



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2023-2024

Mr Mark Parton MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by Mr Braddock on 19 July 2023: Mr Gaughan took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Uncorrected Proof Hansard Transcript 19 July 2023 pp 102–103]

In relation to: Policing priorities

MR BRADDOCK: Substantive, yes. Thank you.

On 20 June 2023, ACT Policing tweeted the videos of shoplifting, which showed the, amongst others, apprehension of a young woman who had stolen a packet of biscuits, Iced VoVo's I believe. Whilst I am not condoning stealing, especially of Australia's favourite biscuit, I am wondering why this is such a high priority for ACT Police in action and also inclusion in your social media?

Mr Gaughan: I do not recall that video. So we will have to take that on notice.

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

In June 2023, ACT Policing and Canberra retailers conducted proactive operations to target shoplifting.

Working with Loss Prevention Officers from Woolworths, Big W, Dan Murphy's and Coles, members from ACT Policing's Territory Targeting Team (TTT) conducted plain clothes operations at a number of shopping precincts.

On 7 June 2023, TTT members targeted shopping centres at Majura and Dickson. During this operation three people were arrested for theft, with one of these offenders also charged for possessing a knife, and another for breaching a good behaviour order. Police also issued 12 cautions for theft offences.

On 14 June 2023, the operation shifted to the Canberra Centre, which saw two people arrested - one for theft and the other for breach of bail. A further six people were issued cautions for theft.

While the individuals arrested or cautioned as part of these operations appear to be petty thieves, shoplifting is still a crime and police will continue to target this type of offending.

Shoplifting results in an increased cost of all retail goods - affecting all ACT consumers. Recent media reporting indicates Woolworths estimates 5.27 million items were stolen across all its Canberra stores over a 12 month period at an approximate cost of \$16.27 million. Each ACT store recorded an average shoplifting loss of \$351,358, or nearly \$30,000 per month per store. Police and

retailers will continue to work together to address this crime type with further operations expected.

On 20 June 2023 ACT Policing issued a media release and footage of some arrests made during this operation to reinforce to the community that theft from retailers is a crime and offenders run the risk of being arrested if they commit this offence. The footage was appropriately anonymised, provided to local media outlets and circulated via ACT Policing's social media channels.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2023-2024

Signature: 

Date: 28/7/2023

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