



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 16 March 2022

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## WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2022

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

### PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS



**Mr SPEAKER:** I have to report that on Monday, 14 March I presented to Her Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill No. 2 and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) for royal assent. Her Excellency was pleased to subscribe her assent in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

### ASSENT TO BILLS



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letter will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Speaker

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Appropriation Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 14 March 2022

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay an amount from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial year starting 1 July 2020

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for particular departments for the financial year starting 1 July 2020

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

14 March 2022

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 14 March 2022, from Her Excellency the Governor, to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 14 March 2022 [[289](#)].

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

**Pitt, Hon. FW, AM**



**Mr SPEAKER:** I also note that 14 March was my father's 74th birthday. I want to wish my dad a happy birthday for Monday.

## Legislative Council, Anniversary of Abolition



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 23 March 1922, the Constitution Act Amendment Bill 1921 was proclaimed and with that the Legislative Council of Queensland was abolished. The abolition of the Legislative Council 100 years ago shaped Queensland's distinct political culture. The Parliamentary Service is commemorating this seminal event in Queensland political history. The highlight will be an historical seminar co-hosted this Saturday with the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. The seminar will be held in the Legislative Council Chamber appropriately from 9.30 am and will be opened by Her Excellency the Governor.

The seminar will include presentations from Mrs Lynne Armstrong of the Parliamentary Library; Dr Denver Beanland; Emeritus Professor Kay Saunders; Dr Gerard Carney; the Clerk, Neil Laurie—and I will feature somewhere as well. The seminar will follow a commemorative lunch in the Strangers Dining Room.

**Mr Bleijie:** You'll love the red room furniture.

**Mr Fumer:** You'll never get there!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Senator! Members will also notice a display to mark the 100th anniversary of the abolition of the Legislative Council on the level B foyer outside the Members' Reading Room. Curated by the Parliamentary Library, the display will remain in the Old House until after the historical seminar this Saturday. It will be relocated later this month to the level 3 lobby in the Annexe.

The Parliamentary Library has also prepared an interactive online biographical portal on the parliament website of the 195 members who served in the Legislative Council.

Finally, I can advise the House that a commemorative red wine for this auspicious centenary is now on sale. I do discourage members from buying this wine over the Speaker's Gin. However, a 2019 Reserve Sangiovese from Symphony Hill Wines of Ballandean, in the electorate of Southern Downs, is available for purchase at the Strangers coffee shop, the Lucinda Bar and the gift shop, and all good retail outlets.

The centenary of the abolition of Queensland's Legislative Council is an important commemoration of a defining event in our state's history. I commend the Parliamentary Service's commemoration to the House.

## School Group Tours



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Samford State School in the electorate of Pine Rivers, and Tamborine Mountain College in the electorate of Scenic Rim.

## PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

### South Burnett, Pain Clinic

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 16 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the provision of a Persistent Pain/Chronic Pain Clinic in the South Burnett [\[290\]](#).

### Darts

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 176 petitioners, requesting the House to reconsider the decision to remove darts as a sport in Queensland and reinstate it as a listed activity [\[291\]](#).

**Mr SPEAKER:** 180!

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk—

### Coronavirus, Health Impacts

1,512 petitioners, requesting the House to seek a more detailed and factual account of the health impacts of COVID-19 [\[292\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

#### REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[293](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

#### **Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021**

Amendments made to Bill

#### **Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

'Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021'

*Insert—*

'Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2022'

#### MEMBER'S PAPER


The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Nanango (Mrs Frecklington)—

[294](#) Nonconforming petition regarding the reinstatement of darts as a sport in order to qualify for sports funding

## MINISTERIAL PAPER


### Ministerial Expenses

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.36 am): I lay upon the table of the House the public report of ministerial expenses for the period 1 July to 31 December 2021.

*Tabled paper:* Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2021 [\[295\]](#).

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing Order

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (9.36 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That standing order 231 shall not operate to prevent questions or debate which anticipate debate on the motion standing in the name of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.36 am): Any driver filling up recently would have received a nasty shock. Petrol has skyrocketed beyond \$2 a litre. Some are facing the very real prospect of paying \$200 to fill the family car. This puts enormous strain on household budgets, especially for those battling to make ends meet. While we cannot control the global events that have led to this price hike, there is something we can do.

We are going to make the cost of buying electric cars a little bit cheaper. I can today announce that our government will provide a \$3,000 subsidy for anyone buying an electric vehicle to the value of \$58,000. The transport minister will shortly go into more detail. I am advised that this brings five electric models—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Are you against electric vehicles now? I am advised that this brings five electric models within closer reach. I am advised that this would make electric vehicles a comparable choice to new cars like Hyundai Santa Fe, Holden Colorado, Volkswagen Amarok or Mitsubishi Triton.

This is a key component of our Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy. It provides \$45 million over three years for the vehicle purchase incentive program and a further \$10 million to accelerate places to charge them. I am advised electric vehicles are cheaper to run because they have fewer parts—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I did not think it would cause so much debate at this hour of the morning.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I can feel the electricity in the room, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** A greater take-up of new electric vehicles means more in the used car market, making them even cheaper and within reach of those with less money to spend.

Queensland has always forged a path for electric vehicles. This government plans for our state's future—the future jobs and future industries. No state has a better developed superhighway of recharging stations. Our next step is to develop the rare earth—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Logan and member for Burleigh, you will cease your discussion, otherwise you can take it outside.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Our next step is to develop the rare earth minerals, particularly in the north-west of our state, and use them to manufacture batteries, even the vehicles themselves. Then there is our \$2 billion renewable energy strategy, including the development of the hydrogen industry.

The goal is to reduce our emissions, reduce the impact of climate change and strengthen and rebuild our economy. Global warming is real. Climate change increases the frequency and severity of extreme weather as we have seen all too clearly and all too recently.

No-one can reduce these impacts alone. Together, we have to all play our part. We have learned from bitter experience when it comes to fuel prices that what goes up does not generally come down. Electric vehicles give people a choice. Our Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy brings that choice within closer reach along with a cleaner environment.

## NAPLAN



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.39 am): The results are in, and today I can confirm that Queensland students get an A plus in 2022. The last two years have been the toughest and most disruptive time for Queensland students in the history of our state. They have had to overcome floods, fires, a global pandemic, being separated from their mates and a new program of learning from home. Despite all of that and based on the latest NAPLAN results out this week, I can safely say that this cohort is among the best and brightest we have ever seen in Queensland.

There are too many to name, but let me go through some of the schools. They include: Crows Nest State School, exceptional numeracy results among years 7 and 9; Millmerran State School, strong numeracy results among years 7 and 9; Mundubbera State School, strong reading results among years 3 and 5; Beenleigh State School, strong writing results among years 3 and 5; Brisbane Central State School in the electorate of the Minister for Education, strong reading results from years 3 and 5; Bundaberg North State School, strong numeracy results among years 3 and 5; Caravonica State School, strong reading results among years 3 and 5; East Brisbane State School, the same among years 3 and 5; Eight Mile Plains State School; Gin Gin State School; Glenella State School; Kalkie State School; Lowood State School; Millchester State School; Minden State School; Mooloolah State School—member for Glass House, good news—Mount Cotton State School; Robertson State School in Toohey. It goes over their head. I go on: Sunnybank Hills State School—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am giving good news. The list goes on: Thangool State School; Vienna Woods State School; and Woolloowin State School, just to name a few. Across the board Queensland students produced some great results. In particular, students at the Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology performed very well. The academy's results were above the average across every category when compared to schools with students from similar backgrounds. Queensland's year 3 students recorded their strongest writing results ever.

I congratulate all 274,000 Queensland school students who participated in NAPLAN last year and give a big thankyou to the teachers, principals, staff, parents and carers who prepared students for their exams.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Now, now, you two!

**Mr Bleijie:** Should we get in the room?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Oh goodness me!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left. Member for McConnel, I do not think we need your commentary this morning.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** These results are a testament to the hard work of all teachers, staff, students and their families. They also reflect strongly on our investment in education. Our government has invested \$5.2 billion in education. We have built 21 new schools including three new schools that I opened earlier this year. I am proud to say that we are investing another billion dollars to open an extra 11 state schools in 2023 and 2024. We will continue to invest in schools and our teachers to ensure that we give Queensland students the very best possible start in life.

### Tourism Industry



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.43 am): There is more good news today: our 'Nothing Beats Queensland' campaign. It is the slogan that encouraged millions of Australians to return to our state after the devastating floods in 2011. Today I can announce that we are bringing it back.

For the last two years, Queenslanders have fought bravely against COVID-19. Just as we started to see the light at the end of the tunnel, floodwaters ripped through much of the south-east, causing more heartache for local businesses. This week, along with the Minister for Tourism, I will launch a new tourism marketing blitz to help struggling businesses rebuild from the impacts of COVID-19 and the floods. From this Sunday, our 'Nothing Beats Queensland' campaign will be in print, online, on the radio airwaves, on social media and on TV from Victoria to New South Wales and right across Queensland over the next three weeks. We know it works.

Following the floods in 2011, we saw Australians return to Queensland in their droves as a result of this campaign. Through our 'Nothing Beats Queensland' campaign, we expect to reach more than nine million people this year. In total, this initiative could generate up to \$3.4 billion for local businesses between March and June.

We are focusing on encouraging Australians to visit our hardest hit tourism regions in time for Easter. Whether it is enjoying the theme parks on our great Gold Coast, learning to surf on the Sunshine Coast, or trying wines in the Southern Queensland country region or perhaps even the drop that you are launching on Saturday, Mr Speaker, there is plenty to enjoy right here across Queensland for the Easter holidays. I am also pleased to report that bookings are picking up in some of our key tourism destinations including: the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast and Cairns, where occupancy is now at around 75 per cent for the Easter long weekend. Isn't that great? Let's get it up to 100 per cent.

Rebuilding Queensland's tourism industry is central to our plan for economic recovery. Since the onset of COVID-19, we have committed \$1.1 billion to support the tourism industry. We will continue to work closely with the industry to help tourism operators get back on their feet.

### Cecil Healy Award




**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.45 am): It is a tale that will live forever in Australian sporting folklore: two young Queenslanders running side by side with the hopes of a nation on their shoulders. One, Ash Moloney, was about to win bronze at the Tokyo Olympics, Australia's first Olympic medal in decathlon; the other, Cedric Dubler, was about to win something just as special. It was the dying seconds of their final event. Ash was fading fast, but Cedric, sacrificing his own performance, won the respect of millions when he spent the rest of the race encouraging his mate to the finish line. It was a remarkable performance.

That is why it will come as no surprise to many that this week, Cedric Dubler has been honoured by the Australian Olympic Committee, receiving the inaugural Cecil Healy Award for Outstanding Sportsmanship displayed at an Olympic Games. I offer Cedric our heartfelt congratulations on behalf of the government and, I am sure, on behalf of this House. He has left a huge mark on the Olympics and has represented his state with pride.

We teach our children that sport is not just about winning and losing; it is about how you play the game. Soon, Queensland will host its own Olympic and Paralympic games. I can only hope that the Queenslanders who represent their state and country here at home in 2032 are inspired to follow Cedric's example.

### Greater Whitsunday Alliance


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.46 am): Queensland's strength is also in its regions. No other state can match the richness and diversity of our regions. They all make great contributions to our economy. Last night it was a pleasure to welcome to parliament the Greater Whitsunday Alliance. I want to acknowledge the assistant minister and member for Mackay and also the member for Whitsunday.

The Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday councils have linked up in a very impressive collaboration. We all know their traditional strengths—mining, tourism and agriculture—and they are proud of those. As we also saw last night, the Greater Whitsunday Alliance is determined to diversify and grow; to add many more strings to their bow; to make even bigger contributions to our state in aviation and aerospace, aquaculture and bioproducts, education, skills and training. It was wonderful last night to see how the three councils are absolutely in lock step, backing each other and backing the people in their region.

Steven Boxall, the CEO of the Resources Centre of Excellence, spoke about the skills and workforce potential of Mackay. Isaac Mayor Anne Baker explained how her region's massive role in our mining wealth is only a part of its contribution to Queensland. Whitsunday CEO Rod Ferguson told us how even he came to be impressed by how much more his area has to offer than tourism.

We have backed the greater Whitsunday region before and during the COVID downturn, and we will continue to support their push for more investment and more development. I congratulate the alliance and CEO Kylie Porter on last night's outstanding showcase.

### Queensland Floods

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.48 am): The recent flooding seen in South-East Queensland, Wide Bay and Fraser Coast is the worst experienced since 2011. In some places it was worse. The QRA has carried out over 16,700 assessments of homes and commercial buildings. Suncorp Insurance has just updated the market regarding insurance claims, and that also provides a sense of the scale of the disaster. Suncorp alone has received more than 34,000 claims across Queensland and New South Wales, with around 60 per cent in Queensland and around 40 per cent in New South Wales. Over 80 per cent of total claims relate to home damage. They report the hardest hit suburbs in terms of Suncorp Insurance claims were Deagon, Aspley, Everton Park, Oxley and Caboolture.


It is clear that as we continue our recovery efforts we need to ensure we have a strong focus on resilience. I met with South-East Queensland mayors on Friday last week. They agreed that we need to ensure we are ready for impacts that we have not experienced before, like the unprecedented rainfall we experienced with this recent event. Queensland councils have seen firsthand the benefits of investing in betterment projects, with many recounting examples of homes and public infrastructure being able to withstand the impacts of the 2022 floods because of the investment that had been made together following previous flooding disasters. In February 2022, on the eve of the recent disaster, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change advised that climate change had already caused more frequent and intense extreme events and that multiple climate hazards will create compounding risks to communities, infrastructure and supply chains.

Investment in flood mitigation can provide economic returns and resilience benefits. As far back as 2002, bureau of transport economics research showed a three-to-one return on mitigation investment through avoided response and recovery costs, but Australian government mitigation spending was only three per cent of what it spent post disaster in recent years. Funds invested by the Palaszczuk government in betterment programs have paid off. We have supported more than 485 projects to the value of \$263.85 million. Many of these projects when impacted by subsequent disasters



have sustained minimal or no damage, avoiding more than \$250 million in reconstruction costs from subsequent impacts. As we turn to the rebuilding task, it is those lessons that will inform how we build back to make sure our infrastructure and buildings can better withstand whatever disaster we face next.

### Exports

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.51 am): For an outward-looking state like Queensland, trade and investment relationships are critical to our future economic prosperity. That has become more and more evident across the course of the pandemic. When natural disasters strike our state, the revenue from exports helps Queensland recover faster and it is our longstanding relationships with global partners that will be critical to our state's recovery. That is why I was proud to lead the Queensland trade mission to Expo 2020 Dubai two weeks ago to promote Queensland exporters and investment opportunities. In 2020 the value of Queensland's exports to the Middle East was valued at nearly a billion dollars and was also a major source of investment. The United Arab Emirates is home to four of the top 20 sovereign wealth funds in the world, including the world's second largest, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, which I met with when I was in the UAE.

This mission was Queensland's first chance to shine on the global stage since the Premier secured our hosting rights for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the response to Queensland's global events at the Australia Pavilion was outstanding. Hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will deliver an \$8.1 billion benefit to Queensland, including \$4.6 billion in economic benefits from tourism and trade. Our Dubai delegation included Olympic champions Natalie Cook and Cate Campbell, Paralympic champion Curtis McGrath and Dubai based Paralympian Jessica Smith. The message was clear: we will share the 2032 games with the world.

The 2032 games are not just about the next decade; they are about the run into 2032 and then the decade beyond. That is why I was pleased to listen to Olympic legacy insights from the Mace Group, which had a central role in delivering the London 2012 Olympic legacy program. Discussions like these with the small band of cities which, like us, are Olympic and Paralympic hosts will help ensure Brisbane, Queensland 2032 will deliver the greatest possible benefit for our state, but our state has so much more to offer.

Our global new energy event showcased our natural and technological advantages when it comes to the production of renewable energy and green hydrogen. Potential investors only need to look at the world's largest hydrogen electrolyser manufacturing facility to be built by Fortescue Future Industries in Gladstone to know that Queensland has an environment and a government and a local member conducive to doing business. Our Future Cities Forum emphasised Queensland's growing reputation as a provider of intelligent transport, technology and architecture and design solutions. Attendees from around the world were left with no doubt that the skills and enthusiasm of Queensland businesses are among the best on the planet—companies like Herbal Wellbeing Australia based in Buddina which is exporting its locally grown pulses into the Middle East with the support of our trade investment office based in Kawana.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I am so pleased that our TIQ office in Kawana supported 14 Sunshine Coast based companies last year with almost a quarter of a million dollars in grants to assist them with export opportunities—extraordinary businesses like Gold Coast based Next Level Racing, which joined me in Dubai, a company that designs, manufactures and exports racing and flight simulators to 50 countries around the world. In a world of escalating geopolitical tensions, there has never been a more important time to look our long-term investment partners in the eye to assure them that Queensland is a reliable and safe place to invest. Sovereign wealth funds based in Abu Dhabi have more than \$2 billion invested in Queensland. Together with the head of the Queensland Investment Corporation, I was able to assure them of more opportunities to come in our Olympic state. As I said in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Queensland trade relationships are based on the values that define our people—trust, friendship, expertise and experience.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Gladstone. Of course, the member for Kawana travelled to China on a trade mission just after his community was impacted by bushfires.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I will remain absolutely relentless in my work as trade minister—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.


**Mr DICK:** I will remain relentless in my work to open doors to build those relationships and opportunities for Queensland businesses and industry while I have the privilege of serving as Queensland trade minister. Mr Speaker, I can assure you, I can assure the members opposite and I can assure all members of the government that I will do this regardless of anything anyone says to talk down Queensland's most valued and important exporters.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We are going to start this day off in a very orderly manner. Treasurer, you are warned under the standing orders. You are not directing your comments through the chair. Member for Clayfield, you are also warned under the standing orders for not directing your comments through the chair.

### NAPLAN

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.56 am): I join the Premier in congratulating Queensland schools on their 2021 NAPLAN results. Well done to all 274,000 Queensland school students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 who participated in NAPLAN last year and a big thankyou—huge thankyou—to teachers, principals, staff, parents and carers who supported and prepared our students throughout the process. The school level NAPLAN results available today on the national My School website follow the statewide results that were released last year showing that our NAPLAN results have held up extremely well even with all that COVID-19 has thrown at us. I was especially impressed with students' writing results, which improved across all year levels, with our year 3 students recording their highest results ever.


Our results for NAPLAN 2021 build on what we have done previously. Queensland has been one of the big improvers in NAPLAN since 2008, recognised by the Grattan Institute as a star performer, particularly with our progress in reading and numeracy at primary school level. This is an important point: while we rightly acknowledge and celebrate the highest performing schools in the state, our focus is always on progress and improvement. This means providing each of our students with all they need to reach their full potential—the best teachers, the best school infrastructure, the best school support services—and we are delivering this in spades with \$1.9 billion in infrastructure spending delivering world-class facilities, delivering more than 6,000 new teachers and 1,100 teacher aides over four years, and our \$100 million student wellbeing and GPs in schools commitment to provide students with access to a health and wellbeing professional.

As I have stated previously, NAPLAN is not the be-all and end-all; it is a point-in-time check and just one of many ways schools can track student progress. We also have to remember that NAPLAN school results cannot always be compared like for like.

I am also pleased to inform the House that the review conducted by Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT has resulted in education ministers agreeing to, amongst other things, moving NAPLAN to term 1 from 2023. Moving the test forward means that valuable dataset will be available earlier in the year to inform teaching and learning programs and to give parents information about their child's performance earlier in the year. The My School data released today provides information about NAPLAN and other matters for every school in the country, but nothing beats visiting a school and talking to principals, teachers and students about the best schooling for your child.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I ordinarily would not comment on the behaviour outside, but I understand that this morning a recording was being played of yesterday's rally. One man and a boom box does not a rally constitute. I apologise that this is a disruption to the House, but we will continue to undertake our business as the people would expect.

### Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.00 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to action on climate change and we are transforming transport in Queensland. We are doing this with a record \$27.5 billion investment in roads and transport, including projects like Cross River Rail and the second M1. We do not cut, we build.

Today we are further electrifying Queensland's future. This morning we are releasing our Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy which will power the state's transport system into the low-emissions future. A key component of this is supporting Queenslanders with a \$3,000 incentive towards new electric vehicles purchased for under \$58,000. The Palaszczuk Labor government will be offering up to 15,000 of these incentives over the next three years starting from 1 July this year.


Getting people into electric vehicles quicker cuts future emissions, cuts fuel imports and acts on climate change. With petrol prices now pushing as high as \$2.50 per litre in some places under the Morrison government, electric vehicles give Queenslanders far cheaper running costs, are more likely to hold their value in the long term and will help us get to net zero by 2050, all while creating a better environment and acting on climate change. This will make the air we breathe cleaner and our streets quieter. Importantly, this will also create a bigger second-hand market for electric vehicles, making them even more affordable to more Queenslanders sooner.

It does not stop there. The Palaszczuk Labor government is also investing a further \$10 million in electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Queensland. This will be delivered in partnership with local government and industry to provide Queenslanders with more places to charge their electric vehicles. This follows us leading the way in 2017 by building the Electric Super Highway.

