




Speech By
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Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Illicit Drugs, Workplace Safety and Drug Driving

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (11.11 pm): I rise to address a number of matters related to illicit drugs. In Australia during the last financial year almost \$2 billion of illegal drugs were seized. Last November a record seizure of illicit amphetamines, including MDMA and methamphetamine, was detected in a cargo ship container bound for Australia from Hamburg in Germany. Record numbers of drug seizures and law enforcement efforts in recent years have not reduced illicit drug supply in Australia, with the price paid on the street or in other environments having remained stable or in some cases even fallen. This is despite some great work undertaken by the Australian Crime Commission, the Australian Federal Police, intelligence services and various jurisdictional law enforcement agencies.

In Queensland the construction industry has called on the Queensland government to introduce compulsory drug testing on building sites given workplace health and safety concerns. Some data presented at the National Methamphetamine Symposium in May found that amphetamine use in the construction sector was twice as common as among the general population, with four in 100 building employees admitting going to work whilst under the influence of drugs. Employers such as the Australian Industry Group are reporting that the threatening and abusive behaviours of some employees under the influence of crystalline methamphetamine is creating safety risks for co-workers, managers and customers whilst also damaging productive work sites. While all this is occurring on construction sites, what should be of great concern to Queenslanders is the alleged criminal conduct of organisational representatives of the CFMEU, the potential formal or informal linkages of these individuals to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. Jo-Ann Miller, and whether organised crime and criminal gangs are involved in illicit drug supply to construction workers and what potential further linkages may or may not exist between Queensland based criminal gangs and terrorist groups through money laundering, illicit drug production, illegal firearm trafficking and other crime.

As the tangled web of conflicting ideologies and political and criminal agendas among jihadists, insurgents and radicalised western youth grows in Syria and parts of Iraq, how long will it be before the powerful amphetamine tablet captagon possibly becomes an issue in Australia and Queensland and other western democracies? Unfortunately, the recent Queensland organised crime commission lacked credibility due to its lack of open and transparent hearings as well as tested evidence and accountability. It could have provided an enhanced opportunity to examine such matters as well as synthetic drugs, which are becoming more problematic in a number of our communities. There is no doubt Queenslanders should have been given an opportunity to have their say in the report. In recent years criminal gangs, particularly on the Gold Coast, have also been problematic, threatening community safety, tourism and the local Gold Coast economy. The Gold Coast is the worst region in Queensland for drug and alcohol related deaths. Drug driving is a serious road safety issue. Illicit drug use can cause cognitive impairment which in turn affects judgement, memory and reaction times. Drug driving is a

contributing factor in seven per cent of road fatalities in Australia. There has been an alarming increase in drivers testing positive to drugs in roadside tests across Queensland. The Queensland government must further review penalties and sanctions while also investing in demand reduction strategies and increasing the access and availability of drug and alcohol services across Queensland. Road safety and eliminating the fatal five is everyone's responsibility, not only at Christmas but also throughout the year.