




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: ARNOLD, MR M; DARE, MR A; MCCROW, MS R

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.23 am): I join with the Premier and all members of this House in paying our deepest respects and sympathies. The events at Wieambilla on the Western Downs last December truly brought home to all Queenslanders the fragility of life and the sacrifices that some amongst us are called to make. Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Alan Dare were murdered in the most brutal of circumstances—simply doing their job or being a good neighbour. It is difficult to put into the words the emotions that surrounded this tragedy; however, the entire state came to a halt as these events unfolded before our eyes. Our grief was shared as we endeavoured to understand the senseless nature of these deaths in an act of terrorism.

During our lives there are two groups of people we often rely on in times of difficulty—the police and our neighbour. They fulfil distinct roles, but the support they extend in their local communities is crucial in determining our response during these difficult circumstances. Police officers undertake hazardous work. It is a responsibility they assume when they are sworn into the Queensland Police Service. The magnitude of this tragedy brings home the extent of the dangers they face for us every day. These events are even more tragic when it is remembered that both officers were on the cusp of long and fulfilling careers. Having made a commitment to serve the community to which they were assigned, they had every expectation that it would be the beginning of a lifetime of service.

The people of Tara and Chinchilla embraced their local police as never before and expressed their sadness and horror at what unfolded. It is times like this that all Queenslanders realise the commitment that our police make. The ABC reported Tara local Allan Bougoure defining the unique relationship between a rural community and the local police. I quote him when he said—

Country-policing is different to the city. The police integrate really well and become an important part of the community.

Both constables were part of the Western Downs community and the people of that region have demonstrated how much they loved them.

Alan Dare was doing what people in the bush do—looking after the interests of his neighbour; an act of kindness that resulted in his death. A neighbour, a friend, a father and a husband; his daughter, Renee, expressed her thoughts about her father at his funeral in Ipswich. In her words she read—

Steady as a rock, he was always there, and guys like him are a rare and precious find: generous to a fault, going long where others fall short. They don't brag or boast, they pick up the slack ... they lower the temperature, they don't hold grudges, they unlock potential.

They don't show off, they show up.

I visited Chinchilla and Tara with our local members in the week following this tragedy. The emotion on the street and in the pub was something the likes of which I have not experienced for a long time. They were numb with shock. The people of the district remained resolute and they supported each

other. It was at this time that the strength of the people of Chinchilla, Tara and surrounds became obvious. Their wounds will take time to heal, but they remain the strong and united community that they have been for generations.

The opposition supports this motion and we extend our condolences to the family and friends of Rachel McCrow, Matthew Arnold and Alan Dare. Their community will be poorer for their passing, but their lives will remain as an example to us all.