



Speech by

# Hon. Desley Boyle

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard Wednesday, 6 June 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Department of Child Safety, Flexible Access Project

**Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety) (10.10 am): Most people with a computer on their desk take for granted how much easier it makes their job. Sending or receiving emails, looking at existing files, typing work records, planning your diary, tracking your work contacts—all of these are at your fingertips with the click of a mouse. But for workers who travel in remote regions, it is an entirely different story. In fact, not having access to this kind of technology is one of their major frustrations. It means that all the paperwork mounts up while they travel and has to be caught up on when they are back in the office. For this reason we are trialling small, mobile, wireless computers for Child Safety staff who work in the regions and who travel large distances and can be away from their office for weeks at a time.

In March this year we began testing three separate devices—thin, lightweight laptops, compact tablet laptops and slimline swivel screen laptops. These devices improve efficiency by allowing staff to instantly access emails, records and other information. But beyond the benefits of work efficiency, it may mean that Child Safety officers will be able to make better and quicker decisions about children in need of protection.

In all, 32 laptops have been sent to Child Safety centres servicing rural and remote areas around Queensland. Initial feedback has been very positive. Staff say it is a big benefit being able to access information on clients without having to go back to the office. Feedback will be gathered when the trial is completed at the end of next month through a user questionnaire and staff interviews. This information will help determine the devices that are most useful for Child Safety officers as we strive to improve child protection in all parts of Queensland.