

Queensland Police Union of Employees

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**Criminal Law (Criminal
Organisations Disruption)
Submission 006**



Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane 4001

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20 November, 2013

Dear Chair

Re: *Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013*

On behalf of the Queensland Police Union ("QPU") I thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Committee. Unfortunately due to the time limitations imposed by the Committee, being just over six hours, I have been unable to provide as extensive a response as I would like.

The QPU generally supports the proposed Bill.

Our members are the ones who have been charged by the Government to take the fight to Criminal Motorcycle Gangs ("CMGs") and the provision of legislative tools to assist in the disruption of those organisations is essential.

The QPU believes the proposed regulation of the Tow Truck Industry, Liquor and Adult Entertainment Industries, and Licenced Security providers to remove the influence of CMG members is completely appropriate. It is through businesses such as these that CMGs can attempt to legitimise their ill-gotten gains.

The QPU also supports the proposed Weapons Act amendments to prevent CMGs from being eligible to apply for weapons licences, however, the QPU's experiences is such individuals, despite possessing weapons, are frequently not licence holders. The amendments however will close a potential legal source for CMGs to obtain firearms.

The proposed amendments to strengthen the powers of Courts and Watchhouse managers to remand CMG associates in custody also provide police with a valuable aid in countering the criminal activities of CMGs. This effectively removes a charged individual from the community and reduces the likelihood of witnesses being threatened or intimidated. It will also increase the likelihood of witnesses being willing to come forward and assist police.

The QPU believes it is appropriate to extend the powers of the Crime and Misconduct Commission to conduct closed investigative hearings and operations in relation to the activities of CMGs. I note that similar amendments in relation to paedophiles resulted in a significant increase in the detection of that type of offending.

Frontline police officers not only need the legislative support to perform their duties, but also need appropriate equipment and resources. This extends to ensuring they are issued with protective ballistic vests and rifles and in appropriate cases have access to their police issue firearm whilst off-duty.

It is also pleasing to note the new *Public Service and Other Legislation (Civil Liability) Amendment Bill 2013*, will provide civil protections to police officers acting in good faith and without gross negligence. The QPU also supports our long called for amendment to make the QPS liable for costs issued against police officers following an unsuccessful prosecution. However the QPU believes civil protection for police is not enough in the war on CMG members, and similar legislation should be enacted to provide a criminal defence for police officers discharging their duties in good faith and without gross negligence.

I am available on 3259 1900 should you wish to discuss the matters I have raised.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ian Leavers', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ian Leavers
General President and CEO