



# **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Members present:**

Ms CP McMillan MP—Chair  
Mr SA Bennett MP  
Mr MC Berkman MP  
Ms CL Lui MP (virtual)  
Dr MA Robinson MP  
Mr J Sullivan MP

**Staff present:**

Ms L Pretty—Committee Secretary  
Ms R Mills—Assistant Committee Secretary

## **PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO THE POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK’S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL 2022**

### **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

**MONDAY, 30 JANUARY 2023**

**Brisbane**

## MONDAY, 30 JANUARY 2023

### **The committee met at 11.30 am.**

**CHAIR:** Good morning. I declare open the public hearing for the committee’s consideration of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack’s Law) Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging. We are very fortunate to live in a country with two of the oldest continuing cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share. I acknowledge committee member Cynthia Lui, the member for Cook, who is the first Torres Strait Islander to be elected to an Australian parliament.

I also at the outset acknowledge Mr and Mrs Beasley, Jack’s parents, who are appearing before the committee today. We are very sorry for your loss. We congratulate you and commend you on your courage, determination and tenacity to honour Jack in all that you have done to bring about these laws in Queensland.

I acknowledge my parliamentary colleagues, Mr Sam O’Connor, the member for Bonney, and Mr John-Paul Langbroek, the member for Surfers Paradise.

On 30 November 2022, the Hon. Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, introduced the bill into the Queensland parliament. On the same day, the bill was referred to the Community Support and Services Committee for their detailed consideration. The purpose of today is to assist the committee with its examination and deliberations of this bill.

My name is Corrine McMillan. I am the member for Mansfield and chair of the committee. With me here today is my esteemed deputy chair, Mr Stephen Bennett MP, member for Burnett; Mr Michael Berkman MP, member for Maiwar; Ms Cynthia Lui MP, member for Cook, who is joining us via teleconference; Dr Mark Robinson MP, member for Oodgeroo; and Mr Jimmy Sullivan MP, member for Stafford, who is substituting for Mr Robert Skelton MP, member for Nicklin, who is unable to attend.

The committee’s proceedings are proceedings of this parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. The proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the parliament’s website. Media may be present and will be subject to my direction at all times. The media rules endorsed by the committee are available from committee staff should they be required. All those present today should note that it is possible you may be filmed or photographed during the proceedings by media and images may appear on the parliament’s web site or other social media pages. I ask everyone present to turn mobile phones off or to silent mode. Only the committee and invited officers may participate in the proceedings. As parliamentary proceedings, under the standing orders any person may be excluded from the hearing at my discretion or by order of the committee.

I also ask that any responses to questions taken on notice today are provided to the committee by 12 pm on Monday, 6 February. The program for today has been published on the committee’s web page, and there are hard copies available from committee staff if required.

**BEASLEY, Mr Brett, Executive Board Member, Jack Beasley Foundation**

**BEASLEY, Mrs Belinda, Secretary, Jack Beasley Foundation**

**O’CONNOR, Mr Sam, Executive Board Member, Jack Beasley Foundation**

**CHAIR:** I now welcome representatives from the Jack Beasley Foundation. I acknowledge Mr Sam O’Connor MP, the member for Bonney, who is appearing as a witness today, not as a local member. I will hand over to the member for Bonney to make a brief statement before I introduce the Beasleys.

**Mr O’Connor:** Thank you, Chair. I would like to declare at the outset of this hearing that in addition to being the member for Bonney in this parliament, I also serve as an executive board member of the Jack Beasley Foundation. That is declared, as required, on my parliamentary register of interests.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr O’Connor. It is very unusual for me to refer to you as Mr O’Connor, but welcome. I also acknowledge, as I did at the outset, and welcome Mr Brett Beasley, executive board member, and Mrs Belinda Beasley, secretary of the Jack Beasley Foundation. We welcome you, we honour you and we look forward to hearing your contributions to a bill that I know is very important to you and to your family. Thank you for appearing before the committee today. I invite Mrs Beasley to make a brief opening statement after which I am sure committee members will have many questions.

**Mrs Beasley:** Good morning and thank you for the invitation to speak at this public hearing for the inquiry into the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack’s Law) Amendment Bill. On Friday, 13 December 2019 at 8.27 pm, we received a call that changed our lives forever—a call that no parent should ever have to get—that Jack was not coming home. Jack had headed out, as many young people do, with a group of seven of his friends. They hopped on the G:link at Helensvale and headed in to Surfers Paradise. Just after 8 pm, Jack and his friends hopped off the G:link and were walking to a friend’s apartment. As they were walking outside the IGA, Jack and his friends were set upon and attacked by five youths for no reason at all. These five youths were aged 15, two 16-year-olds, a 17-year-old and an 18-year-old. They had travelled down from the Logan area on the heavy rail, hopped on the G:link at Helensvale and headed into Surfers Paradise. It was Friday night and two weeks before Christmas, so it was very busy with a lot of holiday-makers, including families, around at the time. These people, including children, witnessed the stabbings and the aftermath of the paramedics and police trying to save Jack and Ariki on the footpath. This is something that should never have happened. It has affected them and will continue to affect them for many years to come.

