



Mandatory sentencing laws will not lower rising home burglary rates

• Crime

BY HAMISH HASTIE

The state government's proposed mandatory sentencing laws would not do enough to lower rising burglary rates in Victoria Park, according to member for Victoria Park Ben Wyatt.

Tensions over the issue boiled over in parliament last week with Mr Wyatt questioning Police Minister Liza Harvey after she mentioned 1114 burglaries have occurred in Victoria Park over the past year.

Mr Wyatt said even more concerning was that the number of burglaries being resolved had plummeted over the past five years.

"Since 2007/08 the sanction rate of burglaries in the metropolitan area, that is, the number of burglaries that are resolved, hopefully by way of a conviction and penalty, has plummeted from 16.9 per cent to 8.5 per cent in 2012/13", he said.

"Members of the public should be horrified by this appalling record of resolving burglaries and sending the perpetrators to jail.

"This means that less than one in 10 burglaries are actually being resolved under the Barnett government."

Mr Wyatt said there should be a tough stance on home invasion but he thought there should be a focus on actually catching the criminals.

"How many of those 1114 burglaries would be captured by the mandatory sentencing legislation," he said.

"No doubt all West Australians would expect burglaries to be resolved in an arrest, a conviction and a punishment."

Ms Harvey said the state government acknowledged the issue of home break-ins and the laws would work to address it.

"Not only do these laws target violent home invaders, but the amendments to the three strikes legislation will also target prolific home invaders who may not necessarily commit offences of violence in the course of the home burglary," she said.

"We are also recruiting even more police officers and detectives to ensure we can increase the effectiveness of our volume crime teams."

She said Labor had no policy at the last election to deal with home burglaries and still had not offered any solutions.

What do you think?

Has your home been burgled and the offenders have not been caught or prosecuted? Email us at editorial@examinernewspapers.com.au



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Page 2 of 2

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Member for Victoria Park Ben Wyatt said the state government's proposed mandatory sentencing laws would address the rising minor burglary rate. Photograph — Matt Devlin.