




Speech By
David Janetzki

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba Royal Show

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (8.50 pm): The show season in the Darling Downs subchamber of agricultural societies is well and truly underway across southern Queensland. Damon Phillips, the CEO of the Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland, and his team of hardworking volunteers are readying the Toowoomba showgrounds for the Toowoomba Royal Show to be held later next month. The Toowoomba Royal Show is the oldest event in Queensland and the Royal Agricultural Society of Queensland is the oldest show society dating back to 1860.

Show societies are the largest volunteer movement in Queensland, with almost 14,000 volunteers across Queensland's 130 shows. A recent study showed that show committees across Australia contributed more than 1.2 million hours of volunteer time per year and are supported by judges, stewards, grounds staff, gatekeepers and other volunteers. My childhood was steeped in the show movement, especially the Oakey show where I watched my father organise the stud beef cattle, and today he traverses southern Queensland in his role as president of the Darling Downs and region subchamber.

Showgrounds across Queensland offer vital social and economic benefits to the regions they serve, and the Toowoomba showgrounds are no different. Our showgrounds host over 450 events, attracting nearly 180,000 visitors. The total economic benefit to the Toowoomba region from events held at the showgrounds tops nearly \$57 million per annum. The RASQ provides local community groups in excess of \$150,000 worth of rental and hire rebates and payments for services annually.

The popular perception of shows are that they are all about show bags, dagwood dogs, animals and fairy floss.

Mr Power: What are they about, then?

Mr JANETZKI: We all know that they are about competition, member for Logan. It is all about the competition for better animal breeds, for the best cake and for the best artwork. That competition requires volunteers. I want to pay tribute to RASQ CEO Damon, President Shane Charles, Vice Presidents Mark Freeman and Kent Bligh, Treasurer George Fox and a whole range of committee members who serve on the RASQ committee.

I also want to acknowledge that this year there is a shadow cast over the Toowoomba Royal Show with the untimely death of a former vice-president Bill Hedger late last year. Bill was responsible for organising eight sections—eight sections—at the Toowoomba Royal Show and he has done that for the best part of 20 years. His untimely death leaves an enormous hole in the RASQ arrangements, and he will be very sorely missed. This year in his honour there will be the inaugural Bill Hedger Memorial Trophy for the best painting on display at the Toowoomba Royal Show. He will be sorely missed not just by the show movement but by the entire Toowoomba business community. I pay tribute to him.