



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Dawson Electorate: Illicit Drugs

SPEECH

Monday, 1 June 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Monday, 1 June 2015
Page 5364
Questioner
Speaker Christensen, George, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (16:40): Last Tuesday I received a disturbing letter from the Mayor of Whitsunday Regional Council. She told me the Bowen State High School had raised some concerns with her about what they described as an astounding and gravely concerning increase in the use of drugs, particularly ice. The reports that the school had obtained insinuated that drugs were being given freely, at no cost to the user, and were used amongst a wide range of community members, including students. As if to substantiate those claims, 100 police raids across Mackay and the Whitsundays on the weekend netted more than \$1 million in drugs, with 57 arrests made. The drug haul included 14 kilograms of cannabis, 18 cannabis plants and 460 grams of the drug known as ice.

The Liberal-National government earlier this year identified the growing problem of ice and created the National Ice Taskforce to develop a National Ice Action Strategy. As a region that is heavily impacted by the use of ice, North Queensland will be contributing to the National Ice Taskforce. I will be conducting community forums on ice in both Mackay and Bowen in the coming weeks, gathering input from key stakeholders across the community, including front-line police and ambulance officers, health and mental health workers, schools, sporting and youth groups, and social services organisations. Our community forums will discuss both the extent of the problem and its impacts, as well as the solutions for the National Ice Action Strategy. I look forward to that strategy being developed and to solutions for my local community.