



Speech By  
**Natalie Marr**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2025

**PRIVATE MEMBER STATEMENT**

**Townsville Fire**

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (2.34 pm): I rise today to speak about the Crisafulli government's recent announcement of the blockbuster basketball tournament that has been secured for North Queensland, bringing all eight women's National Basketball League teams to Townsville for an action-packed weekend. The WNBL Townsville Tip-Off '25 is the league's first-ever standalone preseason tournament, giving basketball fans the opportunity to see eight games over three days at Townsville Stadium—a major win for our city.

As one city leader aptly said about the media announcement, 'There was a cast of thousands here today.' This incredible turnout reflects the unwavering support for the Fire and the significance of this moment for our community and women's sport. I am very proud of Townsville Fire. This is a great announcement that rewards the hard work and dedication of players, staff, volunteers, sponsors and supporters for the past almost 25 years. Without their success, this announcement may not have been in Townsville, so let's reflect and celebrate with the Townsville Fire on their upcoming 25th anniversary.

They were the first to bring a national championship to our region, raising banners that symbolise not just sporting excellence but also the heart and resilience of our community. In 2011, the Fire faced a dire moment, teetering on the edge of collapse, but Townsville rallied. Members, local businesses and volunteers stepped up, refusing to let them die. From that crisis emerged something extraordinary: the Fire became the only community owned club in the WNBL. It places local kids, local jobs and local pride at the core of a national sporting program. Townsville proud!

Suzy Batkovic, a three-time Olympian and former captain, has been a driving force behind the Townsville Fire's success, leading them to three WNBL championships. She continues her relentless passion for basketball and commitment to ensuring every child in North Queensland can enjoy and thrive in sport. This has made her a local icon. As the Fire's all-time leading scorer, her transformative impact on Townsville's basketball scene is immortalised by the retirement of her jersey, No. 32, and her depiction in the team's logo. The Townsville Fire continue to set the standard in WNBL, working tirelessly to remain visible, viable and unstoppable. Let's honour their 25 years of excellence and the community that keeps their flame burning bright.