

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings

Police

Portfolio:	Police and Emergency Services
Witness:	Ms Lisa Neville
Committee member:	Mr Philip Dalidakis
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Relevant text:

The CHAIR: Keeping Mr O'Brien happy is the hardest job as well, so we are both winners here, Mr O'Brien. Minister, with the 2 minutes remaining I will ask you to move into the issue of ongoing investment in police resourcing. I refer you to budget paper 3, pages 266 and 267, and the policing and crime prevention output statement and the major investment being put into policing in Victoria. I am just asking if you could detail in the remaining 2 minutes and then possibly take on notice for the rest of it what is behind that major growth in funding.

Answer:

The Police and Crime Prevention Output for 2019-20 is \$3,563.3 million. This includes a number of important initiatives:

- \$8.5 million for Better Mental Health Care for our emergency workers;
- \$5.0 million for Crime Prevention initiatives;
- \$4.708 million to continue the Forensic Drug Capability Intelligence program;
- \$8.636 million for improving court access through additional audio-visual technology.
- \$2.758 million to maintain the Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC).
- \$2.544 million for Counter-terrorism protective security training and infrastructure.
- \$1.4 million for Embedded Youth Outreach Program.

This investment continues to deliver on the government's commitments outlined in the Community Safety Statement 2017, 2018/19 and 2019/20 as well as the 2016-17 Public Safety – Police Response Package.

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Relevant text:

Mr HIBBINS: Can I move on to the fixated threat assessment centre. I think it was indicated that 300 high-risk radicalised people would pass through the centre in the first 12 months. Can I get some understanding of the figures around that?

Ms NEVILLE: Yes. I may need to take it on notice. I think it is sitting around 200-odd; 220 I think is the figure at the moment.

Answer:

The Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC) was established in March 2018 to identify and assess individuals who pose a threat to public safety due to their risk of engaging in fixated behaviours (that is 'fixated persons'). FTAC also aims to mitigate lone actor grievance fuelled attacks including lone actor terrorism and lone actor apolitical violence.

The annual caseload of the FTAC was initially estimated to be approximately 300 persons. That estimate was based on the experience of the Queensland Fixated Threat Assessment Centre, with adjustments related to population size and the different volumes of national security cases in each State.

Since the establishment of the FTAC, the referral model has expanded as FTAC has been implemented and matured. FTAC commenced with a referral pathway for persons with fixations related to Cabinet Ministers, expanding to include persons with fixations with the Office of the Governor in October 2018 and extended to all parliamentarians in January 2019.

From March 2018 to May 2019, FTAC received 231 referrals. FTAC's caseload in its first year of operation were below the initial estimate. However, in the January 2019-May 2019 period there were 96 referrals, indicating referrals have increased since the referral pathway for fixated individuals was expanded to include all politicians. This increase in referrals is expected to continue to reflect numbers closer to those initial estimates.

Portfolio:	Police and Emergency Services
Witness:	Mr Graham Ashton
Committee member:	Mr Sam Hibbins
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Relevant text:

Mr HIBBINS: I just want to follow up on a couple of the recommendations from the expert panel on terrorism report that was after the Brighton siege. There was recommendation 2 for the government to support further research on extreme left and right threats and Islamophobia in Victoria and its impact on Muslim Victorians. Is that research being undertaken?

Ms NEVILLE: It has been funded.

Mr HIBBINS: So it has been funded and then will be undertaken?

Chief Comm. ASHTON: Yes, it is underway.

Mr HIBBINS: Do we have a time line on that particular place of work?

Chief Comm. ASHTON: I would have to take that on notice as to when that is—

Answer:

The Victorian Government is in the process of finalising a round of Countering Violent Extremism Grants, which will be delivered by 30 June 2020 and will investigate right- and left-wing extremism, Islamophobia and its impact on Muslim Victorians. Additionally, the Government has provided \$3.2 million to a Deakin-led consortium to establish an independent think tank which will investigate social cohesion and violent extremism in Victoria over a five year period.

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Relevant text:

Mr HIBBINS: All right. Thank you. I will ask finally, just in terms of new police stations, what the criteria are for them being assessed, and I will probably put in a plug for the Prahran police station, which I know the police association has identified as a station that probably needs rebuilding.

