




Speech By
Hon. Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 18 February 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Protection

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.49 am): When it comes to safety, nothing is more important than the safety of our children. That is why the Palaszczuk government committed an extra \$3.2 million to the Queensland Police Service to ensure it is well resourced to protect Queensland's children. Taskforce Orion builds on the work of Task Force Argos, which is recognised as a world leader in the investigation of computer facilitated crimes against children. This extra funding will enhance the capability and capacity of the Queensland Police Service to tackle child exploitation activities and deliver a tactical operational response to these activities. Taskforce Orion's first job was a statewide blitz on child exploitation material to track down and target those who use the internet to share disgusting images, no matter where they are across the state, and that means peer-to-peer networks—groups of people sharing indecent images directly with each other without the need to use a central server. Taskforce Orion also targets people using the darknet to share images anonymously. The darknet is another peer-to-peer network that can only be accessed by specific software and/or configurations. It is a sickening and frightening example of the lengths that some people will go to to cover their tracks.

These funds allow the Queensland Police Service to put on extra staff to assist with victim identification and intelligence. One of the most gut-wrenching tasks for these detectives is working to identify the children who have been exploited by these images. Six new staff will be employed to improve forensic capability and identification capacity as well as provide additional intelligence and technical support. We want to make sure that police stay ahead of the game. That is why we are investing in a suite of new and specialist technology and equipment for task force detectives. These funds will also deliver enhanced training for officers in regional areas in child exploitation investigation best practice. We will see an increase in the storage capacity of the evidence database which will allow more effective categorisation of child exploitation material data. These detectives will work with the Crime and Corruption Commission to develop improved capability in support of joint operations and investigations with the Queensland Police Service. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to keeping Queensland's children safe.