Jack and his mate, Ariki, had been stabbed and had been taken by ambulance to Gold Coast University Hospital. We raced up to the hospital as soon as we got the call. Sitting in the hospital room that night was just the beginning of our nightmare: not knowing if Jack was going to make it or not, constantly being updated on his condition by the staff at the Gold Coast University Hospital, and then the cardiac surgeon walking in the room and saying those two words, ‘I’m sorry.’ Our world was shattered with those two words. Seeing our other son, Mitch, fall on the floor at being told that his younger brother was not coming home was heartbreaking.

There are so many traumatic images that we have imprinted in our heads forever. Ariki was stabbed twice and was so very lucky to survive, but he has to live with those images that night for the rest of his life, along with losing his mate. He struggles and he is still trying to come to terms with this, along with all Jack’s other friends as well who were there that night. This was life-changing for all of them and something that, at the age of 17, none of them should ever have had to go through.

Jack was three months off turning 18. He was a character, always the life of the party and the energy in the room and was loved by everyone. He had got his first car, his licence, he had completed his first year of a flooring apprenticeship and had such a bright future ahead of him. We will never get to see of this. We will never get to see him finish an apprenticeship, travel, get married, have kids and so much more. Jack had so many plans for the future. He loved life, he loved his family and he loved his friends. Our lives will never be the same, and so many other people’s lives have been affected by this senseless act of violence.

In honour of Jack’s memory, we, together with a close group of friends, decided we did not want another family to go through and experience the pain and grief that we were living through. We wanted to dedicate our efforts towards looking at ways to making the community safer, to make necessary changes to the current youth justice laws and, more importantly, put together an education platform to teach the country’s youth about the dangers, repercussions and the snowball effect a single act of violence can have on the lives of so many. The objectives of the Jack Beasley Foundation are: firstly, to educate children and youths on the long-term effects violence can have on them; to educate them to use positive choices; to avoid harmful or abusive behaviours to others; and to focus on knife violence, thus assisting an assurance of safety to the general public.

As this was one of the main drivers behind the formation of the Jack Beasley Foundation, to formulate an education presentation that could be rolled out to schools, sporting clubs and youth groups, Queensland Police commenced I live my life ... without a knife campaign in mid-2021 and the foundation commenced presentations with the Queensland Police in July 2021. We have presented to thousands of children in 23 different schools to date and will continue presenting with Queensland Police in 2023. Our *One Moment* presentation covers three key intervention components shown to be effective in preventing knife crime: education, focused deterrence for at-risk groups, and outreach and mentoring. Our aim of the *One Moment* presentation is: to continue the momentum of I live my life ... without a knife campaign, to raise community awareness of knife possessions, laws and risks; to reduce knife carrying and knife-related offences in public places; to educate young people on situational awareness to reduce victimisation; and to educate youth in strategies to avoid confrontation.

Our general engagement principles are: change the values and actions; educate young people by raising awareness of the rules and consequences of knife carrying; educate young people of the prevalence of knife violence in public places and victim prevention strategies; encourage community partnership to achieve positive outcomes for young people; and empower young people to make better choices.

Our one-hour school presentation has direct interaction with Brett and myself, sharing our experience, along with video footage of Jack’s brother and Jack’s friends showing firsthand how life can change because of that one moment of senseless violence, whilst also promoting better decisions and choices. We do this along with the Queensland Police who deliver further information in relation to knife legislation and rules around carrying knives and awareness around becoming a victim of violence.

We want young people to live their life without a knife. Our goal is to look back in years to come and know, through educational presentations, that we have driven change around youth violence and made a substantial difference in the community. Secondly, we want to bring about change to detection and scanning laws around public transport and police powers to use detection instruments in public areas; simply, the prevention of harm.

The foundation has been advocating for scanning facilities and wandering since early 2020. Our motto from the start was a simple one: ‘detect knives, save lives’. During our meetings with police and government departments, we were shocked at the escalation in knife crime offences and the ages of the youths that were carrying the knives, the majority advising it was for protection.

