



Speech by

Mr K. LINGARD

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

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DIVERSIONARY CENTRES

Mr LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (10.09 a.m.): One of the recommendations of the Aboriginal deaths in custody report was the building of diversionary centres. Diversionary centres had many aims. One was to provide a place where people affected by alcohol could either admit themselves for the night or be taken for a night, and obviously to try to stop the incidence of suicide which may have occurred when people were placed in cells. Another aim was to reduce the numbers of Aboriginal people held in custody. A third aim was to provide rehabilitation programs which could be undertaken by Aboriginal people who were affected by alcohol.

In 1996-97 I visited three diversionary centres—one at South Brisbane, one at Mount Isa and a new one at Rockhampton. I recommend that all members look at those diversionary centres, which are excellent examples of the concept.

Last weekend I was able to visit the Townsville diversionary centre. Many people will realise that past Governments have had a lot of trouble with the problem of alcohol in Townsville—especially in the mall and in Hanrahan Park. I recommend that all members have a look at that diversionary centre at Townsville. It is culturally appropriate—it is built at the Bohle on the new Ingham highway—and aesthetically excellent for the area it is in.

I believe that this centre provides an excellent place where people can be taken at night. They can be assessed by the next morning to see what sort of assistance they need. If they need detoxification help, then they can receive that. If they need health programs, then they can be taken to the hospital. The centre at the Bohle is only 10 minutes from the centre of the city and probably 12 minutes from the hospital.

I wish to congratulate the people running that diversionary centre. They are very positive in their attitude in dealing with people who are affected by alcohol, whether they be black or white. It is a centre for all people. I congratulate the staff on the way they are running the program, and I especially commend them for the cleanliness of the building.

Time expired.
