



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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MOOLOOLABA, POLICE PRESENCE

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (8.29): It is time for a police station for Mooloolaba. This is an area I am proud to represent and it has been a wonderful area that has attracted people for the quality of its dining, tourism establishments, great beaches and general lifestyle. It has seen quite an increase in patronage with sometimes up to 6,000 additional people around holiday time just around the township.

Unfortunately, with that success there comes the challenges of managing the complexities of crime. We do not like to advertise the fact that these are challenges that we face. It is no longer enough to have a police beat in a side road without real visibility to the public. It is time to have a proper police station that is manned as a police station and recognises the fact that this area is in dire need of an additional police presence.

Last weekend there was a young man who was bashed unconscious and another young person who was knifed. These are serious issues. Other parts of the state such as the Gold Coast have also had to grapple with the problems of law and order breakdown, particularly with the additional influx of people into a community that significantly dilutes the real police-to-population ratio.

Unfortunately, this is an increasing problem in this community. We want to fight to see this community maintained as a safe destination. We do not want it to have a reputation for violent incidents that unfortunately have marred its reputation in recent times. It is time that we did not just have a police beat, but a proper police station with a complement of police officers who are rostered around this community.

Currently across the Sunshine Coast there are not enough police to deal with the population increase, certainly not the tourism increase, and there are many times that the real number of police on the street versus the so-called number of police on the books is vastly different. We have seen that with those people who have jumped the docks, those who have been in the court system and not had enough police to ensure that proper order was maintained.

This is an area that I again bring to the attention of the police minister and state that the population of an area such as the township of Mooloolaba needs to be considered. When one looks at the sheer population of this area, it needs a proper increase in numbers to match the increase in population. There is an entertainment precinct that brings those additional challenges. We have nightclubs on licensed premises and people who are in that area. There must be law and order. It is not acceptable to have these incidents occurring where young people and others are being attacked.