




Speech By
Hon. David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Townsville, Tough Mudder

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (11.54 am): What an easy act to follow! That was unbelievable.

A government member interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: 'I really hope he saw us!' Today I begin the campaign to bring Tough Mudder to my home city of Townsville. I had the great opportunity of competing in the event on the Sunshine Coast on the weekend. Whilst that was a huge physical challenge, looking at the economic benefits that it brought to that region was what truly challenged me. I think we have a golden opportunity to have two events of this magnitude in Queensland. Queensland is big enough and diverse enough to host two of these events. I think an event in North Queensland would complement well the event held on the Sunshine Coast.

I often stand in this place and talk about the great diversity in Townsville's economy. As the member for Mundingburra, nothing pleases me more than to be part of a city that has a diverse economy. That has not happened by chance; it is something that has been worked on for a long time. I use tourism as an example of how we have played to our strengths. Townsville as a city has not gone after just one portion of the tourism market. We have not just chased backpackers or another specific element. We feel that our strength lies in our ability to host, promote and entice events to the region. We have seen with things like the Festival of Chamber Music, the V8 Supercars and national sporting teams that Townsville does that well. This would be a natural progression in the campaign to continue to build the economy around events.

Why do I think Tough Mudder is a perfect fit for our city? First of all, we are geographically very blessed. An event in Townsville could draw people from the north—all the way to the top but predominantly from the great city of Cairns—south to all of regional Queensland—the great city of Mackay is only four hours drive away—and west to the Isa and indeed even into the Territory. We could really be that base for Northern Australia.

The thing that sets our bid apart is our link with the military. We are a proud garrison city and have such great connections with Defence. In meeting with the CEO, Drew Ward, and the founder, William Dean, after the event, one of the things they were interested in was a comment from Defence communities that in many ways this would be one of the few opportunities Defence has to truly integrate with the community. The ability for families and friends to compete with serving members in an event like that I think bridges the divide between the community and these great men and women of the Australian Defence Force and what they do on a day-to-day basis as well as their families, who support them when they are away.

As a city we are perfectly placed to market our winter weather. I have often said how proud I am of Townsville's events ability. We will soon be hosting a world championship round of the

Townsville Triathlon Festival. We can do this because we are so beautifully placed for that time of year because of our weather. We must use that to our advantage.

The feedback I have received so far has been humbling. We took a contingent from Townsville to Tough Mudder. There were about 25 people in the team I competed with. I am mindful that people also travelled from Ingham. The member for Hinchinbrook, who is here today, had a contingent of people from his region compete. The feedback I have received since I highlighted our intention to chase this has been absolutely incredible. Townsville Enterprise is on board. The local council is on board. We should pursue this relentlessly.

Not only would there be a huge economic impact during the event; unlike many sporting events you would need a lead-up to this event to make it work. The benefit to the fitness community and all of those bits of the economy that feed off people being fit would be absolutely magnificent. I say that we as a city should unashamedly back this. I say that we as a state should back this. It is good for the economy, it is great for our way of life and we should promote the fact that we have a magnificent state with such diversity across-the-board. An event on the Sunshine Coast complemented by an event in Townsville would make me very, very pleased to be a Queenslander.