



Speech by


**Hon. David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA**

Hansard Thursday, 31 May 2012

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### **AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE, PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT**

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (2.30 pm): I rise to talk about something near and dear to the heart of my electorate, and that is that we are a proud garrison city. Today I would like to highlight the member for Townsville who served his nation for three decades. It was a great honour for us to have the Prime Minister attend our city to farewell 350 service men and women to Afghanistan quite recently. She was unable to attend the welcome home parade later on in that afternoon for over 1,000 troops because she had to fly out to attend the NATO summit in Chicago. But her plane broke down—not unlike her leadership actually—and she was stuck at the airport. She subsequently told the residents of my city, including those service men and women, that she simply could not make it back to Strand Park for that farewell.

Today I can reveal that the plane did not depart the airport until after 2.30 pm. The welcome home parade commenced at 1 pm and was concluded over an hour before the plane departed. Can I remind members of this House just how important that moment was for my city. Can I remind members of the House that to go from the airport to Strand Park is a journey of 5.5 kilometres and would take approximately 10 minutes. What I am saying today is that what was displayed there was not just a lack of respect; it was again poor judgement from the Prime Minister. It is something we are seeing more and more of from this Prime Minister. Normally the poor judgement just relates to failed policies and backing people who may not otherwise deserve that support, but in this case it was a slap in the face for the men and women of the Australian Defence Force.

I conclude by saying once again that my city is a proud garrison city. My city is a place where we value the input of those men and women to our lifestyle and when we as North Queenslanders say we will remember them we actually mean it.