



Speech by

**Andrew Cripps**

**MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK**

Hansard Tuesday, 30 October 2007

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## **MOURILYAN POLICE STATION**

**Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (10.11 pm): Earlier this year I received a letter from Mr Ted Hammerton and a petition signed by 122 people from the Mourilyan community expressing concern about the state of disrepair of the Mourilyan Police Station and requesting support to address this situation by making representations to the state government. Tonight, I table this non-conforming petition on behalf of the Mourilyan community.

*Tabled paper:* Non conforming petition relating to the Mourilyan police station.

I was pleased to receive this letter and the petition, because it confirmed my view that the Mourilyan Police Station was in an unacceptable state of disrepair. I had already written to the minister for police and corrective services, the Hon. Judy Spence, and the Queensland Commissioner of Police, Mr Bob Atkinson, expressing my concern about the state of disrepair of the Mourilyan Police Station. I subsequently forwarded a copy of the petition to the minister and the police commissioner in support of my previous representations, demonstrating that the local Mourilyan community also felt strongly about this matter.

In March 2006 during Tropical Cyclone Larry, the Mourilyan Police Station was extensively damaged, as was the station officer's residence. It has been pleasing to see that the station officer's residence has been substantially repaired. Minor interim repairs have been made to the police station, but these have not addressed the full array of problems and have certainly not been completed. The Mourilyan Police Station is an older building and I wonder how much funding can be justifiably spent on such an old building before the replacement of the station will be considered.

One point I wish to make clear is that it would be unacceptable to me as the local member and to the Mourilyan community for the Mourilyan Police Station to be closed. The Mourilyan Police Station services a wide geographical area in addition to the Mourilyan community and the lack of a police presence in the area would be a concern, particularly when the local police officer has successfully established such a strong relationship with the local community.

The Queensland government ought to give strong consideration to making an allocation for the replacement of the Mourilyan Police Station. Earlier this year the minister opened a prefabricated police station building at Halifax in my electorate. This facility has been welcomed and by all reports is very functional. Another prefabricated police station similar to the one opened at Halifax would be an ideal solution for the situation at Mourilyan.

In late June this year the police minister replied to my representations, advising that Q-Build had been engaged to assess the condition of the Mourilyan Police Station to determine the scope of required works and necessary repairs. To date it is difficult to see any improvements in the condition of the building, so tonight I repeat my concerns. I hope the minister can make an appropriate allocation to fully repair or replace the Mourilyan Police Station as soon as possible. The local police officer in charge of the Mourilyan Police Station, like all Queensland police officers across the state, deserves to work in reasonable conditions.