




Speech By  
**Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2023

**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL;  
POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
BILL (NO. 2)**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.13 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill. Of course, this legislation is named in honour of Jack Beasley who tragically lost his life in a knife incident in 2019 on the Gold Coast, just a few months short of his 18th birthday. It was an absolute tragedy. The bill also remembers the passing of Raymond Harris who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise in September 2020. I extend my personal and sincere condolences and those of the Bundamba community to their families and loved ones.

I also acknowledge Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley. I join with others in paying tribute to their strength in the face of unfathomable sorrow. They have shown enormous strength to become strong advocates for positive change borne out of such deep tragedy. Since Jack's death, as founders of the Jack Beasley Foundation, Brett and Belinda have dedicated their lives to educating young people about the dangers of knife crime. It is because of their passion and dedication that we are here today, debating this bill.

The bill extends and expands on an earlier 12-month wanding trial that was held on the Gold Coast. The trial delivered outstanding results. The 12-month trial in two safe night precincts on the Gold Coast was a national first. It was the first of its kind in Australia. Its success was measured in terms of making real progress in combatting violence. From the commencement of the trial on 30 April 2021 to 29 January 2023, 21,326 people have been wanded, 242 weapons seized and 656 offenders charged with offences. The trial has shown that the practice of wanding and how it has been implemented and operationalised throughout the trial over the past 12 months has delivered real results.

The weapons that have been detected have included machetes, a bush saw, a tomahawk, sharpened screwdrivers, flick-knives, a replica gun, knuckledusters and tasers. That is absolutely extraordinary. I think that the vast majority of Queenslanders, whatever their age group or wherever they live, would be stunned by the range and the inherent violence of those weapons. There really is absolutely no reason why any law-abiding citizen would need to arm themselves with knives, knuckledusters, screwdrivers and the like.

Police conducting wanding sends a very clear message to anyone contemplating taking a weapon into a public place that not only is it an offence that is punishable under law but also it sends a very clear message that you will get caught. In fact, 656 offenders were caught during the trial. Jack's Law extends the trial for an additional two years and expands it to include all safe night precincts in Queensland and public transport hubs. People from the community of Bundamba, and right throughout Queensland, who might be going out in Fortitude Valley will now have the benefit of these wanding measures and the benefit of the protection provided by Jack's Law. Expanding the trial to capture all of the 15 safe night precincts, public transport stations and public transport vehicles will provide a greater level of certainty and public safety for Queenslanders.

It is important to understand what safe night precincts are. They are prescribed under the Liquor Act and are characterised by the presence of licensed premises and concentrations of pedestrian traffic, particularly in the evenings and on weekends—people going out to pubs, clubs and restaurants on the weekend at night-time and gathering. These areas tend to function increasingly as entertainment precincts where we have live music venues in these precincts, resulting in the congregation of large numbers of people. The sheer number of people in these areas can mean that the risk of harm being caused through the carriage of weapons is elevated. Because of that increased risk, there needs to be a response to it. That is what Jack's Law is providing: an effective response that has been based on evidence provided by the trial to the increased risk of people carrying knives and weapons into safe night precincts.

The rail network, like safe night precincts, is another area where we need to keep people as safe as possible and protected from any increased risk associated with people carrying knives. The Queensland Police Service Railway Squad in the first half of 2022 reported that there were 58 incidents of a person unlawfully possessing a knife. Just one is far too many. The reason for expanding the trial to capture areas of public transport stations, including public transport vehicles, is to provide that added public safety benefit and to reduce unlawful knife possession.

I thank the committee for its work in considering this bill. In the spirit of bipartisanship, I acknowledge the work of the member for Bonney in bringing this. Some things should be above partisan politics, whatever the particular differences might be. I think this is one of them. Congratulations to the minister for bringing forward this bill and to the Police Service for successfully conducting the trial that has led to the bill before parliament. This legislation is delivering nation-leading police powers to conduct metal detector wandering across our safe night precincts. Jack's Law will give more powers to keep our community safe. I commend the bill to the House.