On 30 April, the police wandering trial commenced in Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach in the safe night precincts with great success. More than 200 weapons were found, including knives, tomahawks, machetes, scissors, knuckledusters and even an axe, which we found really alarming. We were invited to Parliament House in November 2022 by the Police Minister and the Premier, and we are advised that they will be extending the trial for a further two years and rolling it out statewide to all safe night precincts and on public transport, including bus, train, light rail and even ferries. This includes stations as well throughout Queensland, and it will be called Jack’s Law.

We will continue to advocate for these knife detection powers to be made permanent to deter crime. We recognise the importance of having a trial to make these measures work as best as they can and to get the right balance.

We as a foundation have gone out with the police on numerous occasions over the past two years, the most recent being Saturday night, the 28th, and watched how the wandering is done and how well Queensland Police do this. It is not invasive, it takes minimal time, it is educating the people who are being wandered and it is keeping the community safe. We have spoken to many people while out with Queensland Police, from children through to adults, and have received many messages of support for this wandering and would love to see this rolled out in hotspots and on public transport. We truly think that the community will be shocked at the weapons that are found in public transport sectors and other safe night precincts within Queensland. Look at the amount of weapons that were found in a small area where the trial was in Surfers Paradise.

At the end of the day, any person who has children wants their children, no matter what their age, whether they are 16 or 36, to come home safely. The community deserves to feel safe when they are out. Everyone deserves to be safe and feel safe when they are out, no matter where it is. If you have nothing to hide, you should not be concerned about being wandered, and the wandering is saving lives. Thank you for your time.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Mrs Beasley. Congratulations on your strength and for all that you have done for this very important cause. I turn to the deputy chair for his first question.

**Mr BENNETT:** From reading your submission, you are broadly supportive of the transparency and the expansion. I guess this is an opportunity to advise the committee if there are any other areas that you would like to see included while we are doing this inquiry.

**Mrs Beasley:** Do you mean the wandering?

**Mr BENNETT:** The legislation has been written. Is there anything else you would like to see included in the legislation that is not there?

**Mr O’CONNOR:** As we outlined, we will be campaigning to make this permanent. We realise that there is a reason why it is a trial and it is to show that it can work and that there are safeguards in place. We accept that. However, ultimately our aim will be to make Jack’s law a permanent power for the police in Queensland. The expansion to public transport infrastructure and vehicles is a big one and it is something that is very relevant to us on the Gold Coast. As Belinda mentioned, Helensvale station, where Jack’s murderer got off with the other young people, is a hotspot for youth Brisbane

crime in our area. There are a lot of people who move through that station constantly. There was another stabbing at Coomera station, I think, not too long ago. In general, even with just catching the tram on a Saturday night to go to Surfers Paradise, the amount of people who use our public transport, particularly the G:link, is massive on the Gold Coast. A lot of people feel unsafe using it as well so we think that will add to that.

**Mrs Beasley:** I catch the public transport. I work in Brisbane so I catch the train. It is scary sometimes catching the train, especially when young people do hop on.

**Mr Beasley:** We think more could be done at the actual changeover point from the heavy to the light rail, because that is where the problem starts straightaway. They are coming down. They are on the heavy rail from the north. They are heading down to the Gold Coast, which is the party precinct. The changeover hub there is so important. It will probably never happen but I believe some sort of scanning system should be implemented there. You cannot get onto an aeroplane without it. When you go to an airport you have to walk through a scanner before you get on a plane.

**Mr BENNETT:** You cannot get in here, either.

**Mr Beasley:** That is right, exactly, so why can you get on public transport? How are you able to freely walk onto it? Our son’s killer walked on with a knife. He travelled all the way from Brisbane down to the Gold Coast and did what he did.

**Mr BENNETT:** Thanks for that feedback.

**Ms LUI:** Thank you, Mr and Mrs Beasley and member for Bonney, for your time this morning. I commend the work that you are doing to educate and create awareness around youth knife crime in schools, sporting clubs et cetera. How are young people embracing the work that you are doing? I think it is quite significant. You have mentioned not wanting to see other parents go through a similar situation. How are the young people with whom you interact embracing the work that you are doing? I am all for prevention. I would love to see that the work that you do will have a flow-on effect to influence positive change.

**Mrs Beasley:** We have had a lot of really good feedback. It is very confronting, the video and everything that we show the kids. It is showing the facts of life, that this is what can happen and in a split second it can happen. Of the kids we have spoken to, at a lot of the schools that we go to we do grade 9 and grade 10 kids. A lot of the principals and the teachers have said that it is the quietest that they have been for a very long time so they do listen. They do come up to us at the end of the presentation. It does make a lot of the kids upset. It is not our aim to make them upset; it is to make them think and to make them aware that this can happen in a split second: ‘Be careful of who you are hanging around with. Don’t go somewhere where you don’t feel comfortable. Avoid those dangers.’

