



Speech by

Hon. Judy Spence

MEMBER FOR MOUNT GRAVATT

Hansard Thursday, 12 February 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Police Resources

Hon. JC SPENCE (Mount Gravatt—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport) (9.53 am): I have good news for Queenslanders. This month the number of police in Queensland will top 10,000 for the first time in our history. This is the clearest indication of the Bligh government's commitment to increasing police numbers for the safety of all Queenslanders. We will continue to increase police numbers. This year we will train an additional 800 new police. The results of our massive increases in police numbers are lower crime rates.

For the past seven years crime in this state has decreased by 24 per cent—five per cent last year alone. This year's independent report on government services supports this trend by showing Queenslanders generally feel safer than their national counterparts and are less likely to fear crime in their neighbourhood. In fact, Queensland has performed better than the Australian average in the six categories of feeling safer at home, out jogging or walking and on transport both during the day and night. I congratulate our police for those marvellous results.

Queenslanders might well ask where the Nationals stand on law and order. While we increase police numbers and push crime down, what is it doing? Last week Mr McArdle, the deputy leader of the Nationals, went to Townsville in the middle of the floods—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, if you mention Mr McArdle you need to mention him by his proper title.

Ms SPENCE: The member for Caloundra went to Townsville in the middle of a flood and called a press conference to announce a new law and order policy. What was it? It was that marvellous piece of paper, 'Hoon Watch'.

Mr McArdle interjected.

Ms SPENCE: It is the fifth time those opposite have launched it and it has bombed every time. One of the many flaws in this paper is that under this government we have confiscated 9,000 cars from hoons and there has not been a single piece of paper in sight. The Bligh government leads Australia on fighting hooning. We will continue to confiscate more cars to add to the 9,000 we have already confiscated.

While this government increases police numbers to 10,000 and puts more police on the beat, the Nationals intend to put more police on desk duty by sacking administration staff and giving police even more paperwork that the police themselves think is absurd. I am pleased to inform the House that our 10,000 police are out there fighting crime—

Mr McArdle interjected.

Ms SPENCE: We do not treat law and order as a joke on this side, Mr McArdle. I am pleased to inform the House that our 10,000 police are out there fighting crime and at the touch of a button they are

signing up hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders on to the email crime report bulletin and working in partnership with the community to solve crimes.

I inform the House that yesterday I approved two police dog handlers and their two cadaver dogs to go to Victoria to assist with the aftermath of the Victorian bushfires. I have also approved for two police media officers to assist and relieve Victorian police media during this period. This is at the request of Victoria Police. I have also indicated to my Victorian counterpart that if they want more police assistance that will be forthcoming.