




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Keppel, Police Resources

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.27 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government is continuing to deliver on its commitment to boost front-line services with two new full-time police officers to assist in crime prevention in the Emu Park district. Recently I welcomed constables Jaclyn Wickham and Mark Gwynne to the Emu Park Police Station. Constables Wickham and Gwynne will join officer-in-charge Sergeant Paul McDonnell and Senior Constable Doug King. Staffing at the Emu Park Police Station is something I have been passionate about for some time. In 2014, as Labor's then candidate for Keppel, I ran a campaign when the Newman government failed to replace a sergeant at the station following retirement. Senior Constable Doug King was left as the only officer at the station and he was also on call outside of all work hours for months. It was a stressful job for Senior Constable King who was left as the only officer for a community of some 3,500 people and it also put a lot of pressure on Senior Constable King and his family.

I am proud that the Palaszczuk government has now doubled the number of police to four officers at the Emu Park Police Station. The number of police at the station is now commensurate with the population of Emu Park and surrounds and will provide improved response times. In the 2015-16 budget we set aside \$28 million to boost the ranks of the Queensland Police Service over the year by 266 officers over and above attrition. I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government is delivering on that commitment. Earlier this year I welcomed two new police recruits at Yeppoon Police Station and two more at the North Rockhampton station. A further six first-year constables were allocated to the Rockhampton station earlier this year.

In Keppel the new police recruits will now spend a year under the supervision of experienced officers and I am sure they will receive a warm welcome from our community. Queensland-wide police recruit numbers have increased by 63 per cent in the last financial year. In the 2014-15 financial year 324 recruits graduated from the police academy, compared to a massive 530 recruits who have graduated in the 2015-16 year, including those scheduled to graduate this Thursday. As the minister mentioned, those seasoned recruits will be joined by 55 new first-year constables statewide following their successful completion of the recruit training program.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Coomera is extremely vocal this morning. I will ask you to cease interjecting or I may have to warn you.

Mrs LAUGA: Those constables will be out on the beat, honing the skills they have been taught in the academy and learning from the officers who know our community and the local priorities.

In addition to extra personnel, the Palaszczuk government is ensuring that the QPS has the technology and equipment it requires to support those on the front line. Queensland's new police are being supported in their jobs by a range of measures included in the 2015-16 budget, including \$28 million to deliver the 266 extra police over the next year, bringing the total number of extra officers sworn in over the past four years to 1,100; nearly 1,000 new and replacement police vehicles; an extra \$20 million over four years for police to tackle organised crime, alcohol fuelled violence and the drug ice; and more than \$6 million over three years for the rollout of body worn video cameras. We have also seen an additional commitment by the Premier and the Minister for Police to provide the Queensland Police Service with an additional \$20 million over four years to target serious organised crime.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to keeping the people of Queensland and, indeed, the people of Keppel, safe which is why we are delivering on new police for our region. We are also giving local stakeholders a greater opportunity to interact with senior local officers. Last week in Rockhampton the statewide community policing boards initiative was launched and I look forward to meeting with my local board. All of those who live and work in Keppel will understand that our police do a difficult and often dangerous job in fighting crime and keeping our communities safe. In whichever police division Keppel electors live—Emu Park, North Rockhampton or Yeppoon—they can be assured that police will be there to assist.

The Palaszczuk government deeply appreciates the hard work of our police to keep the people of Queensland safe. I am proud to have a strong working relationship with Acting Assistant Commissioner and proud White Ribbon ambassador Ron van Saane and, in fact, all of the Queensland Police Service in Central Queensland. Recently I was pleased to nominate Inspector Virginia Nelson for the public sector award in the 2016 Telstra Business Women's Awards. I publicly acknowledge the work of Inspector Virginia Nelson and, indeed, all of the local policewomen who work so hard to keep the people of Central Queensland safe. I congratulate Constable Wickham and Constable Gwynne on their appointment to the Emu Park Police Station. I wish them all the very best in their careers in policing on the Capricorn Coast.