

The Liberals' Police Enhanced Response Program

*Expanding our police force, making the
justice system more efficient and cutting
red tape on the thin blue line*

MAKING DECISIONS
GETTING THINGS DONE
SECURING WA'S FUTURE



Policy Summary

Supporting police to better enable them to improve community safety was a priority of the Liberal-led Government's first term agenda. If re-elected, a Liberal-led Government will continue to provide WA Police with the resources they need to do their job, and will continue to recruit additional officers and staff. However, further improvements in police service delivery will require more than just additional officer targets. New measures are needed to maximise the effect of the resources which the Liberals have devoted, and will continue to devote, to WA Police.

The Police Enhanced Response Program is a commitment to continue to grow WA Police numbers, simplify the underlying processes and legislative environment in which police operate, make policing more efficient and safeguard officer welfare. A Liberal Government will directly address issues that make it harder for police to protect the community.

A Liberal Government will:

- Recruit an additional 720 officers over the next four years, including the 170 additional officers we are presently committed to by the end of 2013-14, and a further 550 officers by 2016-17
- Fund a \$67million program to upgrade and build police stations in outer metropolitan suburbs, to ensure the additional officers are deployed where they are most needed
- Fund a comprehensive review of the legislation and underlying processes regulating police work to ensure police are fighting crime rather than red tape
- Provide resources for additional judicial officers and video links to free up police time, and deal with minor offenders more rapidly
- Provide significant incentives to attract police officers to hard to fill regional postings and keep them there
- Legislate for mandatory blood testing for offenders who assault officers.

For the community, this will mean more officers spending more time on the beat, and a more responsive and effective police service.

Additional Targeted Officers

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

- Recruit a total of 720 police over the next four years.

A Liberal Government will grow our police force with an additional 720 police over the next four years to drive down crime and protect the community.

The Liberal-led Government implemented a five year program in 2009-10 to add 350 additional sworn officers and 150 auxiliary officers to WA Police. To date, 180 police officers and 150 police auxiliary officers have been recruited and the program is on track to recruit the final 170 police officers by the end of 2013-14.

To continue to grow WA Police, a Liberal Government will boost police numbers, particularly in specialist areas within WA Police, where more officers will make the biggest difference to fighting crime and improving community safety.

In addition to our existing commitment, a Liberal Government will recruit 550 additional officers for WA Police by the end of 2016-17. This will include 400 new police officers and 150 police auxiliaries and will be funded at a cost of \$282million. Importantly, this includes \$67 million for police station builds and upgrades to accommodate these new officers.

These police will be deployed in targeted roles that will deliver a more responsive, effective, visible and engaged police service. This will include officers in suburban and regional police stations, 200 additional detectives to target volume crime and a new 50 strong rapid response group, meaning a dedicated force can each be based north and south of the river.

The 150 police auxiliary officer positions will be used to dramatically increase support at metropolitan stations, thereby reducing the administrative burden on police officers and increasing their capacity to patrol, respond and arrest.

This program will maximise the effectiveness of each police office, freeing them from back room processes that restrict their ability to be on the beat.

For the public, this means not only more police, but more police where they are most needed.

Outer Metropolitan Police Capacity

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

- Devote \$67million to upgrade police capacity in the outer metropolitan area.

A Liberal Government will ensure our police and their resources grow as our State grows.

Over the past decade, the population of the Perth Metropolitan area has increased by 26%, the fastest growth of any capital city in Australia. The largest growth occurred in the outer suburban areas of Perth.

The North-West Metropolitan, East Metropolitan, South East Metropolitan and Peel police districts also accounted for 62% of reported crime in the Metropolitan Area in 2011-12.

The Liberals are committed to recruiting an additional 720 officers over the next term of government, including 550 police officers and police auxiliaries over and above our existing commitment.

To ensure that police have resources where they are most needed, a Liberal Government will devote \$67million to upgrade police stations and build new facilities in outer metropolitan areas to house these additional officers.

A Liberal Government will work with the Commissioner of Police to identify the areas where these facilities will make the greatest difference, including:

- \$12.5million to build a new purpose built police station for Ballajura, capable of housing up to 20 officers
- Capacity upgrades, with a focus in the North-West Metropolitan, East Metropolitan, South East Metropolitan and Peel police districts
- \$5.8million for the new Regional Operations Group to be based in the South Metropolitan area, ensuring a significantly enhanced police capacity.

Red Tape Reduction Push

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

- Fund a comprehensive, independent review aimed at simplifying the legislation and processes regulating police work, allowing police to spend more time on frontline policing.

The Liberals recognise the need to streamline processes to allow police officers to more efficiently arrest and charge offenders, free up frontline officers, and guard against future red tape.

A Liberal Government will provide \$750,000 to fund a review to be conducted by a senior lawyer or judicial officer, working in consultation with the Police Union, and WA Police, and will have the authority to consider the:

- *Criminal Investigation Act 2006*
- *Criminal Procedure Act 2004*
- *Criminal Investigation (Identifying People) Act 2002*
- *Young Offenders Act 1994*
- Related legislation and underlying procedures

This analysis will identify ways to cut red tape and simplify the processes police must follow without reducing accountability and ensure more police time is spent on frontline policing. Specific areas of focus will be:

- Reducing the administrative burden on police officers by streamlining the arrest and charging process
- Identifying ways to maximise the use of auxiliaries and new rapid justice initiatives that will free up police officers from minding suspects and arrestees in stations, transporting detainees, and managing property
- Reducing the amount of time police spend waiting in court to give evidence, and assist courts in dealing with offenders more rapidly.

