Question on Notice
No. 558
Asked on 17 April 2008

MS CROFT asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport (MS SPENCE)—

QUESTION:

Will she provide an update on the future of Neighbourhood Watch?

ANSWER:

For 20 years the Neighbourhood Watch program has given Queenslanders an opportunity to play their part in improving personal safety and household security, and reducing crime and the fear of crime in their own communities.

In March 2007 a community review of the program commenced and was co-ordinated by the Member for Springwood, Barbara Stone and Member for Keppel, Paul Hoolihan, to ensure that all 628 Neighbourhood Watch areas across Queensland keep pace with our changing society, and remain relevant and contemporary.

On 17 April 2008, I tabled in Parliament a report entitled 'The Future of Neighbourhood Watch: A Queensland Review'. This report makes nine recommendations aimed at: expanding the organisation's traditional functions; concentrating on contemporary neighbourhood issues; increasing membership of Neighbourhood Watch groups; promoting the involvement of youth; increasing information technology options; revamping traditional communication strategies; assessing ongoing promotion; redeveloping the Neighbourhood Watch brand; and redesigning the Neighbourhood Watch newsletters into district-based crime bulletins.

The Queensland Police Service is communicating the findings of the review to all Neighbourhood Watch groups in Queensland. As part of this process, in May and June 2008 the Neighbourhood Watch State Office will facilitate Neighbourhood Watch forums in all eight police regions. Local communities will be consulted in relation to the implementation of the nine recommendations from the review as well as the recommendations from an earlier Queensland Police Service review.

I look forward to seeing these recommendations implemented with the support of the Queensland Police Service, Neighbourhood Watch groups and other stakeholders.

As I recently announced in Parliament, Suncorp has agreed to provide sponsorship for Neighbourhood Watch for the next three years to cover the cost of public liability insurance.

The Neighbourhood Watch program in Queensland is strong and secure, and I am confident Neighbourhood Watch will continue to meet community needs well into the future.