



Speech by

Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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ARUNDEL POLICE BEAT

Mr LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (5.23 pm): It was my great pleasure to represent the Minister for Police and Corrective Services at the official opening of the Arundel police beat on 15 June this year. The police beat is situated in Napper Road, Arundel. It is very visible and is on a very busy road in a rapidly growing suburb. The opening was attended by Dave Melville, the Assistant Commissioner, south-east region; Jim Keogh, the District Officer, Gold Coast; Jim Ploughman, Officer in Charge at Southport; and Senior Constables Darren Parker and Stephen Disley, who were already making an excellent contribution to the community as the two officers stationed at the beat. Other police officers and many local residents also attended.

This was the 51st residential police beat to operate in Queensland and the 10th to be open in the south-east police region. Police beats like this represent a return to the traditions of community based policing and allow officers and locals to work together to fight crime. Having officers living and working amongst the community allows local police to build a rapport and establish a relationship of trust with the people they serve.

Residents and businesses in Arundel now have improved access to the local police for reporting incidents, discussing issues of concern or for canvassing new ways to prevent crime in the community. As both Senior Constable Parker and Senior Constable Disley are now living in the area—in fact, Senior Constable Parker and his family live in the residence attached to the beat—residents can have confidence these officers are well attuned to local issues and dedicated to serving the community.

Arundel and the adjoining Parkwood, like all parts of the Gold Coast, have experienced incredible growth in recent years. The creation of this new beat ensures police resources in the area continue to match the population. These officers will be able to assist police throughout Southport and the south-east police region in the fight against crime. Police in the south-eastern region are already achieving great success. Last year's annual statistical review shows a reduction in crime rates in the area including drops in the number of homicides, assaults, kidnappings and abductions. Huge achievements have been made in combatting property offences. In fact, there were 438 fewer homes and businesses broken into in 2005-06. Through this new beat, local police will be able to continue to work with the community to keep these figures down.

The Beattie government is committed to ensuring police in Queensland are well resourced to protect the community. Senior Constables Parker and Disley not only have access to excellent equipment and technology, including a marked police car and networked computer system, but also are well supported by officers throughout the Southport area. There is now an approved strength of 1,204 police positions in the south-eastern region, a big increase from 862 back in 1998 before the Beattie government was elected. This increase in police numbers, together with capital works projects such as this new police beat, means that the people of Arundel can feel safe and secure in their homes, workplaces and on the streets of their communities.