



Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Record of Proceedings, 24 August 2017

SAFER WATERWAYS BILL

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date; Declared Urgent



Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.34 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That—

1. under the provisions of standing order 136, the Agriculture and Environment Committee report to the House on the Safer Waterways Bill by 27 October 2017; and
2. so much of standing orders 136 and 137 be suspended as to allow the Safer Waterways Bill to be declared an urgent bill to enable all remaining stages to be completed by 16 November 2017.

We tabled the Safer Waterways Bill in May, the committee will report back in November and then it is likely to be tabled and debated in May next year. I have here newspaper articles which state why we need this bill to be declared an urgent bill. I table them.

Tabled paper: Bundle of media articles regarding crocodiles in Far North Queensland [\[1450\]](#).

Tabled paper: Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 25 May 2017, regarding Safer Waterways Bill [\[1451\]](#).

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Letter from lady who lives in Mourilyan (as taken from Hansard 10 August 2017)' [\[1452\]](#).

The first article has the headline 'Crocodile captured that killed spear fisherman Warren Hughes in far north Queensland'. The second article is titled 'Crocodile caught and killed in Cindy Waldron search found to have human remains inside'. The next article is titled 'Report confirms that Queensland's saltwater crocodile populations are rising'. That article stated—

Crocodile populations in Queensland have been rising since the 1970s, placing more people in direct conflict with the dangerous reptiles in the north and Far North.

The next article is titled 'Crocodile kills and eats family dog on property near Innisfail'. The next article in the *Cairns Post* is titled 'Biggest rise in beach closures due to crocodiles in Far North in five years'. The next one is titled 'Hungry crocodile stops swimmers at Far North beach', and that article stated—

A hungry crocodile kept swimmers out of the water at one of the Far North's premier tourist destinations yesterday.

I will read this letter from a lady who had her dog taken recently. She stated—

We live on the banks of the South Johnstone River in Mourilyan, NQ. On Tuesday afternoon we lost our 6 month old purebred white Shepherd to a very large crocodile. As we live very close to the river our dog had gone down to the water's edge, failing to call her up to our yard we went down to try and get her when the crocodile just so quietly grabbed her and took her into the water, this was absolutely terrifying for both my partner and myself as we weren't aware it was there and it could of easily been us!

In October last year we lost another white Shepherd to possibly this same crocodile. About a half hour or so after our puppy was taken on Tuesday we were sitting there looking over the river when another 2 crocs showed up! It was like feeding time at the zoo.

A few months back 2 young boys were taking a short cut through our yard, when I asked what they were doing, they said they wanted to go fishing in the river, I warned them about the dangers but they insisted they'd be fine, point is, its private property but you can't always stop people from fishing on our banks, and we're not always here to warn people.

These children were going to exactly the same spot where that dog was taken by the crocodile. She continued—Please help us to do something about these monsters, we need dogs for security reasons, but it's simply too dangerous for them and traumatic for us. I forgot to mention my partner was down not far from the bank poisoning the grass as to keep it down, something made him turn around and look out onto the river to see this monster swimming towards the bank at him. Something clearly has to be done with these killers as we cannot swim in either our beaches or waterways here anymore.

We undertook a number of public meetings in Cairns and Port Douglas.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Dalrymple, my understanding is that we have agreed to allow you to speak to a proposal to bring forward the date that your bill would come on for debate. It is not about debating the substance of your bill. Do you have anything further to add in relation to why we need to support your call to bring forward the date of the debate of your bill?

Mr KNUTH: Yes. A number of public meetings have been held in Port Douglas, Innisfail, Mareeba and Cairns. This is a big issue as we are seeing that tourists are not coming or are not using our beaches as the warning signs instil the fear of being taken by a croc. That is why we need to bring this bill forward; it is for the economy.