




Speech By  
**Hon. Dale Last**  
**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 June 2025

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Regional Queensland**

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (9.56 am): There is no place like Queensland. In fact, as a kid from the bush—like many of us on this side of the chamber—there is no place like regional and rural Queensland. From the Burdekin to the Burnett, from the gulf to the Granite Belt, our budget is delivering a fresh start for all, not just those in the south-east corner. We know that the wealth of this state is built off the back of regional Queensland industries like mining, farming, manufacturing and tourism.

Over the past few months I have been travelling across the state hosting regional forums to help shape the future of our communities. From Roma to Emerald and every region in between, the Crisafulli government is listening, learning, leading and delivering. As I told attendees in Roma and Emerald this past month, I will be your voice in the Queensland parliament. Today I am delivering on that commitment, because on this side of the chamber we understand that the decisions for regional and rural communities should be made in partnership with those they affect.

In Roma the focus is on strengthening agriculture and driving growth in the Maranoa. In Emerald we turned the spotlight on mining and farming and how to unleash the next wave of investment in Central Queensland. Next we are headed to Cloncurry, Charters Towers, Julia Creek, Innisfail, Bowen and Proserpine. We are going right throughout rural and regional Queensland. This is in stark contrast to those opposite, who planned just two future regional forums—on the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast.

The Crisafulli government understands that Queensland does not start and end in Brisbane. We know that improved services and infrastructure are always at the top of regional wish lists. That is why our budget is delivering more health workers in North-West Queensland, the new Toowoomba Hospital and the Mackay hospital expansion program. We are delivering Country Roads Connect, a \$100 million program to improve the roads that link our rural communities. This program will seal key freight and access routes that have been neglected for too long. These are roads that matter.

We are delivering a \$2 million boost to support the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy to expand their program to an additional 50 schools, with hubs in Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton. It will give country kids a head start on a career in our world-leading resources sector. There is a further \$500,000 to create pathways for more women to enter the mining industry. We are delivering \$117.84 million in funding to Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland to protect and enhance our natural assets not just for today but for the generations who come after us. We are proud to be partnering with our NRM regions and their 11 regional member organisations to get this done. It is the largest NRM investment in more than a decade because the Crisafulli government is a government that works with regional Queensland.

Those opposite took regional Queenslanders for granted, and that is why the members for Mackay, Keppel, Rockhampton, Barron River and Cook now sit on this side of the chamber. We are a government that backs our regions and delivers on our promises, and we will not forget that.