



Dale Last MP
Member for Burdekin

Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Affairs

Burdekin Electorate Office

Shop 30 Centrepont Arcade

AYR QLD 4807

Tel: 07 4767 0500

Freecall: 1800 817 594

Email: burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au

April 1st, 2021

Media Release – Last calls for transparency on masks

Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Affairs, Dale Last, believes the government needs to “be up-front” with the people of North Queensland after the mandatory use of masks throughout Queensland was extended for two weeks.

Mr Last said people throughout regional Queensland had, to date, largely complied with the mandate but that answers to their questions were needed for both short and long-term community safety.

“I’m not disputing the health advice, I’m asking for honesty,” Mr Last said. “In recent days we have heard of possible connections to Gladstone but that’s still a long way from Townsville.”

“If there are fears that someone from one of the clusters, or a close contact, has travelled to Townsville, for example then just tell us. If that were the case it would encourage people to be more careful.”

Mr Last said he is not interested in joining the ongoing political tit-for-tat that has surrounded vaccination in the last few days and that his calls were to help calm a building sense of defiance.

“People are saying to me that we are almost 700kms from Gladstone and they are starting to question the logic of mandatory mask use,” he said. “If the main concern is people travelling over Easter then the government should just say that instead of expecting people to blindly follow.”

“I’m confident that explaining why people need to wear masks hundreds, or even thousands, of kilometres from exposure sites would put the issue to rest. We need to keep in mind that, until we have herd immunity, we have to be prepared for outbreaks and the last thing we need, especially in regional and rural areas, is people not following directions because they’ve lost respect for the authorities.”

“Even at the height of the pandemic there was no mandatory mask order in many rural and regional areas so you can’t blame people for asking questions and even feeling uncertain. Just tell us what’s different this time and why the goal posts have been moved.”

“If you want people in regional Queensland to work with you, you have to be honest with them.”

ENDS – Media Contact: David Cooper (07) 4767 0500 or 0427 834 844