



Speech by

**Dr LESLEY CLARK**

**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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Hansard 10 March 1999

### **POLICING, BARRON RIVER ELECTORATE**

**Dr CLARK** (Barron River—ALP) (11.25 p.m.): The Beattie Government is a can-do Government that delivers. Before the 1998 election, Police Minister Tom Barton promised 10 Police Beats throughout the State, but by the end of this financial year 12 will have been delivered, one of which was opened on 23 February in the township of Trinity Beach in my electorate.

Up until now, all Police Beats in the Cairns area have been of the shopfront variety, but the one at Trinity Beach consists of a police officer—in this case, Russell Parker—living with his family in a house in the beat of Trinity Beach that he serves. This particular method of successful community policing was first introduced by the Goss Government in Toowoomba, but it languished under the coalition. Unlike the Opposition, I really believe in this approach to community policing because it provides an opportunity for the police officer to really get to know his community. He will become familiar with all of the houses and the shopping centre in Trinity Beach. He will get to know the young people who have been causing problems in that community. He will form a relationship with the community that will allow him to develop positive actions that, with the involvement of the community, will address the causes of crime. He will bring a problem-solving approach to combating crime in Trinity Beach.

I fought hard to get that Police Beat established in Trinity Beach, unlike the previous member for Barron River. I have to report to the House that the previous member only ever talked about the youth problems experienced in Trinity Beach, she never actually managed to achieve anything.

The Beattie Government has not only delivered a Police Beat in Barron River but it has also increased staffing at the Smithfield Police Station, which serves the Marlin Coast. I committed myself to work for extra police resources and I am proud to say that in my first year of office an extra detective, an extra sergeant, an extra constable and an extra administrative assistant will be stationed at the Smithfield Police Station, bringing the number of operational officers to 21. It is interesting to reflect that when I was first elected to this place in 1989, that police station was not a 24-hour station as it is today and only six officers were stationed there. It has been through my commitment, firstly when I held this office in 1989 and then when I returned to this House in 1998, that police resources are up to strength at that station.

With other members I share the belief that there never will be enough police officers, so again I have committed myself to community policing. I have retained my position as the area coordinator for the Freshwater Neighbourhood Watch program, which is where I live. I have reactivated the Police Community Consultative Committee for the Marlin Coast, which is very active and is involved in a number of very worthwhile projects that address the causes of crime in our community.

I take this opportunity to commend the work of Assistant Commissioner Bob Atkinson, who is responsible for policing in the Cairns district, which stretches right to the Torres Strait. His commitment to far-north Queensland, professionalism and strong support for community policing are getting results. Crime levels in our region have stabilised and are even beginning to drop. Currently we have the best clear-up rate for break and enters in the State.

Police Minister Barton does not know me well if he thinks that I will be resting on my laurels. I have already set my goals for the rest of this term. I have identified the greatest priority in the electorate of Barron River, which is the provision of an additional car for the Kuranda Police Station, to be available seven days a week. Presently if police officers from that station are out of town with the car,

there is not another car available to rapidly attend to any problems that may arise. Kuranda also needs an Aboriginal liaison officer to work with the large Aboriginal population of that region. Again, I dedicate myself to achieving those goals for my community. I look forward to reporting back to the House on my progress in that regard.

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