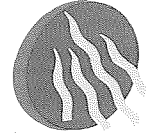




Hon Neil Roberts MP
Member for Nudgee



Queensland
Government

Ref No: (03356-2009)
File No: (C/09/00356)

Minister for Police, Corrective Services
and Emergency Services

23 OCT 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 September 2009, regarding a petition presented to Parliament on 2 September 2009 requesting that the decision to house offenders released under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* in the Etna Creek area be overturned.

The Queensland Government introduced legislation in 2003 that provides for the continued detention of dangerous sex offenders or the strict supervision of offenders after their release from custody. This legislation is entitled the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003*. Before this legislation was introduced, these types of offenders were released from custody with no supervision at all.

The Government argues a case in the Supreme Court that an offender should remain in custody as evidence suggests that the offender poses a risk of re-offending if released unsupervised. The Supreme Court will not always agree and order that an offender be released into the community under strict conditions. Queensland Corrective Services are required to abide by the court's decision as any member of the public is also required to do.

The most significant issues relating to the management of offenders subject to the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* is the ability to accommodate them in the community. Since the introduction of the legislation, the location of appropriate accommodation upon release has proven problematic. Transitional accommodation such as that being implemented on the Capricornia Prison Reserve is one way to address this issue.

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The Government recognises that reintegrating sex offenders back into the community is not an easy task. However, in assessing the suitability of accommodation for these offenders, Queensland Corrective Services carefully scrutinises the accommodation to ensure it provides adequate protection to the community. This includes determining that the accommodation complies with the order requirements, proximity to key locations such as schools, Queensland Corrective Services offices and the Queensland Police Service to ensure adequate supervision and surveillance.

Queensland Corrective Services also considers the availability of rehabilitation and support services so offenders are able to access sufficient support to assist with their reintegration back into the community.

The Government has responded to the previously raised community concerns regarding the placement of accommodation for offenders managed under the *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* through engagement with the Rockhampton Regional Council and the local State Government Member, publishing information about the accommodation on the Queensland Corrective Services web site, attending a public meeting with concerned members of the community, as well as responding to individual correspondence and phone contact.

The Government takes very seriously the safety of the community. We will continue to work with other government and community agencies to more effectively manage sex offenders in the Queensland community.

I trust this information has been of assistance in addressing your concerns. Should you require any further information, please contact Mr Fred Gwinn (Senior Policy Advisor) of my office on telephone number (07) 3239 0199.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Roberts', written in a cursive style.

Neil Roberts MP
**Minister for Police, Corrective Services
and Emergency Services**