




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Community Safety

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.03 am): The Miles government has a strong Community Safety Plan building on current initiatives. We are committed to keeping our community safe, actively tackling the complex causes of youth crime, targeting serious repeat offenders, increasing our front line and, importantly, supporting victims and their families. As part of this multifaceted approach the Miles government is committed to building the necessary infrastructure such as a new youth detention centre in Cairns.

Youth detention centres play a crucial role in the management, rehabilitation and reintegration of young offenders into learning, earning or training. This new centre in Cairns will include therapeutic design elements such as cultural, educational and mental health support which aim to provide rehabilitation for young people and improve community safety. Potential locations for the centre in Cairns are currently being explored, including undertaking appropriate due diligence and site investigations with careful consideration for community input and guidance from local traditional owners. The objective is to choose a site that best serves the community and environment, minimising any potential impact on nearby areas.

As part of the initial investigations the department of youth justice is working with my department through the Coordinator-General providing assistance in the project which will be further informed once a decision has been made on the preferred site. By taking a coordinated approach across government, we are harnessing all levers to determine the most effective and efficient approval pathway to ensure project construction and delivery time frames.

Cairns is already home to a range of programs and services dedicated to supporting young people and addressing the root causes of offending behaviour. The new 40-bed detention centre will complement these existing efforts, providing an additional layer of support and intervention, contributing to positive outcomes for young people and the broader community closer to home.

The construction and operation of the detention centre will also bring a significant economic boost to Cairns by creating jobs during the construction phase. In addition, the operation of the centre will provide employment opportunities across various sectors including health care and education as well as cultural programs partnered with First Nations people. As part of a commitment to maximising benefits for the local community, sourcing goods and services locally will be prioritised, further bolstering the regional economy.

We are committed to doing all we can to keep the community safe and this project is a key part of this commitment. Our Community Safety Plan is a \$1.28 billion holistic, evidence-based approach to these complex issues by providing support to victims, delivering for our front line, intervening when people offend, detaining offenders and preventing crime before it occurs.