




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (5.12 pm): This inept opposition has a proven track record on broken promises. They promised more police, then sacked more than 300 police personnel. They promised more police resources, then cut millions off the police budget. This government will always do the right thing and back our police.

When it comes to approved police strength, there are 710 police working hard in the community right across the Townsville police district, an increase of 104 since we came into government. That is more boots on the ground. Our police are more mobile, more agile, more visible and more responsive, and they are doing a great job each and every day to keep our community safe. I back them 110 per cent.

We promised more police and we delivered them. More than 50 police are already actively patrolling the streets of Townsville as part of Operation Romeo Seville. Townsville police out on the streets are getting results as I speak. Figures from the end of May show that Operation Romeo Seville has led to the arrest of 696 offenders on 2,507 charges. They are backed by the State Flying Squad, State Intelligence, the Road Policing Command, the Rapid Action and Patrol Group, the Tactical Crime Squad, the Property Crime Squad, the CIB, Child Protection and Investigation Unit and our general duties officers.

What has the LNP delivered? A failed boot camp experiment, an experiment that wasted millions of dollars. In the LNP's first budget, Townsville police were told to tighten their belts. Senior police were warned that extra cars and computers would not be provided for new police officers—new police coming out of the Townsville police academy that the LNP planned to sell. In that budget, funding for new operational equipment for police fell from \$77.5 million to \$53.8 million. That LNP budget for new and upgraded equipment, including vehicles, boats and traffic cameras, was the lowest in three years.

Those opposite failed to stand up to their federal colleagues to fund one of the most successful youth programs, Project Booyah's Framing the Future. The LNP voted against our amendments to get tough on bail. At the time when car thefts were on the rise, what did the LNP do? They slashed the police auto theft squad from 18 to three, axed funding to the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council and failed to fund a trial of automatic numberplate recognition—another broken promise. Our government restored all of that funding and more.

We are delivering body worn cameras to every uniformed first responder police officer in Townsville. When parliament sat in Townsville in September last year, the LNP had only one half-baked police policy: an unfunded, ill-thought-out helicopter.

Due to an error in the time allocated to the member, Mr Speaker authorised the incorporation of the remainder of the speech.

The experts crunched the number and found out that the LNP's one helicopter would be in the air for only an hour a day.

It was pathetic.

Because under this government, we have delivered two new helicopters for North Queensland.

Not one, but two.

A \$43 million investment.

And unlike the LNP's pie-in-the-sky promise, our helicopters will be in the air for a lot longer than an hour a day.

The biggest threat to safety in Townsville is the LNP.

Because under the LNP, there may not be a RAP—a Rapid Action Patrol Group in Townsville.

Nothing is sacred when it comes to the LNP's track record to cut, sell and sack.

Let's look at the LNP's own WRAP sheet.

They cut the jobs of more than 330 police personnel.

Cut the Police budget in Townsville in their first budget.

Wanted to sell the very academy that trains police recruits; and

Had a sneaky plan to privatise the Townsville prison.

Cut, Sack, Sell—that's all they know.

It's a shameful legacy.

They promised to boost police training and resources.

Then they cut training courses, firearms training, driver safety courses, taser training, and cut back on vital equipment.

They promised to address youth offending.

And came up with a failed boot camp experiment to breed fitter, faster criminals—an experiment that wasted millions of dollars.

And like a classic scene from Ground Hog Day, they want to do it all over again, and again, and again, and again. Did I say again?

They will never learn from their mistakes.

The LNP voted against our amendments to get tough on bail.

In our five-point plan to crack down on youth offending, we promised tougher action on bail.

Already, we've seen a 100% strike rate in North Queensland where the courts have revoked bail for serious young offenders.

They refused to publish annual crime figures.

This government brought them back.

The LNP will promise the world, but mark my words, they will never deliver.

Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government delivers on our promises.

And we have a plan for Queensland.

Our plan is to build safer communities and stronger regional economies in places like Townsville and to create jobs for Queenslanders at a time when jobs and job security are more important than ever before.