




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Record of Proceedings, 14 September 2016

MOTION: CRIME

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (6.06 pm): Tonight I rise to join my colleagues to hold this incompetent government to account. Therefore, I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. Time and time again I have stood in this chamber to highlight the massive population growth in the northern Gold Coast and the desperate need we have for additional services. We do not need a minister who blames victims of crime instead of keeping our communities safe.

My electorate takes in one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. Areas around Pimpama are growing at the rate of 20 per cent per year. This massive growth is predicted to continue for the next decade or two. On top of this, we hear rumours—and these rumours are rife in my community—about the possible closure of my local police beat. These police beats are the corner stones of my local community. They give officers the opportunity to work with the community and obtain local knowledge of the area. They are seen as the community cops, friends of the community, someone who is there and is always available. The very notion of closing down these critical hubs is absolutely ridiculous at best. These rumours are coming from serving officers and they are rife in my local community.

I say to the minister: we do not want police cuts; we need more police in my area. If we look at the statistics for the Gold Coast over the last 12 months, we see that homicide rates have increased by 27.3 per cent; assaults are up 47.4 per cent; robberies, 13.9 per cent; unlawful entry, 20 per cent; and unlawful use of motor vehicles, 20 per cent. We only need to look at our local newspapers to see headlines such as 'Gold Coast in the grip of a new crime wave and police say tourists and new residents to blame'.

A criminologist from Bond University highlighted the surge of 28 per cent in offences involving property, and that is up 21 per cent on the Gold Coast and does not correspond across the rest of Queensland. He says that the number of assaults have increased by 44 per cent on the 'glitter strip' and that senior police are shocked at the increase in reported crime but they blame it on increased population and tourist numbers. Time and time again my colleagues and I have written to the minister seeking additional police resources for our area: 14 April 2015, 27 July 2015, 20 November 2015 and 6 July 2016. On 6 July I had to thank the minister for giving us a measly 20 more officers when we requested 50 to put us on par with other police districts.

Gold Coast Bulletin headlines state: 25 August, 'Gold Coast risks getting a Beirut brand unless a crackdown is launched on ice attacks'; 29 August, 'Police arrest Ormeau woman and young male after four-day crime spree on Gold Coast and M1'; 30 August, 'Family describe terror as masked men stormed their home and threatened to shoot them'; and lastly, 'Gold Coast teens are out of control with four arrested in just 24 hours'. This just shows that this government and this minister are completely out of touch.