



Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**


**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2020

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Tourism Industry, Queensland Border Closure**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (2.25 pm): The tourism sector, the hospitality sector and the retail sector in Queensland were already doing it tough before the coronavirus pandemic. We have suffered because of green tape that strangled regulation for ecotourism to get off the ground. As a result, our tourism offering has not grown at the same level as that of other states. Since coronavirus, it has been rocked to the core.

Those operators were prepared to take their medicine. They were prepared to look at vast open venues and say, 'The rule says we can only put 10 people in here. We think we can put more in safely, but we will play by the rules.' When it comes to borders, they have had enough. They have had enough of the mixed messages.

July was in the road map. The opposition maturely resisted the urge to say, 'Open them early.' The government had a road map that said July and we said that we would stick to that. Then one morning—perhaps without coffee—it became September. The shudders that went through the industry could be heard across this state. After weeks of pressure, it went back to July. Then today we had, 'Not until there is no active transmission.' Is it now not July? What does that mean? We just want some certainty. That is not too much to ask.

Today I have heard a lot about a road trip where I went and sold the message of this opposition and its leader, Deb Frecklington. We have done that because we are a team that wants to see this state working again. I am going to rise above the shenanigans of the tourism minister because I have had enough people cry on my shoulder in the last couple of weeks. Instead of focusing on me, how about focusing on the people lining up in the Centrelink queues? That is what Queenslanders want at the moment.

Queenslanders like Don, whom I met in Caloundra, who told me that despite halving his shopfront and trimming all his costs he believes he will not only lose his shop but also lose his house. He said to me, 'I can live with that. I am a bushy. I am happy. I will go back to the bush where I came from, but this week I have had to tell my kids that I cannot afford to send them to the school that they have been going to for many years.' That is what indecision means on the ground.

People like Rhonda from Marlin Waters holiday park in Palm Cove who 10 years ago bought a rundown apartment block with her husband and worked their fingers to bone to not only get that place up and running but also make it profitable. They are not eligible for any programs because they do it all themselves. They do not have any luxuries to fall back on. Despite running a profitable, successful business they are going to run out of money in the weeks ahead. That could all be fixed if they could tell their regulars, 'We are open from this date in July.' They could then fill bookings. Instead, the only time the phone rings is when it is people who have booked ahead and with great sadness ask if they could have their money returned because they have to book a holiday somewhere else.

That is what indecision means to real people. They are the sorts of issues that I heard driving 1,800 kilometres, Minister, not the shenanigans, not the silly games, that go on in this place. That is the sort of heartache that exists when a government cannot stick to a plan, when a government has no focus on economic employment and when a government has no ability to lead out of a crisis.

I am going to conclude by saying that Queenslanders did as they were asked because the whole purpose of this was to flatten the curve. The idea of flattening the curve was to make sure that innocent people did not have to line up at hospitals and not have access to respirators and not have access to hospital beds because of a surge in demand for medical facilities we were not ready for.

Now it has become almost as though if there is one case the government wants everyone to stop doing everything. A balance can be found. The balance involves a sensible outcome between health and economic recovery. If the balance is not found soon, the flattening will be of our economy.