

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA Committee - JCS](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Correction to evidence before committee 9.30am 26/10/21
Date: Wednesday, 27 October 2021 2:09:54 PM
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Dear Secretary

Budget Estimates Committee

In a question to me from Mr Cain MLA yesterday Tuesday 26 October 2021 at 9.27am to the effect that he noticed that the DPP budget had increased by \$1.5 million and asked if this funding was adequate, I stated in my response that I thought the increase was project funding as most of that funding was dedicated for an additional Coroner and Drug and Alcohol Court. I added that we did have some budget growth, but that was offset by the loss of the Safer Families funding, and I stated that I thought on balance, other than the special projects funding, our budget did not grow. I further unpacked this later by stating that I thought the lost safer families funding for 2021-22 was around \$340,000, however as part of our step-up growth we received an additional \$331,000, adding that I was of the view that this left around a nett budgetary deficit of around \$9,000.

Correction

I wish to advise the committee that this answer was incorrect and was based on a misreading of our budgetary papers by my support staff preparing my estimates brief.

Following my committee appearance, I returned to the papers and noted that they did record the loss of \$340,000 Safer Families funding for the 2021-22, however this was read as a single amount for the financial year rather than cumulative on the \$332,000 Safer Families reduction in the previous year, meaning that in reality the loss was only \$8,000 Safer Families for the 2021-22 financial year.

This was offset by the cumulative step-up budget growth from \$2,118,000 in 2020-21 to \$2,449,000 in 2021-22, amounting to a step up of \$331,000 for the 2021-22 financial year. This was not offset by the full \$340,000 I suggested in my response, rather the \$8,000 cumulative Safer Families figure.

The correct financial state is, as reported in the supporting brief, a total increase in funding of \$1,463 million made up of the increased funding from the step-up funding, less the loss of \$8000 Safer Families, and the addition of a number of one-off funds including the revised superannuation and index parameters and rent reductions as a result of my office entering a new lease with the Reserve Bank of Australia.

In answer to any consequential questions on the use of this additional funding, it has been supplemented by productivity gains and the redirection of current resources and has been used to expand an eighth prosecution team, called the committals unit. The role of the committals unit is to receive and review briefs of evidence immediately after committal and liaise with both Legal Aid and the AFP to both strengthen the brief of evidence, and where possible either settle the matter by way of plea of guilty or reduce the number of issues in dispute to shorten the trial. A smaller committals unit that was established in the 2020-21 financial year and has proven highly effective settling 26 trials prior to being set for trial, and a further 36 pleas of guilty after being set for trial. The additional funding will expand this team, and make it a permanent part of operations, to increase the quality of trials briefs and increase the number of trials that settle without needing to go to full trial.

I am happy to make myself available to the committee for any supplementary questions at your

convenience.

Kind regards



Shane Drumgold SC

Director

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