**Mr Beasley:** We have also done schoolies. We have done schoolies for the past two years. There are thousands of kids we have spoken to whilst walking around with the Queensland Police Service and there was not one school leaver who was against what we do. The police were wanding a lot of them and we did not have one problem at all. They absolutely love the fact because they know the police are walking around with these wands so they are safe. They feel safe in there while the police are walking around doing this. It really is a no-brainer.

**Mrs Beasley:** We have also done a video that goes to Youth Justice so to the kids who have already offended. With restorative justice we have done a video that has a couple of Jack’s friends and Brett and I speak on it about how it has affected us. It is an eight-minute video that they show to the kids who have been caught with knives, through restorative justice.

**Mr O’CONNOR:** You have met with some of them too, haven’t you, Belinda?

**Mrs Beasley:** Yes. We have been to a few of the meetings with the kids who have been caught with knives.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Thank you, Brett, Belinda and Sam, for doing all that you are doing in this area, which is absolutely critical. I first offer my condolences and commend you for all that you are doing. I say that with a little bit of knowledge having been alongside the Stanleys. I do not know if you know Paul Stanley. I had become the local member in 2009, just after Matthew passed away in a one-punch attack. I have seen them work through that great grief and then try to be very active in doing all they can publicly to try to prevent that occurring again. There is no doubt that all those years of work have made a very significant difference. I try to support and help as the local member with education support. They went into schools. It was very significant to all of the schoolchildren, hearing that story. I really want to commend you and say that if there is anything I can do as the local member for the Cleveland area to help open your program up to schools in the Redlands area, please call on my office.

**Mr Beasley:** We would love to come to the schools out there.

**Mrs Beasley:** We have a letter that we send out to the schools.

**Dr ROBINSON:** I am happy to support you in that and attend and be part of that with you.

**Mrs Beasley:** Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Mr and Mrs Beasley and Mr O’Connor, sadly, our time together has come to an end. We do appreciate your time today. We appreciate your leadership and your commitment to Jack and to all that this bill represents. Thank you, sincerely. We look forward to you witnessing the debate in parliament and hopefully seeing the best legislation being put forward for the members to debate in the coming months.

**Mrs Beasley:** Thank you.

**Mr Beasley:** Thank you for having us.

**RANSLEY, Professor Janet, Griffith Criminology Institute**

**CHAIR:** I now welcome Professor Janet Ransley. We certainly appreciate the partnership that the Queensland government has with Griffith University. We also acknowledge that your academic perspective and the evidence that you provide makes for good legislation in Queensland. We thank you for your time this morning. We will hand over to you to make an opening statement after which the committee will have questions.

**Prof. Ransley:** Thank you for the opportunity to attend. As the committee is no doubt aware, my interest in this topic arises from leading an evaluation team that conducted the evaluation of the trial. I would also like at this stage to express my condolences and the condolences of all of our team to the Beasleys for the unimaginable loss that triggered the need for us all to be here today. I know the report has been tabled so you have access to the report and to our findings and recommendations. I am sure that there are questions so I will not revisit those in the interests of time.

However, I want to touch on a couple of the limitations that we did note at the front of the report because I think those are significant in the decision to extend the trial, which was one of our recommendations. The limitations were partly, firstly, that the data that we collected coincided with COVID. COVID did have an impact on the movements of people in public areas, especially in safe night precincts, including on the Gold Coast, and it did have an impact on policing operations and the numbers of police available. Our findings are not necessarily findings that would hold true in a non-COVID period.

The second restriction is that it was only a year. A year seems like a long time for many things but in terms of detecting longer term trends in crime, in offending, it is not enough. There are natural differences that occur year on year and you cannot be sure that any differences that you are seeing relate to an actual intervention as opposed to those blips that we always see in statistical data.

The third one alluded to in the report is that we discovered during the trial that there were problems in the way that Queensland police record, in particular, the First Nations status of those people with whom they come into contact and enter into their data recording system, QPRIME. That made it very hard for us to draw conclusions about the extent to which First Nations people were, if at all, overrepresented in wandering, which is important for equity considerations. That is in the report and I am happy to go into that if you have questions. Those were restrictions, I suppose, around the robustness of our findings from the evaluation. Apart from that, I will hand over to you and answer your questions.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Professor Ransley. I will hand to the deputy chair who will have a question.

**Mr BENNETT:** I asked similar questions of the Queensland police around section 39C and the parameters to which the authorisation of wandering occurred. I am still confused by the 3A other provisions. The police assured me that it is all very workable and they have an eight-hour window to make sure that they can get their operational issues sorted. For the committee’s perspective, would you like to expand on your concerns around 39C?