Last year we announced we would be expanding the Electric Super Highway into Western Queensland to places like Longreach and Mount Isa. This means we will have the longest electric vehicle highway of any single state anywhere in the world. The strategy also reinforces our commitment to transitioning heavy vehicles, with every new TransLink bus on the South-East Queensland network to be zero emissions from 2025 and across regional Queensland from 2025 to 2030. We are already seeing that plan in action with electric buses hitting the road in Brisbane, the Bayside, the Gold Coast and soon the Sunshine Coast and Cairns.

We are doing all of this heavy lifting due to the void left by the Morrison government. The Morrison government has shown zero leadership on zero emissions vehicles. The economically irresponsible Prime Minister Scott Morrison has, of course, actively campaigned against electric vehicles. I am sure with strong state leadership, manufacturers will look beyond the Morrison government and bring more affordable electric vehicle models to Queensland and to our country. There is no doubt that the Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy announced today by the Palaszczuk Labor government will give them more confidence to do so.


### Tourism Industry

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.04 am): Nothing Beats Queensland. As the Premier revealed this morning, our successful 2011 campaign, Nothing Beats Queensland, is making a comeback to encourage Australians to holiday in our great state. Few industries have been hit as hard by COVID as tourism. Just as the green shoots of recovery were beginning to sprout, South-East Queensland was hit by a rain bomb. We are as committed as ever to helping this vital industry rebuild. That is why we are rolling out Nothing Beats Queensland in Sydney and Melbourne, our key domestic markets. We know that when the weather cools in Sydney and Melbourne families start planning a Queensland winter escape.

From Sunday, Nothing Beats Queensland will burst onto digital platforms, TV, radio and print in Australia's two biggest cities. Nothing Beats Queensland will promote visitor experiences across the state, just as it did after the 2011 floods. With Easter bookings nudging 70 per cent in some regions, such as Cairns, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, now is the perfect time to plan a pre-Easter escape and stay longer. With more domestic flights returning to Queensland skies, we predict generating up to \$3.5 billion for the recovery of Queensland's tourism operators before, during and after Easter.

We are saying loud and clear Nothing Beats Queensland and we are open and ready for business. Rebuilding Queensland's tourism industry is central to our plan for economic recovery. Since the beginning of the pandemic we have invested more than \$1.1 billion in support of the sector. We are continuing to work closely with industry to help tourism operators recover and, indeed, thrive. Nothing Beats Queensland starts Sunday in Sydney and Melbourne.

### Queensland Floods, Community Recovery Hubs

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 am): I am always inspired by the strength and resilience of Queenslanders. That incredible Queensland spirit has once again been on display following the

devastating floods across the south-east. The Palaszczuk government recognises the importance of supporting communities as they respond to and recover from natural disasters. A key part of this support is our community recovery hubs providing vital face-to-face advice and assistance to people in need.

In the wake of the recent floods we were quick to establish hubs in some of the hardest hit towns and suburbs. We have had more than 20 community recovery hubs and pop-up hubs open across the south-east, operating from Maryborough on the Fraser Coast to Palm Beach on the Gold Coast and Gatton in the Lockyer Valley. At these hubs Queenslanders can speak to community recovery workers, apply for grants, access emotional support and be referred to other support organisations. The hubs also host a range of partner agencies such as Red Cross, Lifeline and the Salvation Army, as well as representatives from Services Australia and, of course, insurers, and our housing staff are on hand to provide housing assistance to impacted Queenslanders.

Over the past couple of weeks I have had the chance to visit hubs at Caboolture, Palm Beach, Beenleigh, Gympie, Ipswich, Laidley and South Brisbane. I heard firsthand of the unimaginable toll these floods have taken on individuals and families. There have been stories of loss, hardship and devastation, but there has also been some incredible work happening at our hubs to give people hope and emotional support. As well as support for their immediate needs, such as food and emergency housing, so far 60,669 people have been supported with grants for emergency hardship and other service assistance following the recent flood, with over 26,000 payments made totalling more than \$11 million. If Queenslanders have not already, I encourage anyone in need of support to visit their nearest community recovery hub. Our flood-affected residents can also seek more information online or phone the Community Recovery Hotline on 1800 173 349.

Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to our incredibly hardworking community recovery staff and the almost 300 Ready Reservists who have stepped up to help others. Whether they are out in the field doing outreach in communities, providing support in our hubs or working around the clock to process grant applications for people in need, I thank them for their dedication.

### Queensland Floods, Community Recovery Hubs



**Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.08 am): As Queensland continues its recovery from the recent devastating floods, it is important to review the event and understand exactly what unfolded. Let us look at what we know. We know that South-East Queensland received a massive amount of water—record rainfall, in fact. In the last week in February some areas of South-East Queensland recorded almost two metres of rain. In that time Brisbane recorded 80 per cent of its annual rainfall average—nearly a whole year's worth of rain in just a week.

During that extreme and constant downpour, Wivenhoe Dam performed exactly as it was designed to do. At the peak of the weather event, Wivenhoe Dam held back more than 2.2 million megalitres of water—or, as we have heard before, the equivalent of four Sydney harbours—from entering the Brisbane River. Without Wivenhoe Dam, the devastating flood we saw in South-East Queensland would have been worse. During the event, Seqwater made steady controlled releases below the peak river levels so as not to exacerbate the already naturally occurring flood in Brisbane.


I take this opportunity to thank all of the Seqwater staff in Queensland who worked around the clock to keep Queenslanders safe. Early on Sunday, 27 February the water treatment plants at Mount Crosby and North Pine went offline after the intense heavy rain washed soil and debris into the creeks and waterways that flow into those treatment plants. At the peak, the cloudiness and turbidity of the water at the Mount Crosby plant increased by up to 100 times the normal amount. A number of the Seqwater staff who were fixing the Mount Crosby east bank became isolated by floodwater and ended up sleeping at the plant for several nights before they could be choppered out. We are so lucky to have those hardworking Queenslanders who worked tirelessly to get those plants back online.

South-East Queenslanders should also be thanking the Labor government that built the Gold Coast desalination plant, which kicked into gear during the event. The taps never ran dry in Brisbane because that desalination plant did its jobs, pumping nearly 125 Olympic swimming pools worth of drinking water into the South-East Queensland water grid during the event. More than 1.6 million people rely on the sturdy South-East Queensland water network. I am proud to say that that infrastructure and our contingencies came through.

This weather event proved that nothing is certain and things can certainly change quickly, but Queenslanders can be confident that the Palaszczuk government does not take chances on water security. I am sure many will agree that we do not need another weather event to test our flood

mitigation infrastructure any time soon, but we can take great comfort in knowing and be confident that Wivenhoe performed exactly as it was designed to perform and remains ready to keep Queenslanders safe at any time.

### Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.12 am): Queenslanders have been in the lead on the pandemic, they have led the economic recovery and Queenslanders lead the world on renewables. Now Queensland's first Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy, launched today by the Premier, puts Queenslanders in pole position; we are first on the grid to becoming a renewables superpower. Building on our 2018 QFleet Electric Vehicle Transition Strategy, we are supercharging our government fleet to become electric, going EV first for all eligible new vehicles. That will save millions in fuel costs for taxpayers.

However, even more significantly, when they have done their service with frontline workers such as nurses, community carers and educators, those QFleet vehicles will be available for Queenslanders to buy. That means that every year thousands of well maintained, affordable to run, second-hand electric vehicles will be available for sale to mums and dads. This is also a clear signal to EV manufacturers to bring their best models to Queensland as we have created a target market for them.

Let us be clear: zero emission vehicles are the best way for motorists, commuters and our critical transport sector to break free of big overseas oil companies. Instead of paying over \$2 a litre for petrol and diesel, electric vehicles and our growing investment in renewables mean that Queenslanders will be able to fill their tanks with clean Queensland-owned power at much lower costs. With an electric vehicle, no longer will motorists be held hostage to soaring fuel prices or international price shocks like that caused by the recent invasion of Ukraine.


We are growing demand to drive battery manufacturing right here in Queensland. That sovereign capability will mean more jobs for Queenslanders. Transport is the fastest growing sector for emissions but that also means it could lead the way to reducing them. Our strategy will leverage the transport sector to drive manufacturing jobs, drive down emissions and create supply chains that are secure from geopolitical instability.

Queenslanders want to make things here again and in Queensland they are. We know it can be done and renewables are the fuel. For example, Brisbane based charger maker Tritium is taking on the world with their technology. They are now the world's second-largest charging company, selling more than 6,700 chargers to 41 countries across the globe. Vehicles on the road are just one part of our strategy to reduce emissions. The strategy sets the framework for us to tackle: vehicle interactivity with built environments, including houses, workplaces and public spaces; planning for new developments and roads that considers shifts in how people use their vehicles; investment in electricity infrastructure to accommodate new demand created by a shift to electric vehicles; and tariffs that reward motorists for charging their vehicles in a way that supports more renewables, lower emissions and cheaper electricity for all consumers.

Just yesterday, the Minister for Environment and Minister for Youth Affairs wrote to me and enclosed a copy of a youth bill from the Queensland Youth Parliament. Young Queenslanders—whose ideas such as banning single-use plastics have become government policy—want an electric vehicle youth act. The next generation of Queensland leaders are asking this government to support a manufacturing industry for electric vehicle components in Queensland. Today's announcement does just that.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (10.15 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders, the Premier and Minister for the Olympics be permitted to move a motion, notice of which has been given, immediately after question time with the following time limits to apply: five minutes for each member.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Cairns, Youth Crime



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.16 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House recognises the devastating impacts of youth crime on the people of Cairns and notes:

1. the member for Cairns' solution to the youth crime crisis was for constituents to 'write a letter'
2. the deafening silence of the members for Barron River and Cook and
3. the local community's cry for help leading to yet another crime rally on 2 April 2022

and calls on the members for Cairns, Barron River and Cook to admit they got it wrong and reverse their opposition to making breach of bail an offence for young criminals.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. There will be a time to debate the motion; it is not now.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Capalaba, you are warned under the standing orders.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Today question time will conclude at 11.17 am.

### Integrity Commissioner



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.17 am): My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier rule out any ministerial staff backgrounding against the Integrity Commissioner?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I understand that there may be matters before the CCC and I am not commenting.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I understand you have a second question. That might be the most appropriate time to make your point.

**Ms Palaszcuk** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, we do not need your commentary either.

### Integrity Commissioner

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. The CCC has disputed the inference in the statement put out by the Chief Executive of the Public Service Commission on 13 February that the CCC requested the removal of a laptop from the Integrity Commissioner. Can the Premier rule out any involvement of any ministerial staff in the preparation and release of that media statement?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In relation to matters that the member has raised, there are matters currently before the CCC and they know that the CCC can do their job and release their report—

**Mr Crisafulli:** It is nothing to do with the CCC.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will pull this up really early today. You have asked a question, Leader of the Opposition. The Premier is entitled to answer that question without interruption. You may not like the answer, but the Premier has only just begun her contribution.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** On this side of the House we do things right. We abide by the processes. We do not go out there and make up stuff—

**A government member:** They come in here and make up stuff.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—or come in here and make up stuff. Those opposite should allow the appropriate bodies to do their job, to report on those issues.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right, I go back to the state archivist: out there saying all types of things, accusing ministers of misleading this House and then we had an independent person do a report and what did they say? No inappropriate conduct!

**A government member:** That's right.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That's right. They have not apologised. There have been apologies from those opposite. All accusations, all innuendo—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. How about those opposite? Calm down. Let the authorities do their job.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You do not respect the authorities; you never do.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The LNP in this state has never respected those bodies. They have always sought to undermine those bodies. When it came to the CCC, they cut the staff; they hand-picked. Sorry, the new Deputy Leader of the LNP opposition hand-picked the then chair of the CCC, so nothing got investigated. They could not refer anything there to be investigated. They cut the staff. They undermined the CCC in this state. Well, I am not going to do that. I will respect the bodies that are charged with doing their job.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**An opposition member:** The Premier's controlling them.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No. The Premier respects the authorities. The Premier respects the processes. The Premier respects the institutions. We will guard against those institutions every day that we are in government, unlike those opposite. It is not a laughing matter for the Leader of the Opposition to sit there like Campbell Newman used to do with the eyes flaring, the hands wringing and the laughing. We know what happened to the former premier. The same thing will happen to this Leader of the Opposition because—

**Opposition members** interjected.

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Floods, Recovery

**Mr SULLIVAN:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the flood recovery efforts are going across the north side and further north to our Moreton regions?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am more than happy to talk about issues that are impacting the people of this state. We know the impact that the floods and the rain event had on many parts of our communities right across the south-east. I also know that the member for Stafford joined me and the Deputy Premier at Kedron Brook to look at the devastation that happened along that whole cycleway. We actually saw a container that had been pushed right up against one of the bridges! The fact is that that beautiful, pristine area which a lot of families enjoy has been impacted, as have a lot of houses, by this flood event. Also further north in the Moreton Bay region, they were very severely hit as well. I know the members out there have been out and about in their communities talking to individuals and helping them seek whatever support is needed.

The minister for communities updated the House how around \$11 million has already gone out to impacted areas, plus we have those community recovery hubs. We know that it is going to take some time for people to recover. What also struck me when I was out with the minister in Deagon speaking to its impacted residents was that never before had the water come up so quickly. Not only will the flood event have a big impact on their lives—and their son was there as well—but it will also have a big impact on children. It is imperative that organisations like Lifeline and others are there helping members of the community and that they have somewhere to go during this particular point in time.

I met with the mayor of Moreton Bay and the Minister for Health. We were able to meet with Stacey and Kim. They had their house impacted during this flood event. They wanted to pass on to me how thankful they were with the work the Minister for Health had done on the ground helping them with impacts to their particular home. I thank the mayors for working with us. I thank all of the local members who have been out there on the ground helping people rebuild their lives, because it is no easy task when people's property, lives and everything basically unfolds before their eyes.

The minister for tourism knows that when we were out in Deagon in his local electorate we saw everyone having to take everything out of their house to leave those bare walls—and the smell that comes afterwards. They are having to deal with the insurance agencies. We want to make sure that their life is made easier by the help they can get from right across those different agencies.

### Setter, Mr R

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the media conference Mr Setter held on Monday, 30 minutes before the Premier and in the government's media room. Can the Premier rule out the involvement of any ministerial staff in the preparation of Mr Setter's press conference?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me say very clearly that I read about his comments after the press conference. This is once again an attack on individuals, because that is all they have. The member for Kawana is the architect of attacking individuals and organisations in this state. I say to those opposite that, to put him in now as the deputy of your party—overlooking the member for Whitsunday, overlooking the National Party—if I were on that side I would be splitting.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take the interjection: overlooking women, overlooking talent. Bring back a has-been, the worst ever attorney-general of the state, as the deputy.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is good to see you are back.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I will remind you that your comments will be directed through the chair. There is a point of order. I will deal with that point of order.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, 118(b). The question was about Mr Setter and ministerial staff involvement in his press conference, not about the member for Kawana.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. I am listening to the Premier's answer. The good news is that we have three minutes to provide a response. The Premier, I will assume, is going to round out her response and come back to the question as asked.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana asked the question. I love talking about the member for Kawana because—

**Mr Crisafulli:** Well, you don't like talking about integrity.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Oh, absolutely—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Leader of the Opposition, I have just cautioned the Premier about directing comments through the chair and you have done exactly what I asked her not to do. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** LNP integrity? Well, there is a lot to talk about there when it comes to three years in office. One observation that is often overlooked—the largest majority in Queensland's political history. We were over there. There were seven of us. Then there were eight, and then there were nine. The people of the state said no to the largest majority in Queensland's political history. The architect of most of the flawed laws that came into this House was the member for Kawana. The architect of the appointment of the Supreme Court judge was the member for Kawana. The architect of attacking the CCC was the member for Kawana. The architect of the boot camps was the member for Kawana.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order again on relevance, 118(b). That has been a further minute. We are no closer to rounding out the Premier's actual answer to the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I ask you to come back to the core of the question asked under standing order 118(b). That is the standing order which I will be applying.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** On this side of the House we do not attack public servants. That is exactly what the member for Kawana has done today: attack the Public Service Commissioner. That is in their DNA.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They attacked 14,000 public servants when they axed their jobs. They decimated the regions. We have so much on the member for Kawana that I do not know where to begin. We will not attack public servants. We will not sack public servants. We will respect public servants.



### Queensland Floods; Coronavirus, Vaccination

**Mr POWER:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympics. Will the Premier update the House on how the recent floods have impacted Brisbane and, for the interest of those playing recordings outside, how the recovery is going in the region? Are there any updates on the vaccination rates?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Logan for the question. Many parts of Logan were impacted by the floods. That came after the events in Maryborough and Gympie as the system cascaded down the eastern parts of our state. It was great to join the member for Logan as well as other local members at the Kingston East Neighbourhood Centre. What a great community centre that is. The Treasurer and the Attorney-General were also there. We were able to participate in a barbecue they put on to support the local community impacted by the floods. At that event we were able to kickstart our Queensland Flood Appeal with a state government contribution of \$2.1 million. That has now grown to \$15 million. I thank the people of Queensland for digging deep and helping other Queenslanders in need.

The Logan River peaked at 11.5 metres. Some 197 homes and businesses were damaged—33 of these were severely damaged and three were destroyed. It was also great to go with the member for Macalister and the Attorney-General to visit some of the people from the houses impacted. We met Shirley and Jeff, who are so resilient, and the other people in their street. They are trying their hardest to recover when facing such a devastating time.

Whilst I am on my feet, I give a shout-out to Logan and Beaudesert in relation to their vaccination rates. They are now at 93.3 per cent single dose and 90.9 per cent double dose. I also stress to families that it is not too late to get your children vaccinated. I note reports today that Queensland's vaccination rates for children could be higher. I encourage people to do that. At the moment the vaccination rate is 42.99 per cent. I would like to see that over 50 per cent.

In some good news, over 95 per cent of Queenslanders are vaccinated in areas such as Cairns, which is great to see especially as we open up to international travel. Mackay is at over 95 per cent. So too is South-West Queensland, the Darling Downs, Wide Bay, Toowoomba, Brisbane East and Moreton Bay North. The Sunshine Coast is at 94.7 per cent. I say publicly that I am still concerned about the vaccination rate for the Gold Coast region which is 89.8 per cent first dose. International borders have opened and we want to see vaccination rates in those tourist areas increase.

*(Time expired)*

### Integrity Commissioner

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. Holding Redlich have now rescinded their offer of employment to the Integrity Commissioner. Can the Premier rule out any government ministers or ministerial staff contacting Holding Redlich on this issue?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I wonder whether the member can authenticate the claims that are being made in his question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That is a valid point of order. I also want to ensure that this is within the remit of the Premier's portfolio responsibilities.

**Mr POWELL:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. We have advice from a whistleblower that the matter is authenticated and the Premier's responsibilities do include ministers and ministerial staff and that is the point of the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That answers the second part, but the question has been raised around authenticating the claim being made. There are provisions in the state regarding official status for whistleblowers. I would ask if there is an opportunity for that to be provided or if there is evidence to provide to the parliament that that claim is correct.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I am taking advice from the table. I ask you to remain silent while I take that advice. I am going to allow the question, but I do give a general warning to all members who are asking questions during question time to ensure that the information they are providing is correct. If it is proven under any circumstance that that information is not correct then there are clearly ramifications under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have no knowledge of what the member has raised in that question. If he can provide further evidence I am more than happy to provide a comment, but I cannot comment on something I am completely unaware of.

### Queensland Floods, Resilience

**Mr McCALLUM:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House what the Palaszczuk government is doing to build resilience in flood impacted communities and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Bundamba for his question. I know that day and night since that disaster hit he has been out supporting locals in the community he represents. I was with him a couple of times during that period in suburbs like Goodna and Bundamba. The first time I visited Goodna much of it was still under water. When I visited again and the water had receded, the place looked like a war zone. I do not think I will ever forget those images.

Those opposite might want to talk about anything but the floods that have devastated Queensland, but we on this side of the House are on the side of Queenslanders. Again those opposite find themselves lining up with their mate the 'Prime Minister for New South Wales' backing New South Wales over Queensland. It is outrageous enough that the Prime Minister of this country thinks that flood victims in New South Wales are entitled to thousands more in hardship payments than flood victims in Queensland, but it is even more outrageous that the man who thinks he should be premier of this state would back in the Prime Minister and back in the idea that New South Wales flood victims deserve thousands more than Queenslanders.

Have we heard a single word from those opposite about why Queenslanders should get the same as those in New South Wales? We have heard not a word. There has not been an explanation for why New South Wales flood victims are more entitled than Queensland flood victims because there is not one. You cannot explain that. You cannot justify that. Queenslanders are accustomed to the Prime Minister backing New South Wales over us, but they will surely be disappointed that there are members of their own parliament who will not speak up in support of Queenslanders.

The Leader of the Opposition talks about mitigation, but not once has he supported the mitigation projects Queensland put forward to the federal government's funding program. We were asked to put forward projects. We put forward 20 projects. Of those, 17 were rejected and three were approved—all in the electorate of Kennedy. Meanwhile, the Morrison government has earned \$850 million in interest on that fund—money that could have helped Queensland communities be better prepared for this disaster, including our flood warning system, which was one of the projects that was rejected by the Morrison government. We are used to being let down by Scott Morrison, but those opposite have let Queenslanders down again.

