



Speech by

Hon. LIDDY CLARK

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Hansard 22 April 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Community Patrol Program

Hon. E. A. CLARK (Clayfield—ALP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy) (10.21 a.m.): Homelessness and public drunkenness are not problems isolated to Queensland or to Australia. They are challenges which face every city and possibly every town. They are complex problems requiring careful solutions. I would like to report on a Queensland government program which is having a positive impact in Townsville and Thuringowa.

The Community Patrol Program was one of the key actions identified through the homelessness-public drunkenness project in Townsville. Since the Community Patrol Program began in June 2003 it has assisted nearly 1,150 people. People who might otherwise have been held in custody or caused problems on the streets are safely transported either to private residences or the Reverend Charles Harris Diversionary Centre.

As well as setting us on track to reduce the problems associated with public drunkenness, the Community Patrol Program also provides employment. The program is staffed by 30 community development employment program participants. All this has been achieved and will continue to be achieved with the help of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy funding. My department has committed \$300,000 over the next three years towards the homelessness project.

The Beattie government is committed to tackling the very real problems of homelessness and public drunkenness. I am pleased to be able to report on this project and the very positive effect it is having on keeping people safe on the streets.