




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2015

MOTION

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (6.18 pm): I cannot help it if they think that I am a big gun! I rise to speak against the motion. In the nine months since the member for Bundamba was sworn in as the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services in the Palaszczuk Labor government, she has worked tirelessly to deliver on our commitment to keep the people of Queensland safe. In the past nine months in my own electorate, I have witnessed that a countless number of times. She is kind, she is hardworking and she has a fierce determination to make Queensland a better and safer place. The minister recognises that money spent on police and emergency services is an investment in the lives and quality of life of Queenslanders. That is the difference between us and those opposite.

Since we were elected, the minister has delivered 250 new police officers to hit the beat across Queensland. Under the minister's leadership, we have begun the rollout of body worn video cameras for our front-line officers. The rollout also forms an important part of a comprehensive domestic violence package announced by the Premier. Unlike the LNP, who sat idly by while police officers were left to purchase their own body worn video cameras, the minister will not allow that. That is why she is committed to ensuring that our hardworking and dedicated police are properly resourced to get on with the job of keeping Queenslanders safe. She is also investing an extra \$20 million over four years for police to tackle organised crime, alcohol fuelled violence and the insidious drug ice, which is ripping families and communities apart.

We are in the midst of one of the worst bushfire seasons Queensland has seen for many years. The minister has committed to keeping safe people in bushfire-prone areas such as my own electorate of Keppel and ensuring that fire safety is on everyone's mind, no matter where they live across the state. We have already delivered 77 new firefighters to the front line and a further 21 are expected to successfully graduate from the academy on 18 December. That means that the minister has delivered more than two-thirds of the total number of fireys delivered in the entire time the LNP was in government. The minister has also invested in training for our fireys with the delivery of a brand-new training facility for North Queensland. She has also opened new fire stations in Ingham, Pittsworth, Pomona and Severnlea, with work already started on new and improved facilities in Bundaberg, Petrie and Dayboro. She has rolled out state-of-the-art decontamination vehicles for the regions, new fire appliances and new flood boats for our state Emergency Services volunteers.

In addition, the minister has reinstated vital community safety programs that were cut by the LNP. Shame on the Leader of the Opposition for being part of a government that would cut road safety initiatives such as the road attitudes and awareness program designed to give a life-changing lesson to high school students about how their driving behaviour can have a devastating impact. Shame on the member for Kawana for being part of a cabinet that cut the Fight Fire Fascination program designed

to teach our young ones about the dangers of playing with fire. And shame on the member for Indooroopilly for cutting funding to the vital 'If it's flooded forget it' campaign, which shone a light on how dangerous it is to drive through flooded roads.

However, that is not all: the minister has been a champion for women firefighters and women looking to join up. The QFES will now embark on a targeted recruitment campaign to promote firefighting as a career for women and establish a network of trained equity advisers to provide advice to employees concerned about discriminatory behaviour, harassment and bullying. Women in the workplace deserve to be treated with respect at all times. The government and the people of Queensland would expect nothing less.

Finally, allow me to vouch for the minister's warmth and compassion in times of trouble. The minister gave generously of her time when my region was hit by a natural disaster earlier this year in the form of Tropical Cyclone Marcia. She visited Byfield, Yeppoon and Rockhampton to inspect that damage, offer her support and, in her own unique way, offer a shoulder to cry on. I remember visiting Ferns Hideaway. Marto and Jen were grateful to have the minister visit their beautiful hideaway, which was devastated by the cyclone. They were comforted by the mere presence of the minister that day and six months later when she returned to visit them. They were stoked that she could take the time to comfort them. Her special brand of warmth was of enormous comfort to voters in my electorate and I thank her from the bottom of my heart for taking the time to talk and to listen. All of us in the Palaszczuk government work hard each and every day to ensure the safety and security of all Queenslanders. The minister is delivering for Queenslanders in spades and I have full confidence in her.