




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 27 November 2019

MOTION

Bushfire Prevention and Preparedness, Parliamentary Inquiry

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.16 pm): I rise to oppose the motion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition because the review into bushfires in Queensland is already underway. Those opposite are late to the party when it comes to inquiries into bushfires in this state. The minister has already instructed the Inspector-General Emergency Management to undertake a review and that review is already underway. The people of Central Queensland, the people of Queensland more broadly, do not want politicians running an inquiry into bushfires. They want experts on the ground—through the Inspector-General Emergency Management, which was established by those opposite when they were in government—to undertake a full inquiry into how we manage disasters and, in particular, how we manage bushfire risk in Queensland. I believe that it would be a serious waste of taxpayers' funds to be flying politicians around Queensland to undertake an inquiry which is already underway by experts in the office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management.

I was quite shocked that the Leader of the Opposition came into this place to talk about bushfires and did not once mention Yeppoon, did not once mention Lakes Creek, Frenchville, The Caves, Gracemere, Stanmore—any of those communities, particularly those that have most recently been impacted by bushfire west of Yeppoon, like Maryvale, Lake Mary, Cobraball, Bungundarra, Bondoola.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: I would be very pleased to invite the Leader of the Opposition to Central Queensland, to Keppel, to talk to some of the people in these bushfire affected communities. There was not a single mention in her motion about the people in my community who were affected, not a single visit in the aftermath of this bushfire.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the member for Keppel is not taking interjections. I ask you to cease so I can hear the speaker on their feet.

Mrs LAUGA: A single member of the opposition visited the Central Queensland region most recently.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: I said one single member visited Central Queensland out of all those members opposite. Do the people of Lake Mary, Adelaide Park, Bondoola or Cobraball not matter to those opposite? In a five-minute contribution in this place why could the Leader of the Opposition not even mention the word Yeppoon—after 15 homes were lost, after 12,000 hectares of land was burnt, after thousands of lychee and mango trees were destroyed, after cattle was lost?

I have heard stories from people such as Leon Clothier, with whom I was talking the other day. He told me about the number of native wildlife that have come onto his property and that he has had to euthanase as a result of the fires. After such events, it is important that the people in this place visit

communities to hear from the people affected. I can tell the House that if members asked Leon, Eddie or any of the other people affected by the bushfires whether politicians should travel to Central Queensland to undertake an inquiry into bushfires and how best to manage them, they would say that it would be a waste of money because the Inspector-General Emergency Management is doing just that right now.

The responsibility for hazard reduction rests primarily with landholders. They do a great job, working with our rural fire brigades and the 19 brigades that supported landholders during this most recent event. They work with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. They work with Ergon Energy and all of our utility providers. They work with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Bushfire mitigation and prevention is a partnership. I think that the government has the right balance. We have the right laws and frameworks in place for bushfire mitigation. We can always do better. After events such as this, review and subsequent reform are important. They are integral. I appreciate that the minister has already taken action and that an inquiry into the most recent events is already underway. I do not support the motion before the House.