### Integrity Commissioner, Public Interest Disclosure

**Mrs GERBER:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier has now had 24 hours to speak to her director-general about the PID that the Integrity Commissioner made about various matters including the bullying complaint against Mr Setter. Can the Premier advise what action her DG has taken since receiving the PID in May last year?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** A PID means that you cannot talk about those matters. The member, who I understand is also a lawyer, may want to read the standing orders as well. A PID by its nature means that you cannot disclose it.

**Mr Ryan:** There are actually penalties for doing so.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. There are penalties. Perhaps the member should read the standing orders and the legislation.

### Queensland Investment Corporation

**Ms BOYD:** My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on the importance of the Queensland Investment Corporation's leadership in strengthening the Queensland economy?

**Mr DICK:** As the member for Pine Rivers knows—and I thank her for her question—since the establishment of QIC by the Goss Labor government 30 years ago, successive Queensland governments and generations of Queenslanders have had their financial interests protected by our world-leading investment company. At the end of the month Damien Frawley, the CEO of QIC, will retire. He is held in global regard.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the Premier. He has been an outstanding leader. His status was reinforced to me when he travelled with me to Abu Dhabi and Dubai to help showcase Queensland to investment entities in that part of the world.

I know QIC will be in safe hands under the leadership of the new CEO, Ms Kylie Rampa. Ms Rampa has more than 25 years experience in investment management, most recently as group head of investment at Lend Lease. I know she will do a terrific job. Kylie Rampa joins the growing list of strong, capable, competent women leading important bodies and institutions in Queensland.

Our government has been proud to appoint the first female police commissioner in Queensland's history and the first female Chief Justice of Queensland. We have appointed Dr Young as Governor. We have appointed the first female coordinator-general. For the member for Everton, Toni can be the name of both a man and a woman.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I have not forgotten, Premier. Half of our board appointments are women—an objective this Premier set and we have delivered. Our government puts women in positions of power while the LNP kicks them out. When the Newman-Crisafulli government came to power, of the 78 members in this place they had 13 female MPs—17 per cent. One decade later it has rocketed up to 18 per cent! It has gone up one per cent in a decade. At that rate they will get to 50 per cent in 320 years.

They had a chance to promote a woman recently—the member for Whitsunday. The meritocracy that is the LNP brains trust said she had not done her time, so they pushed out a young woman to put in a bunch of recycled Newman government duds. That is their leadership. The most senior woman on the front bench was demoted. She was demoted. Pushing a young woman out to advance other people—who would that sound familiar to? Verity Barton. Let us hear none of this nonsense from the Leader of the Opposition that somehow he is standing up for women, when he was happy to terminate the career of a young woman starting her political career so he could advance himself. That says everything about the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday!

**Mr DICK:** He will say anything or do anything to women in particular to advance his own career.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, you will cease your interjections.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the next questioner, I do want to note—and I do not make a practice of doing this during question time—that we have Kingaroy State High School visiting us in the gallery this morning. I want to acknowledge them and welcome them to the Queensland parliament.

### **Trad, Ms J**

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney-General advise the date that she signed off on giving legal assistance to Jackie Trad in her private action in the Supreme Court to hide a secret CCC report, and how much have taxpayers paid?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I am advised that there is a non-publication order in place regarding this matter. That means that neither I nor the Premier or any member of this place can legally comment on this matter. On this side of the House we take court orders pretty seriously. We do not walk in here and say things that would be contempt of court if said outside the House. The shadow Attorney-General should absolutely know better and the worst attorney-general in Queensland's history should absolutely know better. If at any time these orders are not in place, we of course will be very happy to answer any of these questions. I remind members that the indemnity guidelines are publicly available. Appendix 6—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question did not refer to the matters that are being put before the court. It was with regard to the date on which the Attorney-General signed the support for Jackie Trad and the amount that has been spent to date.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would suggest that the Attorney-General, in answering the question in the manner in which she is answering the question, is providing the response that you are seeking. Whilst there are specifics in the question, I will allow the Attorney-General to continue answering in the manner in which she is currently responding.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for very nicely explaining how non-publications work to the new Manager of Opposition Business. I would like to remind all members of the House that the indemnity guidelines are publicly available. In fact, they are attached as an appendix to the Ministerial Handbook. They are available to all ministers and former ministers on both sides of the House.

It is a bit rich for those opposite to get up and grandstand about indemnity guidelines. Some of them still sitting over there have been enormous beneficiaries of state funded legal assistance. Let us go back to when the member for Kawana and the then premier Campbell Newman racked up \$50,000 in legal fees defending a defamation matter. It was reported that the member for Kawana and the then premier Campbell Newman settled a lawsuit using taxpayer funds in 2016—over half a million dollars was spent. What is worse is that media reports indicate that that amount of money would have been reduced if the member for Kawana and the former premier had publicly apologised. The member for Kawana's pride cost taxpayers.

It is absolutely outrageous for the shadow Attorney-General and a former attorney-general to come in here and disrespect the court and disrespect the separation of powers. It is absolutely appalling. On this side of the House, we will respect the court, we will respect the court's orders and we will respect the separation of powers.

### Queensland Floods, Schools

**Ms BUSH:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's response to schools that were damaged in the recent flood event and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. It was great to join the member when we visited Milton State School, a school that was severely impacted by the floods. It was really good to see that the new building that was purpose-built so it could withstand future flooding stood the test of time. The flood mitigation did its jobs. That is what we are working on implementing in all of the other schools that were devastated.

When we were driving around the streets visiting schools—whether it was in Milton, Hendra, Rocklea, Gympie or Maryborough—we saw the devastation on the streets and what was left over from the floods. We saw the mud inside the school premises, the ruined carpets, the stench and the decontamination that needed to be done. It was quite devastating to me.

We are looking at about \$40 million to \$50 million on just repair, but in the longer term we are looking at how we can implement short-term strategies for long-term flood mitigation and betterment in those schools. That is what we are working on at the moment.

The member also asked about alternative approaches. Mr Speaker, I despair. Isn't it interesting in this House how the more things change, the more they stay the same. After one of the biggest devastations we have seen in recent history we have not had one question from those opposite on the floods. Not one. There has been nothing from the member for Clayfield; nothing from the member for Lockyer; nothing from the member for Gympie; nothing from any of the members over there. There has not been one question from anyone you see over there.

The old boys, the strategy group that puts questions together, is back. All they want to do is throw mud rather than clean it up. Get out there in the streets and clean up the mud! All they are good for is innuendo, allegations, smears. At every opportunity they try to usurp the institutions we on this side of the House respect, be it the CCC or people under public interest disclosure. You would think that someone with legal qualifications would know better than to ask questions about matters that are before the courts or where there are court orders. If the people outside who voted against this lot last time were confused about the remnants of the Campbell Newman government, let me tell you now they are there. Here we have three new leaders, the old boys of the LNP, and the Nationals are dead.

### Soorley, Mr J

**Mr HART:** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise if Jim Soorley declared he had been a lobbyist for Winlab when he recommended the then energy minister sign off on a \$150 million power offtake agreement between CS Energy, a company Mr Soorley was the chairman of at the time, and Winlab?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If he is a registered lobbyist, I suggest the member go and check the lobbyists register.

### Queensland Floods, Recovery

**Mr KING:** My question today is for the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister advise the House how the Palaszczuk government has ensured the restoration of essential services after natural disasters and whether the minister is aware of any other approaches?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for the question. As a former trade qualified electrician, I do not think there is anyone in this place who understands this issue better than the member for Kurwongbah. I know that he is incredibly proud of the work that Energex has done to restore power supply after the recent South-East Queensland flood event. More than 180,000 homes and businesses had their power cut due to massive flooding throughout the south-east. In response, an 800-strong crew traipsed through mud and floodwaters around the clock. Eight hundred Queenslanders were out there just doing their job. Over 400 of them left their home depots, families and communities—not for a holiday—to show up day and night just to do their job here in the south-east. And a mighty job they did, but they simply did what was expected of them. Today I can announce that not only have they done their job here at home but we have made a formal offer to extend our crews to help down south from Lismore to Narrabeen. Here we have Queenslanders doing their job, and when they are finished they are offering to help others.

When those crews end up back at their depots after a massive effort to restore essential services they must wonder to themselves: why is the Prime Minister of this nation simply not willing to do his? As they have been scraping never-ending filthy mud off their boots, they must be wondering why this Prime Minister is so incompetent when it comes to doing his job. They must be asking themselves: why has the LNP federal government failed to spend a cent of their multibillion dollar disaster fund in this flood-impacted region? While they repair flood-damaged equipment day after day, they must be wondering why the Prime Minister's fund has not completed a single disaster prevention project. Then it comes back to them. They remember he did not show up to do his job during the bushfires. They remember he did not spend a cent on drought resilience. They remember he did not do his job on the COVID pandemic, vaccines or RATs. They remember this nation is led by a bloke who just does not do his job. In fact, he is a bloke who goes missing during every single emergency. I think what disgusts every man and woman in this country is that the only emergency he is prepared to respond to is his very own election emergency. Queensland says to Prime Minister Scott Morrison, 'Australia has worked you out, mate: less time on the ukulele, less time pretending to be a hairdresser, a musician or a welder, and less time failing at leadership.'

### Kin Kin Road, Safety

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. With the recent temporary 10-tonne load limit removed from Kin Kin Road, the substrate still too wet to facilitate lasting repairs, and an independent assessment that the road is too narrow and cannot accommodate the volume of heavy haulage, will the minister advise what is being done as a matter of urgency to keep all road users, including our schoolchildren, safe on this dangerous road?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I know this is an important issue for her constituents. I acknowledge the concerns the member raised about heavy vehicle movements along Kin Kin Road related to the quarry at Kin Kin. I can advise that, due to extreme weather and flooding, Transport and Main Roads applied a temporary 10-tonne mass limit on a section of Kin Kin Road once the road was reopened to motorists on Tuesday, 1 March. This was a short-term measure only to preserve the road and bridges post any damage from floodwaters and to prevent further damage while the road dried and remedial repairs could begin. The load limit was lifted on Tuesday, 8 March, after the weather improved. The road was inspected and the necessary safety works were carried out.

In terms of heavy vehicle movements from the quarry, I am advised that the quarry operates under a local government development approval. Issues around the quarry's operations, including its suitability for the area, its impacts, the volumes of heavy vehicles and haulage routes, are matters for the Noosa Shire Council and the quarry's operators. Transport and Main Roads is aware that the Noosa Shire Council has made applications in the Planning and Environment Court regarding heavy vehicle movements to and from the quarry, and I understand this matter is still before the courts. Considering the operation of the quarry is in line with the local government development approval, the Queensland government has limited ability to have any real impact in terms of these matters.

My department remains committed to our responsibility to maintain the Kin Kin Road as part of a state controlled network. The Palaszczuk government committed \$6 million in joint funding with the Commonwealth as part of a road safety program for a widening upgrade project there to improve safety

on Kin Kin Road. I can advise the member that design is also underway, and road widening works are planned for approximately 800 metres of Kin Kin Road through the Kin Kin Range. The Palaszczuk government also committed \$18 million for the future replacement of the single-lane timber Six Mile Creek Bridge on Kin Kin Road with a new two-lane concrete structure to increase safety for all local road users. I can advise the member that design is underway on that project and is expected to be finalised this year, with construction time frames to be confirmed once design is complete.

### Transport Infrastructure

**Mr HUNT:** My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. What is the government doing to futureproof Queensland's transport system?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for the question. He is a member who already has an incredible record about road projects in his electorate after only one year, with Bells Creek Arterial Road, Bruce Highway upgrades and Ridgewood Road. He is a very strong advocate. We have a \$27½ billion record road and rail budget over the next four years here in Queensland.

What we have seen today is an announcement acting on climate change—the impact of more extreme weather events, whether it is the flooding of the last couple of weeks or the fact that cyclones are becoming more voracious, more powerful and stronger, quicker and quite out of character. We know that climate change is contributing to these extreme weather events, so it is important that we act on it as a responsible government which understands the science and understands what action is all about.

That is in stark contrast to the Morrison government and their record on natural disasters. We remember the Prime Minister deserting this country during the bushfires for Hawaii and lying about it. Do you remember the Prime Minister coming back and forcibly making people shake his hand? That was appalling behaviour.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Judging from the interjections, those opposite are defending a Prime Minister with that kind of behaviour, and that is appalling. His recent behaviour is that he only declared a natural disaster once it hit Sydney. It had been through northern New South Wales, Lismore, Murwillumbah, Toowoomba, Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Gympie, the Sunshine Coast, Wide Bay and Maryborough, and it had to hit Sydney before he declared it a natural disaster.

This is an indolent Prime Minister who fails to act and is not on point. Look at the way he is treating Queensland flood victims in my electorate, in many other electorates and in electorates of those on the other side, like the members for Lockyer, Gympie and Glass House. There are big impacts there, yet they get one-third of the financial assistance that flood victims get in the marginal federal seat of Page in northern New South Wales. What a disgrace. Flood victims are dealing with the same issues everywhere in this state and the other state and they should be treated equally. They should be given the same respect by the Prime Minister. They should be given the same support by the Prime Minister. They should not be discriminated against.

We hear nothing but silence from those opposite. Where are the members for Gympie, Glass House and Lockyer standing up for the flood victims in their electorates who are being discriminated against and are getting one-third of the assistance from this Prime Minister? They should stand up for flood victims and give those flood victims some respect. There is \$4.8 billion in the national disaster fund but there has been no expenditure. This is a pathetic federal government which cannot deal with natural disasters.

*(Time expired)*

### Coronavirus, Vaccination Mandate

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Premier. I table an article from Monday's *Courier-Mail* that highlights the impact of quarantining on mental health and human rights issues that arise from confining people to their homes through vaccination mandates. In light of this credible report, will the Premier now immediately withdraw the vaccination mandate?

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 14 March 2022, titled 'Push to replace harsh Covid laws' [296].

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. As we know, no-one asked to be part of the global pandemic. What Queenslanders have done is they have actually responded really well to basically everything that we have asked them to do, and I want to thank Queenslanders for doing that.

Our vaccination rates across Australia are perhaps some of the highest in the world. I have been very proud that on this side of the House we went out and campaigned to get people vaccinated. Like I said in the previous answer, it is great to see now that many parts of our state are over 95 per cent primary vaccinated, and that second dose is also there.

Subsequent to that, we had the Omicron variant and it was stated very clearly that adding that booster gives you that added level of protection. I can advise today that a person in their 40s who was unvaccinated has tragically passed away, so we are seeing people who are unvaccinated tragically passing away from COVID. I now also have called out for people who have young children between five and 11 to increase the vaccination rates of those people.

I do not think anyone likes to see these vaccination mandates out there, but the reality is that we still need to drive up that vaccination rate and we need to protect the community. I am very concerned about the impact that unvaccinated people could have, especially coming into contact with elderly people. That is why mandates have been put in place at places like hospitals and our aged-care homes to ensure the most vulnerable in our community are kept safe. On this side of the House, we have been absolutely passionate about protecting people's lives. Over the two years of the pandemic, when other people have seen thousands of people lose their lives, Queensland had one of the lowest records on the planet and I am incredibly proud of the work that Queenslanders did.

I do not know what is around the corner. That is why we have a dedicated quarantine facility where unvaccinated people can quarantine. We have also made that available to people who have been impacted by the floods. We know that in Lismore and the southern parts of the state whole towns have been absolutely decimated.

In relation to your issue about mental health, it is a challenge to everybody out there. Dealing with this COVID pandemic has taken its toll on a lot of people. In fact I am quite sure that there would be large numbers of our community who have been through a very difficult time having their world turned completely upside down. I stress that it is very important for people to get their boosters and it is very important for families to get their young children vaccinated

*(Time expired)*

### **Respect@Work Report**

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Will the Attorney-General update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is implementing the Respect@Work report recommendations?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the Attorney-General.

**Ms HOWARD:** And is the Attorney-General aware of any alternate approaches?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, member for Ipswich.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** That is the important bit of the question, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Let us not hope so.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question and I know what a great advocate she is in her Ipswich community to support women and to eliminate sexual harassment in her community. The Palaszczuk government takes these matters very seriously, which is why we are implementing the recommendations of Respect@Work. I have asked the Human Rights Commission to look at introducing positive duties on employers to prevent sexual harassment before it happens. We have appointed Dr Linda Colley as Special Commissioner Equity and Diversity, we are working to establish sexual harassment officers in departments, and we are developing a sexual harassment code of conduct.

On this side of the House, we will not be lectured to by those opposite about the treatment of women. The member for Kawana came into this House yesterday to grandstand about our lack of respect for women. That is absolutely insulting. How dare the LNP imply that we are only supporting some women given their party's track record. The member for Kawana stood by silently and watched as their government sacked 14,000 public servants. They did not stand up for those women in the Public Service when they sacked 14,000 of them.

The member for Kawana famously only appointed one woman out of 17 in judicial appointments in his first two years as attorney-general. At the time, the president of the Court of Appeal, Justice Margaret McMurdo, questioned whether it was a matter of the member for Kawana's unconscious bias.

Speaking of Justice McMurdo, we know that the then attorney-general leaked private conversations with her when she was president of the Court of Appeal. Again, that is another great example of why he is the worst attorney-general in Queensland's history.

Of course we have the member for Broadwater, who was going to stake his leadership on getting more women into parliament but then stood by and watched as the party room elected another man as his deputy again. When the member for Kawana was on his feet yesterday, who was supporting him? It was the member for Everton of course. In relation to the member for Everton, we have never forgotten about how there were too many women on the Parole Board and how he abused Kate Jones in this place and swore that he did not on a stack of Bibles and then he said he did.

The LNP have absolutely no credibility when it comes to women. I wonder if the member for Broadwater or the member for Kawana have condemned Minister Reynolds for calling Brittany Higgins a 'lying cow' after she came out about her allegations. Have they condemned the treatment of Julia Banks as a member of the LNP? Did they condemn the federal LNP for their treatment of Christine Holgate? Did they condemn the treatment of Bridget Archer? They have an absolutely shocking track record on women.

*(Time expired)*

### **Lobbyists**

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. The acting chair of the CCC has said there are concerns around lobbyists avoiding scrutiny by meeting with ministerial staff rather than ministers, a practice this government has done on over 500 occasions with Anacta alone. Did the Deputy Premier have his chief of staff meet with Wanless lobbyists to avoid scrutiny the week before he called in Wanless' waste application?

**Dr MILES:** The answer is no.

### **Emergency Services Personnel**

**Mr MELLISH:** My question is of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister explain how the efforts of our frontline emergency personnel in recent times have contributed to Queensland's plan for economic recovery and will the minister please advise of any alternative approaches that could pose further risk to Queensland?

**Mr RYAN:** I thank the member for his question and note that he was out and about during the recent flood emergency, assisting his constituents, making sure they were receiving the support that they need to recover from this emergency. That is what this government does: we invest in the front line to ensure that at times of disaster and crisis the people of Queensland have the resources and support that they need to not only survive the disaster but also to rebuild their lives quickly so that we do have a strong economy and so that we can get people back into work as quickly as possible. We have seen that over the last couple of years with the COVID crisis which, of course, still has an impact on our communities and our economy.

Here in Queensland, we prioritise people. We got the health response right and we got the emergency response right so that then we can have the appropriate foundation to build a stronger economy and get people into jobs. We are seeing that in the statistics. The same thing applies to this most recent flood emergency. When you get the emergency response right, you can rebuild quickly so that you can then go on to continue to build a strong economy.

We have the best system in the nation when it comes to responding to emergencies. That is not by chance. It is because this government has a deliberate strategy of investing in the front line, investing in police and emergency services, so that they have the resources and capacity to respond at times of disaster and emergency.

Also, when you do that, you attract good people to those roles and you develop good people in those roles, people like Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski, our State Disaster Coordinator. I want to give a particular shout-out to Golly. He is a champion. He is a bit crook at the moment. He is probably watching, so I will give a shout-out to Golly and say, 'I hope you get better soon, Golly.' Steve Gollschewski is the best emergency response coordinator in the nation. We are very lucky to have him in the Queensland government. He is one of tens of thousands of dedicated Queenslanders who are serving their community in emergency responses. We have mature systems, experienced systems, well-resourced systems and this government backs them in.



I also acknowledge the Premier because she is the most experienced leader in the nation in history when it comes to responding to emergency disasters. This Premier has overseen responses to more natural disasters than any other premier in Queensland history. We are very fortunate to have such an experienced leader.

There is a contrast when it comes to the great systems we have in place in Queensland. We just saw that when the federal government—the Prime Minister, the past emergency services minister federally, the current emergency services minister federally—could not even explain how the national emergency disaster declaration works. They seem to think that it is some convoluted process. It is pretty easy: all they have to do is get the Prime Minister to sign a bit of paper and federal resources can be deployed. We deliver. They cannot.

