



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions**

**Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Legal Affairs**

### **COUNTER TERRORISM AND CORRECTIONS**

Hearing: 5 November 2021

**Answers due by: 8 December 2021**

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## COUNTER TERRORISM AND CORRECTIONS

### Questions from Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC *(on behalf of the Opposition)*

#### **Hizb ut-Tahrir**

1. Given recent activity involving Hizb ut-Tahrir in NSW, what is the estimated number of followers in the State?
  - (a) What steps is the NSW Government taking to counter their activity?

#### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

#### **Hezbollah**

2. Given recent activity involving Hezbollah in NSW, what is the estimated number of followers in the State?
  - (a) What steps is the NSW Government taking to counter their activity?

#### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

#### **Nazi flag**

3. Given that documents obtained under freedom of information revealed that between June 2018 and April 2020, there were 31 separate occasions where the Nazi flags and symbols was flown or displayed in NSW, how many times did this occur in:
  - (a) 2019?
  - (b) 2020?
  - (c) 1 January 2021 to 31 October 2021?

#### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

### **Hezbollah flag displays**

4. How many times have the display of Hezbollah flags been recorded by NSW Police in the period 2015 to 2021?
- (a) By year – 2015?
  - (b) 2016?
  - (c) 2017?
  - (d) 2018?
  - (e) 2019?
  - (f) 2020?
  - (g) January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

### **Islamic State or ISIS flag displays**

5. How many times have the display of Islamic State or ISIS flags been recorded by NSW Police in the period 2015 to 2021?
- (a) By year – 2015 and in what locations?
  - (b) 2016 and in what locations?
  - (c) 2017 and in what locations?
  - (d) 2018 and in what locations?
  - (e) 2019 and in what locations?
  - (f) 2020 and in what locations?
  - (g) January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021 and in what locations?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

### **High Risk Terrorist Offenders**

6. How many High Risk Terrorist Offenders (HRTOs) and under surveillance in NSW as of November 3, 2021?
  - (a) Of those who many are men and how many are women?
  - (b) What are their ages?
  - (c) What are the requirements as part of their release?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

### **ISIS Brides/Jihadis**

7. How many people are residing in NSW – who have returned from foreign zones under Islamic State control– and are they being monitored as former Australian Jihadis or ISIS brides?
  - (a) Number of women?
  - (b) Number of men?
  - (c) Number of minors/children?
  - (d) Are they the subject of monitoring?
    - i. If yes, what are the measures?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

NSW works collaboratively with the Commonwealth on the reintegration of individuals returning, and the integration of individuals arriving, from foreign conflict zones. These matters are often subject to operational sensitivity or may be subject to suppression orders. Additionally, there are privacy concerns that need to be considered. Due to these sensitivities, further detail on individuals is unable to be provided.

NSW has comprehensive arrangements to support the return or arrival of individuals from foreign conflict zones. NSW has a multi-agency strategy that sets out comprehensive governance and operational arrangements for safely reintegrating or integrating people when they arrive into NSW.

This strategy enables activation of a multi-agency panel, which would include representation from responding agencies. The make up of the panel is determined on a case-by-case basis, but, for example, would include the NSW Police Force, NSW Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Communities and Justice. The strategy acknowledges that these individuals will likely require support long into the future and that reintegration is not a short-term response.

Case management processes include arrangements for ongoing support and monitoring. This enables services and support to be reprioritised as required.

### **Step Together helpline**

8. Given the Step Together hotline – 1800 875 204 – was set up in June 2017 and it is a NSW funded helpline and online support service for people concerned about friends, family or loved ones who may be headed down the path of violent extremism, how many telephone calls has it received since it was established– as of November 3, 2021?
- (a) How many calls received in 2017?
  - (b) 2018?
  - (c) 2019?
  - (d) 2020?
  - (e) January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021?
  - (f) How many charges or arrests have been made in 2017? 2018? 2019? 2020? And January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021?
  - (g) What was the cost of the hotline in 2017? 2018? 2019? 2020? And January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

As of 30 September 2021, the total number of calls made to Step Together was 4,830. This includes web chats.