**Prof. Ransley:** I think what we have found in the data that we collected during the trial was that the authorisation was simply being done as a matter of course to the extent that there was a period where authorisations were operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week where there were policing resources available to staff that authorisation, to staff that wandering procedure, and there were because there was a special budgetary allocation to enable that to occur. That kind of makes a mockery of the need for an authorisation. If it is just happening all the time, then the authorisation is really not serving a purpose.

I understand that there has been an amendment to the way that operates introduced in 39C of Jack’s law and that the requirement, if this bill is passed, is that there will need to have been—because one of our recommendations was that, with authorisations, either do not have them because they are not serving a purpose or require there to be a genuine consideration of evidence that there is a risk and respond to that risk. 39C(2) and (3) are partly a response to that concern that we raised.

I guess my concern with what has been included in that provision is that it is a very low bar: one offence by a person armed with a knife or one seven-year offence in six months. There would not be a safe night precinct in Queensland that does not have that, I would have thought—I do not know; I have not looked at the data for the other SNPs.

**Mr BENNETT:** I do not know either. The data we were given by the police does not give us that information either.

**Prof. Ransley:** No.

**Mr BENNETT:** That was my concern. You are talking about expanding to 15 precincts and some of those might not have that offence either.

**Prof. Ransley:** No. As you will have seen from our report, while we found that there was clearly a significant outcome for the Surfers Paradise safe night precinct in terms of increasing numbers of detections that was not the case for the Broadbeach SNP. Not all SNPs are the same. Public transport will be a different issue again. Obviously there is a problem in some public transport hubs but a blanket extension, on my understanding of the legislation, to everywhere in Queensland seems quite extensive without a slightly higher bar than that. There would be many places in public transport in Queensland where you are not going to meet that bar, but I doubt that there are many SNPs that do not meet that bar.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** As you said, you had a few caveats on your research in terms of year on year and the particular circumstances we were under. Can you read anything from the statistics or do you have any broader research or academic background in terms of the groupthink that this is trying to go after? This is not just about individuals on a case-by-case basis; it is actually about trying to change a culture, change an expectation that it is legitimate or needed to be armed. Can you talk to that point a little bit?

**Prof. Ransley:** I can tell you what our data found and then I can talk about other academic research that relates to that point. Our data found there was no evidence of deterrence where we saw increased detection. That means that in Surfers Paradise—not Broadbeach—young people have not changed their behaviour; they are still carrying knives.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** To take you up on that point, is it a bit of a chicken-and-egg argument that the more we roll this out, of course the more we are going to detect? It is not as if they were not carrying previously; it is just that we actually have—

**Prof. Ransley:**—gotten better at detecting it—

**Mr SULLIVAN:** Yes, correct.

**Prof. Ransley:**—which is a good thing. Obviously detection is one part of prevention. If you can detect the weapons and they cannot therefore be used, that is a solid protection measure. It is different, however, to deterring people from carrying weapons in the first place. If you detect every single weapon, maybe you do not need deterrence because you get them before they enter the area and that stops the offending from happening. That is highly unlikely to be the case. You do kind of want to see some deterrence. You are not going to see that in a year; that is where our second caveat came into place. We cannot tell whether this is going to have a long-term deterrent effect on that very small proportion of young people—and we have to remember it is a very small proportion of young people—who are carrying knives. That does not remove their risk; they can still commit horrendous offences, and clearly that might justify some measures.

To see deterrence, the general literature would tell us deterrence is a very tricky concept to actually achieve. Mrs Beasley made reference to an approach out of the United States called focused deterrence, which is probably the most promising research that we have seen around deterrence in young people. That involves young people carrying guns, which is obviously the problem in the US rather than knives and particularly young people who are affiliated with street gangs in the US. That requires very specific circumstances though. It is a very structured intervention that has a follow-up. It is not just a case of detect, give them a warning and let them walk off; it is a much more complicated intervention than that.

I am not aware of any Australian research on focused deterrence and whether it would be as effective here. That is what you would need for deterrence.

**Mr BERKMAN:** It is obviously being legislated as an extension of the trial. Are there any ways you can identify that the rollout of the trial could be improved to better facilitate the kind of data gathering and analysis that you did in the report?

**Prof. Ransley:** Yes, QPS needs to address the recording of indigeneity. Our feeling is it probably was not too much of an issue. Although we did see an overrepresentation of Indigenous people at the Gold Coast, we were told by police and our own observations seemed to indicate that this is not necessarily a problem where Indigenous peoples’ rights are going to be effected; it is other cultural groups that are more present, more visible, at the Gold Coast than Indigenous people. That is an assumption; we do not know. We can test that assumption if that data issue is fixed.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Of course, that changes with the rollout across the rest of the SNP.

