



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2015

**MOTION**

**Member for Cook, Order for Production of Documents**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (6.06 pm): I rise to contribute to tonight's debate and to oppose the motion of the LNP in what is a lame, lazy and desperate attempt by those opposite—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** One moment, member for Kawana. The Attorney-General listened to you in silence. I urge you to allow her the same courtesy.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, but I do not know if I really listened to the member for Kawana. I should note that.

This is a lame and lazy attempt to undermine the Right to Information Act. All Queenslanders, including parliamentarians, have the right to apply for access to government documents under open and transparent legislation, a right-to-information regime that puts the onus on releasing documents rather than withholding them. That is legislation that the member for Kawana should be very familiar with because he was the minister who oversaw that legislation for three years.

Some members might be confused with the opposition's approach with this motion. They might rightly be asking: have the opposition never heard of RTI applications or the legislation? Are they so out of touch that they do not even know about their rights under RTI, the rights enjoyed by all Queenslanders? Perhaps members might think they could ask the members of the media gallery. Journalists know about Queensland's RTI system. On a regular basis they submit applications, receive information, produce news bulletins and write articles. Having read the opposition's motion, my colleagues would be right to wonder why those opposite do not engage in this simple and open process.

However, those opposite have submitted RTI applications on the very issue of the interactions between the member for Cook and government officers. We can see that the opposition is already pursuing the content in tonight's motion with details there for everyone to see on the public disclosure log of RTIs. The first application was lodged by the opposition in March this year. I understand that the material was dutifully gathered and prepared for release, but the opposition was so lazy or so incompetent that they could not be bothered to collect the material and the application lapsed.

The opposition has lodged a second application with the Premier's office. It is a wideranging application that requests 'All correspondence held in the office of the Premier including, but not limited to, emails, memos, letters, briefing notes and reports within and between the Premier's office relating to the member for Cook and/or the Cook electorate office.' It sounds familiar, doesn't it? It is actually almost identical to the motion before the House. In fact, it is wider than the motion before the House

tonight. This application was only made 10 days ago, so you have to wonder whether the opposition has no clue as to what it is doing. It is moving a motion tonight to access documents that only 10 days ago they made an RTI application for, so one hand does not know what the other hand is doing. As is clearly shown in the disclosure log, that application is currently being processed.

At a time when Queenslanders want their representatives to focus on the big issues facing our communities, the LNP opposition come into this place to try to abuse parliamentary procedures to demand information which they are already seeking through the appropriate right-to-information process. I also understand that the opposition has asked a range of questions on notice asking for similar information around what information is provided around local events, for example. I remind those opposite that, at least on this side of the House, we respect parliamentary processes and rulings and we take the responsibility for answering these questions very seriously.

Those opposite have used the RTI options available to them, and I understand that, under the allowances that the opposition office receive, the opposition has a right to use those allowances to make an RTI application just as Labor did when we were in opposition. But now they think that they do not have to apply for it because they are too good for that. 'We will just bypass it. We will apply, but we will not wait for it. We cannot be bothered. We will come in here and we will just demand it in a motion before the House.'

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned under standing order 253A for your continuous repetitive interjections. Not one interjection has been taken. You are now formally warned. Please desist. I call the Attorney-General.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, despite making an RTI application, they do not think they should wait for it. They think that they are above the law and that they will just come in here and demand it in a motion. Every day at question time we see from their tactics that they have run out of ideas. They have no idea. They do not come in with motions asking about the economy, jobs, health, education, training or anything else that Queenslanders want. They are just wasting the time of this parliament and the people of Queensland.