



Queensland
Government

Ref: 8737 P9 TMc

04 JUN 2012

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 1850-12 posted with the Legislative Assembly on 30 January 2012. The Principal petitioner is Mr Matthew Churchill of Port Douglas.

The petition calls for security cameras along areas of the Port Douglas CBD to deter violence and assist police in the prosecution of offenders. The petition also requests the House assist in the funding of security measures.

I referred this matter to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) which advises that a number of private venues in Port Douglas have installed CCTV, including some late-trading licensed venues. The QPS has also confirmed that this equipment has assisted police in investigating matters and identifying offenders after incidents have occurred. However, at present CCTV is not installed to cover public areas of the Port Douglas CBD.

The purchase, installation and maintenance of CCTV equipment in a public safety role are an expensive exercise. It is an initiative which has undoubtedly proven successful in other areas and has led to a number of community safety benefits. Not the least of which has been to assist police with the investigation of offences and identification of offenders. Nevertheless, the installation of cameras is only part of the solution.

Cameras must also be monitored and maintained and even a modest camera system represents a significant capital outlay. Once a system is put in place significant ongoing costs must be met. This includes the development and maintenance of a facility to view the cameras, employment of monitoring staff and ongoing maintenance.

It is also important to note that responsibility for the installation and maintenance of public area CCTV systems rests with local government. It is local government which has to make the decision whether the substantial funding required for installing and maintaining a CCTV system represents a net benefit to the community.

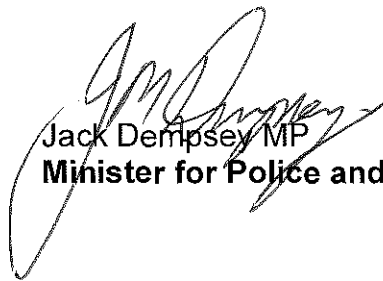
I am advised that while the QPS supports the installation of security camera systems, it is not in a position to contribute to the cost of doing so. At this time therefore, the issue of funding for CCTV equipment in Port Douglas CBD is a matter for the Cairns Regional Council. However, the Queensland Government supports local government with a funding program that can provide up to 40% of the costs of infrastructure such as security surveillance equipment. This is through the Local Government Grants and Subsidy Program (LGGSP). I understand the 2012-13 LGGSP is due for release shortly. Councils will be informed when this program is open for submissions.

There have been incidents of violence and anti-social behaviour in Port Douglas and these are often associated with liquor consumption, whether at licensed premises or otherwise. However, it is important to remember that Port Douglas remains a town with relatively low rates of offences. It would be disingenuous to try to deny that trouble occurs from time to time, however it needs to be recognised that when compared with centres with similar demographics, Port Douglas remains a safe place to live, work and visit. There is no doubt that Cairns Regional Council will take these factors into account when considering whether their existing CCTV system could be expanded to cover the Port Douglas CBD.

Assistant Commissioner Katarina Carroll, Far Northern Region, Queensland Police Service is available on telephone 4040 4912 for any further assistance required.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Jack Dempsey MP
Minister for Police and Community Safety