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2010-11 Budget funds 16 new police officers - making the community safer

Through the 2010-11 ACT Budget, the Government is investing in extra policing resources to further bolster community safety with a \$9.175 million boost in funding that will provide an additional 16 police officers, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Simon Corbell, announced today.

The officers will form dedicated policing teams, one to target road safety through the use of Recognition and Analysis of Plates Identified (RAPID) technology and the other formed specifically to enforce new liquor reforms as part of a major overhaul of liquor laws in the ACT.

The Government will fund ACT Policing to the tune of \$4.1 million over four years to expand the RAPID system to increase road safety.

"The RAPID system, fitted into two dedicated police cars, will enable police to instantly identify whether a vehicle is unregistered, uninsured or stolen.

"A dedicated police team will allow ACT Policing to extend the RAPID technology to make our roads safer as well as prevent crime.

"A limited trial during the first half of 2009-10 resulted in 2,348 individual vehicles and people of interest being identified with 1,820 infringements being issued. Of the drivers apprehended, more than 200 were suspended or disqualified. ACT Policing was also able to recover stolen motor vehicles, execute warrants, issue summonses and make arrests – all of which contribute to overall community safety in the ACT.

"The Government is providing the 10 police officers to enforce the proposed major suite of reforms to the Liquor Act - the first in over 30 years," Mr Corbell said.

"In addition to the increase in police numbers, the Office of Regulatory Services' capacity will be boosted with an additional \$1.338 million over four years for two positions to support the new liquor reforms. This will better inform the Commissioner for Fair Trading about how liquor licensees intend to manage the risks associated with their businesses to protect the needs of the community."

The Government is continuing discussions with industry stakeholders about a risk based licensing system which is expected to offset the cost of implementation and enforcement of these reforms.

"These reforms are essential in order to change the current culture of binge drinking and tackle anti-social and violent behaviour related to excessive alcohol consumption," Mr Corbell said.

"The community has had enough of the increasing number of alcohol-related incidents and these reforms show that the Government is acting to change that trend.

“The Government has released an exposure draft bill for consultation. I look forward to continuing to work with the community through feedback on the bill to ensure we achieve an effective outcome for the whole community,” Mr Corbell said.

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