



Dale Last MP
Member for Burdekin

Burdekin Electorate Office

Shop 30 Centrepont Arcade

AYR QLD 4807

Tel: 07 4767 0500

Freecall: 1800 817 594

Email: burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au

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

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Media Release – Answers may finally be forthcoming

A ruling by the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament may result in greater transparency on crime and the mammoth task our Police face in addressing crime according to Shadow Minister for Police & Corrective Services, Dale Last MP.

During last week's sitting of Parliament, the Speaker highlighted the importance of the Questions on Notice process which allows Members of Parliament to scrutinise the activities of government and it is a process Mr Last says has caused him some frustration.

"The Questions on Notice process is invaluable when it comes to getting actual information on what the government is doing in response to issues," he said. "Unfortunately, there have been many occasions now where the Police Minister has refused to answer questions because information has supposedly not been available or there was too much work involved in obtaining that information."

"What the Speaker has done is highlighted the importance of scrutiny and ruled that questions cannot be avoided without a valid reason. That should ensure that information is forthcoming and, as a result, that the government is held to account."

Mr Last said that, with modern technology, responses from Ministers that information was not available should be extremely rare, but that he had received several responses on important issues relating to Police where the excuse was used, something he hoped was now in the past.

"A perfect example of information not being made available was when I asked questions relating to Project Booyah," he said. "The Minister said he could not advise the total amount invested which I found surprising given that Project Booyah is promoted by the government as a solution to youth crime."

"It seems strange that the Minister cannot provide the information on that particular program but that the value of Police services provided to our PCYC's is able to be calculated and is, in fact, published each year. Project Booyah is funded by taxpayers and taxpayers deserve to know how much it is costing because that lets taxpayers assess it fairly."

"It is as if the Minister simply did not want people to know how much the program costs. That rings alarm bells when, in the same response, the Minister admitted that up to half of the participants haven't committed a crime."

"Information on PoliceLink, staffing levels at Police Stations, funding for Domestic Violence and Police resources has also been sought in the past and not provided. It's not like these requests would involve taking Police off the road to provide answers; it seems be more about laziness or arrogance on the Minister's part."

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