




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 14 November 2018

MOTION

Shark Control Program, Inquiry

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.23 pm): I rise to speak against this absolutely irresponsible motion. It is absolutely laughable that those opposite think the way they are going to solve this problem and solve this issue is by moving a motion like this in parliament. I begin by joining other members of this place in expressing my condolences for the families of the victims. I also want to recognise the hard work and resilience of the tourism operators in the Whitsundays, especially those in the room last Friday. Those people have the biggest stake in this and they deserve an informed debate. They will not be getting that under the LNP.

It has been interesting to hear the LNP making their commentary tonight because we have heard every single possible position from the LNP so far. How many of those opposite can say they have been to Cid Harbour?

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: If you have actually been there, then you should not be—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, direct your comments through the chair.

Mrs LAUGA: Through the chair, then those opposite should not be supporting this motion tonight because they know that Cid Harbour is murky; that it is turbid. It is not a place that you swim.

An opposition member interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: I am glad that you had a great time at Cid Harbour. If those opposite have been to Cid Harbour then they really have no idea and they really should not be supporting this motion tonight. We have the member for Whitsunday on Flemington, our man trackside, making uninformed commentary on a tragic event—2,000 kilometres away from his electorate and even further away from common sense. Why did he not head straight back to the Whitsundays?

Let us look at the member for Everton, who is perpetually outraged, blowing hard but rarely straight. He has called for drum lines to go in. He has called for an independent inquiry. He has called the meeting with experts a 'talkfest'. What does he propose now? He is proposing that a report be tabled in May 2019. Decisive action! The member for Everton is not willing to listen to experts and is not willing to listen to what local people and local tourism operators want. It sounds familiar. It sounds like the same old LNP.

Let us look at the member for Gympie, or let us not because he has been nowhere on this issue. He would not know anything about the Great Barrier Reef to save himself. At least the LNP allowed him an appearance—

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Gympie!

Mrs LAUGA: At least the LNP allowed him an appearance in question time yesterday. Christmas comes early in the Gympie electorate. To speak of Christmas, in came Crisafulli. Is Verity Barton on the LNP's Christmas card list this year?

The LNP do not want to talk about the facts but they are critical to this debate. Cid Harbour is not a patrolled beach. Cid Harbour is not and has not been part of the Shark Control Program. I have visited Cid Harbour a number of times. My husband and I spent a week on a bareboat charter around the Whitsundays on our honeymoon and we visited again a year later.

An opposition member: And never went in the water?

Mrs LAUGA: No, I did not go in the water because I would not. It is a beautiful spot and a great anchorage in the Whitsundays particularly sheltered from the prevailing south-easterlies.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, the member is not taking interjections. I ask you to hear the member who has the call. If you wish to make a contribution, rise to your feet.

Mrs LAUGA: It really is a great anchorage in any wind, which is why it is a popular spot. There are some great bushwalks accessed from Cid Harbour and it can be a good fishing spot. Cid Harbour is a beautiful spot, but it is not somewhere I would recommend swimming. It has a mud bottom, it has murky water with a higher turbidity and there are lots of baitfish.

When visiting the Whitsundays, bareboat charter companies leave a very informative book on boat for tourists titled *100 Magic Miles*. Those opposite who have visited Cid Harbour would no doubt have read that book—hopefully they have read that book. *100 Magic Miles* is known as the bible of the Whitsunday Islands, and I highly recommend anyone visiting the region to take a copy with them. *100 Magic Miles* provides great information about all of the different moorings, anchorages, fishing, snorkelling and diving spots as well as information about safety in the Whitsundays. The book also outlines very measured safety information relating to things like jellyfish, stonefish, sharks, poisonous fish and a range of safety issues to consider whilst enjoying the Great Barrier Reef.

Mr Lister: But it doesn't say not to swim in Cid Harbour, does it?

Mrs LAUGA: Have you read it?

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Southern Downs!

Mrs LAUGA: The Great Barrier Reef is a habitat, an ecosystem and a natural wonderland that has unrivalled beauty, but like any natural wonderland in the world we must be wary of our environment.

(Time expired)