



Dale Last MP
Member for Burdekin

Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
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Media Release – Questions on PolAir get ‘polly waffle’

The answer to whether Townsville will be home to a dedicated Police helicopter at any stage in the future remains a mystery, despite the best efforts of Shadow Police Minister, Dale Last MP.

Instead of answering what Mr Last called a simple question, the response from Minister Mark Ryan referred to “*three helicopters based in North Queensland which are available for policing operations.*”

“Obviously, the Minister is referring to the rescue choppers again and hoping we won’t notice,” Mr Last said. “It is yet another case of double standards because, in the South East, they have dedicated rescue and dedicated Police choppers but we are supposed to be happy with this hybrid model.”

“You only have to look at images of the PolAir choppers in Brisbane and compare them to the rescue choppers here in the North to see they are completely different types of machines. The helicopters we have here now are primarily for search and rescue, not policing operations.”

“If the Labor government want us to accept that our current helicopters can undertake search and rescue plus policing roles, then they need to apply the same logic in the South East.”

Mr Last said the response from the Minister also included “*the standard Labor cop-out*”.

“Any time they are asked hard questions on policing resources, Labor refers to the independence of the Commissioner and how these are her decisions to make,” Mr Last said. “But, on Tuesday, when there was a new Police station to open the Minister described it as a commitment from the government.”

“People are fed up with Minister Ryan dodging the tough questions when it comes to his failure to address youth crime. He won’t give victims the respect of an honest answer but he’s happy to pose for photos at a ribbon cutting.”

“The people of Cairns and Townsville want answers and want to be treated as equals when it comes to keeping them safe. All we have seen from Labor is contempt and ignorance.”

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Question on notice: <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/tableOffice/questionsAnswers/2021/519-2021.pdf>

Media release re new station: <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/92292>