

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### DRAPER CALLS ON POLICE MINISTER TO RETHINK GUNNEDAH POLICE NEEDS

*10<sup>th</sup> November 2003*

While welcoming an improvement in working conditions for Gunnedah police, Independent Member for Tamworth Peter Draper has today expressed his concern that some \$500,000 will be spent upgrading the Gunnedah police station. The station was originally built for a much smaller number of officers, and with a move towards 24 hour policing in Gunnedah, officer numbers would increase from the current 21 officers to 28.

“ While it is difficult to criticise works that will improve conditions for the 21 police officers now working in Gunnedah, I am concerned that the renovated station will be unable to cope with the planned increase to 28. Also, with an increasing numbers of female officers stationed in Gunnedah, additional facilities in the workplace will be needed,” said Mr Draper.

“The building of a custody manager’s area, as well as a dock and holding cell area, breathalyser section, electronic interview room, an observation cell with closed circuit television to monitor prisoners are welcomed as they will improve officer safety, but how long will the improvements cope?” asked Mr Draper.

The Gunnedah Police station was built in 1963 and was designed to accommodate 12 police officers.

“ Putting bandaids on a building that has well and truly passed its use by date is not the answer,” Mr Draper said.

“ The Government should look to the future needs of the Gunnedah community and make an investment in that future. Why waste a large amount of money on a facility that will not cope with the anticipated growth of police numbers?” Mr Draper queried.

“ I am still firmly of the belief, that the only answer that will cater for the long term needs of Gunnedah police is a new police station.”

“ The Minister needs to re-examine the renovation and consider the long term needs of Gunnedah and its police officers by building a new station,” Mr Draper concluded.

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