




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Organised Crime Commission of Inquiry

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.18 am): There is nothing more important for the government than to keep its citizens safe, and I have been shocked to see the politicisation of the royal commission into organised crime by Michael Byrne QC by a number of those opposite. This is a classic case of overreach that is obviously being used as some sort of justification for the government's predetermination to repeal and replace the criminal gang laws that we brought in when we were in government. The claims and wild accusations of those opposite and the public statements of the commissioner himself and the ministers are not borne out by the facts that are contained within. The facts and findings of the royal commission were not explored through public hearings but were rather conducted during in camera hearings, in contrast to what was originally intended. Let us have a look at what happened that led us to bringing in those laws which were then subject to examination by the royal commission.

Under the previous Labor government before we came in, Gold Coasters could no longer feel safe in their homes, on the streets or in restaurants. If you were a reputable businessman in a number of different industries—locksmiths, massage, tow trucks or tattoos—there was a good chance that you had been extorted. Tattoo parlours were being firebombed; people were being shot on the street; in Hooker Boulevard, Mermaid Beach, there was a body found, and former ministers Paul Lucas and Neil Roberts said there was no problem at the Gold Coast. They refused to admit that there was a problem. Things came to a head in September 2013 when there was a public brawl followed by a siege, and we took the very firm position that we had to do something. People wanted action. Unlike this government, we were prepared to take action, make a decision and do something, so that is what we did. We asked police what they needed, and we gave them \$14 million, 1,100 extra police and \$7 million to the Crime and Corruption Commission.

It was not as those opposite have portrayed it, reflecting poorly on the police in other parts of the police administration, that we took away from child protection units or fraud units. But we did not hear anything from the police minister about that! There was silence from the police minister. Who defended the actions of police over those two years since that incident in September 2013? It took Acting Commissioner Ross Barnett to come out and say it was really intraparty sparring over resources, but resources were actually increased: Task Force Maxima, 89; Task Force Argos, 100; and the Child Protection Investigation Unit, 632—yet today the Premier makes much of the fact that she has added another six to Argos. It just goes to show that there is nothing this government will not stoop to politicise. As a parliamentarian I find them irresponsible; as a Queenslanders I find them reckless; as a parent I find it abhorrent.