



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 18

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

JEREMY HANSON CSC MLA (CHAIR), MARISA PATERSON MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), JO CLAY MLA

Inquiry into referred 2019–20 Annual and Financial Reports and Budget Estimates 2020-21
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
25 FEBRUARY 2021

Asked by Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA on 25 February 2021. Chief Police Officer of ACT Policing, Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan, took on notice the following question:

In relation to: **Incidents in Weston Creek and Molonglo**

THE CHAIR: Anecdotally at least, there seems to be an issue with incidents in my neck of the woods as the local member in Weston Creek and Molonglo. There was obviously the tragic death at the skate park late last year, but that is not limited. A large number of members of the community came out talking about a variety of other incidents, break-ins and so on. Can you discuss that with the committee? Is it the case that you are seeing a bit of a surge in that area? If so, what is it and on notice maybe you could quantify that with incident reports and so on.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: We will table some incident reports for the committee's information. I think that, overall, the last financial year actually saw a decrease in crime across the territory. I think it is fair to say we put that down to the impact of the pandemic and the fact that less people were actually out and about. So I think that is probably a statistical anomaly that we would have to put an asterisk next to in future years when we look at crime rates in 2019-20 because certainly they are down.

The other thing that links to an increase in crime in any area of population growth is that very issue of population growth. As Molonglo continues to grow in population, we are going to see an increase in reportable crime. I have been a police officer on and off in the territory for 37 years; I worked in Tuggeranong when it was basically a satellite city of Canberra with only two suburbs that were populated, and we saw a significant increase in crime in Tuggeranong as the population grew, and likewise in Gungahlin.

Through the new police services model and things such as that, we are adapting our model of policing to ensure that we adequately address the concerns of the community. I note a new residents committee has been established in Molonglo, and I look forward to my officers and, indeed, myself engaging with them on some of their concerns.

Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

Population growth is a contributing factor to increases in crime in any area. In consultation with the ACT Government, ACT Policing is transitioning to a community-focused, proactive model of policing under the Police Services Model, to ensure the ongoing safety of the Canberra community. This includes the Strategic Accommodation Plan that will consider policing needs into the future.



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Offence Type	Molonglo District*				Weston Creek**			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Jul 2020 – Jan 2021	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Jul 2020 – Jan 2021
Homicide	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Assault	25	31	33	24	111	73	92	53
Sexual offences	1	1	6	4	13	32	17	14
Other offences against the person	3	5	3	2	6	11	6	14
Robbery	1	0	2	1	14	4	12	5
Burglary	55	38	84	39	161	91	173	61
Stolen Motor vehicle	27	26	37	19	68	50	104	41
Theft (excl motor vehicle theft)	197	122	143	100	370	273	417	155
Property damage	75	90	88	51	177	190	239	77
Other offences against property	14	11	8	8	74	38	60	68
Environmental Offences	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Government security/operations***	1	1	0	0	5	1	5	0
Justice procedures	24	20	33	11	52	43	68	24
Firearms and weapons	3	1	5	5	22	4	9	4
Other offences against good order	12	3	7	3	27	20	36	12
Drug offences	7	7	6	1	22	10	16	5
Traffic Offences	90	80	62	47	221	210	226	126
Other offences n.e.c.	1	0	4	2	1	4	4	5
Total	536	436	521	317	1345	1055	1484	667

Source: ACT Policing PROMIS

*Molonglo District suburbs include Coombs, Denman Prospect, Molonglo, Wright,

** Weston Creek District suburbs include Chapman, Duffy, Fisher, Holder, Rivett, Stromlo, Uriarra, Waramanga, Weston

***Obstruct/Resist Territory Public Official

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

Signature:

Date:

5/3/21

By the acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Chris Steel MLA