

**ROBBIE KATTER**

Member for Traeger



## MEDIA RELEASE

January 14, 2021

### KAP UNVEILS PLAN OF ATTACK ON NQ CRIME CRISIS

KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter and Member for Hinchinbrook Nick Dametto today delivered a robust proposal to take immediate steps to reverse the north's escalating crime rates following an alarming Christmas crime spree and continued State Labor Government inaction.

As part of the plan, the KAP proposed to introduce mandatory minimum sentencing for repeat offenders, and an immediate trial of the KAP's Relocation Sentencing policy which is the cornerstone of the party's solution to create a circuit-breaker in the youth crime cycle.

The KAP also demanded that Queensland's Police and Youth Justice Ministers visit the North to witness the crisis firsthand, stationing themselves in Townsville for at least a fortnight after Labor's Cabinet meeting there late this month.

"The Palaszczuk Government has a duty of care to protect the North Queensland community and it is woefully failing to do so," Mr Katter said.

"Labor's version of our Relocation Policy, the 'On-Country' program, has been a widely-reported abject failure and is just the watered-down poor cousin to the meaningful change that's needed to make the community safe."

Mr Dametto said the crime spree over the Christmas period only reinforced the fact that young offenders did not fear consequences and the court system was failing to enforce suitable punishments.

From mid-December to mid-January, more than 1,600 offences were recorded in the Townsville Local Government area, which included a carjacking involving a firearm, a 21-year-old who carried out multiple caravan park robberies and car thefts.

Mr Dametto said mandatory minimum sentencing for adult offenders who committed violent or repeat property crimes was needed to ensure judges could not treat such offences lightly.

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“Adult offenders found guilty of a crime like carjacking or unlawful use of a motor vehicle should face at least three years in prison, over-riding the current maximum penalty for unlawful motor vehicle use of seven years, which no judge is enforcing,” he said.

“Many people say incarceration doesn’t work, but what doesn’t work is law-abiding citizens being harassed and terrorised day in, day out by scum who are contributing nothing positive to society.”

The KAP’s call for an immediate trial of Relocation Sentencing followed the widely-criticised failure of the State Government’s \$5.6 million On-Country youth trials, with none of the 82 participants finishing the six-week program since beginning in July 2020.

Relocation Sentencing would provide a third sentencing option other than detention or releasing offenders back on to the streets, immediately relocating offenders to a remote facility 800km west of Townsville.

The facility would operate on minimum costs and work closely with Indigenous Elders and youth workers to help offenders develop key life skills and receive the best shot at a successful future.

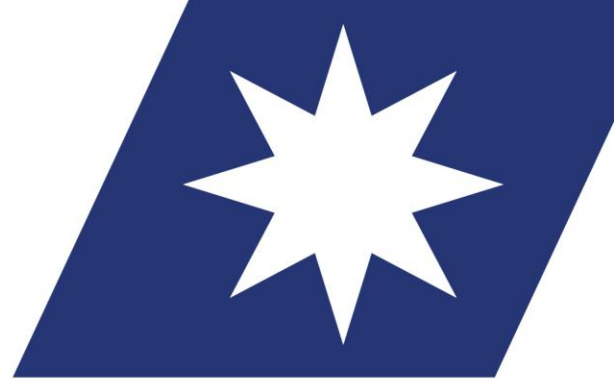
### **Keys points of the KAP Relocation Sentencing Policy:**

1. Applies to young repeat offenders aged 10-17 who have been identified as ‘at-risk’ of recidivism and have a demonstrated history of escalating criminality
2. Provides alternative sentencing (and/or bail arrangement) options to magistrates/judges when dealing with these offenders
3. These alternative sentencing options include ‘on-country’ programs in a remote and approved location. Ankle bracelets would be used for added security but security would largely be maintained through distance and isolation
4. An incentive system based on points and certificate awards would allow the offenders to feel a sense of achievement. This would include qualifications towards things such as a windmill technician, master butcher or stockman, but would not be limited to primary industries

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5. The ultimate goal of Relocation Sentencing is to provide these children with life skills, education and a sense of purpose not available to them on the streets or in juvenile detention facilities
6. It would be available to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and programs would draw heavily on the involvement and teachings of First Australian Elders
7. The KAP has identified a series of possible facility locations in North West Queensland such as Lake Julius (north of Mount Isa). It is envisioned multiple locations will be established across the state in strategic areas
8. The program is designed to be the ultimate ‘circuit-breaker’ for repeat young offenders who are likely to re-offend if returned to the streets and are at-risk of further “criminalisation” if incarcerated at juvenile detention centres

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