



Child Abduction Alert System introduced

“Every second counts in urgent situations such as child abductions,” Police Commissioner Bob Atkinson said.

The Queensland Police Service and Police and Corrective Services Minister Judy Spence have developed and introduced the Child Abduction Alert System to assist in the location and safe recovery of kidnapped children.

“The system, introduced statewide on April 4, enlists the help of the community and media organisations as an additional strategy to maintain a safe environment for our children,” Commissioner Atkinson said.

Under the system, personnel from the Service’s Media and Public Affairs Branch will urgently notify the media and provide them with details of an abducted child or children, where they were last seen and other important information such as a description of the offender and any vehicle involved.

The media will then break into normal transmission with an alert tone and

broadcast the details every 15 minutes, instead of waiting for the next news bulletin, until it is cancelled.

This system will initially only involve radio stations but will be expanded to include other media outlets and potential stakeholders that could distribute the information such as taxi companies, buses, Golden Casket agents, Department of Main Roads and Queensland Transport.

The alert will ask anyone with information that could help police solve the abduction to immediately call Triple Zero or an alternative information number (131 564).

“Police chances of rescuing a child from any potential harm are greatly increased when more people are made aware of the situation,” Commissioner Atkinson said.

Ms Spence said Queensland was the first state in Australia to begin the phased implementation of this system for the urgent

broadcast of information about suspected child abductions.

“Queensland’s system was modelled around the existing systems in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

“Police will activate an alert system when they have reasonable grounds for believing that: a child under the age of 17 has been abducted; the child is at risk of serious harm or death; there is sufficient descriptive information available to make the alert effective; and an urgent public broadcast will assist in locating and safely recovering the child.

“In emergency situations such as child abductions, everyone can help.

“We need the community to be the eyes and ears of police and respond immediately, particularly when the lives of our children could be at stake,” Ms Spence said.

By Louise Allen, Media and Public Affairs Branch