



Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Infrastructure

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.25 pm): The Queensland Labor government has again failed the hardworking Queenslanders who live and work in the Bowen Basin, including places like Moranbah, Dysart, Middlemount, Clermont and Glendon. Despite the billions of dollars that are poured into the Queensland economy and the billions of dollars that this government earns in royalties from the region, the people of that area are being treated like second—no, fourth- or fifth-class citizens. To make it worse, their concerns are being ignored by this current government.

Let's start in Moranbah, where we have a hospital with a termite infestation. That is right; there is termite damage in a hospital. That is the type of damage that does not happen overnight, but it is damage that has occurred despite supposed regular inspections. Despite claims that the hospital has not been forgotten, it certainly has been overlooked.

As we head along the Peak Downs Highway we see several examples of the Labor government's failure to act on roads. Here we have a road that is used to transport equipment and, even more importantly, workers to and from some of Queensland's biggest mines, but it is a road that is simply not built for purpose. It is frequently subjected to rolling closures to move equipment and it is the scene of many accidents, including fatal accidents, along that section of the highway. It is not just the Peak Downs Highway. Throughout the Isaac Regional Council area there are vital roads that still remain unsealed. These are roads that are used by school buses—when the bus is not off the road due to the appalling state of the road, I might add—and emergency responders. Thanks to the state of those roads, we have recently seen ambulance vehicles damaged and rendered inoperable.

Down the overlooked road in Dysart—and I am glad the education minister is here in the parliament today—we have a fantastic high school. I often visit that school, but they have a chronic teacher shortage. I have written to the minister and she would have received that correspondence recently. When you are amalgamating classes 9 to 12 for subjects, you have a problem. When you have families in that community say to me that they are now considering pulling their kids out of that town and sending them to boarding school, we have a problem. I certainly hope that the education minister has taken that on board and is working to address that teacher shortage in the Dysart community.

It is time for this government to stop ignoring regional Queensland. It is time to stop turning a blind eye, and it is time that Queenslanders got their fair share of the pie no matter where they live. The people of Moranbah, Dysart and Clermont deserve better. The government needs to stop rhetoric and start the work. We talk about attracting families to the bush, but you will never get them there unless you have the services they deserve.