



**Official Opening of the Domestic Violence Room
Yeppoon Courthouse**

Friday, 23 March 2007 at 9:00 am

Yeppoon Courthouse

Normanby Street Yeppoon

**Judge Marshall Irwin
Chief Magistrate**

I would like to extend my warmest welcome to each of you, our distinguished guests, to this event, the official opening of the domestic violence waiting room, here at the Yeppoon Courthouse.

The opening of this room is a step forward for the Yeppoon community in providing vulnerable people within our justice system, the security and protection they need.

The staff room at the court house has recently been renovated into this domestic violence waiting room which provides persons who are alleged to be victims of domestic violence with a safe and secure area when coming to a court hearing. This is important in a court where in 2005/2006 there were 135 applications for protection orders, and including temporary orders there were 159 orders made. This room allows people to wait for their hearing

without coming face to face with the alleged perpetrators of domestic violence and their family, friends or associates.

It has been built at the cost of approximately \$160,000, and is one of 23 similar facilities throughout Queensland.

The room is a safe and supportive environment and means that alleged victims, especially children can wait here. They will also be away from public areas where other people involved in the case may be waiting.

Although the target of this room is to help protect alleged domestic violence victims, it will also exist as a secure area within the court for other vulnerable people, including child witnesses and alleged victims of sexual offences.

The development of this domestic violence waiting room and facilities like this in other courthouses across the state is a positive initiative and a practical demonstration of the magistracy's commitment to the vulnerable people in our court system.

I am happy to see the opening of this room and I know it will provide support and protection to those who are most vulnerable. I hope that it will make them feel more comfortable and secure about attending court proceedings.

I therefore have much pleasure in declaring the Yeppoon Domestic Violence room open.