



Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**


**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2016

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Aurukun**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.03 pm): Over the weekend there was unrest in the Cape York community of Aurukun. Yesterday the education minister directed the education department to immediately temporarily relocate Aurukun based staff at the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy in support of the executive principal's decision to close the campus. During this period staff are working out of the Far North Queensland regional office in Cairns. Our staff will be provided with counselling and professional development to support their return to the community. I am deeply concerned about the safety of residents in Aurukun, and that is why my government has acted to ensure the safety of the community. In terms of our government workers, their safety and wellbeing is a priority.

My advice is that at this stage there are no plans to remove other front-line staff or services from Aurukun. We will continue to closely monitor the situation. Five additional police have already arrived in Aurukun to ensure the safety of all residents and another three police will be in place tomorrow. During the period of the time the academy is closed there will be the provision of alternative activities for students affected by school closures. This will be delivered by the local PCYC, with an increased number of officers and logistical support by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I have also asked the Treasurer, as the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, to coordinate the whole-of-government response to the issues impacting on Aurukun.

In terms of housing safety, the Minister for Housing and Public Works ordered an immediate security assessment in Aurukun. They have arrived in the community and have begun their assessment and commenced work. As a matter of priority I have also requested a security assessment of other government employee housing in Aurukun. Work has already started on increased security measures, including the reinforcing and replacing of fencing, and this work will continue today. I have been advised by the Queensland Police Commissioner that prosecutions have commenced for the offences of armed robbery, unlawful use of a vehicle, wilful damage and assault. I have been advised that six offenders have been charged and four offenders have been remanded in custody.

I make it very clear: my government takes the safety of all Queensland communities very seriously. Everything that can be done will be done to ensure the safety of the Aurukun community. I have also directed my director-general to look at the broader social and economic issues in the Aurukun community as a matter of priority and report to me. There will be a community meeting held in Aurukun on Friday and a government minister will attend that meeting. My government will work closely with the community champion and key community and government stakeholders in the Aurukun community.