



Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
23 February 2022

Asked by Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA on 23 February 2022: Commissioner Neil Gaughan took on notice the following question(s):

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In relation to:

MR HANSON: Yes, and it is going to the ROGS report that the clearance rate for property crime lowest in Australia by a long way. So there might be less crime but the actual clearance rates, they are not being cleared up. Is there an explanation for that? And does that go to the satisfaction rate?

Mr Gaughan: Well potentially it does, Mr Hanson. I mean these are the sort of things that actually do need some level of—more exploration than just going off the raw data.

MR HANSON: Sure. Can you give me an explanation—

DR PATERSON: Chair.

MR HANSON: —as to why those rates are so low?

DR PATERSON: Seriously?

THE CHAIR: Just a moment, Mr Hanson. Look, it is kind of otiose because recognising you are here in your shadow capacity and it is my next substantive, I am happy to pass that onto you. Either to continue your line or to start it fresh. Thank you.

MR HANSON: Yes, if I can just continue on with this. Thank you, Mr Chair. Is the actual then substantive reason why our clearance rates are so low comparatively to other jurisdictions? Why is that?

Mr Gaughan: Well I will get Peter Whowell to answer that. But one of the things I will raise is that the way things are recorded are different in every jurisdiction. So we are not comparing apples with apples.

The other thing I will say, that certainly in relation to certain crime offences I think we need to look at some legislative reform that allows us to charge more people with substantive offences. That is particularly in the case of stolen motor vehicles. There is some recent decisions taken by the Supreme Court that made it very difficult for us to charge people in relation to cars. But I might get Mr Whowell just to answer that in relation to the stats.

Mr Whowell: Peter Whowell, executive general manager, Corporate. I acknowledge and have read the privilege statement. And I will take off my mask.

Probably best to take that question on notice, Mr Hanson, in the sense that what I have got in front of me and what I have got in my head is more in our annual report than actually the ROGS. So I would actually rather just have the time to give you a better answer than trying to think of it on my feet.

Minister Steel: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

With respect to the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services 2022, caution should be taken in comparing clearance rate figures across jurisdictions due to different business rules, procedures, systems, policies and recording practices between various police agencies.

For example, in the ACT when no offenders have been identified but the case remains open to further investigation, this may not be defined as 'finalised', whereas other jurisdictions may treat this as 'finalised'. As each jurisdiction categorises its finalisation and clearance codes differently, this may explain why the ACT records lower clearance rates than other areas

ACT Policing is aware that the Australian Bureau of Statistics is currently exploring the development of a consistent set of business rules for the finalisation of cases.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Signature:



Date:

10/3/22

By the A/g Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Mr Chris Steel