




Speech By
Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION (QUEENSLAND) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Australian Crime Commission (Queensland) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The omnibus bill addresses issues within a number of acts including the Australian Crime Commission (Queensland) Act 2003, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Weapons Act 1990 and the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990. The amendments before the House are about enhancing public safety in Queensland.

Our law enforcement and public safety agencies are operating in an increasingly dynamic and challenging environment. It is imperative these agencies have access to accurate, timely and integrated information and intelligence in order to respond to serious and organised crime and identified threats. The merging of CrimTrac and the Australian Crime Commission data holdings in July of this year will assist to this end. CrimTrac delivered and maintained national information-sharing solutions that enabled Australia's police and law enforcement agencies to share information across state and territory jurisdictions. The Australian Crime Commission was the Commonwealth's national criminal intelligence agency with specialist investigative capabilities now, along with CrimTrac, known collectively, following the merger, as the Australian Criminal Intelligence Agency. The bill before the House will assist in the inception and recognition of this collaborative agency in Queensland, ensuring that the sharing of information with other jurisdictions will continue.

The nation's law enforcement agencies, including our own Queensland Police Service, will be able to use a single data entry point to feed in and out of the national IT capabilities where research, operational data and intelligence will provide a big data view of law enforcement information—information not only of major and organised crime but also in regard to national firearms licensing and registration, national driver licensing information system and national vehicles of interest, and volume crime such as domestic violence, the last of which will make an appreciable difference to the many submitters to our committee regarding jurisdictional information sharing in regard to domestic violence information and orders. I note my colleague the member for Bulimba mentioned the bill currently before my committee in this regard earlier. Information gathered by front-line law enforcement officers will be available to intelligence officers monitoring the National Criminal Target List, creating an around-the-clock Australia-wide intelligence-sharing network.

The bill will also amend the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act, the PPRA, to allow a firearms and explosives detection dog to be used in more public places. Currently, drug detection dogs can be used to carry out detection duties at a public place, a place at which an event is being held, licensed premises or a tattoo parlour. An explosives detection dog can only carry out explosives detection at a tattoo parlour. The bill will extend this to the same places as drug detection dogs.

Additionally, a police officer who witnesses the commission of an offence through CCTV or from a distance will be provided with the ability to lawfully instruct another police officer to make an arrest where the instructing officer holds the requisite reasonable suspicion to make a lawful arrest. The bill will place a number of safeguards around the provisions, including that the instructing officer must make a record of the instruction and the reasons for giving it and provide the name, rank and station of the instructing and arresting officer on release of the person arrested from custody. The new section provides flexibility for police when dynamic circumstances arise or the use of technology makes it difficult to abide by a traditional method of arrest but also seeks to strike the balance with the imposition of appropriate safeguards.

The bill also makes clarifying amendments to sections 51 and 57 of the Weapons Act to clarify the definition of 'public place' to include a vehicle that is in or on a public place. Currently, under section 51 of the act it is an offence to possess a knife in a public place or school without reasonable excuse. Also under section 57 of the act, particular conduct involving a weapon in a public place is prohibited without reasonable excuse such as carrying a loaded firearm or a weapon capable of being discharged.

The amendments in the bill in regard to sections 51 and 57 will have the effect of ensuring a person who unlawfully carries a short or long firearm, a knife or another type of weapon in a vehicle in public will not be immune from the reach of the law. Importantly, the bill maintains protection of people with a legitimate reason to possess knives or weapons in a public place while closing a loophole on those who do so without reasonable excuse. The bill also inserts the power for a police officer to search a vehicle where it is reasonably suspected an occupant of the vehicle is in unlawful possession of a knife.

Each of these amendments provide police with additional powers or tools to complement, broaden and strengthen the options currently available to them. Our officers work in extremely dynamic conditions, and I want to acknowledge Inspector Mark Jones, Inspector Mick O'Dowd, Acting Senior Sergeant Leonie Scott and Inspector Craig White from the Boondal and Hendra police divisions and West Gateway Patrol Group and their team of officers who keep my community safe. Inspector White has recently been promoted and has now taken a position in Toowoomba, so Nudgee's loss is South Toowoomba's gain.

Finally, the bill changes the Fire and Emergency Services Act. Sadly, as we know, some providers of budget accommodation are putting profit before the safety of those who stay in accommodation that does not conform with fire safety standards relating to maximum occupancy, exit access and lighting, maintenance of fire safety equipment, and provision of working smoke alarms. The amendment will provide Queensland Fire and Rescue Services with access to owner or occupier information from the Residential Tenancies Authority to enable them to appropriately investigate such contraventions of fire safety measures.

I take this opportunity to thank our police, fire and emergency service personnel for their efforts in keeping our community safe. They do an extraordinary job, often in extraordinary circumstances, and are services to be proud of. I also acknowledge the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its deliberations on the bill and resulting report. I thank the minister for ensuring that our protection agencies are provided with the tools and flexibility to carry out their role and for enhancing public safety in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.