




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.56 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate of the committee report. At the outset it is appropriate to thank our wonderful secretariat, who have done a wonderful job over the past few years. As you said in your contribution, Mr Deputy Speaker Whiting, they do such a volume of work for us as a committee. I thank Jacqui Dewar and her able team for doing that for us once again. We cover a really wide variety of issues. I was not around in the last parliament, unlike some other members of the committee, so it was wonderful to have the opportunity to participate in the inquiry into the impact of invasive weeds and their control in Queensland. As you said as chair of the committee, Mr Deputy Speaker Whiting, all Queenslanders have a general biosecurity obligation under Queensland's Biosecurity Act 2014—each and every one of us. That means that everyone is responsible for managing biosecurity risks that are under their control and that they know about or should reasonably be expected to know about.

The inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants and weeds and their control in Queensland was established to investigate three weeds—prickly acacia, fireweed and giant rat's-tail grass—their impact and their control in Queensland. This inquiry commenced before my time—as I said, in late 2016—and the report was not finalised prior to the dissolution of the 55th Parliament. However, in the 56th Parliament the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee identified the importance of the work already commenced on this significant topic, coupled with the high level of public interest, particularly in those regional areas that we have heard about. The committee finalised and then tabled the report in December last year.

We have over 170 invasive plants or weeds here in Queensland. We know that the task of eradicating every single weed would be extremely difficult. We certainly cannot say that an investigation into just three weeds is the be-all and end-all. Here in Queensland of course we need to take our biosecurity very seriously. We have to assess incursions and realistically assess them accordingly. That is why in December 2019 Minister Furner released the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2019-2024. This strategy highlights existing, established invasive plants, exotic weeds and pest animals in Queensland. The strategy also underlines the importance of management and of building on the principle of a shared responsibility and the commitment from landholders, government, industry and the community to work together to minimise the impact of weeds on Queensland's economy, environment, social amenity and human health.

Invasive plants in Queensland are principally regulated under the Biosecurity Act 2014, though other legislation and local government laws also place obligations on people and persons to manage or control weeds. Local government biosecurity plans outline responsibilities, objectives and strategies for the management of invasive biosecurity matters in their area. Biosecurity Queensland continues this cooperative partnership with local governments—we have over 70 in Queensland—and industry to

improve the management of regional and local invasive weeds and to ensure an understanding of biosecurity obligations. Local governments are empowered to give those biosecurity orders to landowners who fail to manage invasive biosecurity regardless of who is the landowner or the manager.