




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 9 November 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Knife Crime

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.49 am): I start by joining the Premier in acknowledging Brett and Belinda Beasley in the chamber today. Our thoughts remain with Brett, Belinda and all of Jack's loved ones today and, of course, every day. I also acknowledge the Queensland Police Union representative on the Gold Coast, Andy Williams; Queensland Police Union President Ian Leavers; Queensland Police Superintendent Rhys Wildman, who is in the gallery; and Queensland Police Service Acting Deputy Police Commissioner Mark Wheeler. They have all worked tirelessly with the police on the Gold Coast and this government to make today's announcement possible.

As the Premier has already advised the House, Queensland leads the way when it comes to cracking down on crime and increasing community safety. We are committed to doing whatever we can to enhance community safety. We are also committed to keeping weapons out of our safe night precincts and especially out of the hands of young people.

Brett and Belinda, through their tireless efforts at the Jack Beasley Foundation, have been fierce advocates for wandering powers to assist the Queensland Police Service in proactively identifying people breaking the law by carrying concealable weapons. I commend Brett and Belinda for their unwavering commitment to the memory of their son Jack. Jack Beasley's loved ones have called for these police powers and today the government continues its record of acting in the interests of community safety. This morning, the Beasleys supported this announcement when they said—

This is a step in the right direction and it's all for Jack. This is making the community safer—every weapon we get off the street is saving a life.

Brett and Belinda are right: it is for Jack, for young people and for all Queenslanders that today we announce the extension and expansion of the trial of Queensland's wandering powers. As the Premier has said, from now on I hope that everyone calls these laws 'Jack's Law'.

The Palaszczuk government has made this important change following the positive feedback regarding the Gold Coast wandering trial. As we have heard from the Premier, during the trial period on the Gold Coast police found a variety of weapons including knives, hand tools, knuckledusters, a screwdriver, a replica handgun and even an axe. Police found almost 200 weapons and wanded almost 17,000 people. Almost 500 offenders were charged as a result. Quite clearly, anyone who is carrying an axe, a replica gun or a knife in public is not only committing a crime but also endangering the lives of others.

Following the initial Gold Coast trial, the QPS commissioned Griffith University to conduct a review. I table that review.

Tabled paper: Griffith University: Griffith Criminology Institute report titled 'Review of the Queensland Police Service Wandering Trial', August 2022 [1863](#).

The review notes that the analysis of the trial was constrained by the impacts of COVID-19, the relatively short period of the trial and some incomplete data recording in the police database. The review makes a number of key findings including areas of increased knife detection by police and, importantly, feelings of improved public safety among stakeholders. In addition, the review provides some commentary around how the wandering framework can be improved and safeguards enhanced to ensure the powers are appropriately used by police. It is for all these reasons that the government is of the view that the trial of wandering should be extended for two years and expanded to all safe night precincts and public transport modes and associated infrastructure, including train stations and rail corridors.

These are extraordinary powers. While we all trust that the Queensland Police Service will use these powers well and properly, it is always important for there to be appropriate checks and balances in place to ensure the extended trial is rolled out effectively, accurately and carefully. Accordingly, as part of the amending legislation, the government will improve the authorising, accountability and recording framework for the powers. In addition, a further review will be conducted in two years to ensure the powers are being used appropriately and are having the intended effect. I fundamentally believe that these powers, Jack's Law, will make Queensland a safer place and will save lives.