

A strong voice for our future

BRITTANY LAUGA MP

B Urb Dev (Urb&Reg Plan)(Hons), C.dec

**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL
AND ASSISTANT MINISTER
FOR EDUCATION**



MEDIA RELEASE

14 February 2019

Lauga defends ‘world class’ rural firefighters

Rural firefighters in Central Queensland have received high praise from the Member for Keppel and Assistant Education Minister Brittany Lauga. in a passionate speech in Parliament.

Mrs Lauga told MPs CQ firefighters were “world-leading experts”, and “outstanding” in their response to the unprecedented, catastrophic bushfire conditions in the region late last year.

She was speaking against an Opposition motion to hold a parliamentary inquiry into the disaster (including questioning the work of hazard reduction burns by rural firefighters) labelling it a political points-scoring stunt that was unjustly critical of rural firefighters.

“There is actually nothing in the motion that supports our firefighters.

“I see no need to hold a parliamentary inquiry when I witnessed an outstanding and absolutely fantastic response from Queensland firefighters to catastrophic bushfire conditions in our community—unprecedented catastrophic bushfire conditions.

“I saw the local permanent and volunteer firefighters, backed by colleagues from other parts of Queensland and interstate, do a wonderful job at protecting the people and their property in Keppel.

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“They are incredibly brave men and women who put their lives on the line to protect our community.

“The Rural Fire Service volunteers from Bungundarra, The Caves, Keppel Sands, Cawarral, Tanby and Adelaide Park brigades within my electorate all rose to the occasion.

“The fire and rescue stations at Emu Park, North Rockhampton and Yeppoon played an incredibly important role too.”

Mrs Lauga said landholders were often the rural firefighters doing the hazard reduction burns.

“To say that the rural fires do not consult with landholders is outright ludicrous.

“I saw a system that worked. I have seen it before in Central Queensland after Cyclone Marcia in 2015, after the Fitzroy floods in 2017 and again in 2018 after the Queensland bushfires.

“Sure there are ways in which we can improve the way we respond to and recover after natural disasters.

“But I can assure you that the people leading the charge in response and recovery to natural disasters in Queensland, and those who review the whole process, are world-leading experts.”

Mrs Lauga chided Opposition MPs for trying to turn unprecedented bushfire conditions and huge firefighting operations into a political issue.

“The people of Queensland can see through their shallow plan.

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“There is no need for a Parliamentary inquiry (into the fires) when we already have the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management to independently review and assess disaster management arrangements in Queensland,” she said.

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