



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Wednesday, 31 October 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Atkinson, Mr R

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.21 pm): This afternoon I reflect upon the fact that Police Commissioner Bob Atkinson is leaving the service of the people of Queensland after a distinguished career spanning many decades. Commissioner Atkinson has served with distinction through difficult periods, he has undertaken much-needed reform and he has managed the normal challenges and crises that come the way of any police commissioner in the nation. This afternoon, I thank him for his service to the people of Queensland and, particularly, for his leadership of the Queensland Police Service. I am sure all honourable members join with me in wishing him the very best into the future. We thank him.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr NEWMAN: Tomorrow the current deputy commissioner, Ian Stewart, will be assuming command of the service. We all wish him the very best. He has been through a rigorous and demanding selection process conducted in accordance with the legislation and he is the person whom the government has agreed to back. We back him 100 per cent. He has our unequivocal and total support.

Therefore, it is with some sadness and, indeed, regret that I refer to the reported comments of the head of the Police Union, Ian Leavers. I have a great deal of respect for Mr Leavers. I think he is a Queensland union leader who understands how best to represent his members. He has an active engagement policy with key stakeholders such as the government. I think he represents his members' interests very effectively by being prepared to engage, negotiate and interact.

However, I must say that I am disappointed with his comments as reported. I do not think they do him or his members any justice. This afternoon, I simply urge him—and I am sure all members will agree with this—to work productively and constructively with Ian Stewart as the new commissioner. I conclude that point by simply saying that the old Aussie principle of a fair go is what should apply here. Commissioner Ian Stewart needs our full and total support; indeed, he needs a fair go as well.