



Speech By  
**Dale Last**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Bushfires, Detection and Response**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.12 pm): Yesterday the Deputy Premier spoke about Queenslanders turning the Red Planet maroon. He spoke about how Labor wants Queensland to be recognised as a leading centre in Australasia for launch activities. However, in typical Labor form, the Deputy Premier has overseen a failure to launch. It is a failure which has cost jobs, has cost young Queenslanders the opportunity to be part of this exciting industry and could even cost lives.

On 14 October last year, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service was alerted to an illegal camp fire on K'gari—Fraser Island. This fire went on to burn out 87,000 hectares including World Heritage listed areas. While an investigation into that event is currently underway, recent years have shown the loss and damage that bushfires and wildfires can cause right here in Queensland.

What the Deputy Premier, the Minister for State Development, failed to mention yesterday is that four Queensland businesses recently demonstrated a system that detects 100 per cent of wildfires in just 10 minutes, compared to the 90 minutes or more it currently takes for a similar fire to be reported. It is a system that already monitors over 50 million hectares spanning the area from Mexico through to Canada.

The fire urgency estimator in geosynchronous orbit system, known as FUEGO, provides more time and more information for authorities to assess and plan their reaction to a wildfire. As the name implies, the FUEGO system utilises satellites as well as ground based sensors, but it is the satellites which offer 24/7 monitoring that we need. Not only can we act on the threat of fires more quickly; we also have the opportunity to launch those satellites we desperately need from Queensland. Despite his apparent eagerness to embrace space projects, the Deputy Premier and this government have failed to embrace that opportunity.

The coastline in North Queensland is an ideal area to launch from geographically. Instead of embracing the opportunities on offer, this government has turned its back on regional Queensland, turned its back on protecting Queenslanders from bushfires and wildfires, and turned its back on creating jobs for Queenslanders. Space may be the final frontier, but when it comes to protecting Queenslanders and creating jobs for Queenslanders this government has again offered nothing but a black hole.

This is a far too important to let this opportunity go. We know the devastation that fires cause across this state every year, and we should be doing absolutely everything we can to embrace technology that will allow us to detect fires early and to respond. If we had done that on Fraser Island, that fire would not have been as bad as it was.