



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Ryan**


**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.07 am): Following a review, the multi-agency Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group will be revamped and refreshed. It will have strong leadership. It will now be led by the northern region's top police officer, Townsville based Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler and Youth Justice Deputy Director-General Phillip Brooks.

Since the group was first established, there have been significant changes to the way in which youth justice is dealt with in Townsville. Bail laws have been strengthened and they are showing early results, with more recidivist offenders being held in custody more often and for longer.

In acknowledging the efforts of my colleague Minister Linard and her department, there is ongoing investment in youth justice resources and intervention programs in Townsville, including the successful joint police and youth justice co-responder teams, and there are more police on the ground with more on the way. As a result, the Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group's key role now will be a revitalised focus on early intervention. That means delivering the appropriate programs and supports to young people and their families earlier and sooner.

Those changes follow a review that relied upon open and frank discussions with individuals working in the youth justice area in Townsville. Whilst those contributions must be kept confidential to respect the spirit in which they were given, in the interests of openness and transparency the government is sharing the reforms that flowed from the report. Those reforms and others will be made because we always want to do things better. That is what we are doing in Townsville: putting in place measures that further support community safety.