



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Far North Queensland, Tourism Industry**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.28 pm): I rise today to tell the story of the magnificent work being done by the tourism sector in remote Far North Queensland. On behalf of Minister Hinchliffe, last week I had the great privilege to open the new tourist accommodation homesteads at the Undara lava tubes some 300 kilometres west of Cairns on the Great Savannah Way. Spring Creek Station, where Undara is located, is steeped in history. The pioneering Collins family is still on the land to this day, having settled there after a search for the Burke and Wills expedition in the 1860s. This is a quintessentially Australian story that epitomises the hard work, tenacity and resilience of the 19th century settlers who forged a life and created a community in outback Queensland. I am proud to say that this story continues to this day with strong support from the Palaszczuk government, which recognises the value of investing in these regions and supporting new and existing tourism enterprises.

There have been 18 new homestead units built at Undara with the aid of the Palaszczuk government's \$25 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund. These units will be a game changer for the Undara Experience, providing much needed accommodation during the peak tourist season and complementing the existing infrastructure for events on site. Additionally, this facility will enhance and feed into the tourism offerings on the Savannah Way—a booming drive destination which showcases the best of outback Queensland. With the Palaszczuk government's supported projects at Cobbold Gorge and Talaroo Hot Springs on the same route, visitors can plan a journey that takes in majestic natural wonders and genuine Aussie experiences.

Working with the Queensland tourism operators for the benefit of our economy is what this Palaszczuk government excels at. These partnerships have proven results, with regional areas experiencing strong growth in visitation. This helps create jobs and vibrant communities as we recover and adapt from COVID-19. I am also very proud to say that these partnerships extend to our First Nations people who are leading the way in providing authentic experiences for visitors within our state. Like never before, traditional owners are embracing opportunities to develop and run tourism enterprises, responding to the needs of the market and putting Queensland on the map as authentic traditional owner tourism destinations.

Again, the Palaszczuk government have been pivotal in supporting these initiatives through their commitments within the Year of Indigenous Tourism. It is also important to acknowledge the number of jobs it is creating within our Indigenous communities—real jobs and economic independence with a view to sustainability and, most importantly, self-empowerment. Last week was no better example of this, seeing the Ewamian people of the Gulf Savannah taking responsibility and ownership, with ranger and guide programs and huge opportunities as we move forward.