



Speech by

Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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ATKINSON, MR R

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.13 pm): On behalf of the opposition I would like to place on record our thanks to Commissioner Bob Atkinson, who retired this week from the Queensland Police Service. I want to echo what the Premier said in this House earlier this week as well. Commissioner Atkinson has served the people of Queensland very well. He is a very dignified man. He held that role with honour and respect.

I have known Commissioner Bob Atkinson for about 10 years now and I have always found him to be a man of humility, a man of grace and a man of dignity. I have seen him on various occasions over those years at multicultural events, and he was very passionate about involving the Queensland Police Service with the different multicultural groups right across Queensland. I am glad that the new commissioner, Ian Stewart, will continue in that tradition. I also want to place on record the opposition's support for the announcement by the police minister that Commissioner Ian Stewart is taking over the helm. It is a great appointment and Commissioner Stewart demonstrated his strength and his leadership, and I think all Queenslanders would recognise that strength and leadership, throughout the floods.

I did want to share one story with the House about Commissioner Bob Atkinson. About nine or 10 years ago a police officer was tragically killed in an accident. I knew his daughter. His daughter said to me that for the months and years following that tragic accident, Commissioner Atkinson would regularly visit the family. He would visit the family and he would talk to the children and the mother just to see how they were going. He never told anyone that he did this. I think that is a sign of a man who puts others ahead of themselves. He did not ask for any recognition of the role he was playing in making sure that that family was okay.

I also want to place on record that I think Commissioner Atkinson saw his fair share of interesting ministers over those years—both Labor and LNP, ending with Minister Jack Dempsey. He is a fine man. He leaves a lasting legacy. He has over the years, I believe, reformed the Police Service. They are very credible. They are hardworking throughout the state and they are doing a great job. I think he will be remembered for many, many years to come. I hope that he and his wife, Glenda, enjoy retirement. He has worked very, very hard. He has dedicated most of his life to the Police Service and he will be sadly missed.