



## Police squad to enforce COVID-19 restrictions

Sunday, 29 March 2020

- 200-strong enforcement squad to patrol streets and ensure compliance with COVID-19 restrictions
- Urgent legislation for \$1,000 on-the-spot fines to be introduced into Parliament
- Fines to be issued immediately for disobeying self-isolation and gathering directives
- New measures to help maintain community safety during State of Emergency

An enforcement squad of more than 200 police officers will hit the streets immediately to ensure compliance with quarantine and gathering requirements and to maintain community safety during the State of Emergency.

The dedicated squad will perform spot checks on those required to self-isolate and enforce bans on gatherings.

The squad has been brought together by drawing on officers from a range of areas in the Force, along with 60 recruits who are due for graduation in two weeks but have been fast-tracked to join the frontline.

It will also be bolstered by a team of detectives who will be tasked to track and trace any self-isolation cases whose whereabouts cannot be accounted for.

The McGowan Government is also introducing legislation to bring in \$1,000 on-the-spot fines for individuals and \$5,000 fines for businesses who disobey the rules. The urgent legislation will be introduced into State Parliament as soon as next week.

Penalties of up to \$50,000 for individuals still apply under the Emergency Management Act, however, the on-the-spot fines will allow WA Police to issue fines immediately, without having to go through the courts.

The WA Police Force have so far responded to more than 1,000 COVID-19 related tasks, including checks on those required to self-isolate.

**Comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan:**

"This is about saving lives and protecting the community.

"People need to understand that this is serious.

"If you have been directed to self-isolate, then you must self-isolate. There are no excuses.

"The Government is throwing everything it has at this and we are doing so because that's the best way to safeguard the community.

"I just urge people to do the right thing by your family, by your neighbours and by your fellow Western Australians."

**Comments attributed to Police Minister Michelle Roberts:**

"It's regrettable that we are having to get police to babysit people, to enforce something as simple as self-isolation, but we have to do everything possible to keep our community safe.

"Too many people are still flaunting the rules.

"While our police and healthcare workers are working day and night to beat this thing, it's not too much to ask for people to stay home.

"I'd like to thank our police for the incredible job they are doing on behalf of the community.

"I know many are feeling stressed and worried right now, but that's all the more reason to treat one another, particularly those on the frontlines with kindness and courtesy."

**Comments attributed to Emergency Services Minister Francis Logan:**

"A State of Emergency has not been declared lightly.

"We must all work together to ensure that we keep each other safe and those that are not doing so are not only failing themselves, but their community.

"It is disappointing that it has come to this, but if these measures save lives then it will be well worth it.

"I would warn those people that are not taking this situation seriously, that there are more powers available to the State to impose further restrictions to make sure that they do.

"I hope that they do not have to be used and instead we will start seeing a more responsible attitude in our community."

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