced to life, exonerated him of a rape conviction. He had to fight a nine-year battle to get the biological evidence tested. There are similar cases of legal battles spanning years to secure a DNA test. In contrast, the Government recognises not only the importance of the innocent being freed but also the importance of ensuring that the real perpetrator is brought to justice. That is why we are providing a simple and impartial process by which post-conviction DNA comparisons can occur. The Panel will ensure that the Police Service locates crime scene samples and that the comparison is made.

The applicant will be informed of the comparison and information on their options will be provided. The applicant and their legal representative can then determine their next step. The Ppanel will also determine whether to refer appropriate matters to the Commissioner for consideration to reopen a closed case. However, I add a few words of caution. The fact that there is or is not a DNA match may not be decisive of guilt or innocence in many cases. Just because your DNA was found at the crime scene, that does not automatically mean guilt. It may mean that you live there, for argument's sake.

DNA is only a piece of the puzzle. For example, the fact that the DNA comparison results in a non-match may not mitigate against eye-witness testimony of the victim and five bystanders. There are no guarantees that crime scene samples have been kept from old crimes that were considered solved. Some crime scene samples deteriorate over time and may not be capable of having DNA extracted. Furthermore, the steps in the process will take some time. The Innocence Panel is a new development for this State, and I caution those who think that there may be immediate and spectacular results as they may be initially disappointed. It will be set in train shortly. I hope it provides an impartial and facilitative link between different elements of the criminal justice system and those who come into it. I think it is a positive step for New South Wales.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: We have gone over time.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: Just a moment, Mr Deputy-Chair. I want to ask one last question. Some time was taken up by the Hon. John Johnson. I will be very quick.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Mr Deputy-Chair, to be fair, the non-Government member has taken up his own time.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Government members have had half an hour to ask questions. Non-Government have gone for a little more than an hour and a half.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Put it on paper.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I had given up, but I was not finished.

The Hon. JOHN JOHNSON: Neither am I.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I will have one last question and I will put the rest on paper.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: I have got another question too.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Have you got a question that cannot be put on notice?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It is a short question to the Commissioner. Mr Ryan, Budget Paper No. 3, Volume 2, page 14-4, indicates that 500 police have been released for operational duties through the Police Assistance Line being brought into play. Which Local Area Commands or other operational duties have these police been allocated to, in what numbers and when were they allocated to these areas?

Mr WHELAN: Generally across the State.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: My question is which Local Area Commands, in what numbers and when were they allocated.

Mr WHELAN: Any one of a number of 80 and 500.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: All you need to do is list the 80 and the 500, the numbers and the dates, and it will be fine.

Mr WHELAN: Okay.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: You may put that on notice.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Mr Chair, could we clarify the situation with regard to questions on notice?

DEPUTY-CHAIR: We have, except for when they will be lodged.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: When will they be ready?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Five o'clock tomorrow, and we get them back in 35 days.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: Unless they need more time.

Mr WHELAN: But I will not respond and the Commissioner will not respond to anything that is of a defamatory or personal nature.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No-one on this Committee would ask you anything that was embarrassing, Minister.

Mr WHELAN: Of course you do.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No-one would ask you anything defamatory, Minister.

DEPUTY-CHAIR: I declare the meeting closed.

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.