




Speech By
Hon. Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 2 November 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Dreamworld, Fatalities; Moorooka, Bus Incident

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.15 pm): The last two weeks have been incredibly tragic for this state. On behalf of all Queenslanders, I extend my sincere condolences to those families and friends of the victims, as well as those who were present when the sad events in recent weeks have taken place. The tragic incident at Dreamworld last week has shocked not only Queenslanders but the rest of the country. The Premier yesterday offered well-deserved praise to Aguek Nyok, who saved the lives of those trapped on a bus in Moorooka. I would also like to praise his quick thinking and what can only be described as heroic actions. Yesterday, two young girls tragically lost their lives in their family backyard pool. I cannot imagine what this family is going through and I would like to pass on my heartfelt sympathy to their family and friends.

I would also like to extend my praise and thanks to all of the front-line officers involved during the various tragedies over the last couple of weeks, especially at Dreamworld and Moorooka. At least 30 police responded to the tragedy at Dreamworld. That does not include the unsworn Queensland Police Service personnel who were in the background toiling behind the scenes. Along with them, 45 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services personnel also attended. In Moorooka, 16 firefighters attended the bus blaze.

We are so accustomed to traumatic circumstances being a part of a police officer's or a firefighter's job that we often forget they can also be impacted. Having met with Police Commissioner Ian Stewart on Friday, I know that he and his officers have felt the impact of what has occurred over the past couple of weeks. The Queensland Police Service and QFES officers selflessly place themselves in dangerous and emotionally challenging situations every day for the community they serve. They always step forward, and we wholeheartedly thank them for that.

I know both the QPS and QFES work hard to prevent the sustained impact on the wellbeing of staff. QFES have 103 counsellors and psychologists and 160 trained peer support officers. From July 2015 to July 2016, they helped more than 500 QFES staff and family members. In 2015-16, more than 1,200 QPS employees used their internal psychological services. I hope the loved ones of those who passed away in these tragedies know that the state is thinking of them. I hope the men and women of the QPS and QFES know that we are thinking of them too.