



Speech By  
**Samuel O'Connor**


**MEMBER FOR BONNEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 November 2018

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Gold Coast, Broadwater**

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.24 pm): I rise to once again speak about the beautiful Broadwater on the eastern edge of the Bonney electorate. I am lucky to live just a couple of streets back from it. Many people in my area enjoy the calm waters, the skyline views of what is, in my opinion, the inferior electorate of Surfers Paradise, and the slower pace that the Broadwater brings compared to its southern counterparts. I probably get the most feedback on this part of my electorate.

Last week, I held a public forum on Broadwater issues. I thank Hal and Peter from the Gold Coast Waterways Authority for attending the forum and taking feedback and Jason and Carmen from the Grand Hotel for hosting us. With over 100 turning up, that was a clear display of the passion that the locals have for their Broadwater. I thank each and every one of them for giving their time to raise these issues.

I want to bring to the attention of the House the three major themes that I have had feedback on. Regular dredging of the Broadwater is needed to make sure that navigation channels are maintained and allow for a greater number of larger boats to use the Broadwater more freely. There needs to be more funds put towards this dredging, because we will reap the return on that investment. On Saturday, in an article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, the minister in charge said that he did not think that any changes were needed. I think that shows that the minister knows as much about boats as he does about four-wheel drives. I would like to see that dredging go beyond the navigation channels. For that to occur, the GCWA needs to be given the budget and authority. The resources the GCWA gets from the government are too low, especially in the context of how much revenue is generated for the state by the Broadwater.

There are also too many boats overstaying their mooring times on the water. As well, many are of an unsightly nature and their waste and effluent pollute the water. Once again, the minister has oversimplified the issue and not listened to the people who live by the Broadwater. These boats are more than just 'average-looking houses'; they are unseaworthy vessels that are an eyesore and they are being allowed to put their waste into the waters that people swim in. The GCWA investigates 80 to 100 boats per month. Often, those investigations take years and the GCWA struggles with its limited budget. Every local knows that this is an issue and so does the GCWA. We need this government to give the GCWA the right resources and authority to resolve the issue. For example, in the past five financial years the GCWA has issued just 46 cautions and given one removal direction against a buoy mooring.

Over the past few weeks we have also heard a lot about police numbers on the Gold Coast. One of my particular concerns is the number of water police in my area. We simply do not have enough and their numbers do not reflect the growing number of people who are on the water. Since 2000, there has been an increase in water police numbers of just two and that happened way back in 2006. How can this government not see that more police are needed on our waterways?

We need a government that shows care and responsibility for one of our greatest assets in South-East Queensland. I am going to keep standing up until we get that.