



Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**


**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Ipswich Electorate, Australian Honours System

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (9.30 pm): Tonight, I rise to recognise the hundreds of Ipswich citizens who have been bestowed with an Australian honour since 1975. The Australian honours system began in 1975 with the creation of the Order of Australia to recognise service to the nation or humanity. Since the inception of the honours system, Australia has created additional awards to replace those areas of service that were recognised previously by the British system and to acknowledge additional areas of service valued by Australians.

Might I say how delighted I was to hear that, only last week, the newly appointed Prime Minister of Australia has done away with the anachronistic knighthoods, famously revived in 2014. The old imperial honours were originally ditched by Gough Whitlam in 1975. Gough believed that it was time Australia stood on its own merits. His dream was to see an egalitarian, autonomous system of honours with our very own flavour. The Australian honours system recognises extraordinary commitment to the community, brave conduct, contribution to the emergency services—police, fire and ambulance—as well as contribution to public service. The highest honour is the Medal of the Order of Australia.

I am delighted to advise that every year, as a community, Ipswich is well represented in the Australian honours list. In fact, over the years over seven people in every 10,000 Ipswich residents have been recipients of prestigious awards. Some of those recipients are household names, such as Neville Bonner, Australia's first Indigenous parliamentarian; Sir Llew Edwards, a former state treasurer, deputy premier and CEO of World Expo in 1988; David Hamill, a former state transport minister, education minister and treasurer and now Chair of the Australian Red Cross Blood Bank; and George Hogg, founder of the Ipswich Orpheus Chorale.

Other awardees are not so well known outside my community, but in Ipswich they are loved and honoured as great citizens. Take for example the most recent recipient of the Order of Australia medal in the General Division, Mr Peter McMahon. Mr McMahon was one of six locals who was recognised for their outstanding service and dedication to the community of Ipswich in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours in June. Peter is well known locally because of his extraordinary and lengthy commitment to his community. Many people would know Peter as the friendly face at McMahon's Swim Factory who taught them how to swim. Peter's passion for swimming also led him to establish Swim Australia, the peak industry body for 600 swim schools around Australia. Peter was born and bred in Ipswich. He began his volunteering career as a member of the Ipswich Show Society in 1971. He has continuously served as the chairperson of the Ipswich Hospice Care Board since 2008. Peter is also a proud member of the Rotary Club of Ipswich City. There are no signs that Peter is slowing down. In September, I had the great privilege to represent the Premier at Government House when Peter McMahon received his honour. I congratulate Peter and his lovely family and commend him and the many thousands of Ipswich residents—

*(Time expired)*