




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Forte, Mr B

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.59 am): I wish to pay tribute tonight to an extraordinary constituent of Toowoomba North who swore an oath to serve and protect the families of Queensland and did so with honour and courage: Senior Constable Brett Forte. I table Commissioner Ian Stewart's valedictory speech so that future generations can know a little more of Brett's distinguished service.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Queensland Police Service Valedictory: Senior Constable Brett Andrew Forte' and copy of memorial service program [\[1003\]](#).

Brett was the driver of the tactical crime squad lead vehicle and Acting Sergeant Cath Nielsen was the front passenger when Brett's life was tragically cut short on 29 May this year. Sergeant Thomas, the OIC at Helidon, and Senior Constable Ritchie were also first responders, along with Acting Sergeant Hill, Senior Constable Barlow and Constable Poulton of the Gatton station. Brett has been posthumously awarded the Queensland Police Service Valour Award, and I am sure that others in the Police Service and emergency service personnel will have their extraordinary courage and professionalism recognised in the future.

Senior Sergeant Stahlhut, the officer in charge of tactical crime squad, tells me that Brett was dedicated to the TCS, as is partner Cath, who was a founding team member. Brett was on his second 'tour' with the squad. Brett was a motivated, reliable and professional officer who led from the front in the true sense, even on his last day of duty.

Brett's tactical crime squad is a tight-knit squad, vested with fighting against drug crime, property crime and road policing operational activity. The TCS-led team focused on outlaw motorcycle gang crime and compliance upon introduction of the VLAD laws and were pivotal in the dismantling of a chapter of a national club in the Darling Downs district. This team was a finalist in the QPS Awards for Excellence in 2015. Brett's partner, Senior Constable Nielsen, was recently recognised with a highly commended award for Most Outstanding Female Investigator in the Queensland Women in Policing Awards 2017.

This tragedy highlights the dangers all operational police face on a daily basis. I would like to acknowledge on behalf of all Toowoomba and Darling Downs residents all of the police involved, including specialists from the Special Emergency Response Team, the negotiators, PoAir and all emergency service personnel who work so hard to ensure the Queensland community is safe and protected, not just on that day but every day. Whilst in this place, I will do all I can to ensure the police have the laws and equipment that are needed to protect our communities, families and their colleagues, and themselves.

On a personal note, Brett possessed a quick wit and a fantastic sense of humour. He was well liked and highly respected. He was an avid water skier. Brett and his wife, Susie, and their children, family and friends would make the most of every opportunity to get the boat into the water. He was a husband, a dad, a brother and a son. My condolences go to Brett's wife, children and family. With honour he served: Senior Constable Brett Forte.