




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 27 March 2019

ADJORNMENT

Operation Energise

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.15 pm): I am always amused at the constant barrage of negativity from those opposite about the union movement while they appear to ignore any transgressions from banks and employer and industry groups that advocate on behalf of business, farmers and others. It seems that only the representatives of workers come under LNP fire. When a union—in this case the mighty Electrical Trades Union—steps up to help a community, I wait to see if those opposite will rise and thank the great unionists and businesses who have come together to help out, in this case in our state's north.

Operation Energise is an ETU initiative that mobilises every time our state suffers from a natural disaster or a community is impacted by loss of electricity to a large number of residents. Their work is done for free to provide electrical work and testing to home owners and community groups who have copped nature's worst. The service is largely for those who are uninsured, as there are local electrical contractors who are very busy doing insurance work and need that work themselves to rebuild and should not have their livelihoods taken, even for such a good cause.

A few weeks ago I was honoured to be invited along to the Operation Energise Townsville premobilisation briefing here in the parliamentary precinct. I was very impressed at the professionalism of the team and the project overall. I have participated in an Operation Energise, helping out in Bundaberg after its devastating flood event, so I have firsthand experience of how lives can be changed due to this work. On the day briefings were given by not only Keith Mackenzie, the ETU organiser running the operation, but also the Electrical Safety Office. Mates in Construction were also on hand to offer their support and knowledge. Mates in Construction had a representative in the area during the course of the operation to provide support not only to the Operation Energise crew but also to residents who were feeling the overwhelming weight of these circumstances and needed emotional support.

It was nice to see Minister Lynham attend to show support. The Deputy Premier and ministers Cameron Dick and Mick de Brenni also dropped by to show their appreciation. Other members who dropped in were the member for Redlands, Kim Richards, and the member for Thuringowa, Aaron Harper, who, along with his Townsville colleagues, has dealt with the devastation firsthand on a daily basis. I know that the hardworking local members would have been out there every day helping to clean up as much as possible.

During the course of this exercise over 90 jobs were completed in the region. I place on record my appreciation of the industries that continually support this important operation. I also mention Electro Group Apprentices, Powerlink, the Electrical Trades Union, Energy Super, Mates in Energy and the Electrical Safety Office.

The 10 members of this deployment are now part of history, and I look forward to catching up with them again at a thankyou barbecue soon. What they have experienced together is something they will talk about for the rest of their lives. They should hold their heads high, knowing they did their bit to support the community of Townsville.