*(Time expired)*

### **Emu Swamp Dam**

**Mr LISTER:** My question without notice is to the Premier. It has been three years since the Queensland government agreed to fund the state's share to build the Emu Swamp Dam. A month ago in this very place, the Premier confirmed this commitment. After three years the project is still stalled and awaiting state government approvals. Will the Premier advise: when will my community get its promised Emu Swamp Dam?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have committed \$13.6 million for the construction of the Granite Belt Irrigation Project which includes Emu Swamp Dam. We have already fast-tracked \$6 million for the project proponents to get the project to construction—

**Mr LISTER:** What about the approvals? We know all that stuff.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have fast-tracked \$6 million for the project proponents to get the project to construction stage. I am advised that Granite Belt Water Ltd, which is the proponent for the project, recently announced there is a planned pause phase. The Queensland government is working with the proponent and the Australian government during this pause to assess progress and work out what happens next. The minister has had discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce. We have also invested money in the project because we know how it could transform the region. As you know, Mr Speaker, the minister is talking to his counterpart.

Whilst I am on my feet, in relation to an earlier question raised by the member for Burleigh, I am advised that Mr Soorley declared his interest and it was recorded in the meeting minutes of the board.

### **Small Business**

**Mr O'ROURKE:** My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister please update the House on the government's funding support for Queensland small businesses, and is the minister aware of any alternative policies?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

**Ms FARMER:** I thank the member for his question. I love watching his Facebook pages because every single day you see the stories of him supporting his local small businesses. We have committed over \$2.5 billion to support small businesses since COVID, which includes our most recent announcement of \$558 million in a joint funding package with the Commonwealth to support businesses that have been affected by the floods—up to \$50,000 in grants and up to \$250,000 in loans. In fact, we had those grants going out the door within a day of the grants going up. On top of that, the DESBT staff have been out to thousands of businesses, telling them what is available and making sure they feel comfortable about applying. I cannot speak highly enough of them.

Unfortunately, we are too well aware of disasters in this state because we have so many of them. Unfortunately, we know that many businesses do not feel comfortable about applying. They cannot even see or hear about what support is available because they are so traumatised. It makes it even more appalling that the LNP is doing so little. In fact, they are working against businesses. They need to feel supported after they have been through such a traumatic time.

We know that they called for borders to be opened when in fact it was borders being closed that kept businesses open and trading here. They did absolutely zero to support vaccination when we knew that getting vaccinated was going to keep us open and trading. During the floods, we heard nothing

from the LNP nor the shadow minister for business—zero. The only thing I heard was whingeing about why the state government would not pick up funding for a federal grant that would be closed in June. They did not pick up the phone to ScoMo to say, 'Mate, how about you pick up that grant?' We know they could do with a few votes up here. Certainly there was no standing up for small businesses in Queensland when extra funding was announced for New South Wales. We want them on Queensland's side.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## MOTIONS

### Queensland Floods



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (11.18 am): I move—

That this House:

1. acknowledges with great sadness the devastation caused in Queensland by natural disasters this year;
2. extends its condolences and deepest sympathy to the families and loved ones of those who have lost their lives as a cause of the natural disasters this year;
3. grieves for those who have suffered injury and who have lost their homes, property and personal possessions and extends our support for their recovery;
4. places on record its gratitude for the support and hard work of all emergency service personnel, frontline responders, local, state and federal agencies, private sector, community and voluntary services, and members of the Australian Defence Force who all came together to not only support Queenslanders during the natural disaster events but are continuing to support them through the recovery phase; and
5. commits to working with all Queenslanders and affected communities to ensure that Queensland recovers from these natural disasters and rebuilds better than ever.

Since 2015, Queensland has faced 64 separate natural disasters: 37 floods, five severe storms, 12 cyclones and 10 bushfires. That is an average of nine a year, and more than our fair share. It is rarely one cyclone a season; it is more like many. We have the relatively new experience of catastrophic bushfires. Summer storms bring huge hailstones, tornadoes, and recently there was even a tsunami warning. However, the record rainfall that led to the widespread flood of the past fortnight will enter the record books as one of the toughest ordeals our state has ever faced.

I express once again my sympathies to the families and friends of the 13 people who lost their lives. These floods occurred with frightening speed across a vast area. It is as if a river dropped from the sky across the entire south-east. We received nearly a year's worth of rain in just a matter of days. In six days, 792.8 millimetres of rain fell on Brisbane—137 millimetres more than in 1974. This is the highest six-day figure ever recorded.

Fifty-six locations received more than 1,000 millimetres. Mount Glorious recorded 1.8 metres of rain. Swiftwater teams performed 657 rescues. State Emergency Service volunteers answered 13,685 calls for help. One of them, former nurse Merryl Dray, lost her life on her way to help others.

From this event a total of 16,703 damage assessments have been completed on flooded properties; 80,233 insurance claims have been lodged to the value of \$1.2 billion; and seven cities were affected—Maryborough, Gympie, Brisbane, Logan, Ipswich, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast—as well as Redlands and the Sunshine Coast. The scale of the disaster only highlights the size of the community response to overcome it.

Queensland has lost count of our heroes. The swiftwater rescue team that spotted the light from a mobile phone under the water that led them to a couple trapped in their car displayed absolutely extraordinary efforts. To hear from them firsthand was incredible. There was another that pulled people to safety in Ashgrove. I met those people. They owe their lives to these rescuers, not to mention the countless anonymous neighbours and passers-by who went to the aid of strangers in their street.

Yesterday I announced the IGEM review of our handling of the disaster. This is standard. The Inspector-General Emergency Management routinely examines how we handled the most recent disaster so that we will be better at handling the next one as we know the next one will be just around the corner. It is what makes Queensland's disaster management one of the world's best.


The IGEM review will examine whether warnings were adequate. It will also examine dam management. Wivenhoe Dam held back the equivalent of four Sydney Harbours worth of water. Critics have accused the dam's operators of contributing to the floods. How they explain what happened in Gympie and Maryborough, let alone Lismore and Sydney, is beyond me and many of the people I have met in the past two weeks.

Queensland's response to this latest disaster has been nothing short of phenomenal. Our roads and transport systems are almost back to normal. The list of schools closed by the floods has been reduced from 87 to six in just a matter of weeks. The department of communities and housing established 23 community recovery hubs directly in the neighbourhoods worst affected by the floods. Here they helped people access emergency hardship assistance funding of \$180 per person or \$900 for a family of five to cover food, medication, clothing and essentials. At last count they had processed 61,702 applications. They have made 25,570 payments worth more than \$10.6 million, benefiting more than 58,000 people. Over 1,000 have been helped with emergency housing.

I have also appointed Major General Jake Ellwood as our recovery coordinator. He will work with the Queensland recovery agency to make sure no-one is forgotten. As Muhammad Ali said, you do not lose because you are knocked down; it is all about getting back up again. We are here to ensure that Queensland gets back up again.

I also thank all of my ministers who were involved in this recovery as well as all of the local members. I also make a special shout-out to Police Commissioner Carroll, Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski—and we wish him a speedy recovery—and also Deputy Commissioner Shane Chelepy, who also stepped in. I also commend Commissioner Leach and all of the directors-general including my director-general, Rachel Hunter, for the extraordinary work they have done at emergency management at Kedron.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the House of those members who are on a warning. The members for Kawana, Woodridge, Clayfield, Capalaba, Broadwater and Southern Downs are all on a warning.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.23 am): I have already placed on record my sincere thanks to those who have served us in this particularly challenging time, the likes of the emergency services, the SES and all those volunteers. I wish to again join with the Premier in putting forward our heartfelt sympathies to the families of those 13 victims. Disasters are a challenging time, and for families who lose loved ones, it is a particularly difficult moment.

Disasters bring out the best and the worst of people. We have seen the worst with the looting, but we have also seen the best. It is the best that I want to focus on. As I have spent the last couple of weeks going around the affected areas, I have seen the best in the eyes of Queenslanders. When you meet someone who has lost everything and the first thing they say is, 'Oh well, there's someone who's worse off than me, mate,' you know what sort of state this is. I think of those sporting and community groups who have put so much into their prized associations. To see the likes of the Mitchelton Football Club have a brand new playing surface picked up like a piece of cloth and thrown out is particularly harrowing for the clubs. The Scouts organisation—again picking up the pieces.

I think of those rural communities who have had their roads so badly damaged, their lifeblood for getting products to market and kids to schools. That is particularly challenging for those communities. I think of people I met in the evacuation centre sitting on the end of a fold-out bed and the only thing left in their possession is a little bag they grabbed as they were rescued by those heroes.


I particularly think of those people who had their homes and businesses destroyed. There is one in particular that moved me, and that was when I went to Stafford and met a gentleman by the name of Tim. Tim was on his way to help his son whose house had floodwater rising nearby. On the way he decided to call on his business. The business was located in an area that did not flood in 2011 and many say that it did not flood in 1974, so he was not expecting to see water. Tim owns an electrical hire business. As he pulled into his street, he saw millions of dollars of equipment under water—none of it insured. Many businesses struggle to get flood insurance. If they did not get it in 2011 or 1974, you can understand why he did not have it.

When I met him I met many people, including competitors to his business who sent staff there. They were frantically pulling apart the electrics to walk it across the street to another business owner who had vacated a tenancy which had been flooded. They had cleaned it out as quickly as possible and turned on the aircon to try to have a red hot go at getting this equipment dried out so that maybe he could get back on his feet. I spoke to him a couple of days ago. Some of that equipment is starting to turn on; some of it is not. It is a gamble and he hopes that he can get enough to get back on his feet and start trading. That is the Queensland spirit that I love.

We are passionate about making Queensland the most disaster resilient state in the nation. There are three elements to that and there are three issues that I see could be improved based on the last disaster I witnessed. One is messaging, two is mitigation and three is betterment. On the messaging, we have to call it for what it is. There were people I met who were pulling out everything they owned and tipping it out onto the street who said, 'We were told, "Please, there is no cause for concern," on Saturday.' Disasters are about making the right calls at the right time, and messages matter. When you have different messages about whether or not schools should be opened or closed or you should pick up your kids or not, that matters. When you announce a different recovery coordinator in the space of one press conference, that matters. Consistency in messaging matters.

We have to get back to a time of building mitigation, and I think of the levees that I played a very small part in: Eulo, Wyandra and St George. They have stood the test of time. I think of drainage and levee combinations in places like Roma and Maryborough. They work and we must get back there.


Finally, on betterment, we must get back to a stage where we have a rolling Betterment Fund so we build resilience into our infrastructure so we do not continue to make the same mistakes time and time again.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (11.28 am): I rise to address the motion moved by the Premier regarding the catastrophic floods that have recently affected the Fraser Coast, Wide Bay and South-East Queensland regions. In my ministerial duties I have had ample opportunity to address the flood impacts across the region, so in addressing this motion I would like to speak to the impact of the rainfall and flood on my community of Murrumba. This flood was different to the one in 2011. It impacted the Moreton Bay region more than the one in 2011 did. The Suncorp Insurance data I mentioned earlier today indicated nearby suburbs like Caboolture, Deagon, Everton Park and Aspley were amongst the hardest hit in terms of property damage.

We saw levels of rainfall that have never been seen before. At Murrumba Downs, 1,145 millimetres of rain fell; at Kippa-Ring 1,076 millimetres; at Rothwell 1,076 millimetres; at Young's Crossing 1,104 millimetres; and at Lake Kurwongbah 1,050 millimetres. All of this rain fell on an already sodden catchment. The North Pine Dam had been spilling for 13 days, releasing millions of litres of water into the Pine River, which is the southern boundary of Murrumba and separates Moreton Bay from the Brisbane City Council area. All of that water led to localised flooding across Dakabin, Murrumba Downs, Kallangur, Griffin and Rothwell. Roads were closed, power went out and properties were isolated and damaged. The beautiful playground at Pine Rivers Kindergarten was damaged and will need to be replaced.

I have travelled the entire region affected by this disaster, and the damage in Deception Bay, in the neighbouring electorate of Bancroft, was amongst the worst. The member for Bancroft urged me to visit Major Street. Residents were still in shock, working together to strip their homes while toddlers showed me what was left of their bedrooms. Through all the grief, the famous Queensland community spirit was on display. Pastor Dan Sweetman and chaplain Nathan Grady from Lifepoint Church Rothwell were delivering a car boot load of Domino's pizzas. My heart goes out to the residents of Mary Street East and West, Mango Hill; Chermiside Road, Mango Hill; Ceccato Street, Murrumba Downs; Roseann Street, Kallangur; and Alma Road, Dakabin. There was even a landslip at Moss Glen Close, Murrumba Downs.

Now that the clean-up is done and the rebuild has started, I look forward to working with the community; neighbouring Moreton Bay MPs the members for Redcliffe, Bancroft, Morayfield, Pine Rivers and Kurwongbah; Mayor Flannery and the Moreton Bay regional councillors to ensure we rebuild with the disasters of the future in mind. I want to thank all of our many local heroes. Sandra and Danielle Harvey of Alana Street, Murrumba Downs took in neighbours Deb and Anthony Kenneth and their two children after sewage came through their home. I thank the mayor and local councillors who I have already mentioned, particularly Mayor Peter Flannery, Deputy Mayor Jodie Shipway and Councillor Sandra Ruck. On this side of the House, we stand with Queenslanders who have been affected by the worst natural disaster in more than 10 years.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (11.32 am): I rise to support the motion. It is important that as elected representatives of the Queensland parliament we acknowledge the significant devastation experienced and the heartache felt by so many Queenslanders during the recent severe weather and flood event, including in my state electorate of Moggill. Local residents have been traumatised. They have

experienced property damage, lost their possessions and, in a number of cases, been displaced from their homes and businesses. In six days, more than 792 millimetres of rain fell across Brisbane—more than in 1974. This represents the highest six-day figure ever recorded in Brisbane.

I join with all elected representatives of the Queensland parliament in extending my sincere condolences to the families of those who have lost loved ones in this extensive natural disaster. As traumatic and as heartbreaking as this natural disaster has been, in typical Queensland fashion, local residents and impacted Queenslanders have come together and done an outstanding amount of work to support each other, their neighbours, their families and, in fact, their entire communities.

In my electorate of Moggill, emergency services workers, community volunteers and local residents have all rallied to support each other. I wish to acknowledge and place on record my sincere appreciation to the many local residents of Moggill who worked around the clock to support our community. This includes members of our local Queensland Police Service such as Senior Sergeant Shane Hancock, Senior Constable Chris Tetley, Senior Constable Lachlan Scott-Preimonas, Senior Constable Michelle Schreiber and Constable Belinda O'Brien, as well as volunteer members of the Moggill State Emergency Service unit including Colin Alley, Julie Francis and Mark Kerle. I acknowledge members of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, members of the Brookfield Rural Fire Brigade including First Officer Mark Farmer, Brookfield Show Society president Catherine Fullerton, Jaimee Morgenbesser, disaster agency staff of the Brisbane City Council, members of the Queensland Ambulance Service and all emergency services workers and volunteers.


I also acknowledge our outstanding local residents, community organisations and volunteers including Alicia Rossiter of the Kenmore Bears Rugby Club; Dr Cath Hester of the Colleges Crossing Family Practice and her staff; Mike Ballinger and James Robinson; and our local school communities including members of the Mount Crosby State School community, Deputy Principal Corey Ridden and Olivia Laurens of the Mount Crosby State School P&C. There are many others including Dan Hill and Tim Kempton.

I wish to thank my staff in the Moggill electorate office, including Daniel Downes, Gabby Nolan and Amanda Strachan, who worked tirelessly alongside me to support our local residents. I acknowledge Greg Adermann, councillor for the Pullenvale Ward, and Julian Simmonds MP, the federal member for Ryan, and thank them both for the way in which we were able to work collaboratively to respond quickly to the needs of our shared communities. As the state member for Moggill, I worked vigorously alongside other elected representatives to support and provide assistance to the local residents who needed it. This included helping with the local clean-up recovery efforts, which are still ongoing.

Given the geographical isolation issues that once again affected many suburbs and residents in the electorate of Moggill during the flood, the local situation cannot continue without a comprehensive review of disaster management agency coordination and communication across local, state and federal governments. Comprehensive solutions are needed to address the much needed infrastructure needs. Such infrastructure solutions require cooperation and allocated funding by all three levels of government, particularly the Queensland state government. As a part of the announced reviews by the Brisbane City Council being undertaken by former governor of Queensland Paul de Jersey and the state government review to be undertaken by Inspector-General Emergency Management, Alistair Dawson, a dedicated State Emergency Service unit resource for Karana Downs and Mount Crosby must be delivered. A new Mount Crosby Weir bridge needs to be constructed as a priority; matters pertaining to Colleges Crossing must be examined; and the feasibility of combined Brisbane City Council and state government funding for a full traffic bridge at a suitable location at Bellbowrie must be explored. Specifically, the shared jurisdictional aspects of development planning and approvals via Brisbane City Council and the state government must be reviewed.

There is no doubt that the approval of a petrol station by Brisbane City Council at 2250 Moggill Road is entirely inappropriate, given what we have seen with the recent flood and the real risks of local environmental contamination of Moggill Creek. The Queensland Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning should be examining this development application approval and utilising any state legislation or regulatory instruments to intervene to ensure that this development does not proceed.

I will be taking the opportunity provided by the relevant local and state government reviews to formally provide correspondence about a number of matters that must be comprehensively examined and reviewed, including specific infrastructure delivered for local residents of the electorate of Moggill and, more broadly, the western suburbs of Brisbane. There is no doubt that the communication, messaging and resilience of infrastructure needs to be reviewed by the state government.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.37 am): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the Premier. Let me begin by offering comfort and ongoing strength to every Queenslander affected by the devastating floods witnessed across the south-east. Queensland is an incredibly resilient state, but this event pushed us to the brink. My heart is with those who have lost loved ones, their homes and treasured memories, particularly my friends, neighbours and fellow residents in the City of Logan. Through the water, the mud and the loss, we witnessed incredible courage and selflessness. There were some Marsden residents in the community of Logan—men like Fred, who scaled the fence as the floodwaters rose to help his elderly neighbours get upstairs and out of the floodwaters. His swift actions and those of so many Queenslanders like him undoubtedly saved many lives. Our state and our country will always be grateful for that.


It has been heartening to continually hear the sentiment expressed by people throughout the City of Logan in the aftermath of the flood: 'It's been tough for me, but it's been tougher for other people down the street. They are more deserving of help.' This is the big and selfless heart of the City of Logan and the electorate of Woodridge on display to the world. It has been the general approach of people of Logan and across the south-east, with so many residents putting a pause on their own needs to go help their neighbours, community groups or their local sporting and service clubs. There are people like Gayle Rose, from Marsden Scout Group, who I met down at the Scout den. Even though her own house had been flooded, Gayle was down at the den working out a plan to help the group, and the Cubs and the Scouts they do so much great work supporting, to recover from the flooding impact. Then there was Louie Naumovski from the Logan House Fire Support Network. There were no fires, but Louie was there. He was a tower of strength and dug deep, along with so many other people in our city, to help others.

It is hard times like these that remind you how great Queensland really is. These recent storms came roughly a month after another destructive supercell ripped through Logan. On the first day of February my community came face to face with a tornado. Like these most recent floods, the rain was relentless and the wind ferocious. The aftermath saw houses stripped of roofs, huge trees uprooted, powerlines down and school infrastructure destroyed. Again, that is when our city sprung into action, with so many wonderful Woodridge locals starting the clean-up straightaway. Energex and Ergon crews worked around the clock restoring power to households, as they did after the floods. I want to make special mention of Kev Lavender, who led the Energex response across Brisbane south and Logan.

QFES and SES officers also arrived quickly on our streets and then backed up a few short weeks later to assist with the flood response and recovery. I want to recognise the work of Colin Neil OAM and Geoff Townsley from the QFES and Brad Mills, Jim Ferguson, Paul Guy, Trent Becker, Belinda Quail, Shaun Poole and Garlin Needs, among many others, from the SES. Staff at our wonderful local schools put in a herculean effort following that storm. Woodridge State High School was among the worst hit by those storms, but principal Kathleen Janecek, facilities officer Peter Ridgeway and grounds keeper Brian Ross worked tirelessly to recover. Logan City Special School cleaners Gaye Napier and Maria Tarei—a combined 40 years of experience between them—dug in when it was needed most, and did so with a smile. They all worked late into the night and through the days that followed, removing debris and conducting repairs so our schools were safe when students returned.

Many local businesses have also stood tall in Logan's time of crisis including Vinton Tree Services, Oasis Landscaping and Maas Earthmoving & Home Restorations which carried out significant clearing at Woodridge State High and throughout surrounding areas. A special shout-out to Travis from Maas Earthmoving, son of Woodridge High cleaner Charmaine, who removed the big tree blocking the school's main gate.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the work of Logan City Council Mayor Darren Power, Deputy Mayor Jon Raven, Councillor Teresa Lane and in fact all Logan councillors and council officers. Our Logan community is lucky to have a great local council and they all acted quickly and with compassion in the aftermath of these natural disasters. On social media I pay tribute to my electorate by using the suburb postcode that we are proud of in Woodridge and I use #all4114all and that resonates across our city, because we are all for Logan, we are all for Queensland and we are all for helping each other out through these events and beyond.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (11.41 am): In my 10 years as the local MP for the seat of Everton the recent flooding events have by far been the worst natural disaster impact that my electorate has experienced. We had flooding that has never been seen before. I am old enough to remember the 1974 floods when I was just a young teenager and these floods have been worse. Many times there were comments from people saying that they have never seen anything like this before. I estimate that probably 40 to 50 homes were impacted.

