



Speech by

Hon. T. McGRADY

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

Hansard 9 November 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Police Computers

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Carpentaria Minerals Province) (9.50 a.m.), by leave: I would like to inform the parliament about progress on the rolling program to upgrade the Queensland Police Service's computer networks.

Talking about upgrading—I note that the member for Gregory has certainly upgraded his sense in ties. That tie was donated by me to the Royal Flying Doctor Service for an auction last Saturday night. The real question is: how much did the member pay at the auction for the tie?

Mr JOHNSON: Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter suddenly arising. As the honourable member donated this tie to the auction at the Pelican Waterhole Aero Club in Winton last Friday night, my very good friend and colleague John McNamara bought it because he thought that I would probably have to show Mr McGrady that we do support each other in some areas. I also inform the House that the Pelican Waterhole Aero Club also has reciprocal rights to the Baghdad Aero Club and the Antarctica Aero Club.

Mr McGRADY: I ask the member for Gregory to stop wasting the time of the House.

If Queensland is the Smart State, then what it needs is 'smart police'. But not only that, it requires 'smart policing'. This government is committed to giving the Queensland Police Service the tools it requires to carry out the duties of modern policing. Technology increasingly plays a key part in criminal activity. This is something that we would ignore at our peril. Neither the Beattie Labor government nor the Queensland Police Service intends to do so. So we recognise that up-to-the-minute technology plays an integral part in effective policing. Better yet, we are acting to ensure that our police have access to weapons to fight the modern criminal.

I am pleased to report that the Queensland Police Service's \$21 million computer upgrade is ahead of schedule, with 7,500 machines expected to be up and running at the project's completion next year. The government has funded this project over four years, which commenced in the 2000-01 financial year and received approximately \$7 million in this year's budget.

The Queensland Police Service's desktop replacement program aims to modernise the service's desktop computer fleet and place police on a platform consistent with other Queensland government departments. The replacement of all Macintosh computers as well as the upgrade of all older Wintel computers began in May of this year. It is expected that the project will be complete by September 2002. It is expected that in addition to upgrading and replacing current models, the project will increase the number of computers in the service from about 6,700 machines to a total of 7,800 machines.

There are multiple benefits to this initiative, including an upgrade of the Queensland Police Service printers in the program's second phase. This will give officers access to the most modern up-to-date software with a capacity to run software that currently causes problems on some older machines. More importantly, staff will enjoy better access to email, a better scheduling system, better security and faster response times. That will help improve service delivery across-the-board. The project is certainly money well spent in ensuring that police have the technology they need to provide the best service possible to Queensland communities.