




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Record of Proceedings, 15 July 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Rural Fire Service; Bushfire Strategy

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.00 pm): It is the time for hazard reduction burning by our rural fireys once again. I am proud to say I have four rural fire brigades protecting property in the Coomera electorate: Cedar Creek Wolffdene Rural Fire Brigade, Rocky Point Rural Fire Brigade, Ormeau Rural Fire Brigade and Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade. We all remember how devastating the fires were less than 12 months ago. I know that in our area we dodged a bullet.

In conversation with my local volunteers, I was alarmed to hear that what they used to do in terms of hazard reduction burns in decades past—doing everything in our region in a five-year cycle—has not been able to be done for the past 15 years. An LNP government will change all that. We will introduce a 10-point plan to overhaul Queensland's bushfire strategy to improve public safety and protect property. As Leader of the Opposition, Deb Frecklington, said when introducing the plan—

The LNP will take decisive action to get Queensland bushfire-ready in wake of the incredible tragedies we have seen in New South Wales and Victoria.

In a bushfire-prone state like ours, the government must stop at nothing to ensure communities are kept safe.

The LNP will make sweeping improvements to Queensland's bushfire strategy to make the state more prepared and more able to respond in emergencies. The LNP's 10-point plan for bushfires includes: introducing a one-stop shop for streamlined approval process, establishing a single point of contact for landholders and councils to submit all bushfire mitigation inquiries and permits; implementing a deemed approval after 15 business days under a right to burn model, meaning properly made applications will be automatically approved after 15 business days to give landholders and councils certainty; and introducing new KPIs to achieve 98 per cent of hazard reduction activities because there are currently no KPIs holding government departments to account on hazard reduction burns. Between 2016 and 2019 only 54 per cent of hazard reduction burns planned had been completed. There has also been a 30 per cent reduction in completed overall hazard reduction activities.

The LNP will trial a traditional burning program run by Indigenous rangers. The program will not replace the Rural Fire Brigade's role in managing and coordinating hazard reduction burns. It will compliment pre-existing efforts by combining the two. We will establish a natural disaster cabinet committee to monitor preparations. It will be chaired by the emergency services minister and the QFES commissioner. It will monitor the progress of state departments and landholders.

Monitored grazing in state forests and some national parks will also be implemented. We will establish urban based rural fire volunteer brigades, like those in Sydney and Melbourne. We will restore local control to rural fire brigades. We will establish a rural fire board to be made up of elected rural fire brigade members from across Queensland. We will review aerial firefighting capability and do a stocktake of aviation fire assets in Queensland.