Illawarra Street at Everton Hills had the combination of the water running down the street like a torrent hitting the Kedron Brook at the bottom of the street and rising rapidly. I remember speaking to Ryan Weston there—a good old Aussie who just got into cleaning up under his house and helping his neighbours. It was encouraging in really hard times to see his attitude. That was at Everton Hills. Griffith Street, Gordon Parade and Little Street in Everton Park were hit pretty bad. I was speaking to Nathan and Sam in Little Street and Natasha across the road and they told me about the water that came across the Mitchelton football fields and through their houses and many other houses up that street.


St Helens Road, Lansvale Street and Blackwood Street at Mitchelton were all inundated with the rising waters of the Kedron Brook going through their homes, with some of them having to evacuate. Of course, that was at the southern end of the electorate in the Brisbane City Council area. The electorate was affected as well in the Moreton Bay northern end—not quite as bad but, still for those who were affected, it was bad enough. I was at Birmingham Street at Eatons Hill when I met Matthew and Samantha who normally have a beautiful view over the creek, but it became a raging torrent and went through their house in a bad way.

The Everton Plaza shopping centre, which has been a great new eating precinct, had rising waters that came very rapidly. Stellarossa, 5 Boroughs, Sweeties and the Janome sewing machine shop all went under as well. Local businesses that have had a pretty hard run over the last two years because of COVID have been hit again. Albany Creek State School and Albany Hills State School both had water coming through them—the assembly hall at Albany Creek State School and the administration block at Albany Hills State School.

I echo some of the comments made by other speakers in that it is great to see Queenslanders coming together at this time. I do not know how many people said to me, 'Yes, we've been hit, but other people are worse off.' If there is anything good that comes out of a natural disaster it is the fact that people get together, there is great community spirit and we all pitch in together. I must mention Mitchelton Football Club. The artificial turf pitch, which is now like rolls of carpet—a \$1½ million investment by both the Brisbane City Council and the state government—is gone, ruined. I hope in the future there is something that the minister can do there. It was a magnificent pristine pitch that allowed people to play all year round no matter the conditions.

The opposition leader did touch on an issue that does need to be improved next time—that is, clearer communication—and those in the South-East Queensland corner realise that the schools had yet another very tough week. We should not forget that at the beginning of the year two weeks were taken out of the school year. During the flooding four days were taken out, which I think was unnecessary, and the communication was either non-existent or incredibly confusing. I heard reports of children going up to teachers and saying that their mum and dad were on their way and the teachers had no idea what it was about. Principals had no idea what it was about. It was very confusing, and of course there was no rain. In fact, in the typical Queensland manner, I was at the garage on the Friday when the schools were closed and one of the parents said to me, 'Tim, thank goodness the kids aren't at school today because they would've got sunburnt!' That is how ridiculous it was. We need clear communication, but that was a poor example of it.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.47 am): That is all we get from the other side—whinge, whinge, whinge, whine, whine, whine. Once again I reiterate that those opposite are more interested in throwing mud than cleaning it up. They should get out into their electorates and help those people clean up. I give my condolences to those who lost their lives in this unbelievable rain event and tragic circumstance that we found ourselves in.

Everyone is a genius with the benefit of hindsight, but I will say one thing: safety always comes first and I would rather see a sunny sky or a cloudy sky than a family in tragic circumstances any day. Aren't they all geniuses with the benefit of hindsight? The recent floods also affected my electorate and I welcome the Inspector-General of Emergency Management, Alistair Dawson, taking submissions until 19 April in relation to reviewing how the flood went. I have met with Major General Jake Ellwood, who is doing a great job getting around. It is a pleasure to support the motion moved by the Premier.

In my own electorate it was the usual streets that get flooded unfortunately such as Welsby Street in New Farm. It was great to walk around and see those families getting back to normality. Rod has lived in Welsby Street for 40 years and there he was cleaning. Unfortunately his children had slept in that morning and they were not helping him, but he assured me that they were on their way. Even Tim in my office who lives in Welsby Street was impacted by the floodwaters in that he was stranded as they could not get out because the waters had risen so quickly.


Sydney Street is another one where the car parks underneath the unit buildings flood, and some of the smaller businesses in Welsby Street and Sydney Street were impacted as well. The iconic Merthyr Village is run by the Sorbello family, who did an amazing job getting that centre up and running again. Matt Sorbello was one of the first businesspeople on the phone to me needing assistance from Energex. We put them in contact because of the electricity issues at the centre, the difficulty being that where the electricals are it is very hard to get the shopping centre up and running. They had a generator. They were talking with Energex and I was amazed that the centre was open. Good old New Farm Deli had patrons coming in to buy goods, so fortunately Maria and Vince were not impacted at that point in time.

There was flooding in streets around Moray Street: Sargent Street and Oxlade Drive. My heart goes out to Rachel and Ian. They worked tirelessly to keep the water out of their place. I met Kristy from Fuljames Lane. It was her first flood. She had only been living in the area for five years. She had never experienced it before. She got emotional when she talked about her neighbours guiding her through what to do. She was very thankful for their help. Her complaint was that it was coming up through the stormwater drain. I will talk a little bit more about that later.

Herston saw significant damage, particularly along Butterfield Street. I visited Herston Lodge. It is a supported accommodation facility. We dropped off some care bags. I thank the Young Allies Foundation that put them together. They normally provide care packs to kids in hospital, but they wanted to show support for the flood victims. We handed many of them out to Herston Lodge, on the streets of New Farm and other suburbs and we dropped off the remaining packs at the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre which does a great job. I am concerned that we need to implement an evacuation plan for Herston Lodge. These are supported accommodation residents who really do need assistance. I will work with Ann and her staff at that lodge to work out an evacuation plan for when these rains come—and they will come again.

I love my electorate. I saw strangers coming up to Herston Lodge. There were SES crews there helping them out. The support was overwhelming. It makes me proud to be the member for McConnel. Small businesses are very welcoming of our grants of \$50,000 and \$20,000 for not-for-profit sporting organisations. The terms of reference are very well written. I want to look into backflow valves. Are they working? Can we do better? There were many complaints of water coming through the drains, including in front of my own electorate office. We get very little information about the efficiency of backflow valves. It is something that I will be raising during the inquiry.

There were mighty efforts by many at the schools that were impacted. Thank you to all the school communities, QBuild, emergency services staff and my own staff, Judi and Chris, who were out on the streets handing out bags, talking to residents, giving them comfort and doing all that they could to get grants in the hands of small business.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.52 am): We saw an enormous amount of rain in areas across Queensland, including in Kawana. Although we had localised flooding of some roads, with damage to houses and schools due to the amount of rain, nothing compares to what we saw in other areas across Queensland.

I bring to the attention of the House the areas of Meridon Plains and Kawana Forest. I have recently written to Minister Mark Bailey about the issue of Kawana Forest becoming an island. The only way in and out was flooded. The roads were cut down Woodlands Boulevard onto Kawana Way Link Road and Kawana Motorway up to the hospital. Kawana Way Link Road was nearly going under. It is a state road. The only other available emergency access is out Red Cedar Drive, through a gate, through a car park and onto Meridon Way, which also went under. Even if they were going to sandbag their communities, they could not get out to get sandbags.

I have written to Mark Bailey on behalf of the Kawana Forest residents and acknowledge the efforts of the Kawana Forest Residents' Association in writing to me about this. We need to work out how we are going to flood-proof Kawana Forest and Meridon Plains so we do not have issues in the future. I thank the Kawana Chamber of Commerce for the recent Clean Up Australia Day. A lot of the debris that went out the Brisbane River, particularly microplastics, have ended up as far as Fraser Island. All the Kawana beaches were impacted so we had a huge clean-up day.

I was in the chamber when the Treasurer was speaking about how hard these recent floods were on him. I am not going to cop that from Treasurer Cameron Dick, who was in Dubai when Queensland was flooding. When Queenslanders and his community were in their hour of need he was in Dubai. Dubai is about a 14-hour flight. He could have come back. I know a few members were stuck at



Parliament House. We were desperate to get back to our communities. We were looking for back roads through the hills in the hinterland to get back to our communities. The Treasurer had the choice to get on a plane and come back but he chose to stay nearly the entire week when Queensland had flooded and the mud armies had mobilised.

Today Treasurer Dick said in a ministerial statement how wonderful it was and how much he achieved in the trade delegation. Yesterday I tabled happy selfies that were taken by Trade and Investment Queensland. While Queensland flooded and the mud armies were out in force, Treasurer Dick was getting selfies with big koala mascots. I warned the House. I said I bet Treasurer Dick will make sure those photos are non-existent. Guess what? Trade and Investment Queensland has taken down all the photos containing Treasurer Cameron Dick. I table the new, edited photos. I also table the screenshots where you can see the edits that were made.


*Tabled paper:* Extract from Trade and Investment Queensland page, dated 1 March 2022 [\[297\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Extract from Trade and Investment Queensland page, dated 8 March 2022 [\[298\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Extract from Trade and Investment Queensland page, dated 10 March 2022 [\[299\]](#).

It shows that all the photos containing Treasurer Dick have vanished from the Facebook and Instagram accounts—they are just gone. I said he would have been annoyed that we caught him doing selfies in Dubai while his flooded communities were recovering. To come in here today and try to play the victim and say how hard it was when he was sipping champagne in Dubai while Queensland flooded—I am not going to cop it from Treasurer Dick—pretending that he was here helping clean up. His Facebook had posts about the floods. His community suffered its worst flood for 40 years and he chose to stay in Dubai and not come home. It is a 14-hour flight. Any of the LNP members, and I suspect probably all of the Labor members other than Treasurer Dick, would have got on a flight back to be with their community, but he could not do it.

Who could forget the chaos with the schools and parents going to pick up their kids? I have been told by principals that they were getting told by students, because they saw it on social media first, that their schools were closing and their parents were on their way to pick them up. Principals and teachers did not know from the minister or the Department of Education that their schools were being closed. They were closed and the sun was out. Surely we are not getting to a situation in Queensland where, when BOM issue a severe weather warning—which we know they do every second day—that we close our schools. Principals and the community should make the decision. There is no use closing a school at the Gold Coast because Gympie is having a bit of rain. We need to be resilient in the future. I congratulate all the people who assisted people clean up their communities—other than Cameron Dick.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.57 am): Out of respect for the 13 Queenslanders who lost their lives during this tragic incident, I will not engage in what we have heard just now from the member for Kawana. What I will do is talk about the impact in my own electorate. I am going to talk about the suburbs in my electorate that have seen significant inundation.

People's homes have been inundated. Indeed, much loved community institutions have been inundated and devastated. Those suburbs in my electorate that have had that impact are Bald Hills, Bracken Ridge, Brighton, Deagon, Fitzgibbon, Sandgate, Shorncliffe and Taigum. That is all of the suburbs in my electorate. Each and every one of those areas have had some form of significant inundation into homes and into much loved community institutions. That is the consequence of the extraordinary rainfall that was experienced.

We have heard the statistics across the city from others, including the Premier. On Sunday, 27 February, Brighton had 381 millimetres of rain, Deagon had 399 millimetres of rain and Bracken Ridge had 444 millimetres of rain. It was very much like the event that occurred on 1 May 2015. People will recall there was a massive storm that hit Brisbane, in particular the northern suburbs, on that day. This event came on top of continuous days of rain. Over the three days—Friday, 25 February through to Sunday, 27 February—the total rainfall in Bracken Ridge was 1,054 millimetres—over a metre of rain; Deagon had 940 millimetres; and Brighton had 975 millimetres. Brisbane floods are always different. This was a flood that was from the sky and not so much from the river.


Cabbage Tree Creek, Bald Hills Creek, Einbunpin Lagoon—which overflowed and flooded shops in the main street of Sandgate—Dowse Lagoon, Third Lagoon, the Tinchi Tamba Wetlands and the Deagon Wetlands were all significantly impacted, hurting not only local institutions, communities and households but also the natural environment. I could go on for some time giving examples of inundation in places where it has never been witnessed before.

In my electorate the new areas of what is called 'old Fitzgibbon'—areas that were developed in the 1990s—had never been reached by floodwaters before. In the big inundation of 2015, the water was held in a detention basin in a neighbouring parkland. This time, the water came through the whole community, devastating a number of properties. Properties backing onto Cabbage Tree Creek were inundated for the first time ever. On the Monday morning after the rain event I visited a family in Central Avenue, Deagon. That house has been in the family since it was built in the 1890s. There are no family stories about floodwaters ever coming near the house, but they had more than one foot of water through the bottom level of the house. We are hearing stories of inundations in places that have never been flooded before.

There are also amazing stories of resilience and rescue. Local heroes like Quinn, Matt, Phil and Johno got out in their tinnies to help people in different parts of Deagon such as at Station Road, Finnie Road and Blackwood Road. A post by a resident's daughter summed up the community spirit that Sunday night. She said—

Thank you, Quinn and Matt, for helping my mother out on Blackwood Road. They were walking up and down the street, helping whoever needed it. The people of this neighbourhood never fail to astound me with their generosity, thoughtfulness and willingness to lend a hand.

I heard that story time and time again as I went from door to door to talk to people in the local community. I acknowledge the outstanding work done by my local representative colleagues, Anika Wells and Councillor Jared Cassidy. I also acknowledge the array of community members who have done amazing things; there are too many to mention.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (12.02 pm): I would like to start by expressing my sincerest condolences to the families and friends of the 13 Queenslanders who lost their lives during the terrible weather event. Within the Nanango electorate we experienced that firsthand. We sadly lost Wondai local Mr Greg Hodges in the floodwaters at MP Creek. On the road at Glen Esk we lost Dr Alex Klestov of Brisbane, who was swept off the road. I also reflect on the tragic loss of our Lowood group SES volunteer, Merryl Dray, who was from Coominya in my electorate. Merryl Dray died after her vehicle was swept off the road by floodwaters while responding to a request for help from a family in the Lockyer Valley. That is a reminder of the risks faced by our first responders. I give a massive shout-out to all our first responders, police officers and emergency workers.


In the clean-up process I had an opportunity to call in to the Coominya rural fires. David Stephens and his team certainly need to be congratulated for their hard work. I think they said that they did something like 24 rescues on the first night of the terrible heavy rainfalls in the lower Somerset area. I want to put on the record of this House the effect that the flood event had in the Somerset region. I have sat in this House for the past two days and the words 'Somerset region' have been missed out from every single statement by the government. I was on the Somerset Local Disaster Management Group. I give a massive shout-out to Mayor Graeme Lehmann and his team who worked exceedingly hard. Once again the Somerset was missed out in the middle of the floods and it gets out missed in the acknowledgements in this chamber. I stand here to acknowledge the Somerset.

This morning the roads minister listed a number of roads. What about the Brisbane Valley Highway, where my communities were cut off? In the South Burnett, the Cherbourg Regional Council was cut off for three days. Where is the acknowledgement of that? I am here to give that acknowledgement on behalf of my community. The communities around Mount Tarampa and Patrick Estate deserve a voice in this House, but all those opposite can talk about is Lowood. Whilst we love Lowood, Jim—I have to say it; we love Lowood—other areas in the Somerset continually miss out when it comes to this government.

It was great to see the federal government supporting us. The ADF came to help the Somerset region. I give a massive shout-out to the ADF guys. I met and spoke with some of those guys. The homes of two of them were flooded in Brisbane, but where were they? They were in the Coominya region, helping out my local community! I say 'thank you' and give a big shout-out to those guys.

I want to say this: we need clearer communication. There is always a fight over who is in South-East Queensland. I was visiting Nanango State High School to talk to a group of Year 11 students. When I left I saw a line-up of cars as parents came to pick up their kids from school. It was the middle of a sunny day in Nanango. The principal did not know and the parents did not know, but the Premier was saying, 'At schools in South-East Queensland, pick up your kids! Go to school quick and pick up your kids!'

My electorate has four school regions. At each one of those four regions, people had no clue about what was actually happening at their schools. I have received many letters of complaint from the school communities within my Nanango electorate about the communication fail that happened around school closures. Parents did not know whether or not they should pick up their children. That decision should be made at a local level. I implore the government to allow the local principals in the local areas to make those decisions on behalf of the parents and for the safety of the kids. The Premier said 'everywhere from Bundaberg to the coast'. In the middle of that is the mighty Nanango electorate. We need clearer communication.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.07 pm): I am glad to be following the member for Nanango, who said that she was very happy with the input from the federal government. I can tell the House that the City of Maryborough is not happy. We are not happy at all. We have not heard from or seen our federal member. We have not had any help from the federal government.

**Mr Harper:** Disgraceful.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** It is absolutely disgraceful; I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. It is absolutely terrible. Who is the prime minister? We think Menzies is still the prime minister because we don't know this bloke.

The first flood hit on 8 January. We had a big rain event at Gualda that caused a lot of flooding in Maryborough. That was the first rain event. One person who turned up straightaway to talk to the rural fires was the federal opposition leader. You would not believe it, but there he was, talking to the rural fires. He, Jim Chalmers and Senator Murray Watt were all having a yarn and talking about the help that they could give. We also received a lot of assistance from the state government. We had the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the transport minister, the education minister, the small business minister and the housing minister all there helping people after the first flood. Once again, all we heard from the federal government was crickets. We are still looking around for the federal government. Then we found out that they changed the criteria for the flood money, but once again we could not contact the federal member or anyone in the federal government.

Then we had our second flood event, which was a record flood event. I would like to thank all of the people involved. I thank the mayor and the deputy mayor. In particular I want to thank the men and women of the Fraser Coast Regional Council: the CEO; the chief engineer, Davendra; the head of the local disaster management committee, Brendan; the rural fires; the SES; Superintendent Mick Sawrey; and QFES. They were all absolutely amazing. I say to the minister sitting in the House today: if you ever want to see a blueprint on how to handle a disaster, look at what the QFES and police in my region did. It was outstanding. The members of my community are saying that, too, minister. They were there, backing up the community.

What about Ergon? The minister is here today. The Ergon staff were also fantastic in getting people's power reconnected to houses and in making sure that things were safe. What about TMR and RoadTek? It was the quickest we have ever seen in terms of bridges being reopened and roads fixed in Maryborough city. The TMR crew were there to make sure that the roads were safe. The engineers were at Lamington Bridge and Granville Bridge and at Maryborough Hervey Bay Road. The flood response of the state government in Maryborough city was absolutely amazing. Today, we still have not seen a visit from the Prime Minister. I think Bridget McKenzie had a fleeting visit after being dropped off in a helicopter. We have not seen anyone from the federal government come through and talk to people about the drama of having two floods inside six weeks. People lost everything. We heard the Premier speak about it today.

The Premier came up and talked to members of my rural fires, the Aldershot Rural Fire Brigade. People's belongings were sitting on the footpath. I was talking to people last week. Businesses such as Richers Transport, one of the largest transport companies in this state, suffered a significant amount of damage from the floodwaters that went through its yards in Maryborough. I cannot thank enough the rural fires, the SES and the crew from Downer. It was amazing to watch the train crew from Downer. With the warning of the first flood on 8 January, Pete Kaleen and the crew from Downer moved all the NGR trains to higher ground. These are the trains that we are fixing up in Maryborough because of the LNP's mistakes. The Downer crew were so polished in terms of moving the trains out. What about the damage to the Downer factory during the first and second floods?

Once again, we are grateful for the response of the Queensland state Labor government in terms of housing, QFES, police and rural fires. Steve Mulders, of the Burrum Heads SES, drove in every day to organise the crew. The Ergon crew were working in 40-degree heat to make sure that people had power on. That is what a traditional Labor government does.



**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (12.12 pm): I start by acknowledging the impact of the terrible rain and flood event and offer my condolences and deepest sympathies to the families and friends of people who sadly lost their lives. I would particularly like to thank the emergency services personnel and volunteers who responded to the disaster and worked around the clock to keep Queenslanders safe.

The Sunshine Coast, including my electorate of Buderim, experienced significant rainfall and flash flooding over a number of days. Homes and businesses across the Sunshine Coast, particularly in hinterland areas, were inundated by water or cut off by flooded roads. That is why I was disappointed when the Sunshine Coast local government area was excluded from state government disaster grants, unable to apply until I and others called out the Premier on social media. Parts of the Sunshine Coast were added the next day; however, only selected locations were added. A blanket approach would have been more suitable. Members opposite do not like it, but the facts are true. They ignored the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast is an afterthought for this Labor state government. The members for Nicklin and Caloundra were silent. It was LNP state members fighting to get Sunshine Coast included on the emergency hardship grants.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Pause the clock for a second. Members to my right, the member for Buderim has the call.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** As shadow minister for small and family business, I was also extremely disappointed in the delay for support and recognition of small businesses and their staff who were so impacted. Many businesses lost everything. They lost their life's work, washed away. It will take a long time for some to recover and rebuild what has been lost. Many things cannot be replaced. The businesses that were able to clean up and carry on still lost days of trade. Their staff lost shifts and subsequently a pay cheque. These business owners and their workers were only just starting to find their feet after years of COVID impacts. It has been blow after blow. They deserve to be offered support straight away, but it took almost a week for the Premier to even request a co-funded disaster assistance package from the federal government. It was not requested until 4 March. Why did it take so long when the damage was so clearly evident? Was it because the Treasurer was in Dubai while the south-east was going under?