- (a) 2017 - 71

- (b) 2018 - 878
- (c) 2019 - 1,238
- (d) 2020 - 1,910
- (e) 2021 (Jan-Sep) - 733
- (f) This is a matter for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.
- (g) Since the service transferred from the Department of Premier and Cabinet to the Department of Communities and Justice in mid-2019, expenditure for the Step Together Helpline is as follows:
  - FY2017/18 - \$1,043,944.74
  - FY2018/19 - \$1,148,801.68
  - FY2019/20 - \$1,027,224.90
  - FY2020/21\* - \$813,960.00
  - FY2021/22 - \$625,000.00

\*On 1 April 2021, the Step Together Helpline transitioned from an external provider, On The Line, to a more cost-effective in-house service within the Department of Communities and Justice.

### **Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) program**

9. How many has been spent on the Counter Violent Extremism program in:

- (a) 2015?
- (b) 2016?
- (c) 2017?
- (d) 2018?
- (e) 2019?
- (f) 2020? And January 1, 2021 to October 31, 2021?

### **ANSWER**

I am advised:

(a – e) The NSW Government announced a \$47 million package of Countering Violent Extremism initiatives from 2015/2016 until 2019/2020. \$46.6 million of this funding was expended during this period.. The program was managed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet from commencement to July 2019, when, as a result of machinery of government changes, it was transitioned to the Department of Communities and Justice.

(a) FY2015/16 - \$13.4 million

(b) FY2016/17 - \$16.8 million

(c) FY2017/18 - \$6.6 million

(d) FY2018/2019 - \$6.5 million

(e) FY 2019/20 - \$3.3 million

(f) In the 2020/2021 budget, the NSW Government announced a further \$49.6 million over four years for the CVE program. In the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 financial years, the allocated funding to the CVE program has been \$12.3 million per year.

From 1 January 2021 to 31 October 2021, \$10.3 million has been spent on the CVE program.

10. Given the NSW government in its submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security Inquiry into extremist movements and radicalism in Australia – published March 18 2021 claimed that the program reached almost 1.5 million people, what is the basis for that claim?

## **ANSWER**

I am advised:

ACIL Allen Consulting produced the NSW Countering Violent Extremism Program Evaluation in October 2019, assessing the effectiveness of the program since its inception in November 2015. The report found that the activities under the program had reached nearly 1.5 million people, including through engagement with communities, service providers, schools, government employees and local councils.

Community-based programs were able to demonstrate broad reach, engaging a large number of community groups and young people, while the more targeted projects provided intensive service delivery to a small and relatively homogenous cohort.

The report states that the School Communities Working Together (SCWT) program had the broadest reach, covering more than 1.2 million students. By the time of the evaluation in 2019, Step Together had reached more than 83,000 community members across NSW, the Ambassadors Program run by Multicultural NSW had reached more than 130,000 people, the COMPACT program had reached more than 20,000 people, and The Point magazine had reached 100,000 readers.

The report notes that the CVE program represents an innovative and flexible approach to addressing resilience, capability, diversion, and disengagement. It is available here:

[https://www.cveevaluation.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/771963/ACIL-Allen-NSW-CVE-Evaluation-Final-Report-October-2019.pdf](https://www.cveevaluation.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/771963/ACIL-Allen-NSW-CVE-Evaluation-Final-Report-October-2019.pdf)

### **Riot at Parklea Correctional Centre**

11. What is the estimated cost to repair the damage resulting from the riot on 12 July 2021?

#### **ANSWER**

I am advised this is subject to an MTC-Broadspectrum insurance claim and is a matter being determined by MTC-Broadspectrum and its insurer.

### **Wellington Correctional Centre mouse plague**

12. Wellington Correctional Centre was closed as a result of a mouse plague. When will the facility be reopened?

#### **ANSWER**

At this stage it is anticipated that staff will reoccupy the refurbished facility in January 2022 to undertake operational commissioning with the first inmates returning to the centre in February 2022.

13. Please detail the cost of the mouse infestation at the Wellington Correctional Centre broken down by,

- (a) Cost of refurbishing facility Counter Terrorism and Corrections
- (b) Cost of relocating staff
- (c) Cost of relocating inmates

#### **ANSWER**

I am advised that an insurance claim has been submitted to iCare and is currently being considered.



### **Deaths in Custody**

14. Please advise the number of people who have died in custody since 1 January 2021

### **ANSWER**

I am advised that the number is 28.