



Speech by

Glen Elmes

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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NOOSA ELECTORATE, POLICE RESOURCES

Mr ELMES (Noosa—Lib) (9.59 pm): I rise tonight to speak on an issue of real concern to the electorate of Noosa—that is, the level of forward planning by the Beattie Labor government on police strength in the Noosa, Coolum and Eumundi police divisions. We are fortunate in my community that very serious crime is reasonably rare. What does occur—and it is increasing—is minor crimes like hooning and vandalism which can only be countered by having police on the streets when they are needed.

These crimes impact on the quality of life and feeling of security that residents have, particularly our senior citizens. This, of course, is exacerbated during holiday times and weekends when the Noosa electorate also becomes the temporary home to thousands upon thousands of tourists.

The gazetted strength of the Noosa police division in 1991 was 31 officers when Noosa had a population of 26,400. Today, at the end of 2006, the gazetted strength of the Noosa police division is 32, with a resident population of almost 50,000—an increase of about 95 per cent. In plain terms, that means that in 1991 there was one police officer for 851 people; in 2006, there is one police officer for 1,562 people. I have only mentioned here statistics relating to our resident population and not the dramatic increases that take place throughout the year at school holiday times, long weekends and weekends generally.

If the Labor government is serious about providing what is its most important function—that is, the security of citizens—then proper planning must be undertaken and additional officers must be allocated to my electorate. Specifically, I call for an additional two officers to be assigned to each of the Hastings Street and Tewantin police beats and the establishment of a new police beat at what is referred to locally as the Noosa Shire Business Centre or, more formally now, Noosa Civic. The establishment of a new police beat at Noosa Civic will cater not specifically to Noosa's new business and shopping precinct but also to the many thousands of new residents moving into Peregrin Springs and the new Coolum Ridges development. When complete, these two developments will house, conservatively, more than 6,500 people.

The Noosa electorate is one of the jewels in the crown of the Queensland tourism industry. In order for our tourism industry's goals to continue to be realised, the government needs to ensure that residents and holiday-makers alike feel secure in their surroundings. It is only in this way that continued investment in tourism and the much needed jobs that come with it will continue.