I would like to address criticisms from sections of the media and the Labor Party about the ADF response to the floods. What about criticisms from the likes of David Koch, who demonstrated his ignorance when he directly criticised ADF personnel on the ground, and criticisms fuelled by people like Labor Senator Murray Watt and supported by members of this House, including the Minister for Transport and Main Roads? I note that the motion acknowledges and thanks members of the ADF for their support during the flood response and through the recovery, but such words are pretty hollow when we have Labor senators and ministers endorsing and fuelling the misguided views of people like David Koch and Shelley Craft.

To criticise the men and women of the ADF is a disgrace. Our ADF are required to step up because state governments are too frequently incapable of delivering the necessary response required in a disaster. Domestic disaster response is not the primary task for the ADF.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my right, your interjections are not being taken.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** The primary task for the ADF is the defence of Australia. They step up to assist the states because, if they did not, Australians, Queenslanders, would suffer more. But, every single time they step up to perform such tasks, we should acknowledge that it comes at the cost of their primary task of defending Australia. Having worked in Queensland district and local disaster management groups multiple times, in my experience the issues with the timeliness of support from groups such as the ADF are because those managing the disaster response do not make a request for support until the last moment. Then they expect the ADF to be able to deploy instantaneously.

In 2011 I was one of the first ADF members on the ground in Grantham after the devastating floods. Members opposite do not like it. I hear the member for Pumicestone chirping away.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, pause. Member for Thuringowa, I can see you behind that chair; you are warned. Member for Maryborough, you are warned. Member for Redlands, you are very close.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** When my soldiers and I rolled out of the gates of Gallipoli Barracks in 2011, no request for support from the ADF had been received from the Labor state government. In anticipation of a need-for-support request, we forward deployed to Amberley expecting a call which eventually did come. My soldiers and I did the tasks that the police, the fires and the community could not. We crawled through the mud under houses to search for the missing. We cleaned up rotting fridges and dead animals from people's houses. We trudged through mud above our knees for days, searching floodplains and creeks for missing people and, alongside Queensland Water Police, recovered bodies from dams, creeks and houses. My soldiers worked tirelessly in arduous conditions just as soldiers did in the most recent flood.

Perhaps next time those who seek to criticise the ADF in such circumstances—including those opposite—might join our service men and women in the mud to see for themselves the commitment to the people of Queensland and Australia.



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (12.18 pm): I start once again by acknowledging the loss of life in this most recent natural disaster emergency. A number of people have lost their lives. I express my condolences to their family and friends. In particular, I again highlight that a member of the emergency services, Merryl Dray, an SES volunteer from Lowood, died serving her community. Again, I express my condolences to all who knew Merryl and to all members of the SES who obviously are grieving her loss.

I have lived most of my life in the Caboolture area. I remember big rain and flood events from the early 1990s and those of the 2000s. I know from my memory that this is the biggest weather event I have ever experienced in the Caboolture region. Certainly from conversations with the many people I know throughout the Caboolture region, many of whom have lived their entire lives in the Caboolture region, they agree that this was a significant weather event.

The bureau agrees as well. The Bureau of Meteorology has confirmed that the weather event that South-East Queensland experienced was the biggest weather event for 130 years—since 1893. More rain fell in South-East Queensland and Brisbane than at any other time for 130 years. It was quite extraordinary. It was bigger than the event in 1974 and bigger than the event in 2011. Numerous sites throughout South-East Queensland, including Caboolture, experienced over a metre of rain in a matter of a few days. That volume of rain is unfathomable. Many sites throughout South-East Queensland received over a metre of rain within a few days, which is quite extraordinary.


What was also extraordinary was how communities and emergency services right across South-East Queensland responded, providing support to people who needed it, helping people in the emergency and helping people clean up after the emergency. I wanted to particularly highlight the impact and response in the Caboolture region. There have been people impacted in the Caboolture region. Many streets have been impacted and many residents have been impacted. I have, of course, been out and about meeting with local people. It was good to talk with the people from Mark Street in Morayfield—not named after me—who unfortunately experience flooding in most major events. They again experienced significant flooding with numerous residents impacted.

The Caboolture River Caravan Park was impacted, but not as much as last time. This is a great example of how we learn from natural disaster events and build back better. The Caboolture River Caravan Park was significantly impacted in the 2011 flood. As part of the rebuilding, everything was built back at a level higher than the 2011 flood. Whilst there was still some impact it was not as significant as 2011. Nonetheless, for those people who have had floodwaters through their properties it is a terrible experience. I know the Caboolture community will continue to support them as they rebuild.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the local emergency services that significantly contributed to the response in the Caboolture region—the police, the Fire and Rescue Services, the Rural Fire Service, the SES and Volunteer Marine Rescue—as well as our support agencies like the Red Cross and Community Recovery. They do outstanding work. I had the opportunity to go out with the Moreton Army—not the Mud Army—a week and a bit ago through parts of the Caboolture area. Whilst we were doing clean-ups in people's yards and houses it was amazing to see the many Community Recovery teams—this was on a Sunday—going house to house. There was the physical clean-up but also the wellbeing support that is so important.

There was an evacuation centre as well as a recovery hub set up very quickly in Caboolture. I know Minister Enoch is in the chamber and I commend her department for establishing that facility so quickly and for ensuring the financial, counselling and wellbeing support was there for local people.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the Moreton Bay Regional Council. It is a sophisticated and experienced council. Their response was appropriate and well thought through. I particularly commend the mayor for his leadership. All in all, we will continue to rebuild and continue to look after people in Caboolture impacted by this event.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (12.22 pm): I rise to speak on the motion in relation to the floods in Queensland. There is heartache in Queensland across the communities that have experienced some of the highest floods in 100 years. In places like Gympie the floodwater did not just go over the floor, it went over the roof. It gives a different perspective when businesses are trying to get that floodwater out of their roof insulation. I saw that firsthand in a number of places we visited in Gympie.

The floods have taken away livelihoods, businesses, beloved pets, cars and homes, and sadly many are now homeless. I extend my deepest sympathy to the families and friends of those who have lost loved ones during these natural disasters. I particularly want to mention Merryl Dray, the SES volunteer who lost her life trying to help others in the Lockyer Valley. We owe our deepest gratitude to the brave emergency services workers who put their own lives in danger to assist others during these events.

Small and family businesses were trying to get back on their feet following COVID restrictions and now they have been flooded. They are exhausted physically and financially. Following the floods they face the initial clean-up of the sticky, smelly mud and silt that seems to get into everything. I want to thank the Mud Army 2.0 and the ADF for their mobilisation and work. I saw and talked with a number of ADF personnel in places like Gatton, Esk and Gympie. That clean-up goes on for months. In some cases it will take years to recover. The memories and the fear is always in the back of the minds of people when they have been through these horrific events.


These disasters take a toll on Queenslanders. That is why we have to build back better. It is vitally important that we do not continue to build infrastructure back in the same location to the same standard and expect a different result in the next event. When the LNP was in government the Reconstruction Authority was given more staff and empowered to provide a rapid response to repairs. Local governments were empowered as disaster coordinators in their local areas because they know their local communities best. We have seen the benefit of their work in this disaster. The LNP built levee banks and drainage projects in places like St George, Eulo, Wyandra and Roma. We lifted the water treatment plant out of the flood height in Gayndah. That is just a few of the projects that we did to ensure betterment.

In government we also facilitated land swaps so that those who wanted to move out of the flood zones could do so. They had an option. We did that in places like Charleville and Roma. We made betterment projects and mitigation an absolute priority. I say to the members opposite: don't go blaming others. Get on with the job. Do the work and do the betterment projects. Make betterment and mitigation a priority. Help those who have experienced successive events with a suite of mitigation measures and give these people some options.

Our mayors and councillors and their staff have been working around the clock before, during and after this flood event. Local governments were doing what they do best—disaster management. They were and they still are on the front line working to clean up the streets. This event is stretching their resources. Our local governments have also experienced frustration with the emergency alert systems in Queensland. Some of the Brisbane City Council's requested messages took up to seven hours to make it out. The Western Downs Regional Council were impacted with a three-hour delay for their alert messages. That is far too late for places like Dalby that have flash flooding. The messaging was too late for many and they were cut off and unable to evacuate their homes, cars and possessions. I saw that firsthand in places like Goodna.

No doubt the Labor government is a bit sensitive about the lack of timely messaging. The Premier's messaging in the lead-up to the crisis was lacking. First we heard the Premier's messaging that there would be no cause for alarm and that this would not be as bad as 2011. This led to thousands of households being taken completely by surprise. Then we saw the overreach that resulted in the messaging around school closures that was a complete shambles.

The reviews need to be comprehensive. They need to consult with the community. The betterment and mitigation projects need be kickstarted. We need to make Queensland the most resilient it can be because we are the most disaster-prone state in Australia.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (12.27 pm): I rise to support the motion and pay my condolences to those who have passed. There is a saying that without the rain there is no life. In Queensland we know this more than most. For our agriculture, for our drinking water and even for our recreation we

need water and a plentiful supply—perhaps too much supply. In our state we know the summer storms. As a kid you would endure a stinking hot day and right around the time you would be walking home from school the storm would come—sometimes with a bit of hail—and cool everything down.

It would seem we no longer know the storms. In 2020 when a massive hail storm ripped through my electorate and the neighbouring Logan electorate, bringing with it hailstones of 14 centimetres and leaving 2,065 homes damaged, we were all stunned by its ferocity. On the evening of 25 February—my husband's birthday, in fact—I was still up late when the mayor of Ipswich rang me at 10.30 pm. Those are the phone calls people dread because they know it is never good news. The mayor provided me with an update from the Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group and advised that they were working with the Red Cross that evening to open an evacuation centre at the Ipswich showgrounds.

Early on Saturday morning, I went out to check on some of the low-lying areas of my electorate, particularly those near Woogaroo Creek. I was also in contact with my Logan councillor Natalie Willcocks as local roads in Greenbank and New Beith were beginning to have water over them leading to potential flooding. The rain was steady on that Saturday but, as the Premier noted, it hovered over the south-east and would not budge. We issued warnings urging our residents to stay home and remain updated on the situation. I want to thank my community who did just that. Very few people were on the roads that Saturday and Sunday, and, as people have said to me, 'We bunkered down.'

As an electorate, we were fairly lucky and my heart goes out to those members whose electorates have been more significantly impacted. We saw limited inundation of homes, though I want to give a special mention to families in Iris Street and Dulin Street, Gailes, who were particularly affected.

The Ipswich part of my electorate fared pretty well with limited road closures or loss of services. The Logan part of the electorate saw significant road closures, loss of electricity and loss of internet for a number of days. Greenbank saw more than 1,300 homes lose power for a number of days with key roads and bridges cut off. I want to give a massive shout-out to our Greenbank Rural Fire Brigade who were out ensuring that road closure signs were up and visible and who also helped with those who found themselves stranded from their homes.

The community of Flagstone was completely cut off for a number of days with no power and no internet which made communication and getting messages out particularly difficult. Neither the local councillor nor I could reach our community there. We relied on some incredible locals to provide us with updates on the situation and what was needed. I am actually going to do a separate adjournment speech to recognise all of those amazing people in Flagstone because they represent the very best of community and I am so grateful to them all.

The Ipswich Motorway separates my electorate from one of the most hard-hit areas of the floods—Goodna. It has been absolutely devastating to see the impact of the floods on some of the most wonderful people you will ever meet. In our patch we are a close-knit group—so I wanted to be there for my colleagues the member for Bundamba, the federal member for Oxley, Deputy Mayor Nicole Jonic and Councillor Paul Tully who have such a massive recovery task ahead of them. I have been out helping in some of the more impacted streets—Mill Street, Enid Street, Cox Crescent and the Hillsdon Court townhouses.

I want to thank the council team who helped to set up the recovery centre at Goodna, particularly Margy and Mel. There were a few in council who questioned the need for this centre. I can say without any doubt that it has been vital for this community. I also want to thank our community recovery team who have been doing an incredible job supporting affected residents with financial support. Of course, to all of our emergency services—our police, our fires, our ambulance services—they have been absolutely incredible.

To all of the volunteers, including the massive team from Thiess who just turned up and set up at Goodna—just incredible—the wonderful crew from Goodna Street Life who are always there, the Pioneers Basketball Club, as well as the ADF who have been instrumental in getting the community to a certain level of recovery: I want to thank you as well.

We know the recovery will take some time. We need to continue to be there in the long term. I never thought I would quote Walt Disney, but this is apt. He said, 'After the rain, the sun will reappear. There is life. After the pain, the joy will still be here.' We will help people to find that joy again. I commend the motion to the House.



**Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.32 pm): It gives me great pleasure to give a summary to the House today on the impact of the floods in Lockyer, as well as pay tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice and give a great deal of thanks to our community and the first responders and volunteers. The Lockyer was very badly impacted by these floods.

As I told the government representatives who came to the town and who attended a number of meetings, this is another disaster in a long line of events. We were in drought up until 2020. We have seen COVID through 2020 and 2021 and now the floods in February this year. Many of our farmers are broken. The bank balance is just not there to recover. We need specialist assistance from the Treasurer and from this government to get our farmers back on their feet again.

I want to pay respect to the 13 people who lost their lives including Merryl Dray, one of our local SES volunteers, a former nurse and a volunteer at the SES in Lowood. She was very well known in the Kenilworth area before moving to Lowood. Our love goes out to her family and friends.

My colleague the member for Nanango and I share the Somerset Regional Council area. I have to reinforce, as the member for Nanango did, the important role that the Somerset Regional Council played in their disaster recovery through the LDMG and also the Lockyer Valley Regional Council. Mayor Tanya Milligan and CEO Ian Church and team, as well as Mayor Graeme Lehmann and CEO Andrew Johnson and their team, did an amazing job with the thousands of calls for service that they received.

Many places are inundated. We are sick of the damp. We are sick of the smell, but we will get back again. As one of our clever and smart farmers and a great leader in our community Troy Qualischefski said, 'Just plant the next acre. Find another 10 acres and keep going forward. We will get to the rest of it, but at least you will get back to normal.'

While I am talking about the growers, the impact of this flood is only understandable if you understand farming practices. When the floods occurred, our farmers were preparing fields for planting. When that happens, the first foot of topsoil is very vulnerable, so any water that is going sideways sees it move—and move it did, with hundreds and thousands of tonnes being washed away. One farm lost in the vicinity of \$4 million worth of revenue and there is \$500,000 worth of landscape work to be done. As I said before, many of our farmers are broken.


It does bring out the best and the worst in people though. I have a great appreciation of our Lockyer Valley Growers—Mick Sippel and his team. They pulled an event together on Tuesday last week. At that event I said that from my experience as a critical incident manager I congratulate them on holding the event and getting the farmers together, getting our community together to talk about what has gone on, to help each other out, to help recover and to take the next steps to go forward.

All of our frontline workers did a tremendous job. We are well practised in flood events and other devastating events, but this showed their true mettle once again and they put their shoulder to the wheel. I have to thank the federal government for sending the ADF to give assistance. That was very timely.

Importantly though at this time there are many people who are affected by mental health and need support. It is not just those who come out seeking support; it is the others who are still at home—whether it be through pride or not wanting to seek assistance. We need those people to come out. Do not self-assess. As the people from QRIDA, the Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority, said, 'Don't self-assess. Come out.' We have community hubs set up at Gatton, Laidley and Lowood at the RSLs, so go down and have a talk to the recovery team. They will help you out with some money and they will also be able to provide some more information about QRIDA.

I have to tell the story of Tanya Hooper and her family who have a shop in Grantham. They have been flooded over and over again. They have opened up again serving the Lockyer Valley's best chips, as voted last year. They are back in business doing what they do well—serving our local community. Thank you to all of our volunteers. The work and assistance that our community have given to their neighbours is just tremendous. It is an honour to be the member for Lockyer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Before I call the member for Bundamba, I give a very special welcome to the students and staff from Tamborine Mountain College in the Scenic Rim electorate, which I represent.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (12.37 pm): I would like to begin my contribution to this motion by offering my sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to the families of the 13 people who lost their lives during this tragic weather event and the many others who were impacted physically, mentally and emotionally. It is going to take a long time for the recovery to get substantially towards the end.

We are Queenslanders and we stand tall during the toughest of times. We share our sorrow, celebrate our success and lend a helping hand to those in need. We have seen all that and so much more in recent weeks. We will continue to do so for months to come as we walk the road to recovery. The toughest of times does bring out the best in people. We have certainly seen it in our local community. There has been a huge response from our local community in terms of volunteers coming




out to help those in need. I want to make special mention of but a few, starting with Daniel Young, who has become known as 'Dan the Mill Street Man', with Mill Street being one of the most heavily impacted areas in our local community.

Dan and his mum, Carol, who lives at Collingwood Park, have spent nearly two weeks supporting our community from a makeshift hub which became a critical meeting place for so many of our affected locals offering food, drinks, cleaning products, groceries and lending a helping hand, especially with the huge response from our emergency services workers and volunteers. I also want to give a huge thank you to Lee and Ants from our local Goodness Grazes in Redbank Plains, who left their small catering business for 11 days to keep the grills going in Mill Street to help affected residents as they were cleaning out their homes, as well as actually helping to clean their homes. Players, parents and supporters from the mighty Springfield Pioneers basketball club lined Mill, Enid and Parker streets offering support. After playing their weekend fixtures they would come down and help the community out. A huge shout-out to Morgan from our local Domino's at Goodna, who delivered a huge slice of community spirit with over 800 pizzas for impacted residents, businesses and groups, which were distributed right across our community from Goodna to Bundamba.

Phil and the team of nearly 70-strong volunteers from Thiess kept our local community and volunteers fed and watered with about 150 kilograms of sausages, 60 kilograms of burger patties, 30 kilograms of bacon, 200 loaves of bread, over 1,800 cans of soft drink and 4,000 bottles of water. There was huge support from the team at Thiess and that absolutely needs to be acknowledged. Our wonderful friends from the local Goodna Buddhist temple donated over 700 fresh curries to impacted residents. One resident contacted me to express her gratitude. She said it was the first decent meal she had in over a week. Similar support came from our local Muslim community, which provided much needed food for hundreds of people.

We have crews from the mighty Electrical Trades Union out on the ground today with Operation Energise, completing free electrical safety checks for the uninsured, sole parents, pensioners, not-for-profits and community groups. These crews have already safely returned power to over 45 premises, including the Goodna Bowls Club, bringing more hope and optimism to our local community. Just one reconnected hot water system has united a street in Goodna, with people opening their home and offering a warm shower to their neighbours who might like or need one. I will conclude by saying that it is going to be a long road ahead, but we will walk it together.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.43 pm): If I really could distil what I saw in the last couple of weeks and bottle it, I would be a millionaire. It is called the Queensland spirit. It adorns the side of trains, it is on placards and billboards, but what I witnessed firsthand—along with every other member of this chamber—was nothing short of incredible. As an MP, I sometimes have people say to me they are concerned about their faith in society and the human spirit and where we are heading, but what we have all seen, particularly in South-East Queensland, Gympie and other parts of the state in the last fortnight has been nothing short of amazing. But it is no surprise. I can recall many years ago in 1974 seeing firsthand the floods in Brisbane, and of course back in 2011 I was part of the Mud Army, as many other members here would have been.


I am very proud to represent the eastern suburbs of Brisbane. Believe it or not, 2022 has been the worst by far. Floodwaters do not differentiate or discern the difference between little dotted lines on an electorate map. My electorate of Chatsworth was relatively unscathed. A couple of low-lying acreage areas flooded. I decided to help out wherever I could. I forgot about dotted lines, as any person would, and went across to Billan Street and Grey Street in the electorate of Bulimba. I acknowledge the work that the member for Bulimba did in her community. What I saw firsthand there replicated what we have seen in past floods, but the thing that struck me was the fact that—and members have commented on it—people who were not affected were driving around in their food vans, for example, and freely and willingly stopping and trying to help out the Mud Army and, most particularly, the people who were affected. It was simply amazing to see it on the display. One thing I would hope is that, whenever people are getting a little bit down about the way society is going, they speak to people who have been affected or got involved with what happened here recently.

I would also like to place on record my heartfelt condolence to the families and friends of the 13 souls who were tragically lost during the recent floods. I have to say that you meet people in this job—and, like the member for Everton, I am privileged to be coming up to 10 years—and you make a lot of friends in the community, around South-East Queensland and the whole of the state. When you do have people who get knocked down, you see the way they go about re-establishing their lives. There

were countless examples in Billan Street where people were decimated, but when the call went out to lift heavy equipment they left work on their own properties to come across and help out other Queenslanders. It is truly magnificent.

