



Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**


**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2016

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Aurukun**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.34 am): As honourable members would be aware, there was unrest in Aurukun over the weekend of 7 and 8 May which gave rise to concerns for the safety and wellbeing of staff of the Aurukun campus of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy. Charges have now been laid in relation to this incident. Five additional police were sent to Aurukun to ensure the safety of the community in the wake of the unrest. Unfortunately, there was further unrest over the weekend of 21 and 22 May including an alleged armed robbery. Three juveniles have been charged in relation to this incident.

Police will continue to work closely with the local council and the community to ensure the safety of all Aurukun residents. The school remains open and is again operating after a temporary closure. We are now working with the principal, teachers and the Queensland Teachers' Union to ensure staff are adequately supported. Additional security officers have been deployed as an additional safeguard for school staff. These latest developments are of great concern, with the actions of a minority of people negatively impacting on the whole community.

My director-general and other senior government representatives, including other directors-general and a commissioner from the Children and Families Commission, were in Aurukun yesterday talking with the mayor, councillors, council officials, police, the justice group, family responsibilities commissioners, the school principal, teachers and relevant community members and groups about ways to strengthen approaches to community safety and wellbeing. I want to make sure the focus is on the immediate safety of residents and the workforce, and that together we re-engage with children and young people through school and employment. We will also work with the community to sustain calm, build community safety and security in the long term, strengthen community governance and harness opportunities for business development and jobs. Projects like Rio Tinto's Amrun project are on the community's doorstep and provide huge opportunities for employment and providing people with new skills.

It is clear that positive changes are dependent upon strong community leadership. The community must be accountable for restoring and maintaining long-term calm. I know this is the view of the mayor and community leaders. The discussions held this week are the beginning of an ongoing conversation with the community. We will work with the community to restore the community to a peaceful place and help the proud residents of Aurukun to move forward through these issues.