**Prof. Ransley:** That is right. If you go to North Queensland, obviously that is a huge issue and even in central areas of Central Queensland, as will happen, so I think that needs to be fixed urgently. In terms of other things that could be done, we have made recommendations around training. I would like to see those implemented, particularly in the new sites as well as addressing some of the concerns that we had around the Gold Coast and particularly training around human rights and the



selection or targeting of particular groups of people. Again, our evidence did not show particular overrepresentation of any groups, but that is a limitation of the evidence because the recording of ethnicity in the QPS data is, again, not great.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Do you consider that training will be sufficient to address those concerns around the selection issues and potential racial profiling?

**Prof. Ransley:** I think there are other things which we recommended should happen. One was an audit of the body worn cameras. We are fortunate at Surfers Paradise because there is a very good network of CCTVs which supplements the body worn camera footage. I am not aware if that is the case in other SNPs or not. I suspect it may not be the case in public transport hubs. Maybe it is; I am not sure. I think that is an important consideration. I think those audits, which were not legislated for but which the police at Surfers Paradise were voluntarily doing I would like to add, are good practice and they should roll out as a safeguard as well.

**Mr BENNETT:** I was curious about the issues you have raised. It is always good public legislation when it reflects submissions. Was there anything else particularly you wanted to see within the legislation that you would like to put before the committee?

**Prof. Ransley:** I do think there needs to be a bit more clarity—and I do not know whether it needs to be in the legislation or not—around the transport hubs and how that is going to operate. My understanding is that could operate anywhere in the state. How is the training for that going to roll out? Who is going to be responsible for the training?

The pilot at Surfers Paradise in particular was extremely well organised and resourced. There was training. There was a big commitment by the senior leadership of Gold Coast police to implement that training, oversee that training and be quite rigorous in the way they monitored the trial. If you go out to more sites I wonder whether that can be maintained, particularly in other areas which—I might be wrong—may not be as resource rich and that could be an issue. I would like to see whether it is a QPS budget allocation to training—and I suspect they will say they do not have any money. I think that needs to be taken seriously because, while it is a useful tool, there is a potential for misuse as with most policing tools.

**CHAIR:** Professor Ransley, our time together has come to an end. We thank you immensely for your—

**Mr BERKMAN:** Sorry, I do not mean to push my luck. We have two more minutes left according to my clock. Could I put a really quick question to the professor while we have her here?

**CHAIR:** Sure.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I am particularly interested in this issue of the increase in drug detections and offences flowing from that as a result of wandings. My reading of the bill does not suggest there is anything in it to address that or to reduce that effect. I am interested in your view.

**Prof. Ransley:** No. I think that is where training could be quite important. Many officers we spoke to during the evaluation said to us quite accurately that the purpose of the trial was to detect knives and stop violent crime. Quite a few others said it was a good tool for them to deal with any kind of crime. My reading of the legislation is that is not the purpose of the legislation; it is focused on violent crime and that it should not be used as that generalised tool. The data suggests that it has led to an increase in drug detections. That has flow-on effects. I refer to the Queensland Productivity Commission report from a couple of years ago which talked about the flow-on effects from the detections of young people with minor amounts of drugs who become criminalised and enter the criminal justice system. That can have quite significant effects not just for them, but also for the criminal justice system. I do think that is something that needs to be addressed perhaps in the training.

I note that the bill refers to there being no change to the search without a warrant process, which is absolutely true. On every occasion that I observed the police use a wand, it triggered the wand because everybody has on them keys or a pen or some kind of metal object. Once that wand has triggered, the person wanded is required to empty their pockets. If they are still triggering the wand, then the police officer forms a reasonable suspicion and is entitled to search them, and that is how we get the increase in drug detections.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Thanks so much for your indulgence, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Professor Ransley, I think now our time has come to an end. We thank you for your work on this bill and the research behind some of our best laws in Queensland. We certainly appreciate all you have done to contribute to this very important issue. Professor Ransley, have a nice afternoon and thank you again.

**Prof. Ransley:** Thank you very much for the opportunity.

**DANIEL, Mrs Kim, Executive Coordinator Community Safety, Development and Youth, City of Gold Coast (via teleconference)**

**RAINBOW, Ms Anna, Coordinator Community Safety, City of Gold Coast (via teleconference)**

**CHAIR:** I now welcome representatives from the City of Gold Coast. Good afternoon to both of you and thank you for appearing before the committee today. I invite you to make a brief opening statement after which our committee will have many questions.