In their five-minute contribution people will say what they want to in relation to criticisms and whatnot. I would like to focus on some of the teamwork I saw—for example, the local councillor in my part of the world, Councillor Lisa Atwood, and Ross Vasta MP, the federal member—people working hand in glove. In fact, I was working with someone whom I know handed out how-to-vote cards against me. There is a time and a place for that, but when it comes to Queenslanders in need no-one cares. Blue T-shirt, red T-shirt, green T-shirt, purple T-shirt—no-one cared. It was all about getting on with the job and trying to bring some relief.

I want to give a special shout-out to people in my own Chatsworth electorate. We did feel a bit of survivor guilt. We were relatively unscathed. But when the call went out for blankets, over 100 blankets arrived that morning at my electorate office which were immediately taken to the Chandler evacuation centre in the Sleeman Sports Complex. When the call went out for tinned food, we gave Woolworths and Coles Westfield a run for their money. We ran out of floor space in the electorate office. When the call went out, people responded. When we travel the world is it any wonder we get homesick, particularly if you come from this great state of Queensland. There is something that is distilled here. There is something about it. When that clarion call goes out 'We need a hand', people take cufflinks off and put T-shirts on. It makes no difference: when the call goes out for Queenslanders in need, Queenslanders will always be there.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (12.48 pm): I do want to acknowledge the efforts of the member for Chatsworth in my electorate. I have heard of the help he gave at the Brisbane Softball Club too, and I thank him for that.

We have just been through the biggest rainfall event we have experienced in South-East Queensland since 1893, and the devastation in so many areas has been overwhelming. The images and stories of the havoc it has wreaked on people's lives are harrowing. I know that I speak on behalf of everyone in my community in sending my sympathies to those affected outside the Bulimba electorate, as I do to those affected in my own community. I particularly acknowledge the residents of Norman Park, Bulimba, Carina and Hawthorne and our local sports clubs, all of which had clean-up to do, but the Bulimba Golf Club, Brisbane Softball Association and Norman Park Bowls Club especially.

As we say too many times in this House, we are unfortunately very good at disaster recovery in our state because we are regularly beset by natural disasters. One of the many reasons we are good at it is because of the commitment and expertise of our police, emergency services workers and volunteers. I do not want to leave out thanking the Energex workers as well, whose efforts are critical to getting everyone back on their feet again as quickly as possible. I do not think any of us could speak highly enough of the work all of these amazing people do, and I mean every single one of them from across the state.

As a local member I am especially proud of the swiftwater rescue team, which operates out of their headquarters on Lytton Road. In addition to their many heroic actions over the last couple of weeks, this is a group of people who are building capacity across the state, and in fact across the country and across the world, to do exactly the sort of work that was required in the floods now and in the future. We are so proud of them locally.

I could not talk about the SES without mentioning the Eastern Group SES whose volunteers operate out of their centre at Morningside. I have had the great privilege of knowing this group for many years now, and I pay homage to their never-ending dedication.


This government was quick to get financial support to the groups that needed it through the disaster recovery grants. In joint funding with the Commonwealth, we are offering a \$558.5 million package, which is the most substantial support package since the 2011 floods, including up to \$50,000 for small businesses. It has been so good to visit so many small businesses in the past weeks and to get the message out to them that that support is there. We know many small businesses have borne the brunt of COVID, and to suffer flood impacts on top of this has been excruciating.

I was really pleased most recently to visit 4 Brothers Brewing and Rowes Furniture in Toowoomba. I was also out with the member for Pine Rivers and the member for Kurwongbah to meet their local businesses. I encourage everyone to support their businesses wherever and however they can, now more than ever.

Awful though it has been, this disaster has brought out the best in us yet again, and in this instance the best really is the best. It has been the goodness that we have seen in our communities, and we are all talking about it—of neighbours helping neighbours, of strangers helping strangers, of that tangible desire of people to get out and help. I want to take this opportunity to recognise those in my community who have been so generous in trying to lighten the load of others. It is by no means an exhaustive list but I hope everyone who has helped knows how much they are appreciated.

I want to pay special tribute to the role the Facebook community groups have played through this crisis, keeping residents up to date with vital information, with how they could help and with how they could be helped. I single out the volunteers who run I Love Bulimba & 4171, the Morningside/Cannon Hill/Norman Park/Seven Hills 4170 Community and the Murarrie Community, as well as the others. I know they put in many extra hours.

I also thank the following: Foodbank, for getting extra supplies to the organisations on the ground; FareShare, for creating extra meals for the many people displaced from their homes; Balmoral State High School, for delivering 150 meals and collecting over 800 items in their flood drive; Lourdes Hill College, McGuires Hotels and Care Kits for Kids, for getting backpacks of personal items together for the displaced students of Milperra State High School, and the member for Miller and I are partnering up to do that as well; Domino's Cannon Hill, for popping up everywhere to support weary residents; Jo Wallace from Crackerjack Toys, for putting together lovely bags of goodies for kids; Carla Haddan from Place, for organising meals for the homeless; Norman Park bowls club, for donating all their meat to Micah Projects when their freezers went off, as did Flour and Chocolate with their excess products; Ray White Bulimba, for setting up a marquee at Hardcastle Park, running a barbecue and offering cleaning support and for coming out to help the Bulimba Community Centre when I asked. I pay tribute to my friends Councillor Kara Cook and Terri Butler, the member for Griffith, who did amazing work. Together as a team we want to say that we are there for our local community.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (12.53 pm): I wish to be associated with the many comments that have been made in this House acknowledging the 13 people who perished in the floods, storms and disasters that occurred in late February. I extend my condolences to all of those people affected by that loss of life. Whether they were serving in the SES and our emergency services or whether they were simply travelling home, any loss of life in a flood is unexpected and tragic for all of those involved. Like others, my heart goes out to them and we wish their families the very best in very tragic and sad circumstances.

I also wish to be associated with the comments that have been made on both sides of the House in respect of the great work that has been done by our emergency services crews, including the police. In my own electorate, the first message I got on Monday morning was from the officer in charge of the Hendra station. While he was out in his vehicle, I was out in mine and we were inspecting various parts of the electorate and comparing notes to see where the help was needed most. To them, I say thank you for your efforts. It is never easy and the calls continue to come in. Some of them might seem unreasonable, but we do not know that unless we are the person who is making that call because we have not experienced the floods in their shoes. Their house has been flooded, their possessions have been lost, they are staring at a sea of mud and are understandably distraught. Reasonableness and calmness are not things that we should expect in those circumstances.

Here in the south-east we live in a humid, tropical climate. One of the great benefits of living here in the south-east is that, whilst we experience hot and humid summers that we all may gripe about every now and then—and thank goodness for air conditioning—we also enjoy the benefits of magnificent autumn, spring and winter weather where things are much better. Our hot, humid summers bring with them the storms. It is almost legendary—perhaps even myth—that during summertime every afternoon you can set your clock by the time the thunderstorms come through. Well, the thunderstorms rolled through and they rolled through and they rolled through at the end of February.

It is no surprise in many instances that places in my electorate flooded. For the 45-plus years that I have been there, it has been a regular occurrence. But perhaps more than in the past, this February's rains and the resultant flooding took many more people by surprise. That was certainly one of the most prevalent comments that I heard—that people were taken by surprise. Clayfield was badly flooded. People perhaps think that all of Clayfield is sitting on top of the hill overlooking Kingsford Smith Drive, but in fact it is not. I will not say it was the worst affected or that we had it harder than other areas, because for anyone who was flooded and lost homes, loved ones, possessions, businesses and jobs, it was the worst thing they could have endured and comparisons are both meaningless and odious.

However, it is the worst level of flooding that I have seen in 45 years. Flood levels along Breakfast Creek from the Albion Fiveways to the famed Breakfast Creek Hotel were measured at almost twice the height of the 2011 flood. Only today we see reports that the Breakfast Creek Hotel is looking to reopen later this week. They had hoped to open last week but unfortunately not. For those interested, during the flood aftermath it was reported to me that a bull shark was seen swimming in the carpark of the Breakfast Creek Hotel. Whether he was after a beer off the wood or a rib fillet medium-rare, we are not sure but he seems to have evacuated the scene. Thank goodness.

Businesses like coffee roasters were flooded—including the famous Fonzie Abbott, who you would know if you go to the airport. They were flooded through to two metres. They were resilient though and bounced back. On the Monday morning Dan Pappas said, 'Tim, we know it's going to flood. We've had our gear up. We were out of the floodwaters. We just want to start operating again.' In fact he was delivering beers and pizzas to local businesses in the area that Monday night, helping them rebuild. There are terrific stories like that.

Through Downey Park and the Northey Street farm and surrounds, cars were under water. Anyone who knows netball knows Downey Park. Enoggera Creek flowed through there—well, it did not flow through; it muscled and shouldered its way all the way through that part of the world in areas of Windsor, around the back and then through Toombul Shopping Centre, which is still closed. It is Brisbane's first shopping centre, opening in 1967, but it looks likely to be closed for many months. It is not in my electorate—it is in the member for Nudgee's electorate—but it is right next door to mine. The water then went all the way through Clayfield, with Aviation High being destroyed as well.

Many things have been said. There is a great deal of resilience. There will be a lot to be learnt from this—whether it is around the messaging, whether it is around resilience or whether it is around betterment. Not only should we be looking to thank those who served; we should be looking at how we can do better in the future.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 pm to 2.00 pm.



**Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.00 pm): Unfortunately on many occasions, as Queenslanders we have become accustomed to many natural disasters, and the recent flood event in February and March was no exception. It was truly unprecedented. I have been around long enough to have seen the 1974 floods. As a young lad I helped out with the evacuation there as well as the 2011 flood, but I do not think anyone was prepared for this particular flood event. We have seen thousands of homes and businesses inundated across 19 local government areas and, sadly, I put on the record like every other speaker, our deepest condolences for the 13 lives that were lost in this event.

In my electorate of Ferry Grove, we saw many sporting organisations inundated, like Pure Tennis not far from my office. We are there to assist them in their time of need.

In my portfolio, we saw farmers, in some cases for the second time, affected by flood. The Palaszczuk government always stands by our primary producers, and we will on this occasion again. We will stand shoulder to shoulder and support them as we have done through natural disasters year after year. That support includes things like assistance through, for the first time, an online damage survey. I must put on record my appreciation of AgForce and the Queensland Farmers' Federation who supported the survey which enabled primary producers to assess and provide information to us, to make sure we are well prepared to assist them through their needs.

It was good to see out in the Lockyer Valley my good friend, the current member for Wright, Scott Buchholz who even commended the Palaszczuk government last week on our response to, and assistance for, this natural disaster. It is good to hear there are people out there, not only primary producers but also other members of parliament supporting us.


It was worthwhile going to Gympie as well and I know the member for Gympie is well versed in what occurred in that particular town. The flood event there was the second highest on record. It was great to get out to Nolan Meats to speak to Terry Nolan about the damage that occurred to his business. He is probably the largest employer in that town. We will stand with him and those in Gympie and surrounds to support them. Terry estimates \$15 million in damage to that particular business, including product. Nevertheless, two days earlier than the day of our visit, he was already processing cattle—I think 400 head he commented at the time—so it just shows you the resilience of businesses like Terry Nolan's.

We also went to the Lockyer Valley and visited Qualipac where we spoke to Troy Qualichefski and his team, and also to Mitch Brimblecombe out at Moira Farm. These are resilient people. You wonder sometimes how they bounce back when they experience these weather events, but nevertheless, they are bred tough up here in Queensland. As Queenslanders, we are there to provide support through the Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority through grants and assistance.

We have activated a \$559 million assistance package that provides eligible producers recovery grants of up to \$75,000. Those grants have been offered, as I said, through QRIDA and, as of last Monday, they received 998 applications and already approved nearly \$1.9 million in assistance, not only to primary producers but also to small businesses.

Once again, as a government, we are there when these natural disasters hit. These are the times when people suffer the financial losses and hardship that governments stand up and support them. Underlying that is true optimism. I see out in those fields of perished crops or topsoil that has been washed away that optimism in the willingness to go back and start farming again, to start their business recovery. That is the experience of our true salt-of-the-earth primary producers in Queensland. That is why I am really proud to have QRIDA by their side to assist them in times of need. We went down to the offices of QRIDA just after the event to make sure they were well prepared. They had a good team of people ready and willing to stand up to get this funding and support out the door.

QRIDA are very well versed in providing assistance, having dealt with more than their fair share of natural disasters, including the monsoonal event west of Townsville in 2019. They continue to support not only primary producers but also small businesses and businesses alike through the typical natural disasters, and we always will.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.04 pm): It was devastating to drive through areas of the Gold Coast after the rain stopped last week to have a look at the damage that was done, as well as in New South Wales. There is a lot of damage down there. As you drove through the streets it was heartbreaking to see those houses with furniture outside and people still mopping up and hosing down their houses, trying to recover from it all.

The Leader of the Opposition has already said that we need better communication, mitigation and betterment. On the communication fund side of things, the real issue that I saw during this crisis was the government's response to closing down the schools. I had 20 or 30 houses inundated in my electorate, and I think we got off fairly lightly compared to a lot of other places, but it was bad enough. Closing down the schools just added to the problems. A number of my schools could have been opened. They could have been teaching the kids and giving the parents the opportunity to protect businesses and protect their homes from what was coming. When the government announced that they were going to shut down all the schools, it sent a panic into the people that did not need to happen, and I would suggest that was because the union demanded that the schools be closed down.

On the communication side of things, initially Palm Beach was not included in the disaster grants. We had to urge the government to put Palm Beach into the disaster grants; I am glad that we were able to get that done. Communication? How could there be good communication about funding when the Treasurer of the state was in Dubai, having a good time rather than being with his people during the floods? The Premier was completely absent initially from the whole project. She was not to be seen anywhere. Then when she was seen, the information that flowed out of the Premier was wishy-washy, all over the place, and nobody really knew what was going on.

We need to mitigate these issues. I have written to the Minister for Transport to ask him to have a look at issues in my electorate and the member for Currumbin's area where a number of residents have contacted both of us and suggested that it might be a problem with the M1 construction down there; that that may have caused houses that have never been inundated before to get inundated this time. This was a very bad rain event, but there were houses that were inundated this time that had never been inundated before.

There is construction happening around the transfer area between Tallebudgera Creek and the Tallebudgera canal systems that may have led to an issue—only may have. There is also the construction of the M1 bridges that may have led to an issue. I wrote to the Minister for Transport—and I understand the member for Currumbin has as well—and just asked him to have look at that. If that is the case, let's make sure this does not happen again.

The minister went straightaway to the Labor attack plan and that is to attack the messenger and attack me in the media. He has not actually responded to me yet. I understand he has responded to the member for Currumbin, but he has not responded to me. I do not know why that would be. I will table that.

*Tabled paper:* Bundles of letters from member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, regarding flood mitigation [\[300\]](#).


I also wrote to the Premier and said that we need to look at flood mitigation further up the valley in Tallebudgera because these things have now happened a number of times. Dams would be a good thing for the government to build. The government spruik loudly about building dams, but they have not actually built any dams. They are talking about building dams, they are planning to build dams, but they have not actually built any dams.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr HART:** I am glad someone opposite mentioned Rookwood Weir because I will table a document from 2017.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 4 November 2017, titled 'Big Read: Questions raised over LNP pushing on with Rookwood' [301].

At that time I went to Rockhampton as the shadow water minister and announced that we would build Rookwood Weir, and what did we hear from the Labor government? 'No, it's not a good idea. The business case doesn't stack up.' We were going to do it had we been elected. We built the Wivenhoe Dam. Those opposite cancelled Wolffdene dam. They tore down Paradise Dam. They do not like the concept of building dams. Dams mitigate our flood issues and we need to build more of them.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (2.09 pm): I begin by expressing my sincere condolences and sympathies to those families impacted by this recent natural disaster including people in my own electorate of Algeria and of course those right across the region and especially those families who are now mourning the loss of a loved one.

The Palaszczuk government puts people at the centre of everything we do. We take a person centred approach and we respond quickly and with compassion. This approach was on display as my department led the human and social recovery response to the recent South-East Queensland flood event. Within hours of the deluge, the Palaszczuk government moved swiftly to activate impacted areas in the Gympie and North Burnett regional council areas. I want to acknowledge those councils and others that requested those activations and worked so closely with the state government to get those activations happening. This enabled members of those communities to apply for grants, including jointly funded Commonwealth-state Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme grants from Sunday, 27 February.

As the storm system tracked south, activation of impacted regions followed with areas in the Lockyer Valley, Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Ipswich, Somerset, Gympie, Noosa and Logan local government areas being activated by 1 March and further areas including Redlands and Scenic Rim activated in the following days. As of this morning, there have been over 26,000 payments made to impacted Queenslanders, totalling more than \$11 million and benefiting 60,669 people. A key component of Queensland's world-class community recovery response is the standing up of community recovery hubs and pop-up hubs where government agencies work alongside our NGO partners to deliver impacted communities financial assistance as well as vital emotional support including crisis counselling.

The Palaszczuk government moved quickly, with community recovery hubs opening in Gympie, Redcliffe and Caboolture by Thursday, 3 March. We had more than 20 community recovery hubs and pop-up hubs open across the south-east, supporting individuals and families across the flood-affected areas. Over the past couple of weeks I have witnessed the important work being done in hubs across the south-east: at Beenleigh and Palm Beach to the south, Ipswich and Laidley to the west, across the river in South Brisbane, and in Caboolture and Gympie to the north. I want to pause and acknowledge the member for Gympie for taking my call the day that I was able to visit the Gympie recovery hub and for sharing some really valuable information about how we can assist people in his region. I also acknowledge the member for Ipswich, who accompanied me on my visit to the Ipswich community recovery hub.


I have been particularly moved by the commitment of staff, volunteers and the almost 300 ready reservists from across the Queensland Public Service who volunteered their time to support their fellow Queenslanders. I also thank all community recovery and housing employees from the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy who have gone above and beyond. I heard from many of our housing employees of the challenges they encountered in finding emergency accommodation for so many in an already tight housing market. Given these challenges, within a week of the flooding event I convened the emergency housing security meeting with key housing stakeholders, including QCOSS, Q Shelter, REIQ, Tenants Queensland, the RTA and the residential parks association. We discussed immediate housing challenges in response to the flood and the best next steps, discussions that will continue during this heightened recovery period. I also announced a \$600,000 rapid response fund for

specialist homelessness services, enabling existing services to tailor responses to those communities impacted. I also expanded the eligibility for bond loans and rental grants, easing pressure on private rentals for more Queenslanders.

Whether it is supplying emergency housing, planning longer term housing solutions or providing immediate financial relief, we have been supporting the people at the centre of this disaster. The Palaszczuk government has acted swiftly and compassionately to meet the housing needs of those impacted by the South-East Queensland floods. Sadly, this has been against a backdrop of a federal government that has abandoned its responsibilities to Queensland when it comes to housing and homelessness. The Morrison government has turned its back on Queenslanders by stripping nearly \$100 million from housing and homelessness funding to our state at a time of unprecedented pressure.

The Morrison LNP government has been the architect of declining funding for housing since 2016-17. They have abandoned the national partnership for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing and the funding that goes with it. They have ceased the National Rental Affordability Scheme, leaving over 10,000 Queenslanders paying more rent or having to find alternative housing into the future. They have refused to forgive Queensland's historic housing debt, unlike what they have done for Tasmania and South Australia.

We are working hard to make sure that Queenslanders recover from these floods. We know there will still be a great deal of work to be done, but we need the federal government to step in with us. We will continue to fight hard for Queenslanders.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.15 pm): I rise in response to the motion moved by the Premier about the recent flooding disaster that has affected so much of South-East Queensland. I, too, send my deepest sympathies to those who have lost family members and friends and to those who are now trying to rebuild their lives after their homes and possessions were destroyed. I especially want to record my condolences for the family and friends of Gabrielle Sale, whose car was swept off the road in Bonogin. Rescue workers found her body five days after she went missing.

I note the government's intention to review the tragedy and urge them to reflect on their own conduct during the disaster. There is no doubt that the lack of management and clear communication from those opposite added to the burden borne by Queenslanders as the waters rose. Already anxious, people were confounded by the confusion that emanated from the highest office in the state, and that was contradicted by the Premier's own team. First, she assured people there was no need for concern and predicted the disaster would not be as bad as the floods of 2011. That left thousands of Queenslanders absolutely caught by surprise and on the back foot as the waters rose.

Then parents were caught out with the call on school closures. Were they really shut? Did they really need to scramble to find emergency child care? All this occurred as they were fighting the rising tide in their suburbs. The Premier has a 30-strong media team. One would think that would be enough to get the facts straight. However, it was not enough for the Premier to provide clear communication to the people of this state. The Premier's press conferences must all be examined by the Inspector-General Emergency Management in the review announced yesterday.

The very best of Queensland comes out during emergencies. In my own electorate, there were heartbreaking scenes as waters from local creeks crept up and then inevitably broke their banks. Hundreds of residents were affected, cut off by roads that went under the muddy torrents. One of the worst affected, as always, is the Austinville Causeway. Every time we have significant rain it goes under. This causeway went under 12 months ago and a car was swept away. Fortunately, its occupants were saved. It went under again. Mark my words, someone will die on that causeway.


