



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (6.54 p.m.): I rise to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2003. In doing so I would like to personally congratulate the Minister for Police on his commitment to policing issues, especially in my home city of Ipswich.

Since our election in 1998 the Beattie government has provided more than 73 extra police in the Ipswich police district, including 40 since February 2001. Clearly our efforts are paying off. Our commitment to community safety and the Queensland Police Service is also evidenced through our six consecutive record budgets for police, with this year's budget tipping the \$1 billion mark with an \$84 million increase.

The Ipswich Tactical Crime Squad has started to achieve positive results in relation to property and drug offences. These results are a credit to our local police, especially Goodna police. They show that the strategies of the police and the community working together to fight and prevent crime are reaping rewards. There is still more work to be done and the community needs to remain vigilant when it comes to crime prevention.

Residents can play an important role through initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch. Neighbourhood Watch groups are very active in my area from Bundamba to Springfield. They are dedicated volunteers who work with the police and emergency services for the benefit of my community. I thank them for their commitment. I hope that the emergency services trial being conducted at the Neighbourhood Watch group at Riverview will work well and spawn a wider role for neighbourhood watches across Queensland.

I would like to comment briefly on the 2002-03 statistical review which was released by the minister today. In the Ipswich district the number of robberies fell from 122 offences in 2001-02 to 97 reported this year. That was a 20 per cent decrease. Reductions in both armed and unarmed robbery were responsible. Clearance of the offences fell to 30 per cent from the previous year's 45 per cent. Total unlawful entry offences decreased by four per cent, which equates to 107 fewer offences reported. An eight per cent reduction in unlawful entry of dwellings was only partially offset by increases in unlawful entry of shops and unlawful entry of other premises by six per cent and one per cent respectively. Unlawful use of motor vehicles decreased by 10 per cent following a 15 per cent decrease in the previous year. This equates to 83 fewer offences reported in 2002-03. Approximately 88 per cent of vehicles were recovered.

In total, other offences increased by 27 per cent with rises in drug offences, which were up by 18 per cent. Liquor offences were up 87 per cent. Trespassing and vagrancy offences were up 21 per cent. Weapons Act offences were up 75 per cent. Good order offences were up 46 per cent. Breach of domestic violence protection orders were up 88 per cent, and traffic and related offences were up 16 per cent. The increases can be partly attributed to increased police activity and targeting of these particular categories of offence. An increase in the breach of domestic violence protection orders is related to the widening of categories of relationships about which orders can be granted in March 2003.

I want to briefly talk about the issue of volatile substance misuse.

Mr Schwarten: You've not been brief with it so far.

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs MILLER: I can provide a lot more good statistics about Ipswich. I am going to talk about volatile substance misuse. Some young people like to sniff glue, paint or petrol so that they can get a high. It certainly is a cheap drug. Chroming can kill young people. It can also cause shocking brain damage and it is a very dangerous practice. The legislation before the House will allow our police officers to take action in the interests of young persons affected by glue, paint or petrol sniffing.

Our police officers will have a search power for the purpose of seizing the substance of a person who may be about to use the substance or who appears to be affected by the substance. Police officers can seize the glue, paint or petrol. In my community we believe that this is good law. Also, in the interests of the welfare of a person who is affected by sniffing these substances, police officers will be given the power to detain a person so affected and to take that person to a place of safety. They could be taken to a hospital, a youth shelter or even to a home. The police may also call an ambulance to provide assistance.

In my community the Goodna Youth Service has initiated an Outrigger program aimed to assist young people affected by chroming. It is building traditional canoes which will be launched soon at Springfield Lakes. It has been a great partnership with Bremer TAFE and all of our ethnic communities. In my community we recognise that chroming is a problem and that we have to tackle this issue head-on, but we have done something about it. We brought all of the elders of our communities together and also worked with the Goodna Youth Service, particularly Colleen and Vince, other youth workers and the elders. The elders of the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Samoan, Pacific islander and other Polynesian communities all worked together with our church leaders and our other community groups. In conclusion, I thank the Goodna police, the Goodna Youth Service, the Base, another great youth organisation, Bremer TAFE and all of our ethnic communities. We believe that the Outrigger project with its wonderful canoes—and I will be there when the canoes are being launched; I hope they float, otherwise I might be in trouble—is a great initiative in relation to chroming. I support the bill.