

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 90**  
**Asked on 16 February 2006**

Mr LAWLOR asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)-

**QUESTION:**

With reference to the mobile drug testing vans for offenders under supervision in the community which serve as a useful detection tool, particularly on behalf of the Drug Courts -

What investments has the Government made to improve the mobile drug testing program on the Gold Coast?

**ANSWER:**

In the Gold Coast area the southern region drug van tests offenders supervised by the community corrections offices at Logan, Beenleigh, Burleigh Heads and Southport. Southern Region took delivery of a new and improved drug testing van in January 2006.

The new van has improved features which include a proper flushing toilet, greater storage space, a small fridge to store urine samples, improved lighting, stainless steel benches for better hygiene, larger work benches, an annex and a generator that allows the van to operate independently from the vehicles motor. These improved features provides staff with the ability to conduct an expanded range of testing especially in remote areas. The van has the ability to test for substances that include heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, methamphetamine, THC, methadone, ecstasy and benzodiazepine. The new van provides the department with the capacity to conduct more random and surprise tests on offenders, especially where community corrections area offices do not have adequate facilities to conduct testing.

All area offices in the southern region are now equipped with urine testing facilities. The mobile drug van also provides a useful management tool to support this process. The van can test offenders outside of normal business hours and on weekends.

In 2005, the drug van tested 3376 offenders in the southern region. With the new and improved van, we anticipate a further increase in this number which is a result of improved technology and more offenders being managed in the community.

The operation of the drug vans provides a viable and cost effective way to monitor the compliance of offenders subject to orders that carry requirements for alcohol and substance testing. Regular and more easily available access to testing as provided by the mobile van assists offenders with their rehabilitation process and ensures that timely action is taken when offenders fail to comply with the conditions of their orders.