The CHAIR: Mr Hibbins, I will leave that as a question on notice as we move to Ms Stitt.

from transcript)

Answer:

Plans outlining facility investment priorities are updated annually and approved by Victoria Police, providing a three year outlook for property investment requirements and priorities.

To further refine the list of priority projects a review of sites is undertaken with the following considerations:

- age of existing facilities
- maintenance expenditure
- capacity to accommodate additional officers
- property condition
- how the infrastructure supports capability growth in identified priority capabilities outlined in Victoria Police's Capability Framework.

Victoria Police Executive Command review and endorse the priority sites for progression to Government and the ERSC funding submission process.

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Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE: But not the 500 that they have requested. Chief Commissioner, we will move a little bit away from that. In the 19–20 budget it states that new booze and drug buses were completed in quarter 4, 18–19. On average how many drug and alcohol tests would each one of these buses complete per day?

Answer:

Alcohol or drug bus or Alcohol and Drug Testing (ADT) Vehicles, which may be used as an alcohol or drug bus, will usually require the deployment of an Evidential Breath Test Operator (Senior Constable level) supervisor and four constables. On average, per bus, per day (shift):

- An ADT vehicle tasked with drug testing will complete 200 preliminary oral fluid samples (POFTS)
- An ADT vehicle tasked with both alcohol and drug testing will complete 677 preliminary breath tests (PBT) and 10 POFTSs

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Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE: We will move on to our next topic. We have such a short time for so many topics to get through. Chief Commissioner, earlier this year, 21 February, the Court of Appeal dismissed Victoria Police's attempt to maintain the suppression of the identity of lawyer X. What we are after is around the expenditure side of things. How much was spent by Victoria Police attempting to block the release of lawyer X's identity? Just a dollar value, the running total dollar value.

....

Ms VALLENCE: Yes, so just the total value. It has been reported I think in the media that it is around at least a \$5 million figure to date. Would you say that is accurate?

Chief Comm. ASHTON: Well, I will take their number on notice and get back to you with the exact number rather than just guess.

Answer:

It is Victoria Police's firm position that the protection of human life is, and always will be, their absolute priority. Accordingly, Victoria Police believed that legal action through the courts was necessary as these matters should not be aired publicly as they would put a person and their family at extreme risk of harm. .

From 10 November 2016 to 31 May 2019 Victoria Police has spent \$1,954,247.27 (incl. GST) on legal fees to Minter Ellison who represented the individual in question, (including Barrister fees), in the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court matters. The Supreme Court indicated that it was entirely proper that Victoria Police fund representation for the individual in question.

From 29 April 2016 to 31 May 2019, Victoria Police has spent \$3,413,626.63 (incl. GST) on legal fees to the Victorian Government Solicitors Office (including Barrister fees), in the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court matters (please note some legal costs arising from certain other related proceedings).

The amounts above include the costs associated with the suppression, which were not recorded separately and cannot be meaningfully disaggregated from the total amounts.

The above costs are reported in relevant Victoria Police annual reports from 2016 to 2018, included in the Financial Statements, Section 3.3 Operating Expenses of the Victoria Police annual reports, as part of the consolidated figure under the category Legal.

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Relevant text:

Mr RICHARDSON: And in the short time I have got left, Minister, can you update the committee on what some of the research on the road toll is saying and how these new cameras will help address some of the key drivers of the toll?

Answer:

The 2019-20 Budget delivers a \$120 million road safety package centred around a 75 per cent increase in mobile camera operations (96 new state-of-the-art mobile speed cameras) and supporting community engagement, as well as investigating and trialling new enforcement technologies. Modelling by the Monash University Accident Research Centre found this increase will save 60 lives and reduce serious injuries by 260, every year.

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Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE: in such a short period of time, and you are already looking to up the head count to 100. So we have got that, and what we are just after is: you said it was over \$6 million. I just want a confirmation, Chief Commissioner, that you will take it on notice to come back with the total operating costs for Taskforce Landow, and broken down to each of the elements—legal, rent, so on and so forth.

