

**Question on Notice
No. 517
Asked on 20 April 2005**

MRS LAVARCH asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the role of community corrections in the Pine Rivers area –

How does community service benefit our local community?

ANSWER:

Community corrections is one of the operational arms of the Department of Corrective Services. Community corrections staff ensures that the conditions of court-based and post-prison orders are enforced and, where prescribed, reparation activities in the community are fulfilled. Staff also provide advisory services to the courts and community corrections boards.

Staff at Community Corrections offices protect the community and reduce recidivism by supervising offenders in the community in which they live. They encourage offenders to adopt more pro-social attitudes and behaviours.

Pine Rivers Community Corrections Area Office encompasses the Pine Rivers Shire north of Brisbane, including the suburbs of Albany Creek, Eatons Hill, Murrumba Downs, Bald Hills, Frenches Forest, Narangba, Griffin, Ocean View, Brendale, Highvale, Petrie, Cashmere, Joyner, Samford, Dakabin, Kurwongbah, Strathpine, Dayboro, Lawnton, Warner, Draper, Mango Hill, Whiteside, Mount Pleasant, Jolly's Outlook, Mt Glorious, Mount Nebo and Wight's Mountain.

Six staff work at the Pine Rivers Community Corrections Area Office. Community correctional officers supervise offenders who are on a variety of orders including probation, prison probation, intensive correction, parole, home detention, community service and fine option. One officer is primarily responsible for supervising offenders ordered to perform community service work in the community.

The completion of community service enables offenders to make reparation to the community as well as providing positive social experiences and work skills that otherwise may not have been available to those offenders. It also ensures that offenders have the opportunity to continue to fulfil their employment and/or family obligations.

In turn, community service generates significant benefits for the local community by supporting the work of many local "not for profit" organisations such as Meals on Wheels, the Lawnton Show Society, the Pine Rivers Shire Council, the Queensland Ambulance Service, Lifeline and North Pine Country Park. Through these projects the offenders perform work such as kitchen duties, landscaping and painting.

In the past 12 months, approximately 300 offenders in the Pine Rivers area have performed more than 8,000 hours of work to the value of approximately \$120,000 to the local community. In the past month alone offenders have performed 533 hours of community service with a value to the community of nearly \$8,000.

In keeping with the Department's focus on "Strengthening Community Safety" Pine Rivers has undertaken a number of initiatives including monthly meetings with the Petrie Police Tactician/Intelligence Group. These meetings focus on the joint exchange of relevant information regarding offenders. As a result of this combined agency approach with officers from the Petrie Police Station, the Pine Rivers area office ensures the effective and prompt return of offenders to custody, if necessary, to protect the community's safety.

Additionally, monthly meetings are held with Petrie Police Domestic Violence Officer specifically in regards to offenders who are currently on supervision for domestic violence. This assists in ensuring that victims of domestic violence are protected. Meetings are also held with key stakeholders to develop a domestic violence perpetrators' programme to assist in rehabilitating offenders and ultimately reducing the number of domestic violence incidents in the Pine Rivers area.

The area manager attends combined agency meetings with the local magistrate and the Inspector in charge of Petrie Police as well as monthly meetings with the Petrie Juvenile Aid Bureau and regular meetings with the Youth Justice Service, Mental Health Unit and Prince Charles Hospital.

Funding of \$340,000 has been committed in the Department of Corrective Services' budget for new premises for the Pine Rivers Area Office and options for the new office are being assessed.