



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 19

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 Ms Jo Clay MLA on 25 February 2021. Chief Police Officer of ACT Policing, Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan took on notice the following question (s):

In relation to: **Vulnerable road user incidents and investigators allocated to major road collision team**

MS CLAY: I would say zero fatalities is a great goal but we want to prevent accidents too. I have recently been speaking to a constituent who was in quite a serious one. He has lifetime damage, which is what typically happens with a vulnerable road user and a car. One person walks away; the other person rarely does, even if they have not died. So I am interested in knowing how many full-time investigators you have got allocated to the collision investigation and reconstruction team and whether, if a collision involves a vulnerable road user, you use a specialist team, in the same way that you use a specialist team when you are looking at other complex crimes.

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: We will take it on notice in relation to the numbers because I do not have them ready. People are thoroughly looking for them. We will attend a collision if there is a fatality, if there is an injury where a person requires transportation to hospital, if it is blocking the roadway or is a danger, or if any person is suspected to be in breach of the peace—in other words, if they are likely to be aggressive with each other or there is an allegation of drug use. In relation to collisions, they will attend primarily the ones where there is serious injury. Injury defined under our process is a person that is admitted to hospital. It is not classified as a person that goes to hospital with an injury and then is later discharged from emergency. It is someone that is actually admitted to a hospital and stays overnight or, unfortunately, is a fatality. That is the criterion for our accident squad to attend a collision

MS CLAY: If somebody is subsequently admitted to hospital and has surgery, they would not trigger that?

Dep Commissioner Gaughan: It would depend on how long after and whether the accident had already been investigated by another patrol at the time. In the hypothetical situation you just put to me, I would be surprised if that matter had not been concluded before we became aware of someone being in hospital; but the investigation is basically underway from the time our patrol attends.

MS CLAY: When you are providing the other information on notice, could you add in the total number of accidents involving vulnerable road users, and what percentage of those did involve the collision investigation and reconstruction team? Is it possible to include that?



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Dep Commissioner Gaughan: We will try. I cannot give the committee a guarantee that we will have that granularity of data, but certainly we can provide high-level data in relation to that. We will see what we can come up with—noting that it could be a manual interrogation.

MS CLAY: Thank you.

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

The ACT Policing Major Collision Team (MCT) is one aspect of ACT Policing's Road Policing capability. Broadly, Road Policing are responsible for upholding road safety and reducing road related trauma in the ACT.

The MCT is responsible for the investigation of serious injury and fatal motor vehicle collisions within the ACT. This specialised team is comprised of two Sergeants and 10 team members. All other traffic related investigations are undertaken by ACT Policing Road Policing members.

ACT Policing are unable to provide the number of accidents involving vulnerable road users and attendance by the MCT, as it would require the diversion of police resources to manually interrogate all collision reports made to ACT Policing. This would be an arduous process, unable to be completed within the required timeframes.

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