

**Question on Notice  
No. 658**

**Asked on 11 September 2013**

MR STEVENS asked the Minister for Police and Community Safety (MR DEMPSEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide an update on how the new initiatives implemented by the Newman Government are helping curb the infiltration by interstate bkie gangs?

ANSWER:

The Newman Government is determined to disrupt the criminal activities of organised crime groups, including Criminal Gangs.

Criminal Gangs are an ongoing investigative and intelligence priority for the Queensland Police Service (QPS), given their known involvement in criminal activity and propensity for violence.

The QPS's Task Force Hydra conducts investigations into organised criminal networks operating within OMCGs in Queensland. With the support of the Road Policing Command, the QPS also coordinates targeted policing responses to national Criminal Motorcycle Gang runs. These operational responses assist in protecting members of the community, enforcing the road rules, and preventing and detecting criminal offences by members of Criminal Gangs.

This Government has supported the important work of Task Force Hydra by providing nine additional investigators and an additional intelligence officer. We have also increased the size of the South Eastern Police Region's Major and Organised Crime Squad by 10 positions, bringing the Squad's strength to 30 police officers.

Following a number of recent disturbing incidents involving violence by members of Criminal Gangs on the Gold Coast, this Government has announced an immediate crackdown on the activities of these gangs. The QPS will be provided with whatever additional resources are needed to carry out this crackdown.

As part of a multi-faceted approach to organised crime, this Government recently introduced new unexplained wealth legislation through the enactment of the *Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Act 2013*. This legislation will strip criminals of their assets and give Queensland the toughest laws in the nation for dealing with organised crime. It casts a wider net to capture the organised crime figures that have previously escaped charges. Drug traffickers will be forced to forfeit all of their relevant property to the State, including gifts they have given to others in the six years before the offence.

This Government has also introduced laws providing for:

- mandatory minimum sentencing for the possession and trafficking of firearms;

- doubled penalty for assault of a police officer, and minimum mandatory non-parole period of 25 years for murder of a police officer; and
- tougher penalties for drug trafficking.

In addition, this Government is fast-tracking the introduction of tough new laws to combat criminal gangs. Under these planned laws, members of organised crime groups will face mandatory penalties, bans and losing their bikes or vehicles. The proposed measures will target what these people do, where they go and who they fraternise with. Members of criminal organisations will face mandatory prison sentences if they are convicted of serious offences. Among the mandatory penalties will be a minimum one year in prison for serious assault of a police officer. There will also be provisions allowing for their motorbikes or other vehicles to be confiscated.

By restricting their movements and operations, the community is protected and it prevents these groups from running their criminal enterprises.

Proposed bans for gang members include:

- gathering in groups;
- attending specific locations;
- wearing club colours inside licensed venues, including pubs, nightclubs and restaurants;
- owning, operating or working in tattoo parlours; and
- promoting or recruiting for their organisation.

We are also further reviewing Queensland's criminal organisation legislation to see if more improvements can be made.

In relating to funding initiatives, this Government has decided to give Crime Stoppers up to \$5 million over the next 12 months for additional payments of rewards relating to information received about criminal gangs. Cash payments of up to \$20,000 could be made for information leading to the arrest of Criminal Gang members for serious offences involving firearms, dangerous drugs, extortion and robbery. Payments of up to \$1,000 could be made for information leading to a successful raid on a drug lab, or the location of unlawfully possessed guns, ammunition or other weapons. Rewards of up to \$500,000 will be offered in the event of a successful prosecution or shut down of a criminal gang, which will be identified under this Government's tough new laws. Anyone with information is asked to call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. Callers can remain anonymous.

These initiatives send a clear message that this Government will not tolerate criminal activities being carried out in Queensland by organised crime gangs.