

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN REGIONAL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Name: Mr Michael Kemp MP
Position: Member for Oxley
Date Received: 29 May 2024



Michael KEMP MP

Member for OXLEY



28 May 2024

Mr Edmond Atalla MP
Chair - Committee on Law and Safety
lawsafety@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Atalla

I ask that the following information be forwarded to the *Community Safety in regional and rural communities* Inquiry on behalf of Oxley constituents who recently attended the Oxley regional crime community forum held at South West Rocks.

South West Rocks is a small coastal town in the Kempsey Shire Council, population 5443 with a steady growth rate including a large number of retirees.

More than 200 people attended the forum and a survey was circulated of which 104 responses were returned on the day. Of the 104 responses to the two questions outlined below, the following results have been observed:

1. Have you been a victim of crime or experienced anti-social behaviours?

- 14% stated that they have experienced a home or business invasion
- 27% had been physically or verbally assaulted
- 43% said they were victims of break enter or steal
- 30% had property damaged or vandalised
- 10% reported kids on bikes without helmets riding dangerously
- 32% state they are suffering from mental stress as a result of the crime

2. What would you like to see changed?

- 56% want a change in the law and court system for offenders
- 78% would like to see 24 hour policing at South West Rocks
- 11% state their previous response from Police was not timely
- 7% suggest CCTV in the CBD and on Spencer's Creek bridge
- 23% seek more investment in youth education and sport
- 9% suggest repeat offenders should attend military/boot camp, and be assigned a mentor other than a parent
- 21% say parents of the offenders should be made responsible for child/youth crime and damage

As you will note, these results are very compelling and of deep concern to our local community and I seek your due and full consideration as part of the inquiry.

Kind regards



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THE NATIONALS
for Regional NSW



Michael KEMP MP

Member for OXLEY



Mr Edmond Atalla MP
Chair – Committee on Law and Safety
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31 May 2024

Dear Mr Atalla,

I ask that the following information be forwarded to the *Community Safety in Regional and Rural Communities* Inquiry on behalf of the Oxley constituents who recently attended the Regional Crime Community Forum held at Nambucca Heads.

Nambucca Heads is a small coastal town in the Nambucca Valley Shire, containing a population of 7,115 and continues to steadily grow with young families and retirees drawn to the region.

Almost 100 people attended the Forum, and a survey was circulated of which 34 responses were returned. Of those 34 responses to the two questions outlined below, the following results had been observed:

1. Have you been a victim of crime or experienced anti-social behaviours?

- 8% experienced a home or business invasion
- 61% experienced physical or verbal assault
- 70% were victims of break and enters or theft
- 67% had property damaged or vandalised
- 23% reported kids on bikes without helmets or dangerously rising
- 41% experience mental stress as a result of crime

2. What would you like to see changed?

- 35% want a change in the law and court system for offenders
- 47% would like additional police resources including more patrols or police presence
- 14% want a timely response from police
- 23% would like further surveillance and CCTV cameras around town
- 35% would like an investment into youth education and support
- 17% want a review into social security, security for youth and reoffending youth to look at boarding school or armed forces
- 11% would like laws that make parents or guardians responsible for offending youth

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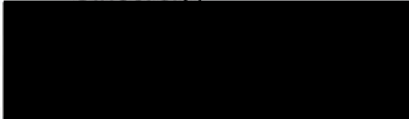


Michael KEMP MP
Member for **OXLEY**



As you will note, these results are very compelling and of deep concern to our local community, and I seek your due and full consideration as part of the Inquiry.

Sincerely,



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Michael **KEMP** MP

Member for **OXLEY**



Mr Edmond Atalla MP
Chair – Committee on Law and Safety
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31 May 2024

Dear Mr Atalla,


While I appreciate the opportunity to make a submission to the Regional Crime Inquiry, I must insist crime and anti-social behaviours has become dire in regional New South Wales, and for those living within the Oxley Electorate, there is no more time to wait. To address this submission bluntly, regional crime is now a matter of urgency and for many in my electorate, a matter of life and death.

Regional New South Wales has the right to feel safe and secure in their neighbourhood and their own homes but for many, 'home' has become a cage of fear and sleepless nights. Our government response is not good enough when violent crimes in our small towns is up 15 per cent compared to the four per cent of Sydney – and that 15 per cent leap has tormented the 9325.32 square kilometres that comprises Oxley.

Oxley consists of four Local Government Areas including Bellingen Shire, Nambucca Valley Shire, Kempsey Shire and Port Macquarie-Hastings. Before I delve into regional solutions, I think its paramount to understand the steep increases in crime that is downright disturbing and terrifying for the people living in these borders.

According to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOSCAR) the four major offences increasing significantly in the past five years include motor vehicle theft, sexual assault, domestic assault and non-domestic assault. For Kempsey Shire, motor vehicle thefts are up by 65.2 per cent over the past two years, non-domestic assault up by 27, and break-and-enters by 11.7 percent over five.

If we break this down to Kempsey Shire juvenile offenders, a main call of contention for Oxley, committing assault has jumped by 55.3 percent over a two-year trend, while malicious damages to property have also skyrocketed by 113.6 percent. In 2023, there was 150 incidents of theft, including 36 motor vehicle theft and 51 incidents of break and enters in a dwelling.

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In the Bellingen Shire, malicious damages to property are up 37.4 percent in two years, Nambucca Valley witnessed a 25 per cent increase of breached bail conditions over five and Port Macquarie-Hastings leapt by 16.2 for sexual assault. These statistics here are a brief snapshot of what my constituents are facing, and I implore you to research the many other increases that are not enclosed within this submission.

From my personal interactions with constituents, the message is loud and clear – they are fed up. I have hosted two Regional Crime Community Forums in South West Rocks and the Nambucca Valley and the cry is for solving juvenile crime, increasing police resources and drastic changes to our judicial system.

We must significantly invest in grassroot diversionary programs that know and understand our regional children. This is a pivotal step to altering their life course, with the right mentorship and educational, sporting pathways.

For repeat offenders, there should not be a second chance. Our judicial system needs to reflect the community outcry and strengthen its bail laws - even if that includes a revoking of bail. This is also extremely important for the many women and children facing domestic and family violence. They need guaranteed protections like at home services, housing and legal protection in the courtroom.

It is time to reevaluate our policing powers and model legislation around Queensland's *Jack's Law*. This will give police a 'wand' or 'scan' people for knives without a warrant in designation areas, including transport hubs, shopping centres and other crowded places. If there is a remote threat of weapons in our community, it should be addressed immediately.

Significant attention and investment need to take place in regional New South Wales, protecting our most at risk and vulnerable people – including children that are heading down a criminal path. I am asking the Committee to put these recommendations into tangible action and put the safety of everyone in Oxley, in regional New South Wales at the forefront.

Sincerely

Michael Kemp MP
Member for Oxley