




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Floods, Recovery; Police Service, Personnel

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.00 am): I start by associating myself with the remarks and condolences just expressed by the Premier. One year on from the South-East Queensland floods, our thoughts remain with the loved ones of those who lost their lives and all those who were impacted. I particularly remember one of the best of us, SES volunteer Merryl Dray, who lost her life in the service of her community. My thoughts as always are with Merryl's family, friends and colleagues from the Lowood SES Group and the SES family more broadly.

The Palaszczuk government is making the biggest investment in policing in Queensland in more than three decades. This investment will deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel positions, and it will deliver nearly 1,500 sworn police officer positions. These commitments are fully funded and fully allocated by the government. The funds and the positions have already been allocated to the Queensland Police Service by the government. The Queensland Police Service advises that the first two years of recruitment have hit their targets, and only two weeks ago another 89 recruits graduated from our police academy. Mr Speaker, you will be very pleased to hear that lots more are on the way.

I am advised that there are currently 345 recruits undergoing training at our Townsville and Brisbane police academies. In addition, 144 recruits are due to start training in only a few months in May. In addition, a further 50 recruits are due to start in June. In addition, police advise that nearly 600 police recruit candidates had registered to undertake testing this month for admission to the academies, and nearly 500 more candidates are registered to undertake entry testing next month.

The Queensland Police Service never stands still and is always planning for future contingencies. We have seen the impact COVID has had on labour markets across the nation in all industries and all sectors. Unemployment is at its lowest level in decades. Labour markets are tight. Police have responded by stepping up their recruitment activities. Police have conducted police academy open days and waived some of the application costs, among a range of other initiatives.

Today I can announce that the Queensland Police Service now intends to take advantage of its international reputation as a truly world-class policing service. Through an agreement with the federal government's Department of Home Affairs, the Queensland Police Service will now conduct a marketing campaign to attract new recruits from across the world. The Queensland Police Service has approval for 500 new international recruits to join the service each year for the next five years. This is a unique opportunity for Queensland and is the broadest agreement of its type in the nation. It is a unique opportunity for people across the globe to join a world-class organisation, and it is an unprecedented opportunity for the Queensland Police Service to significantly expand the diversity of its workforce. I call that a win-win. I commend the commissioner and the Queensland Police Service for their agility, flexibility and capacity to plan ahead for whatever challenges and contingencies may arise.

I also want to thank in particular the federal immigration minister, Andrew Giles, who has worked on this initiative for a number of months with me. He played a pivotal role in ensuring that this agreement could proceed. I would also like to thank Minister Farmer for her support and the introduction to Minister Giles on this particular subject, which we did last year. The Queensland Police Service played a vital role keeping Queenslanders safe during the pandemic.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, there is too much conversation in the House generally. I would like to hear the ministerial statement that the minister is delivering.

Mr RYAN: The pandemic in turn has thrown challenges at the police—and all sectors, for that matter—and their recruitment activities, but, as ever, the Queensland Police Service has risen to meet whatever challenges are thrown its way. While I am on my feet, I might take the opportunity to say that if there is anyone out there who is interested in joining a world-class policing agency now is the time to join the Queensland Police Service.