



Speech by

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POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (12.06 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008. I note the support proffered by the shadow minister, the honourable member for Gregory. This is an important regulatory bill that will remove some of the legislative barriers plaguing the Queensland Police Service by allowing enhanced information sharing between officers, stations, regions and jurisdictions. The bill will drastically improve the way police access information and ensure that Queensland police can participate in the national fight against crime.

This bill builds on the Queensland Police Records and Information Management Exchange, or QPRIME, system introduced in 2006. QPRIME represents a massive investment in information technology, reportedly worth over \$95 million. Once fully operational, the system is expected to boost police intelligence and revolutionise the way we fight crime in Queensland. However, it has been a long time coming. Since the system went online two years ago, consolidating around 230 databases into one centralised system, police have complained that the system has, in many respects, hampered their efforts in tackling crime as a result of poor training and time-consuming data input.

The August 2007 edition of the *Queensland Police Union Journal* contained an article by a senior police officer who said that the system was taking police officers off the street because of the amount of time it took to enter data into the QPRIME system. In a separate statement earlier this year, the Queensland Police Union confirmed that the QPRIME reporting requirements were such that a small oversight would derail data input by rendering it unregistrable.

While this legislation will fix many of the frustrations Queensland police have with the current system, it does not take away from the fact that up until now, and until the system is fully operational, police presence on our streets has been hindered by the very information system designed to save time and improve policing. When you consider some areas like the Gold Coast—which has the lowest police to population ratio in the state, despite being a renowned party precinct and a high petty crime area—it is quite concerning to think that our thin blue line is even thinner because our trained police officers are too busy attending to administrative duties rather than patrolling the streets.

That said, I believe this bill will go a long way towards improving the way we fight crime in Queensland. The bill will allow police to participate in national information-sharing initiatives, including federal agency database CrimTrac. This will give Queensland police far greater access to information than what has previously been the case.

Through information sharing and access to national fingerprint ID systems and DNA databases, police will be able to more effectively track criminals and administer justice. The efficacy of the CrimTrac system was demonstrated recently when a Melbourne man was arrested in Western Australia five years after a sexual assault claim was made against him. Victorian police were able to track him down through information contained in a DNA database connecting him with the crime. CrimTrac director, Ben McDevitt,

made the interesting comment that a national information-sharing system allowed the fight against crime to be taken Australia-wide.

The LNP is committed to creating a true justice system in Queensland. That is why we will support any move to train more police and give them access to state-of-the-art resources and modern policing powers. When it comes to policing, the LNP recognises the need for a nationwide approach to solving crime. That is why I support this bill.