



Speech by

Hon. MIKE REYNOLDS

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Hansard 27 April 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect System

Hon. M. F. REYNOLDS (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety) (10.10 a.m.): My new Department of Child Safety will become the lead agency overseeing a new framework for the suspected child abuse and neglect—or SCAN—system in Queensland. This improved framework was recommended by the CMC and will provide better information sharing between government and non-government agencies and better case planning for children at risk of abuse and neglect.

The Beattie government will spend an additional \$1.7 million a year on the SCAN system from the 2006-07 financial year after increases of \$1.61 million in 2004-05 and \$1.67 million the year after.

Last month a three-day training course was held for newly appointed SCAN team coordinators and that was the first in a series of proposed projects the government is undertaking to strengthen the SCAN system in Queensland.

The Peter Forster blueprint for reform outlines specific SCAN functions for my department and a number of other government departments, including the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health and Education Queensland, to help ensure the safety of children. This whole-of-government response incorporates the establishment of 20 child protection assessment and management teams in major regional and metropolitan centres across the state to conduct initial assessments and recommendations relevant to cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. Child protection community implementation teams will also be established to develop and implement specific protective case plans for individual children and families.

The new model provides more flexibility to effectively case manage the protective needs of children in a broader range of communities, including remote and indigenous communities, ensuring a higher standard of decision making, supervision and accountability. This will set the benchmark for the delivery of holistic, interagency and culturally appropriate child protection services throughout the state.

An enhanced and more robust framework for cases of suspected child abuse and neglect means better case management, quality decision making and improved accountability in the child protection system. This indeed is the beginning of a rejuvenated SCAN framework that will focus on the protective needs of children and young people at all stages of child protection intervention.