

**Question on Notice
No. 733
Asked on 24 May 2005**

MR LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the launch of the Child Abduction Alert Program last year and used for the first time this month –

Will she outline the role of the community in this new crime prevention initiative?

ANSWER:

The community has an integral role in the Child Abduction Alert Program, which was introduced in south-east Queensland in December 2004 and was established statewide in April this year.

Through the program, police would be able to declare an alert when they have reasonable grounds for believing that:

- a missing child under the age of 17 years has been abducted;
- the child is at risk of serious harm or death;
- there is sufficient descriptive information available to make an alert effective; and
- an urgent public broadcast will assist the location and safe recovery of the child.

Child abduction alerts work in partnership with the media, community and other agencies and organisations.

The abduction alerts involve the urgent public broadcast of information about a child abduction through the media and other stakeholders to facilitate the search for, location and the safe recovery of abducted children. This means, media and other organisations and agencies within the community, including taxi companies, Department of Main Roads and RACQ, use their resources to quickly inform the general community about a child abduction.

Once information about a child abduction has been broadcast, the community is able to act as eyes and ears for the authorities. Equipped with the information, members of the public then have the ability to provide a vital source of information to the Queensland Police Service.

In the case of an abduction alert, the community can use two methods to contact the Police. People are encouraged to urgently pass on to police any information they may have by calling 000, if the person has specific emergency information, such as a sighting of the child. Alternatively, they are encouraged to call 131 564, a dedicated child abduction alert telephone number, if they have more general information about the incident.

The Child Abduction Alert Program initiative is the first of its kind in Australia and is focussed on increasing children's safety in Queensland