The Territory Opposition is astonished by revelations that the Member for Daly, Rob Knight, was unconcerned that children at the Palumpa community were wading through a crocodile infested billabong to get to school.

When quizzed by Julia Christensen on ABC radio this morning as to what he had done to rectify the situation the Minister evaded the question, blandly observing that many remote communities had problems in the wet season.

Christensen: The Chief Minister knew nothing about this shameful situation when I raised it with him on Thursday and yet obviously you knew all about it. Why hasn’t it been raised with him?

Knight: Well look I guess there’s hundreds of issues going on during the wet season in hundreds of communities throughout the Territory I mean…

“Such a casual attitude would never have been displayed if the situation hadn’t occurred in a remote community,” says Terry Mills, Leader of the Opposition.

“The Minister should have taken immediate action to ensure children wanting to get to school didn’t have to run the gauntlet of crocodiles.

“The first thing the Minister should have done is contact the Chief Minister and inform him that a crocodile infested billabong separated kids in this community from school.

“As Minister for Education the Chief Minister is responsible for ensuring kids can get to school, let alone having to risk their lives to get there.

“According to residents at the Palumpa community, they told Rob Knight that the local council had suspended its ferry operation across the billabong because of the threat of crocodiles some time ago.

“Yet only after the issue broke in the media did the Minister apparently make any moves to deal with this issue.

“The Minister must produce all documentation regarding when he knew of this matter and what steps he took to overcome it.”
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