**Mrs Daniel:** Good morning to members of the Community Support and Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to represent the City of Gold Coast at the hearing today and to further show the city’s support for the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack’s Law) Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to start by acknowledging the people of the Yugambah region, who are owners of the land on which we are meeting today. I would also like to extend this acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the land that committee members are meeting on and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the hearing today.

The Gold Coast is a rapidly growing city and is home to over 630,000 residents and over 76,000 registered businesses. The city is a tourism industry leader, attracting millions of visitors each year. As a growing city and premier tourism destination, community safety is a key priority for the City of Gold Coast. The city recognises that a safe place to live, work and visit is critical to the wellbeing and also the livelihood of our residents and visitors and is vital in supporting the Gold Coast’s economy.

As the committee is aware, the current trial of the handheld scanners, referred to as the wandering trial, has been implemented in the city’s two safe night precincts at Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach. Through an established partnership between the city and the Queensland Police Service, the city has supported the trial since it commenced in 2021. The city’s support of the trial has been provided through our city’s Safety Camera Network program, an extensive public safety tool funded by the city that incorporates more than 800 CCTV cameras. As noted in the submission, cameras are strategically placed in public spaces including in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. Cameras are monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with incidents communicated directly to the Queensland Police Service. Approximately 8,000 incidents are captured annually through the Safety Camera Network.

Within the city’s two safe night precincts, the city’s support of the trial has included actively monitoring over 900 instances of wandering. This service has provided an additional strategy to mitigate potential risks to community safety and to facilitate a rapid response when required. The city has regularly been informed of the results of the existing wandering trial at stakeholder meetings, including the city’s Mayoral Safer Suburbs Forum. This interagency forum is chaired by the mayor with members from the Queensland Police Service; the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation; the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs; Neighbourhood Watch; and key tourism and education sector representatives.

Through our other partnership meetings, support of the wandering trial has also been acknowledged. At the inception some stakeholders raised the possible displacement of antisocial behaviour as a direct result of the trial outside of the two safe night precincts. The proposed expansion of the trial to include public transport stations and transport vehicles is expected to assist in addressing this feedback and is supported by the city.

The results achieved during the existing trial have seen some evidence of improved perceptions of community safety, particularly in the most highly visited precincts where antisocial behaviour, alcohol fuelled violence and criminal activity are most likely to occur. Should the bill not be supported, the city is concerned that this could lead to an increase in weapons, crime and antisocial behaviour in the city’s two safe night precincts, a decrease in actual and perceived safety within the community impacting on the wellbeing of residents and business owners, a negative impact to the city’s reputation as a national and international tourism destination which may adversely affect employment and the local economy, a potential decrease in the effectiveness of our joint community safety initiatives and a potential decrease in safety for the city’s outdoor workforce including our city cleaners, maintenance and health and regulatory staff who work within those entertainment precincts.

It is noted that the bill requires details of wandering authorisations to be published on the QPS website within two months after the authority is made. It is understood that published information will include the offences known to the officer who issued the authority. While it is acknowledged that this

is important and we are supportive of it for the purposes of transparency, the city would like consideration to be given to mitigating any risk of reducing perceptions of safety at these published locations.

In summary, the city is supportive of the extension of the trial until April 2025 and its expansion to include public transport stations and public transport vehicles. To further support the expansion, the city will continue to support the QPS through community safety initiatives and joint partnership arrangements. We therefore encourage the committee to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack’s Law) Amendment Bill 2022. The city would also like to acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley for their strength and commitment to improving community safety. Thank you for considering the information we have provided and for the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry and speak to the city’s submission.

**CHAIR:** Thank you very much, Mrs Daniel. I turn to the deputy chair who will have a question for you.

**Mr BENNETT:** Kim, as always it is great to see the work that you put into our committee’s deliberations. Thanks again for that. Obviously, as a council you have put a lot of work into this and are to be commended. Is there anything else that you would have liked to have seen in the bill to enhance the work that you need to do on the Gold Coast?

**Mrs Daniel** (Inaudible).

**CHAIR:** I am sorry, Mrs Daniel, but we need you to speak up.

**Mrs Daniel:** The one thing that we did think about—and probably it is not something for the bill—is that we would love to see a promotion of the trial and what it involves as the trial is expanded so that the general public can get to know what to expect—

**Mr BENNETT:** Kim, I need to interrupt you.

**Mrs Daniel** (Inaudible). That is one of the things that we thought of, although not necessarily as an inclusion in the bill.

