

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE (Of which some notice has been given)

Thursday, 23 May 2013

Hon Robin Chapple to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Corrective Services.

I refer to the Minister's statement in justice reinvestment reported in the West Australian of 6 May, and I ask:

- (1) What steps has the Minister taken to implement justice reinvestment in the Mining and Pastoral Region?
- (2) Will the Minister ensure that a youth remand centre is incorporated into the design for the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison redevelopment?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?

I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

(1) The government is in the process of exploring a range of options, and whilst it will not apologise for imprisoning offenders, it recognises that more work needs to be done in regards to identifying areas of need and redirecting offenders away from the prison system. This may be able to be achieved by offering support and guidance to prevent further and potentially more serious crimes being committed, therefore preventing further imprisonment.

The Minister for Corrective Services has requested the Department conducts a review of all current Youth Justice Services. Once that review is finalised this Government will make decisions on the way forward.

The Regional Youth Justice Services (RYJS) model operates in the Mining and Pastoral Region. It is premised upon the idea that preventing young people from entering the formal youth justice system, or diverting them away from the system as early as possible and for as long as possible, are the most effective ways of improving young people's life opportunities, and preventing criminal behaviour.

The services provided address four priority needs as follows:

- o Diversion of young people who offend away from the criminal justice system
- o Reduction of the financial costs of youth crime

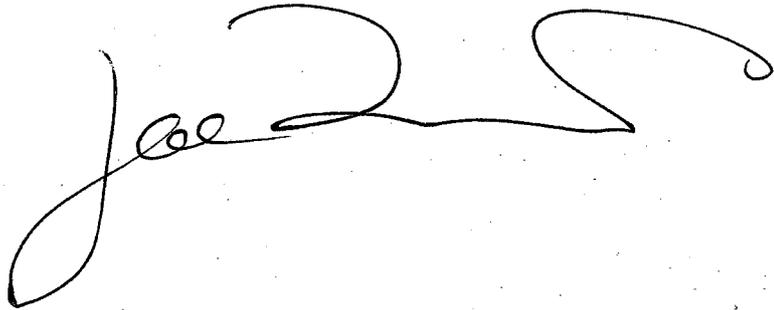
o Improvement of life opportunities for Aboriginal young people

o Reduction in the numbers of young people in remote areas who are transported to the metropolitan area and separated from their families and communities.

(2)-(3) The Department's focus continues to be placed upon ensuring that young people, especially young Aboriginal people, are either prevented from coming into contact with the formal criminal justice system or are provided with opportunities to access early intervention programs aimed at diverting them away from a lifetime of offending if they enter and escalate through the criminal justice system.

It is important to note a remand centre in one of these area would service on average 50 young people per year, whereas a RYJS model would service approximately 890 people per year.

In addition to the mentioned outcomes which a focus on diversion can achieve, this approach creates greater efficiencies in terms of savings to the Western Australian Community. The cost of accommodating a young person in the community is \$77 per day and this is significantly less than the \$624 per day cost to keep a young person in detention.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joe [unclear]', written in a cursive style.