




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (COMMONWEALTH GAMES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (3.14 pm): I rise to speak to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Commonwealth Games) Amendment Bill 2017. From the outset, I want to express that the LNP will not be opposing the changes contained in this bill. The Commonwealth Games, to be hosted on the Gold Coast in April next year and at other supporting venues throughout the state, including Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville, will be the biggest sporting event in Australia for a decade. It is a major international event for our state and country. With over 6,600 athletes and officials, 3,000 media personnel, 1,500 volunteers, 1.5 million spectators and a global audience of 1.5 billion people, the Gold Coast and, more broadly, Queensland will be showcased on the international stage.

The security of all of those involved in the event is of paramount importance, which is why these changes are being debated here today. As outlined in the explanatory notes, games security planning is informed by the current general public national terrorism threat level, which, despite recent international events, remains at probable. Recently, we have seen an increasing number of international terrorist attacks in open areas and public transport areas where large numbers of people have gathered to cause the maximum impact. Clearly, the tragic events that we saw in Manchester are another reminder of what has become an all-too-familiar story, as in recent years we have seen similar events in Europe and across the globe. Therefore, it is important that the police have additional proportionate powers to keep people safe and to ensure that the Commonwealth Games is a safe and secure event for everyone. We trust police officers to keep Queenslanders safe and prevent and detect crime. It is fundamentally important that they have the powers they need to make the games a safe and successful event.

In government, we introduced specified additional powers to ensure a safe G20 event. As outlined in the explanatory notes, the bill includes the following: the prescribing of protective security zones by regulation; the declaring of protective security zones by the Commissioner of Police, with the approval of the minister, if urgent action is required; the power for a police officer to search a person in a protective security zone, to stop, detain and search vehicles entering or in a protective security zone, to enter and search premises, excluding residential premises, in a protective security zone without warrant—however, a police officer can still search a residence with the consent of the occupier or if the officer reasonably suspects an offence may be committed in or from the residence and the offence would be likely to endanger the safety of a person; to use a firearms and explosives detection dog to search public places and premises that are not residences in a protective security zone; to give a general direction to a person entering or in a public place in a protective security zone to ensure the safety of persons entering or in the zone, and an exemption from completing enforcement registers for searches conducted by police officers within protective security zones or under the Major Events Act.

All of the additional powers will expire at the end of the games, except for the changes around enforcement registers which can be used by police for other major events in Queensland in the future. The changes to the enforcement register mean that police will not need to record every time they search

someone in a protective security zone at a designated major event unless the search locates an item such as a weapon or explosive. As Commissioner Ian Stewart outlined to the parliamentary committee in a public briefing—

When assessing security needs for the games, the Queensland Police Service considered a number of factors including current threat assessments and intelligence relating to the general security environment and lessons learnt from previous games and other large-scale policing operations such as the 2014 G20 Leaders' Summit in Brisbane.

The QPS also conducted an extensive review of current legislation including the Major Events Act 2014 and Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. The Major Events Act is expected to apply to the games and will provide sufficient powers to provide a safe and secure environment within a prescribed games major event area. However, it does not address security requirements in other public areas associated with the games where people will gather in large numbers—for example, designated pedestrian routes to a venue and public transport hubs and networks. The Police Powers and Responsibilities Act also does not specifically address the unique security issues associated with the games in the current security environment.

We need to trust the advice of our law enforcement agencies on these issues and let them do what they do best. That is what happened when we put together our 2013 tough bikie law reforms. They were formed with the advice of our two key law enforcement agencies, the QPS and the Crime and Corruption Commission. We note the concerns from the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, which are important in maintaining the appropriate balance and regard for the individual rights and liberties of individuals. We also note the response from the Police Commissioner in his statement to the committee in the public briefing in relation to this issue—

In developing the bill, the QPS has been mindful to find a proportionate and reasonable balance between additional police powers designed to promote the safety and security for all and the rights and liberties of individuals. The QPS has sought only those powers considered necessary for the safety and security of the games. Our objective is to deliver an integrated security operation with our partners that will achieve a safe, secure and successful games. This bill is pivotal in reaching that objective.

We appreciate that advice and the need for the security planning of the games to be led by the Queensland Police Service. Ultimately, it comes down to the security planning ahead of the games and making sure we have a safe event. Sadly, no matter how many times it happens, and it is happening far too often, we are all shocked and saddened by the international terrorist events overseas where radicalised individuals set out to cause maximum damage by ploughing trucks through crowds of people or setting off explosive devices like we saw in Manchester earlier this week. The final quote I want to use is from Assistant Commissioner Crawford. It defines the issues that the QPS need to take into account in preparation for the security planning ahead of the Commonwealth Games next year—

The games will inevitably have an impact on members of the public and, therefore, the engagement with them and the messaging to them is a critical component not only of this aspect of the bill but also of the policing strategy generally. For us to make this work, we need the appropriate policy in place, we need to train well, we have to give very clear direction to our members and we have to ensure that the execution of the police operation, including the use of these powers, is done in accordance with the intent.

In summary, what we are seeking to achieve is, by the use of this legislation, to deter those people who are intending to commit acts that are going to cause harm in the public space. We want to detect those people who are planning on executing any action in that public space that is going to harm people and we want to present a really visible reassurance to the public that we are out there in that space protecting their safety as they attend the games in what is a very challenging security environment that the Police Commissioner has identified. We are mindful the spirit of the games and the atmosphere for this spectacular sporting event is an area where we have to support the government's intention and we will do that.

I want to thank the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee for its review of the legislation and the three recommendations it made to inform the communication of the changes contained in the bill which, of course, we support. We want a safe games, because a safe games is a successful games. It is important to back the police to ensure that this can happen. Our prayers and sympathy go out to the people of Manchester following the tragic events earlier this week. We need to learn from these international incidents to ensure that something like this never happens here in Queensland.