




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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ADJOURNMENT

Thuringowa Rapid Action and Patrol Hub

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.58 pm): I rise tonight to speak about my recent work with the QPS Thuringowa Rapid Action and Patrol Hub run by Inspector Joe Kitching, a police veteran with some 30 years experience. Inspector Kitching runs three teams of 10 officers out of this hub. Recently this two-year-old QPS RAP hub had its review and demonstrated its good performance, which at its very core provides a mobile workforce proactively patrolling the community with officers using resources such as iPads to ensure they can swiftly access information therefore reducing the need for writing out paperwork, the need to return to the RAP hub and also ensuring their high visibility in the community.

Having formed the Upper Ross Community Consultation Group in February this year, it was always my intent to have local police play an integral role informing the community on crime prevention and to hopefully start a neighbourhood watch program in the area. I regularly meet with the officer in charge of Kirwan station and the QPS RAP, Indigenous elders, community groups such as a TCAD and members of the community to address issues of crime that have affected our area for a number of years. On Friday 21 October, I had the opportunity to run on road with RAP Sergeant Tony Jacobs, another veteran with many years service, and his partner, Senior Constable Robert Booth. This followed the successful Operation Oscar Merchant, where 30 extra police were stationed in Townsville, yielding nearly 800 arrests and nearly 1,000 charges. I particularly commend those officers for their professionalism and conduct, which is displayed to members of the community in sometimes trying and challenging circumstances. At the beginning of that shift, I witnessed numerous curfew checks of youth on court ordered curfews. The RAP officers told me that they conduct approximately 50 such checks per week.

I also had the opportunity to speak with local constituents who had contacted my office regarding concerns about a particular residence in the Kelso area. Earlier that night, the RAP team had arrested and charged an individual at that particular residence. I agree with the strong sentiment that we should all feel safe in our communities. I remain committed to working hard with all in our community to address the issues of crime in the Thuringowa electorate.

I have full confidence in the Stronger Communities Action Group to be co-located at the QPS RAP in Thuringowa. That whole-of-government response will bring core agencies together to ensure not only that individuals in the youth justice system are identified but also that targeted intensive case management is applied to those individuals and their families, so that they can become good citizens through training, education and employment opportunities, such as the inaugural Training for Success program, which I recently attended. The program is aimed at getting youth back on track and helping make our community safe once again.

To this end, I will continually make representations to the police minister for more police for the RAP. It would put the icing on the cake to have funding in the next budget for another team of 10 to help make Thuringowa a safe electorate and reduce crime rates in our area.