




Speech by

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GOLD COAST, POLICE RESOURCES

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.34 pm): Labor's failure to plan for increased population densities in the south-east and on the Gold Coast has resulted in our hardworking police lacking the resources and the numbers that they need to deal with increasing crime. These police do the best with what they have, but what they have been provided with by the Bligh Labor government is clearly not enough. Consequently, there has been a spike in drug crimes, robberies and other serious crime in the south-east and particularly on the Gold Coast. So far this year—and it has been widely publicised—there have been 46 armed robberies on the Gold Coast, including a series of robberies carried out by an offender who is just 10 years old. Only 10 per cent of those crimes have been solved, which suggests that police resources are stretched beyond their limit.

People who work in service stations or in convenience stores or, in fact, own those businesses and their customers should not live in fear that they will have a weapon shoved in their faces by desperate, often drug affected criminals. Many of us have seen the graphic television footage of these sorts of hold-ups. Armed robbery can have a devastating impact on victims, more so if the offenders are not caught or if they receive an overly lenient sentence, only to be released back into the community to offend again. Sadly, on the Gold Coast and in Logan that has become a fact of life, but it need not and it should not be.

The Gold Coast is the sixth largest city in the country, and growing, and it is the second biggest in the state. Yet it is treated as second rate by this long-term Labor government. The Gold Coast has a population of just over 538,000. In 2009-10 there were 890 sworn police serving the Gold Coast community. In comparison, Tasmania has a population of almost 508,000 with 1,247 sworn police. That is a ratio of one to 407 in Tasmania compared to one to 604 on the Gold Coast. In 2009-10 there were 309 armed robberies on the Gold Coast. In the same period in Tasmania there were 138 reported armed robberies, which is less than half that in Queensland. In 1999-2000 there were 4,625 reported drug crimes in Queensland's south-east. In a decade under Labor's do-nothing policies, that figure has blown out to 7,694 reported drug crimes—a staggering increase of 66 per cent.

Labor's response to this growth in crime has been to deny that there is a problem and to do nothing. In sharp contrast, senior police who have the onerous day-to-day responsibility for dealing with crime and criminals know exactly what to do. Last year Assistant Commissioner Paul Wilson told the CMC inquiry into Operation Tesco that the south-east region, and particularly the Gold Coast, needs a permanent, organised and major crime squad with dedicated detectives. Labor's response was to dismiss the idea. But a can-do LNP government will establish a permanent major crime squad based on the Gold Coast. A can-do LNP government will also roll out a state-wide armed robbery prevention and reduction strategy. A can-do LNP government will be tough on crime and tough on criminals.

(Time expired)