




Speech By
Barry O'Rourke

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 4 April 2019

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Fitzroy River Barra Bash

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.45 pm): During the first week of March I had the pleasure of representing the Minister for Tourism Industry Development, Hon. Kate Jones. The Queensland government via Tourism and Events Queensland was able to provide \$10,000 in funding to support the 2019 Fitzroy River Barra Bash.

Almost four years ago the state government ended net fishing in the Fitzroy River with the aim of increasing recreational fishing opportunities and thereby supporting tourism and economic growth. This event aligns with our strategy to build visitation and economic growth via tourism for Central Queensland. I met with the Frenchville Sports Club General Manager, Damien Massingham, and the Chair, Graeme Brady, to unveil a Polycraft 410 Challenger, which will be won at the family fun day in May.

Sporting a new name for its second year, the Frenchville Sports Club is proud to bring a bigger and better Fitzroy River Barra Bash, which will run from 23 to 26 May and is worth \$20,000 in cash and prizes. As well as the two-day barra tournament, this year's event has three new attractions: a family fishing competition, family fun day at the club and an exclusive lunch. The family fun day will include a free competition on the Fitzroy River on Sunday, 26 May including prizes for the biggest and mystery length barra. After the free family fun day there will be a festival at Ryan Park, also with free entry, between 2 pm and 8 pm, which will include casting competitions, live entertainment and prize presentations. Everyone attending the family fun day has the chance to win a new boat, a Polycraft 410 Challenger valued at over \$24,000, by purchasing a raffle ticket.

The Fitzroy River has become a mecca for fishing, especially for barramundi and threadfin salmon. I am pleased that there are now nine charter boats operating from five businesses on the Fitzroy, namely Hooked Fishing, Big Fella Sport Fishing, Reel Fishing, Guided Fishing DownUnder and Rise Guardian, which has just started operations. Today I stand here in awe at how successful the recreational fishing industry has become as a result of the net-free zones and the businesses who have helped shape us into an iconic fishing destination. I would encourage people to come to Central Queensland, enjoy the Fitzroy River and have a great time.