




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Ryan**

**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

---

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

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

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.36 am): We all have a heavy heart today as this parliament acknowledges the tragic loss of Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Mr Alan Dare, whose lives were so senselessly taken on 12 December 2022. I acknowledge that the hurt and sadness will go on for many, many people, including the Commissioner and her executive leadership team whom I would like to acknowledge in the public gallery today.

It is with great sadness that we are all here today as we remember Alan Dare and our fallen Queensland police officers, who paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect their community doing their jobs and doing their duty. It should have been a routine job for four bright young police officers working and living in our state's serene Western Downs region. Instead, the events that unfolded would leave the police community, the Western Downs community, the Queensland community—in fact, every community around our nation—rocked to its core by an unthinkable act of evil. Two of the best young constables of the Queensland Police Service, Constable Rachel McCrow and Constable Matthew Arnold, were murdered along with local resident Alan Dare, while the lives of their two brave colleagues, Constable Randall Kirk and Constable Keely Brough, will never be the same.

Despite the risks involved, police officers continue to do their jobs, to do what needs to be done. They put their safety at risk and vow to protect the community at all costs. Each day they go to work with the understanding that they may not come home, but it is their commitment to their duty, to their service and to their community that makes police officers who they are. The harrowing situation those police officers were confronted with when they responded to what seemed to be a routine call, only to be ambushed and murdered, is nothing short of horrific. The death of a loved one in any circumstance is a hard burden to bear, but this senseless loss of life at the hands of evil will forever remain etched in the minds of all good people around our state.

It is my hope that the McCrow, Arnold and Dare families know that we grieve with them, we grieve for them and we will always grieve alongside them. I extend my deepest and sincerest sympathies and condolences to the McCrow family, to the Arnold family, to the Dare family and to their extended family and friends. My thoughts are and will always be with you.

Constable Matthew Arnold and Constable Rachel McCrow joined the Police Service in March 2020 and June 2021 respectively. They each began their careers policing in Dalby, before transferring to Tara Police Station. Matthew was a triplet and a gifted athlete. Even after his school graduation, he remained involved with the school as a coach. This clear drive to give back, to make impactful change on the lives of those around him, and his love for and sense of community is what would make Matthew the ultimate police officer. He brought compassion and commitment to the role and a drive to serve those he vowed to protect.

Rachel McCrow came from a family that understood the fulfilment of serving others and she embraced that path with great passion. She was not just kind; she was supportive. She was a good friend, but she was also an inspiration to those around her. Rachel would go above and beyond the necessary roles of her job and she possessed all the vital skills that any successful police officer should strive for. Above all else, it was Rachel's humanity that she will be remembered for—always wearing her heart on her sleeve, being a friend to everyone, a confidant to her peers.

The outpouring of grief from across the country for Matthew and Rachel is a testament to the remarkable individuals they were, both professionally and personally. We all mourn for their families who must now carry on without them. We mourn for the communities, for their friends and for the police family. We will never know what Rachel and Matthew were to become or what great achievements certainly lay in front of them. I hope their families can find some comfort in knowing that the legacy of their loved ones will live on through the good and hardworking members of the Queensland Police Service.

Today I acknowledge the tragedy that unfolded in December last year, but so too do I acknowledge the bravery, the courage and the dedication of the Queensland Police Service officers on that day. I acknowledge the efforts of Randall Kirk and Keely Brough. Although their physical injuries may soon be healed, I know the impacts of this day will last a lifetime. I would like to give recognition to the courageous officers who knowingly entered into the firing line to retrieve their own and to the other officers who worked throughout the night to keep the community safe. Their bravery in the face of danger is a testament to the professionalism and commitment of the Queensland Police Service and a credit to their own character and selflessness. We thank you and we appreciate you today and every day.

To the Queensland Police Union of Employees President Ian Leavers, we thank him for his support and all he has done alongside his union colleagues to support the families and the broader police family. I want to also express my deep gratitude and sympathies to the Police Commissioner, Katarina Carroll. Your compassion, selflessness and steadfast leadership was a rock for many—even for complete strangers who were seeking reassurance in these troubled times. To you and the entire police family, we say thank you. Collectively, you have been through an unthinkable loss, but in this time of great sadness and loss you banded together and each and every day since you have continued to protect Queenslanders and continued to support your colleagues.

This tragedy will remain a dark part of Queensland's history but we can never let it shape us. Collectively, we must all do our part to ensure good always prevails over evil. We will carry the legacies of our two great Queensland police officers, Rachel and Matthew, in all we do. Queensland and the nation will forever remember them because it was with honour they served.