

BUSHFIRES — KATANNING AND SOUTH WEST

147. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the recent bushfires in WA that have burnt through approximately 1.5 million hectares of land and affected many communities.

- (1) Has the minister had a conversation with Emergency Management Australia about exemptions to disaster recovery arrangements so our communities can access Australian Taxation Office relief and other forms of assistance?
- (2) Is the minister aware that 417 visa holders, volunteering in Katanning and regional WA with BlazeAid's relief and fencing efforts, are being forced back to the eastern states where exemptions have been negotiated by state ministers?

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Let us hear the answer, member for Warren–Blackwood.

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

Despite the fact that I have written to the member for Roe on this very matter, because he has asked me about it, I am not 100 per cent sure, from that question, whether he actually read the response that I gave him.

Mr P.J. Rundle: I read it.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I then question why the member has raised this question in the house. The reason I say that, member, is because it was all laid —

Mr R.H. Cook: Did you have pictures?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I did not put cartoons in, maybe I should have done.

It was all laid out there and I really cannot understand why the member and his federal colleagues in his area cannot get it through their heads that the disaster recovery funding arrangements have been put in place by the federal government.

Mr P.J. Rundle interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Roe, you have a chance for a supplementary.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: It seems to go right the way through those members' heads, from here to here and out the other side.

The SPEAKER: Member, just answer the question, please.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The disaster recovery funding arrangements follow the same conditions that are in place for the normal disaster recovery arrangements in this state when there is a flood or a bushfire or whatever.

Mr D.T. Redman: These were arrangements from BlazeAid. Pick up the phone!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I will get to BlazeAid in a second. He asked the government a two-part question.

The first part is about the recovery arrangements and whatever relief that comes, whether it is a loan, subsidies on interest or any other form of support, as a result of those bushfires. All those conditions were laid down by the federal government. If the member has a problem with them, go and raise it with my federal counterpart.

Mr P.J. Rundle: You're the minister.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: That member is an MP. Raise it with the —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: — Nationals member, who happens to be the federal minister for emergency services who wrote out those conditions.

Several members interjected.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: You are an MP —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, do you want to hear the answer or not?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: You represent those people in that area; get off your butt and write to those people, write to our counterparts —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, speak through the Chair, please.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Write to your counterpart —

The SPEAKER: Through the Chair, minister.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: — who is —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: — the federal emergency services minister who set those conditions out if you have a problem with them.

Ms M.J. Davies: Why does every other minister manage to have the conversation?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: No. I have written that to you.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I have written that to you. I have also raised the very issues that you have raised with that federal minister, and they are being raised again today by the Premier in the Council of Australian Governments meeting. What are you doing? What are those members doing? That is what I have been doing. The member for Roe is the local member; what has he been doing? He has been doing nothing. With respect to —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: With respect to Liz Guidera, who is the president of Katanning shire, and who spoke to my office, I texted back and forth with her yesterday about BlazeAid. I made it very clear to her that the 457 visa issue is a federal issue. It is immigration, so take that up with the local federal member.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood!

Mr D.T. Redman: Start doing your job!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Why do you not do something, member for Warren–Blackwood?

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Like the guy behind you —

The SPEAKER: Order, minister! Member for Warren–Blackwood, I call you to order for the first and the second time, because you are too busy talking to hear me say it the first time. Minister, speak through the Chair, please.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Nationals WA members seem to be long on talk and short on action—as normal. They talk a lot in here. Try to get them to represent their members —

The SPEAKER: Members of the National Party, I do not want to have to throw you all out, but with the way you are going, the only one who has any class today is your deputy leader!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

As I have said —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: As I have said, members of the National Party are long on talk and short on action. They can represent their constituents by taking these issues up with their own political colleagues in Canberra, and they fail to do so. I have done it, and, with respect to the Katanning issue, it is still ongoing and still being raised. Basically, I am doing the work for the member for Roe, down there, in his own constituency. I would like him to now get up and say thanks.