




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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POLICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (IDENTITY AND BIOMETRIC CAPABILITY) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.48 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Police and Other Legislation (Identity and Biometric Capability) Amendment Bill 2018. This bill aims to facilitate Queensland's participation in the identity-matching services national program. It will also allow our police to access Queensland driver's licence digital images for non-traffic offences, meaning they have another tool to identify potential suspects who may be involved in a crime. The bill also deals with the issues of homemade explosives.

This bill makes amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act which outlines the role our police play in our community. Ensuring that our police are supported and given the tools they need to ensure the law is upheld is one of the fundamental responsibilities of any government. Police need to know that they have the support of this parliament and their government as they carry out their important duties to protect the community, but how can we expect our boys in blue to protect us if we fail to protect them, give them the tools that they need or give them the support that they deserve? This is the question we should be asking as we hear this Labor government attempting to cobble together an ineffective solution to a string of dangerous incidents involving vehicles at the Mudgeeraba Police Station.

As this bill gives police another tool to use in the form of accessing digital licence imaging, sadly our police at Mudgeeraba are still being put at risk. Three times in the last three years the Mudgeeraba Police Station and the hardworking officers who work there have been put at risk by people behind the wheel of motor vehicles. In the most recent incident, a man intentionally rammed through the wall of the station, narrowly missing an officer who could easily have been killed. This was a shocking and cowardly attack on our police and it warranted an appropriate response to keep them safe in the future. That is why on 1 August 2016 I wrote to the then Labor minister for police to urge him to secure the safety of officers through the installation of boom gates at the police station. I wanted the minister's help to support our officers. Sadly, the response I received was dismissive and failed to commit to any new measures to keep our police safe.

After the current Minister for Police was sworn in, I wrote to him on 14 December 2016 imploring him to help where his predecessor would not and install these security measures. Again, we had to wait and were left wondering whether the Mudgeeraba officers were going to be kept safe or whether we were going to get another hollow promise. To date no additional security measures have been installed to prevent further incidents of this nature. That is why I was so surprised to read a recent media release from the Minister for Police, which I will table for the benefit of the House, where he announced an apparently sweeping response to a similar incident in Brisbane last year.

Tabled paper: Media release by the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services, Hon. Mark Ryan, titled 'Security audit into all police workplaces' [279](#).

It seems that when a man drives his vehicle towards the main entrance of police headquarters causing minor damage to the front stairs this calls for a massive statewide response, but a man driving his car purposely through the wall of a police station in Mudgeeraba elicits nothing more than a shrug of the shoulders. I wrote to the minister on 21 February this year expressing my surprise at his media release and his new-found concern for the safety of police. I again urged the minister as part of his security audit to ensure the Mudgeeraba Police Station receives the boom gates it needs to keep officers safe in the future. I table my letters to Labor ministers on this issue for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Bundle of letters from the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services, Hon. Mark Ryan, and the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Hon. Craig Crawford, regarding the deliberate ramming of the Mudgeeraba Police Station in July 2016 [273](#).

I now find that Labor's reported solution is going to be bollards, not boom gates, and they are apparently only going to be installed on one side of the station. These bollards would only protect the station from the western side, Minister, leaving the station exposed on the eastern side. Whilst I appreciate that there is action about to be taken, it was the western side of the police station where a man drove his car down the ramp through the garage where police have their cars and almost killed one of the officers.

Mr Ryan: You can always talk to me about it.

Ms BATES: I will again, Minister. Thank you for the bollards on the M1 side, but we certainly need to have bollards on the other side to prevent a repeat of what happened last year.

Today as we debate amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act and the ability of police to keep us safe, I want to reflect on another key issue on policing for my electorate in the Nerang division. I have spoken repeatedly in this House about hoons gathering in my electorate at the intersection of Nerang Murwillumbah Road and Pine Creek Road, putting the community at risk.

For three years I have been urging Labor ministers to finally do something about this dangerous hooping activity. The community is sick and tired of inaction from Labor and wants a plan to be put in place at this intersection. We know that more than 30 hoons at a time meet at this intersection. We know they have spotters in place to watch out for approaching police and warn their mates to disperse. We know that when the hoons are done for the night they set their tyres on fire in the dense Numinbah bushland, just several hundred metres from sleeping schoolchildren at the Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre. When police do arrive at this remote and isolated location, they are frequently outnumbered and put in danger. The latest example of this was just a few days ago at the weekend.

Our police in Nerang are frustrated. They have been proactive in their response to complaints for increased patrols and intelligence gathering, but we cannot expect our police to deal with this issue if we do not put a deterrent in place for the hoons at this intersection. We cannot expect our officers to do their jobs unless they have the infrastructure in place to help. That is why in the 2015 and 2017 state elections the LNP committed \$300,000 for CCTV cameras and a road realignment at this intersection which would have included concrete bollards to deter hoons and stop them from gathering there.

This announcement came after a submission from senior police from the South Eastern Region who confirmed this issue was considered urgent and that the area was at high risk. The submission said that covert policing strategies are not guaranteed to be successful and pose a significant risk to our police. Unfortunately, despite the LNP coming up with a solution, to date Labor has expressed no interest in dealing with this issue. It does not care about keeping the community or our police officers safe.

After two letters and a meeting with the then Labor minister in 2015, nothing happened. After two questions on notice in this place to the next Labor minister, nothing happened. Now we have a third Labor Minister for Police and yet again so far nothing has happened. I table for the benefit of the House my letter to the minister on 21 February where I again called for action. I am awaiting a response. I call on the minister to act now before a tragedy occurs. We need to take action to implement the LNP's solution to protect our local communities.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 February 2018, from the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, to the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services, Hon. Mark Ryan, regarding hooping activity in the Numinbah Valley [274](#).

As we debate this bill today which has implications for our police officers it would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the contribution of former Senior Sergeant Mark Anderson of the Mudgeeraba police. For many years Mark has ably led the Mudgeeraba police as they protected the Mudgeeraba community. At the end of last year he handed in his badge and began his well-deserved retirement. As well as being a hardworking old-school copper, Mark is also a fierce community advocate

who wanted to include the community in all that he did. Mark would never hesitate to roll up his sleeves to keep the community better informed or to travel to remote areas of his division to speak to residents about police matters. He knew that his role as a community leader did not stop when his shift ended.

It was Mark who kicked off the Mudgeeraba Police Community Consultative Committee, which is still going strong today. Our PCCC provides an opportunity for those who may be intimidated or overwhelmed by the formal complaints process to come along for an informal chat with their senior sergeant. It also gives residents a chance to raise concerns about broader issues that they want addressed. Mark believes in good, old-fashioned police work and Mudgeeraba is a much better place for it. I am lucky to be able to call Mark a friend after all of the support he has given me since I was first elected in 2009.

I have never hesitated to pick up the phone and talk to Mark about a law and order issue. My office has always been able to send through a constituent query to him when the police are best placed to assist. Mark's response to me and my office was always swift and they were always candid. Mark can certainly be a man of few words, but he has always got the job done. He always went above and beyond to keep Mudgeeraba safe and I want to place on the record of this House my personal gratitude to Mark Anderson for his years of outstanding service to the Queensland Police Service and the broader community. He will be sorely missed and his successor will have some very big shoes to fill.