




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 2 March 2017

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE: REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.08 pm): I reiterate the member for Mermaid Beach's arguments put forward with regard to this issue. As he said, the committee received only eight submissions for the inquiry. When this came up in the committee process we asked departmental officers: why has this come up? Has something happened that we have not seen? Is there a reason for this? The departmental officers said no. They did not know why this was coming up. It was very important for us as a committee to make sure that if we were going to investigate this matter there were good reasons to do so.

In the seat of Gregory there are plenty of amateur combat sporting clubs. One comes to mind. It is not just so much a sporting club but an iconic event that happens around regional Queensland, and the heart of that is in Birdsville—and that is Fred Brophy's tent.

Mr Perrett: He lives in Kilkivan.

Mr MILLAR: He does live in Kilkivan. He also has the pub at Cracow. He is an absolute champion of regional Queensland.

Mrs Frecklington: He came to the Nanango show last year.

Mr MILLAR: I take the interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Fred Brophy is probably best known around Nanango and Cracow and, of course, the member for Callide's area, but Birdsville is the place that Fred Brophy continues to head to and plays an important role. Let me get on with the issue here.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Good idea.

Mr MILLAR: Fred Brophy and people like him need to be protected.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! While these interjections have been very interesting, could we please allow the member for Gregory to move on with his speech?

Mr MILLAR: Thank you so much, Madam Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to be heard on this issue. The eight submissions for the inquiry demonstrated that there was no real need for us to have an inquiry into this. There was little interest not only from the submissions but also from the departments when we questioned them as to why we needed to investigate this.

Sporting clubs across regional Queensland are volunteer sporting clubs. They are put together by hardworking volunteers with little funds. The last thing we need is to provide a nanny state approach to these regional Queensland sporting clubs and put more restrictions on them, making it harder for them to continue to operate.

Mr Costigan: Less red tape, not more.

Mr MILLAR: We need less red tape, absolutely. I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. My experience in these sporting groups is as an avid player of Rugby Union in my younger days. I played Rugby League for the Emerald Tigers as a junior but I played Rugby Union in my later life. I can tell the House that as a Rugby Union player and also as a Rugby Union coach we take safety very seriously. It is important that we allow these sporting associations to continue to provide the safety that they can provide without having more red tape put on them because it is getting harder and harder to participate. The cost of providing jerseys and registration fees is extremely expensive. Also, bear in mind that these regional sporting groups, such as Rugby Union and Rugby League, take safety very seriously.

As a coach of a Rugby Union team after I finished playing, it was my duty to ensure the safety of all of my players no matter what. If they came off concussed, I made it a rule that they were not allowed to play until they got a medical certificate to say that they could continue to play. I am just an amateur when it comes to playing Rugby and coaching Rugby, but I knew that I had a responsibility to make sure that safety was paramount for those people who participated in the sport. That is like everybody—every coach and every administrator in regional sporting groups such as Rugby Union, Rugby League, whether it is boxing or a combat sport. Volunteers who end up being administrators or coaches take safety as a paramount obligation to make sure that that happens.

Mr Costigan: They have the time.

Mr MILLAR: They have the time. What we need to do is to have less red tape to encourage people to be a part of those groups, not put inquiries in place which are going to send fear into those groups that there is more red tape coming and more restrictions. I was so glad that the committee was able to make the recommendation that there be no further investigation into this inquiry.