

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

17 December 2003

### DRAPER CALLS FOR REVIEW OF DOCS HELPLINE

Independent Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper, has called upon the Minister for Community Services, Ms Carmel Tebbutt, to immediately review the DOCS Helpline Service after receiving numerous complaints recently about the length of time people have to wait to report children at risk.

“I’ve had people tell me they have given up after waiting over forty-five minutes on the Helpline – professionals as well as the general public” said Mr Draper today. “This is an intolerable situation.”

“By law, professionals working with children are obliged to report to DOCS any cases where they believe a child may be at risk. The Helpline exists to facilitate and co-ordinate, on a state-wide basis, all such reports.

“But what professional has the time to spend 45 minutes on a Helpline?” Mr Draper said.

“Those members of the public who are trying to do the right thing and protect children at risk, are being turned away by the lengthy phone queues.

“I have asked the Minister to investigate the timeliness of responses to the Helpline and to ensure that these wait times are drastically reduced”

“This Minister has done a remarkable job in improving the service and conditions at the Department of Community Services. I am confident she will recognise the urgency of this situation and take the necessary action to redress this problem” Mr Draper concluded.

**End Release**

[www.peterdraper.com.au](http://www.peterdraper.com.au)

Media Contacts: Peter Draper      mob. 0417 290 376      Electorate Office ph. 6766 1422  
Parliament House ph. 9230 2341