




Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

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

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate on the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022. The Community Support and Services Committee, in its report No. 26, has recommended to the Assembly that the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) be passed.

The main objective of the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) is to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The bill proposes amendments to the Police Service Administration Act, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act, the Weapons Act, the Fire and Emergency Services Act and the Disaster Management Act. The key issues raised by stakeholders and considered by the committee during the examination of the bill included: the police discipline system; reducing the legislative burden on the QPS; weapons licensing, in relation to the delegation of administrative power for more efficient processing of applications; and proposed amendments to the Fire and Emergency Services Act, in relation to clarifying the power to enter premises without a warrant, communicating local fire bans via community radio and the proposed new or amended offences.

Overall, the committee supported the purpose of the bill to enhance the operational effectiveness of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to ensure both of those bodies are able to meet the needs and expectations of Queensland communities. The Queensland Police Union stated that overall they supported the proposed amendments to the Police Service Administration Act and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. Recommendation No. 2 of the committee stated—

The committee recommends the Minister for Police and Corrective Services, through the Queensland Police Service, continue to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the application of the Police Service Administration Act 1990, and where improvements are identified, consider further enhancements to maintain optimal operational efficiency.

Another recommendation was—

The committee recommends the Queensland Government continue to engage with other Australian jurisdictions and the Commonwealth Government to ensure a consistent, efficient and safe approach to Australian weapons licencing practices.

The bill proposes changes to the Fire and Emergency Services Act and the Disaster Management Act to support the ongoing effectiveness of services delivered by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by clarifying when an authorised fire officer may enter premises without a warrant and by including proposed new or amended offences—for example, failing to maintain fire safety installations.

I now wish to move to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the hard work done by Brett and Belinda Beasley, the parents of Jack Beasley, who these proposed laws are named in honour of. Jack was a 17-year-old who was

tragically stabbed on a busy street in Surfers Paradise in 2019. Brett and Belinda established the Jack Beasley Foundation and they want Jack's legacy to be a safer community. I would also like to acknowledge the passing of Raymond Harris, who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise in September 2020. Jack's Law extends the Gold Coast knife-wandering trial for another two years and expands the powers for police to cover all 15 safe night precincts as well as public transport infrastructure.

The Community Support and Services Committee in its report has recommended that this bill be passed. The main objective of the bill is to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanners, or wands, to detect the unlawful possession of knives, which was carried out in Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise safe night precincts. The bill proposes amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act to: extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions to 30 April 2025; increase the scope of prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations, including public transport vehicles; and strengthen the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of a handheld scanning device.

The key issues raised by stakeholders and considered by the committee during the examination of the bill were around public safety, authorisations and safeguards, expansion to public transport stations and vehicles, and the importance of public messaging and education. The committee was satisfied the Queensland Police Service will support police officers with appropriate training and comply with reporting requirements to ensure police undertake wandering searches appropriately.

The committee made recommendations to support the expansion and extension of the trial, including that the Queensland Police Service be adequately resourced across the state and that a public education program be implemented that is relevant and appropriate to the unique characteristics of safe night precincts, the public transport setting and the Queensland community. The committee also recommended that the extended and expanded trial be independently evaluated prior to consideration of further legislative reform. I commend the bills to the House.