Answer:

Taskforce Landow was established to support Victoria Police's contribution to the Royal Commission into Management of Police Informants. Taskforce Landow includes support from the Intelligence and Covert Support Command (ICSC). Estimates to 30 June 2019 are detailed below:

Item	2018/19 estimated cost
Salaries and on cost	\$1,872,541
Operation cost	\$1,221,952
Legal Cost	\$6,504,000
Total	\$9,598,493
Note:	
- Estimated cost are based on actual costs to 31/05/2019 and estimated cost from 01/06/2019 to 30/06/2019	

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Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE: And the 19–20 Justice and Community Safety questionnaire highlights a \$3.8 million cut to police services, Chief Commissioner, made by reducing ‘the funding available to deliver non front line services’. Commissioner, in what areas will funding be cut by Victoria Police?

Chief Comm. ASHTON: Well, we always look to try and map out those reductions. We have got to try and find savings into areas that reduce—

Ms VALLENCE: What is the time frame to map them?

Answer:

The 2019-20 Budget reflects a reduction in consultancy and labour hire expenditure.

There are no reductions to frontline police services.

Emergency Services

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Witness:	Ms Lisa Neville
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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: I will move on. Secretary, can I ask, please, for you to provide a current list of high-priority CFA stations due for replacement that will remain as 100 per cent CFA?

Answer:

Due to the need to maintain flexibility to respond to emerging and urgent repair and replacement issues, it is not possible to provide a current list of high-priority stations that require replacement that will remain as 100 per cent CFA. However, in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 State Budgets, the CFA received funding to replace 10 volunteer stations at Ararat, Tatura, Selby, Inglewood, Nagambie, Mt Macedon, Moe, Junortoun, Riddells Creek and Phillip Island.

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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: Okay, Minister, I am not going to get an answer, clearly, on that so I will move on to the secretary. Can I ask you to provide an outline of the cost of overtime in the 18–19 year for both the CFA and the MFB?

Answer:

The cost of overtime for the 2018-19 financial year to 31 May 2019 is:

- \$39.3 million for the CFA; and
- \$35.8 million for the MFB.

The cost of overtime for the 2018-19 financial year is forecast to be:

- \$42.2 million for the CFA; and
- \$39.2 million for the MFB.

The MFB's overtime costs include \$3.6 million for major incidents at Tottenham, Campbellfield and Gippsland.

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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: Well, presumably the CFA and the MFB would have that information. I would hope so. Secretary, in the past 12 months can you tell me what the increase in overtime was for both the CFA and the MFB?

Answer:

The increase to date in the cost of overtime for the 2018-19 financial year to 31 May 2019 is:

- \$7.5 million for the CFA; and
- \$13.9 million for the MFB.

The total increase in the cost of overtime for the 2018-19 financial year is forecast to be:

- \$10.6 million for the CFA; and
- \$17.3 million for the MFB.

The amount of overtime can be attributed to a range of factors including several campaign fires and complex structure fires requiring additional resources.

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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: Okay. Secretary, are you able to detail any new costs, including extra allowances, wage increases and staff levels, that are required to be delivered with the new EBAs, the ones that have been completed?

Answer:

The cost of new allowances, conditions and staff levels under the MFB's 2016 Operational Employees Agreement cannot be determined until financial outcomes of the 2019-20 financial year are known.

The CFA Operations Agreement 2016 has not been approved by the Fair Work Commission. New costs cannot be determined until its approval.

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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: extra allowances, wage increases and staff levels as a result of new EBAs. If I could get that on notice.

Answer:

The cost of new allowances, conditions and staff levels under the MFB's 2016 Operational Employees Agreement cannot be determined until financial outcomes of the 2019-20 financial year are known.

The CFA Operations Agreement 2016 has not been approved by the Fair Work Commission. New costs cannot be determined until its approval.

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Relevant text:

Mr D O'BRIEN: Likewise— and I do not know whether you can give me this right now—the cost annually, including average allowance payments but not including overtime in the MFB for all classifications of firefighters.

Answer:

The annual costs (including allowances but excluding employee on-costs such as superannuation, income protection insurance, WorkCover and payroll tax) for each classification of firefighter is as follows. The figures are presented as the cumulative total for all firefighters at each classification level.

- Commander - \$12,072,341
- Senior Station Officer - \$15,375,169
- Station Officer - \$42,619,398
- Leading Firefighter - \$115,789,809
- Qualified Firefighter - \$13,543,539
- Senior Firefighter - \$2,196,822
- Firefighter Level 3 - \$7,535,493
- Firefighter Level 2 - \$5,212,060
- Firefighter Level 1 - \$3,545,073
- Recruit - \$2,754,488