



Speech By  
**Michael Hart**


**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2015

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Gold Coast, Public Safety**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.26 pm): Today I rise to speak about the safety of our families on the Gold Coast. For the last three to four years the people of the Gold Coast have felt much safer than they ever felt before. During the five, six or 10 years before the previous government was in power it was not unusual to see a lot of bikies touring around the Gold Coast and a lot of criminal activity that was associated with biker groups. That is why the previous government had to take such strong action to fix those issues that were infesting the Gold Coast and, for that matter, the whole of Queensland.

**Mr Rickuss:** Protecting people like those in the gallery at the moment.

**Mr HART:** There are some young people from my electorate in the gallery today and it is very important that on their behalf we offer them protection from what is a scourge on our society—that is, criminal organised gangs. This government told us when it first came into power that it was all about transparency and accountability and we have seen minister after minister as well as members opposite stand up and say that they are a transparent and accountable government. Far from it! They are not transparent and they are not accountable. This government has set up about 80 inquiries. Last week when the organised crime commission of inquiry reported there was quite a bit of misinformation and it was quite a political report that was, I would have to say, almost orchestrated for its outcome in order to attack the strong laws that the previous government brought in. There was a lot of misinformation in that inquiry. There were some quite conflicting numbers and we have since heard from the assistant commissioner of police that the numbers in that report were possibly not right. The latest figures are that there are in fact 89 members of Task Force Maxima as against 100 members of Task Force Argos, as there rightly should be, and over 600 police officers are tackling child protection. That report was just another in what this Labor government calls accountability and transparency and it is now moving on to the VLAD laws that we put in place.

We all know that in September 2013 there was an incident at Broadbeach where bikies confronted each other in a restaurant and then they confronted police officers. That led to the surrounding of Southport Police Station by a group of bikies who demanded—demanded—that police release those persons who were arrested on that night. They attempted to bully those police into doing that. That shows a complete lack of respect for our police officers and that is something that we have to fix.

This government has decided that it will have an independent inquiry into the VLAD laws. How independent is that when the very first sentence of the terms of reference of that particular task force states—

The Taskforce will note the Queensland Government's intention to repeal, and replace the 2013 legislation, whether by substantial amendment and/or new legislation.

One of the terms of reference of this task force is—

How best to replace or amend the 2013 legislation.

This is an inquiry with a predetermined outcome. Today we saw the Minister for Police come in here and tell us that she is worried about the health and safety of our police force. Far from it: she is not concerned at all about our men and women in blue. If she were, she would appreciate that what we have done is uncuff the hands of our police force and give them the necessary powers to tackle these criminal groups head-on. The VLAD laws are having a dramatic effect on the Gold Coast. We cannot afford to undo the good work that the previous government did. I call on this government to be transparent and accountable.