**CHAIR:** I am sorry, Mrs Daniel. We had some issues with our sound. Are you able to repeat what you just said, please?

**Mrs Daniel:** No problem. This is probably not so much in terms of inclusions in the bill and obviously we are very supportive of the expansion, particularly to the transport stations and vehicles. In terms of what we would like to see in the future, it is obviously that ongoing training for QPS officers involved in enacting the trial, particularly as it expands to more safe night precincts and to those other transport locations. The other thing that we have been thinking through would be the promotion of the trial and what it involves as the trial is expanded so that the general public could get to know what to expect from the trial. Those are things not necessarily for inclusion within the bill but that we would like to see moving forward.

**Ms LUI:** I am interested to know whether or not you have any concerns around the trial simply displacing knife crime to other areas of the Gold Coast given that you put some heavy work into Broadbeach and the Gold Coast?

**Mrs Daniel:** From our perspective we do have our CCTV network which is across the city. We have it also spread out through our transport modes currently. Our current CCTV network does span from the north to the south of our city so we are in a very lucky position where we do have that strong infrastructure and city support for that infrastructure. We were concerned about the displacement of antisocial behaviour as a result of the trial, particularly as the heavy rail links with the light rail here on the Gold Coast. I think it is vital for us in terms of that expansion to include those transport hubs, which I think will assist in mitigating those risks.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I appreciate you being on the line with us today. I want to touch on the expansion of this trial to include public transport. Do you have any concerns about how the trial will operate on public transport given the variety of public transport modes that are available and the number of visitors to the region who would be using it?

**Mrs Daniel:** We have no real concerns, I guess. It comes back to police training and ensuring clear guidelines for police. For us it is quite positive in terms of expanding it not only to rail but also to the bus network and the ferry system. From our perspective it is positive as long as that training and the authorisations are in place and there is that regular checking on the officers, which I believe the police are looking at doing. As long as that audit process is in place for police officers who are undertaking those checks and the appropriate authorisations are in place and the appropriate training, we believe it is a positive.

**CHAIR:** I am conscious of time. Member for Cook, do you have a further question?

**Ms LUI:** Yes, there is just one more question from me. The committee notes that the City of Gold Coast conducted a community safety survey in 2021. Can you please give the committee some more information in relation to the results of the survey and what more can be done?

**Mrs Daniel:** The city would be happy to send through a copy of the evaluation of the Safe City survey done in 2021 if the committee desires. We can forward that through. In summary, in 2021 the city conducted a survey that looked at perceptions of safety across the city. We had 3,316 respondents to that survey, which is actually the largest response we have had for a citywide survey, including for the budget, so we were very pleased to know that community safety is obviously an important community issue.

In terms of some of the results that we have had, 61.8 per cent of those who were surveyed felt safe on the Gold Coast; just over 72 per cent felt safe in their neighbourhood; 83 per cent felt safe on the Gold Coast during the day and 39 per cent at night. The interesting one and the links, I guess, with this bill is around the use of public transport, particularly at night. Just under 49 per cent did not feel safe travelling on public transport at night and around 35 per cent during the day. For us, once again, this bill helps to support that survey and to improve perceptions of safety, particularly on the public transport network. We will be looking at repeating that survey every three years. We are due to do that again in 2024. Each three years we will be looking at reviewing those results and, obviously, looking at comparing the data across a lengthy time period.

**Mr BENNETT:** When we met you guys on the Gold Coast with the isolation and public drunkenness inquiry, you were supporting a lot of education programs. I note in your submission you talk about a knife program run by the QPS. Are you doing any public awareness or youth engagement on this particular issue?

**Mrs Daniel:** We did support police when they ran the ‘I live my life ... without a knife’ campaign, which was launched on 4 November on the Gold Coast and the city has been very supportive of that campaign. We did roll out materials across our community centres, so displaying across all our community centres and other city facilities, and distributed information out to our network. We would be happy to continue to support any initiatives that help promote the bill and, obviously, safety. In addition to that, we have also linked locally through our Gold Coast youth networks and have ongoing support for them through the campaign as well.

**Mr BENNETT:** It was great to meet all those people, too. Congratulations.

**CHAIR:** Mrs Daniel and Ms Rainbow, our time together has come to an end. Thank you again for making the time in your very busy schedule to share with the committee your thoughts around the proposed bill. We do really appreciate the time you have taken today. Thank you sincerely and have a good afternoon.

**Mrs Daniel:** Thank you, Chair and committee.

**CHAIR:** That concludes this hearing. On behalf of the committee I thank all of the witnesses and stakeholders who have participated today. I thank the many submitters who have engaged with the inquiry. Thank you to our Hansard reporters. A transcript of these proceedings will be available on the committee’s parliamentary web page in due course. I declare this public hearing closed.

**The committee adjourned at 12.28 pm.**