



INDEPENDENT FOR KAWANA

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT WITH INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FOR PUMICESTONE – JASON BURGESS

20 November 2017

Queensland election candidates reveal that candidacies are part of rehabilitation program; hope example can save lives

Independent candidates for Kawana Jeremy Davey and Pumicestone Jason Burgess, today confided that their candidacies are partly a mental health rehabilitation challenge to throw themselves out of their comfort zones and measure their performances in a high intensity environment.

Whilst both Mr Davey and Mr Burgess come from vastly different Australian Defence Force (ADF) backgrounds, both know the debilitation caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Anxiety and have admitted to previous idiosyncrasies about suicide. Mr Davey said the hardest thing to do was to find someone to reach out to when he became so debilitated with his condition he made plans to take his own life.

“I became so indecisive with this bloody voice in my head that questioned every decision I was making. I felt shame, uselessness and turned to excessive use of alcohol and cannabis to wipe myself out. I had to question, plan and risk mitigate every little task I had to do. It got to the point where I would flip a coin to enable me to make a decision; fortunately a flip of the coin told me to seek help from a counselling service rather than gassing myself in a car.

“As I sit here preparing this release I feel a wave of emotion such as shame and embarrassment whilst my pulse races. It would be so much easier to keep this my secret but I am sick of losing friends to suicide and hearing of the diabolical state of mental health in the community. If I have to go through the embarrassment of admitting to falling so low to push the issue of mental health then stuff it. It absolutely needs to be done,” Mr Davey said.

Mr Burgess said that he still found it hard to carry out tasks required of him in the election such as organising printing and design. He admitted that the process of online design and ordering eased the burden of what many may see as a menial task so much easier. The Pumicestone candidate did however say he valued the opportunity to step outside of his comfort zone on the hustings.

“I have to talk to people, I have to engage with constituents and I have to present debatable points of difference when trying to convince them that I am the person they should vote for. It wasn't that long ago when I could never have imagined myself doing this. The support I receive from friends but most importantly my family pushes me through many barriers,” Mr Burgess said.



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Kawana candidate Jeremy Davey pointed to the fact that PTSD and other mental health problems go far beyond those who have served in the ADF or other frontline services.

“Of course we have our ADF personnel and first responders in the emergency services, but we have people who have been exposed to horrible events in the course of their employment, in the course of their lives. No one is immune from PTSD or mental illness more broadly”, Mr Davey said.

Mr Burgess said that he and Mr Davey did not want to politicise the issue, however all levels of Government were well aware of how rampant mental illness had become in the community and it needed to remain a debatable issue.

“We just want to share our story, to bring it to the table for discussion because getting it out there in the public forum saves lives; simple as that. Hopefully it will bring more funding as well.”

Mr Davey offered some pointed advice, especially to men, who were battling with mental illness.

“The very first thing you need to do is forget about this macho bloke syndrome we all seem to have; that’s bullshit. Reach out for help. You’ll feel down, you may feel ashamed and embarrassed but at the end of the day, you’ll still be alive.”

For those who consider themselves or someone they know to be in immediate danger call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

24 hour counselling services are provided by several organisations including:

***Lifeline: 131114
Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36
Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800***

ENDS

For further information please call or text Jeremy Davey 0400 398 367