These reforms will increase police hours spent on targeted frontline duties, and build a police service that can more effectively respond to the demands placed upon it.

Rapid Justice Initiatives

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

- Implement measures to ensure the criminal justice system works with police to deal with offenders in a rapid and effective manner.

To ensure police can deal effectively with crime, it is vital that we streamline the manner in which they interact with the criminal justice system.

There are some immediate, practical improvements that can be made. Police should not be expected to play "nursemaid" to offenders when they should be out tackling crime, and when offenders are charged, they should be explaining themselves to a Magistrate as quickly as possible.

A Liberal Government will provide \$3.6million over four years to fund two full time equivalent additional judicial officers (and associated court staff) to deal with matters in police lock ups more rapidly, and ensure police have to spend less time looking after offenders prior to their court date. The additional judicial officers will:

- sit on Sundays at the Perth Police Complex, supplement existing night services and ensure a seven day service operating from that location to deal with bail and remand decisions; and
- be available to fast track traffic and impoundment matters during the course of the week.

A Liberal Government will provide over \$200,000 to expand police video-link technology capabilities in the seven major regional centres (Karratha, Geraldton, Broome, Albany, Kalgoorlie, Northam, and Bunbury) to ensure they are able to access the seven day a week services operating out of the Perth Police Complex.

As part of the review of red tape, a Liberal Government will also explore legislative changes to further streamline police interactions with the criminal justice system, avoid the need for police officers to go to court in some matters, and seek to allow more low level offences to be dealt with by courts in one sitting following arrest and charge.

What this will mean for the public is up to 20 additional police available for frontline duties each weekend, and a more rapid and efficient justice system.

Regional Incentives & Mandatory Blood Tests

If re-elected, the Liberals will:

- Provide substantial attraction and retention payments to help attract police officers to regional Western Australia, and introduce legislation to safeguard the welfare of police officers who are bitten or spat on.

Being a police officer is, and always will be, a demanding and stressful occupation. Police officers posted to regional locations work in difficult situations, often with a more limited support network of colleagues. They often face additional work stress when there are delays in filling vacancies alongside them.

A Liberal-led Government will allocate \$10.5million over four years to assist WA Police in attracting officers into hard to fill regional postings, and retaining them in those positions.

This will involve an initial attraction payment, and a further payment in recognition of more than three and a half years of service in the location.

The amounts of these payments will depend on the location involved and the degree of difficulty in filling postings in that area, and include:

- For all regional postings - \$2000 Attraction payment
- For Australind, Bunbury, Esperance, Geraldton Hopetoun: \$4000 Attraction payment
- For non-coastal locations with fully subsidised housing (excluding Pilbara/Kimberley Kalgoorlie) - \$4000 Attraction payment, \$6000 retention payment
- For non-coastal locations without fully subsidised housing (excluding Pilbara/Kimberley Kalgoorlie) - \$7000 Attraction payment, \$12250 retention payment.

A Liberal Government will also introduce legislation providing for the mandatory taking of samples from individuals after a police officer has been exposed to their bodily fluids, which will:

- Permit police to, upon authorisation by a senior officer, take samples from criminals who have bitten, spat on, or otherwise attacked an officer



- Where a police officer has otherwise been exposed to blood or bodily fluids, (for example, following a traffic crash) permit a magistrate to order the person concerned to provide a sample.

Our Record

- The Liberal-led Government has supported and valued our police officers and both increased police numbers and better supported them with the right equipment and facilities.
- When the Liberal-led Government was formed in September 2008, there were 5,647 police officers in Western Australia. Four years later, there are:
 - More than 330 additional police and auxiliary officers
 - A more than 25% increase in funding to police,
 - More than 1000 additional inmates in our prisons, and
 - A 9% decrease in reported crime.
- The Liberal-led Government implemented a five year program in 2009-10 to add 350 additional sworn officers and 150 auxiliary officers (to free up sworn officers for frontline duties) to the WA Police. To date, 180 police officers and 150 police auxiliary officers have been recruited and we are on track to complete the final 170 police officers by the end of 2013-14.
- The Liberals have also legislated to better support police officers and tackle criminals and criminal behaviour with tougher laws. These measures include:
 - Mandatory jail terms for assaults harming police, ambulance officers, transit guards, court security and prison officers
 - Allowing for the payment of medical expenses for employment-related injuries for former police officers
 - Successfully negotiated with the Police Union to give WA police officers a well-deserved 13.25% pay rise over three years, making them among the best paid in Australia
 - Laws to tackle criminal organisations, including anti-association powers, and enhanced property confiscations and sentencing rules
 - Laws to tackle out of control gatherings and more rapidly disperse crowds and arrest troublemakers, accompanied by high capacity 'arrest buses'
 - Laws permitting police to issue on the spot infringements for low level offences



- Laws permitting police to rapidly seize and confiscate hoon vehicles
- Key to our measures to ensure police can more efficiently respond to crime is the new \$93million Perth Police Complex, scheduled to open April 2013, with facilities onsite for a Magistrates Court, and the capacity to provide video-link services to regional locations.