



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by Andrew Braddock MLA on Monday, 29 August 2022: Neil Gaughan, Chief Police Officer – ACT Policing took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Transcript Monday, 29 August 2022 [PAGE #]]

In relation to:

MR BRADDOCK: Do we have any records as to how often or instances where the spit hood is actually utilised? Do we know if, for example, it has been used on children or just on adults?

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: They are not used on children. Certainly, we have had a 16-year-old in the city who was aggressive when she was taken into the watch house for refusing to give up her alcohol, and she spat and kicked at police. But, as far as those under the age of 16 go, I have no recall of that being undertaken. I suppose the thing is that it is recorded in our PROMIS system as the use of CO3—the commissioner's order 3, which also covers things such as handcuffs and capsicum spray. It would require a manual interrogation for us to basically going through every case to determine in which instances spit hoods had been used, or not.

MR BRADDOCK: Okay. I am concerned because, despite spit hoods being available for use, there have still been those instances, as you described, where police are being spat on or bitten. What are the alternatives that the police could use, like personal protective equipment or similar?

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: Something similar to this could be possibly used, but I think that then they cannot see their accoutrements. This the challenge we have. If I put a Perspex on a police officer, they cannot see down. These options have been considered and at the moment the best alternative we find for an efficient use—and, as I said, they are very seldomly used—is the spit hood.

MR BRADDOCK: I am just concerned about instances. There was the case of the death of the individual in South Australia in a spit hood because you cannot identify respiratory distress or other concerns associated with the individual when they are in a spit hood.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: Chair, I understand, standing orders preclude me from actually showing what a spit hood looks like. I am happy to take the question in camera to show the committee a spit hood, but I understand I cannot use a prop during estimates.

THE CHAIR: We are happy to receive an image, I guess, as an exhibition.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: An image?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: I do not have an image.

THE CHAIR: You could take it as a question on notice and supply an image, and we can accept that as an exhibition piece, if Mr Braddock is happy with that.

MR BRADDOCK: I am absolutely fine with that.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: Thank you, Chair.

Mick Gentleman MLA, Minister for Police and Emergency Services: I am advised that the answer to the Member's question is as follows: –


Image 1: Safariland - Tranzport Hood



Image 2: Safariland - Spit Net



Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature: 

Date: 6/19/2022

By the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Mick Gentleman MLA