I have tried; I have badgered, begged and even bellowed at the Main Roads minister to do something about it. I finally secured \$150,000 for a hydrology report into the road so planning could commence to raise the road and protect the lives of my community. I have been told—and I keep being told—it's a 'priority project'. I ask again for Minister Bailey to please fund the necessary raising of the Austinville Causeway before someone dies because this project is too far down the list. As his own Deputy Premier pointed out this morning, the return on mitigation is three to one. More importantly, it is a concrete—pun intended—investment in our community so that in times of disaster they remain connected with services, with help and with each other.

Mudgeeraba residents watched again as Beechmont Road was closed and Gold Coast Springbrook Road was shut, shaking their heads as they know the drill: it rains, the roads close and then for months afterwards they endure the endless repairs as the major thoroughfares are patched up once again. Let me run through the list of roads in my electorate that were closed or went under: Latimers Crossing Road, Advancetown/Gilston; Robina Parkway, Clear Island Waters/Robina;

Clagiraba Road, Clagiraba; Highfield Drive, Merrimac/Robina; Berrigans Road, Mudgeeraba; Gunsynd Drive, Mudgeeraba; Hardys Road, Mudgeeraba; Somerset Drive, Mudgeeraba; Nerang Murwillumbah Road, Numinbah Valley; Robina Town Centre Drive, Robina; Scottsdale Drive, Robina; Old Coach Road/Tallebudgera Connection Road, Reedy Creek/Tallebudgera Valley; Nerang Murwillumbah Road, Numinbah Valley; Boowagga Road, Merrimac; Bonogin Road, Bonogin; Nielsens Road, Carrara; and Brushbox Road, Lower Beechmont.

Sporting clubs like the Robina Raptors, the Redsox and the Hinterland netball team headquarters all bore the brunt of rising floodwaters, but the community rallied. By the Monday after the floods, the mops and buckets were out. Volunteers joined council workers to get the courts and grounds back in order. The LNP has three priorities when it comes to preparation for future flood events: communication, mitigation and betterment. It is vitally important that we do not continue to build infrastructure back in the same locations to the same standard and expect a different result.

When the LNP was last in government, improvement projects were an absolute priority. An \$80 million betterment fund was established, and this needs to be a permanent fixture. When the LNP was in government, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority was given more staff and empowered to provide a rapid response during emergencies. Local governments were designated as disaster coordinators in their local area. This demonstrates the LNP's continued commitment to ensuring those who know their local community the best are able to keep people safe during natural disasters. We urge the government to consider our approach so that we do not have a disastrous repeat of the last few weeks.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (2.20 pm): I rise to support the Premier's motion. Our community is one of many across South-East Queensland that have been hit hard by the recent weather event. As I have said publicly before, I grew up on the beautiful Kedron Brook and I know the local areas that regularly flood when it rains—this weather event was very different. Never before have I seen our suburban waterways flood with such force and damage. Nor have we seen suburban streets across the north side flood like they did, as a result of the rain bomb that parked itself over South-East Queensland and the water that could not escape. The flooding was not related to the river or creeks—just from the rain that was falling from above.

Many local residents, local businesses and sporting and community organisations were hit hard. There were those whose properties were impacted directly. Others at the height of the rain event were isolated. Major roads flooded where they have not before, including major roads like Stafford Road, Gympie Road, Webster Road, Rode Road and Hamilton Road. For many families, the immediate concern was for individual homes and for ensuring family members and kids could get home safely, avoid floodwaters and not be separated at shopping centres or other locations that were blocked off by the water.

The scenes of Westfield Shopping Centre at Chermside, Toombul Shopping Centre and the entrance of the Prince Charles Hospital flooding were shocking. Of course, we know that those impositions, temporary as they were, are nothing compared to those who were hurt directly and whose properties were damaged. It does not go anywhere near the pain felt by the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in these events—some 13 people. Our heart goes out to all of them.

That is why it was pleasing to see volunteers, friends and families in our community working closely together to stay safe during the event and support each other in recovery. I thank the local charities that provided food, care and support right across our community. That included direct support like foodbanks and donations. I recognise the local charities and community organisations who played an important role in the days and weeks afterwards by bringing people together. Reflecting on developments at home and abroad, many locals reinforced how important it was for our communities to come together.

Our sporting clubs were particularly hard hit—from those that had minor damage and leaks to facilities or sheds and equipment damage, to those that saw damage to water pumps or mowers, to those who suffered extraordinary damage to fields and clubhouses that were inundated. Again, many of these impacts were felt for the first time ever. I would like to thank all of the club volunteers and community members who worked hard together when the damage became clear. It was uplifting to work alongside them and to see that, as challenging and as damaging as the rain was, there was so much strength, generosity and commitment to each other in our community.


I want to recognise the work of those clubs that generously recognised their own damage but reflected that they were not the worst hit and were more concerned with others. Clubs like Brothers, Valleys, Gorillas, Grange Thistle, Kedron Lions, Brisbane Netball and Kedron Wavell Wolves all worked hard with volunteers to get clubs up and running, to get kids back on the pitch and to look after others.



Clubs to the south across Newmarket, Wilston and Windsor were particularly hard hit—Newmarket FC, Brisbane FC, Gold Coast cricket, commercial hockey and the women's sporting precinct at Downey Park with Brisbane softball, hockey and netball. I want to recognise the club leadership at all of those clubs. It was inspiring but not surprising to see such a brilliant response from the club members, supporters and community volunteers who rolled up their sleeves to get the work done.

I thank the sports minister and the government more broadly for their immediate response in offering grants for community clubs. I have been working closely with our clubs in those application processes. I thank the SES volunteers, QFES officers, our health workers, police and ambos—those directly responding to floods and those who had to do extra shifts, such as our health workers who stepped in when colleagues were cut off from the hospital. Staff had to go the extra mile to keep our hospitals operating. I thank the Energex staff who worked hard, including those at the Stafford depot. I thank the northside team, particularly those in hard-hit seats—the members for Aspley, Sandgate, Cooper and Nudgee—as well as our federal colleague Anika Wells and Brisbane candidate Madonna Jarrett, who work so hard in their local communities.

I thank the Premier and Deputy Premier for coming to Stafford to meet with people and see the damage firsthand. It meant a lot to our community. I again apologise to the Premier and, more importantly, Auslan interpreter Mikey for the unfortunate welcome that he received from birdlife in our area. I have had 20 years experience in law and government but on that day it was my previous training at Stafford City Lowes that made the difference! I will continue to work with local residents, businesses and communities. I finish by highlighting this example of community spirit: the Kedron Lions AFL club had damage but they recognised that they were not the worst off. They mobilised their volunteers to head to Sandgate AFL—their competitors—to clean up their pitches.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.25 pm): The Gympie floods were a catastrophe. That is the official designation from the Insurance Council. It was Gympie's second-worst flood in recorded history. In some parts it was the second flood this year. Some areas were still recovering from flooding caused by ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth in January. At 22.96 metres, this flood caused devastation everywhere. Most heartbreakingly, three people died. More than 80 per cent of a year's rainfall fell across a few days. It gouged roads, inundated houses and businesses, washed away livestock and assets, destroyed crops, contaminated grounds and building structures, and destroyed thousands of kilometres of fencing. Residents were evacuated as it cut roads and bridges, creating fuel and grocery shortages.

Depending on where they lived, some could not access the hospital, some doctors surgeries were closed as staff could not get there, isolated residents could not get to pharmacies, courts made special arrangements and schools were closed. One Mile State School and Two Mile State School were flooded. Students at Two Mile school can remain onsite; One Mile is significantly damaged. Students from One Mile have alternative learning arrangements, but this shifts the problem to another school and puts pressure on its staff and facilities. It is a temporary measure which is unsatisfactory for the school community and cannot be sustained. The government must fast-track investment in new buildings and flood-proof them. This school and its community—Principal Stuart Bell, the fine teaching staff and the students—deserve more than makeshift classrooms. Five years ago the school lost blocks and a shed from a fire. Demountables should be temporary, not the solution. It is not good enough. We need to do better. The government needs to construct new buildings above flood level.

Gympie was isolated to the north and south. The Cooloola Coast was an island, with its three communities cut off from each other. Much of the Mary Valley, Widgee, The Palms, Goomboorian, Southside, Curra and communities across all points of the compass were cut off and isolated. Bells Bridge, at the intersection of the Wide Bay and Bruce highways, was such a mess it remained closed for days after the Bruce Highway had reopened. There were cuts to power supplies, internet and phone links; power to many centres was cut because electricity distribution equipment, including transformers and switches, was under metres of water; and power cuts affected the water treatment works, resulting in calls to conserve water and fears of health risks. *Gympie Today* described it as 'the fundamentals of western civilisation began to fall apart, in areas including public health, water supplies, food logistics and transport systems'.

Gympie is not immune to floods, but you must go back 129 years—to 1893—to find a higher flood. That reached 25.45 metres and was followed two weeks later with a 21.08-metre flood. Gympie is resilient. Our residents, local organisations, volunteers and businesses always step up. Every worker, family member and business rose to the challenge. They deserve our thanks: the emergency services workers; the SES; the local disaster management group, chaired by Mayor Glen Hartwig; volunteers; service organisations; and those who donated their time and services to help before, during and after the floods. I thank the ADF for its help.

The devastation cannot be overemphasised. The Premier and several ministers have visited. It is a pity it took a catastrophic event for the Premier to have her first visit since 2015. The Leader of the Opposition has visited Gympie several times, including in January. He attended a LDMG briefing in January and again in March.

**Ms Pease:** She's a little bit busy.

**Mr PERRETT:** I take that interjection; she has never been there. In a previous role I was the LDMG chair during the 2011 and 2013 floods. I understand that the systems Gympie has in place to manage floods are second to none. This one stretched every system possible.

I showed the opposition leader and the member for Warrego the extent of the devastation firsthand. They spoke to business owners, workers and residents. They were briefed by the mayor. They saw the state of our roads and damage right across the region. I have written to the Premier reinforcing that Gympie needs specific and additional assistance to futureproof the region to repair infrastructure and help residents, businesses, primary producers, sporting groups and community organisations to recover. It cannot keep building infrastructure in the same location to the same standard and expect a different result. The government needs to be serious about betterment. Betterment projects should be a priority. Betterment funds should be permanent.



**Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.30 pm): The extreme weather and floods that hit South-East Queensland in late February is another one for our records. The amount of rain that fell in the space of a few days was monumental in terms of the volume and the terrifying speed with which it filled our creeks, rivers and gullies. It was scary and it was lethal. I extend my sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of those people who lost their lives during the flood event.

It has been heartwrenching to see the damage to people's homes and the piles of belongings and household goods on the footpaths. The task of rebuilding and replacing household items is going to be long and difficult, especially for those without insurance. There were 535 buildings in the Ipswich area which were flood impacted and sustained some sort of damage. More than 8,000 properties also lost power, some for up to a week, and I want to take this opportunity to thank all those electricians on the ground working day and night to restore that power. I am grateful for the generous spirit shown by the Ipswich community and, as mentioned in my adjournment speech last night, I again want to thank all of our emergency services—the police, ambulance officers and firefighters, the ADF and SES.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. I am sorry, member for Ipswich. I ask all members to come to order. There has been continual quarrelling across the chamber and I am having trouble hearing the member for Ipswich. I ask everybody to please keep it to themselves so we can listen to the member for Ipswich.

**Ms HOWARD:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker; I appreciate that. I also wish to acknowledge and thank the Ipswich City Council, Energex, department of communities and housing officers at the Ipswich community recovery hub and all of the selfless volunteers and community groups like Orange Sky Laundry who were up at the evacuation centre along with Lifeline and the Salvation Army. The Palaszczuk government's support packages for individuals suffering hardship from the floods will go a long way in helping them get back on their feet. I am pleased to see that small businesses are also getting the financial support they need. It is tragic for small business owners to see their livelihoods go under water. The clean-up, repair and rebuilding efforts cause them significant hardship and loss of income for quite some time, and all on the back of Omicron. Some small businesses affected by the floods were already struggling due to the Omicron wave, so our support is crucial in helping them get back on their feet.


After the 2011 floods the local chamber of commerce ran the Shop Ipswich campaign and I would encourage Ipswich people to adopt that thinking again. It is one of the best and easiest ways to help out our local businesses to recover. Further support is also being provided through the Palaszczuk government's and the federal government's \$559 million disaster assistance package for flood-affected Queensland businesses. Grants of up to \$50,000 are now available to small businesses to assist them in the massive clean-up and the repair effort. Small businesses can also apply for loans of up to \$100,000 to help with essential working capital for expenses as well as loans of up to \$250,000 to help with re-establishing normal operations. In a city like Ipswich, our small businesses are the lifeblood of our community. They contribute millions of dollars to our local economy and employ tens of thousands of people. It is essential that we get them up and running again so that they can continue to support our local economy, keep people employed and provide essential services that our city needs.

Ipswich's sporting and community clubs are also an incredibly important part of our community. A few of Ipswich's sporting clubs were flooded, including the Ipswich Knights Soccer Club and the Ipswich Basketball Association complex next door. The Ipswich & West Moreton BMX Club just near

where I live also sustained flood damage to its new track. A large portion of our community depends on sporting clubs for activity and recreation, so it is essential that our clubs get the support they need to clean up, repair and get back on track. The Palaszczuk government is driving that support with a joint state and federal package of \$20,000 grants to help clubs repair damaged infrastructure and fields and replace lost equipment. Our government is providing \$5,000 grants to sporting clubs in addition to help them with the immediate funding they need with their clean-up efforts, and there is quite a bit of that going on.

Helping Queenslanders recover is our top priority right now. The Palaszczuk government's raft of support packages, grants and loans are essential for those who have lost everything—their livelihoods, their household goods, even the roof over their heads. I know that there are many people in Ipswich right now whose homes are uninhabitable due to significant flood damage. These support packages will go a long way towards helping them and we know that finding alternative accommodation is extremely difficult at this moment.

I want to thank the Minister for Housing, Leeanne Enoch, who came out to our community recovery hub last week. I thought it was beautiful the way she just sat there and listened to the clients and to the staff on the ground who expressed to her in no uncertain terms how crucial the need for housing and support is. She made it very clear to us that she understands the issues and I thank her for her time and her consideration of those things. I want to acknowledge the exceptional Ipswich people. The qualities that you have make you stand out and they make me want to fight every day.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.35 pm): I rise to add my voice in support of this motion. Fortunately my part of the Gold Coast was spared, but I know I speak on behalf of the entire community I represent as I extend my sympathies to all of those who have lost so much and my thanks to our emergency services. Seeing the most populated part of our state go through this yet again is difficult to comprehend. In that week Brisbane recorded 790 millimetres of rain. For comparison, in a typical year London will only experience 690 millimetres. The loss of life that that deluge led to across the region is tragic and I offer my condolences to the families of all of those people and to the enormous number of people who have lost their homes and so many of their possessions.

As shadow environment minister I want to raise a couple of points on this catastrophe: firstly, waste and then some of the broader environmental issues. Floods create a lot of rubbish. In 2011 I helped with the clean-up in Ipswich, alongside my dad. We borrowed my uncle's Dingo digger and dump truck and headed into Basin Pocket. It was devastating. The Bremer River had gone over two-storey-high houses. We were filling up the truck scooping up people's entire lives to take to the tip at Swanbank. I remember waiting in line for hours to get rid of a single load.

A decade on, I now have a ute and I was back at it with the very hardworking member for Currumbin, helping collect rubbish from some of the flooded houses in Elanora. These floods will create even more debris overall than 2011. Brisbane's Lord Mayor, Adrian Schrinner, said last week that the clean-up will involve a year's worth of landfill which is already tens of thousands of cubic metres of waste.

I want to thank my opposite number, the Minister for the Environment, because on the Monday after that terrible weekend I contacted her directly about waste levy exemptions for affected councils after hearing from the member for Glass House about his constituents in Woodford who were being charged at some tips to throw out their flood damaged items from their ruined homes. The state government rightly gave an exemption for 12 affected local government areas so they will not be charged \$85 a tonne for flood related waste, which will make the clean-up easier.


In terms of the broader environmental impact, we will not know much of this for some time, but we are already seeing some extraordinary damage. On our rivers and creeks Maritime Safety Queensland has confirmed there has been over 1,100 tonnes of material cleaned up from the river's surface so far, with workers and volunteer groups pulling out pontoons, jetskis, yachts, trees and many other, sometimes unusual, objects, but clearly there will be much more below the water's surface.

Beaches from north to south have had debris wash ashore, with the people on K'gari, or Fraser Island, putting out a massive call to arms to help clean up the enormous amount of waste that has washed ashore there. There is also the problem of polystyrene, with huge pontoons made of this washing up along our 300 kilometres or so of beaches. Volunteers are spending countless hours trying to clean up these tiny beads. They have a huge impact on our marine life and I urge the state government and councils to look at ways they can support these clean-up efforts and any alternatives to polystyrene.

Healthy Land & Water has also said that there will be five to 10 times the amount of mud and silt washed into Moreton Bay from the Brisbane River than in the 2011 floods, which could mean up to 10 million tonnes of sediment in Moreton Bay alone. It has also stated that it believes that this is due to there being no large-scale riverbank revegetation projects in the decade since the last major flood events.

We will not know the full impacts for some time to come, but it is clear that the long-lasting environmental damage will be extensive. I implore the state government to ensure these impacts are recorded and measures are taken to prevent future impacts. We cannot prevent natural disasters, but we can do more to make sure our environment, our river systems and our infrastructure are as strong and as resilient as they can be to minimise the effects of future events.

Climate change does mean these disasters will happen more and more often and with greater severity. The latest IPCC report released as these floods were occurring said within this century we will see one-in-100-year flood events occurring several times a year. The state government is not even halfway towards its 2030 emissions reduction target, which is almost identical to the federal government's, and there are serious doubts about their pathway to net zero. We need practical action to help manage and minimise these disasters and to do our bit for Queensland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are lessons from this that must be learned: on disaster communications from the top down, on our planning laws, on mitigation work and on betterment projects.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.40 pm): I rise to support the motion. I too place on the record my sincere condolences, on behalf of myself and my community, to the family and friends who have lost their loved ones, to those who have lost their homes and to those who have lost their cherished belongings. Who would have thought that 10 years on we would be seeing a repeat of the 2011 floods. It was said earlier that this rain event broke a 130-year-record. It was like nothing I have ever seen before. I have lived in my home in Thornlands for 30 years and I can honestly say that I have never seen such a deluge in all my life. The rain was coming down from every direction. I know that it has had a huge effect. By and large the Redlands Coast and the bay were lucky.

**An opposition member:** How did Billy go?

**Ms RICHARDS:** Billy was okay. Houses are not being built behind his place so Billy was alright. We seem to cop it from every direction. I thank all of our community volunteers who pitched in and helped where there was damage in our areas and offered to help in other areas. In tough times we see our communities shine. We see that across Queensland when we experience these severe weather events.

I thank our SES led by Clare Barker. The Redland Bay SES is highly awarded in the state. They do an amazing job. They are our orange angels on the ground who make sure they are protecting our community in so many different ways. I also thank the Redland City Council crews. A particular shout-out to Pat and the boys who were lifting very heavy sandbags in really unpleasant conditions. They did a fantastic job.


I also thank our Coast Guard. I sat in on a session with them as they were planning their trip out to secure debris that was coming out of the mouth of the Logan River into our bay. They continued that work up into the Brisbane River. They are out in the bay cleaning up the debris that is floating out there at the moment. I thank both the Coast Guard and Volunteer Marine Rescue for all of their work, as well as Maritime Safety Queensland. I think in a really coordinated way they have done a fantastic job to make sure that we are keeping our waterways safe for boaties and trying to clean up what was a massive disaster.

Throughout the flood event there was a loss of power across our islands. I thank our Energex crews who worked tirelessly to restore it. They did a fantastic job mobilising quickly over the course of the weekend to restore power to homes. I am a proud member of the ETU and their Operation Energise again came to the fore. Keith 'Macca' MacKenzie did a great job in coordinating this effort. They have crews out at the moment across Gympie, Bundamba and Goodna helping people restore power to their homes, doing safety checks and supporting community groups and not-for-profits. They really do a fantastic job in helping Queenslanders in their time of need. Thank you to Macca for all of his work.

I thank our sporting groups. The member for Capalaba and myself went out to the Capalaba Warriors and helped them clean up. I do not think they had ever seen a flood event like this, nor had the Capalaba Greyhounds. We found a carp on the middle of the rugby field. There were incredible things left after the floods. I also went out to Crestline Equestrian Centre, Julieanne Broadbent's facility. They were extraordinarily badly hit. Many local businesses came down to support and help, whether with equipment, food or relocating the horses. A shout-out to my friends Elka, Anthony and Jason. On the Sunday we did a big sweep of all the paddocks to clear up a lot of debris.

I also thank Minister Enoch for establishing a community recovery centre. A shout-out to Carol and Jill who are working there. I got to meet them on Sunday and watch their briefing session. Red Cross, Lifeline, housing and community services are out there. Residents from Birkdale, which is in the northern end of the Redlands local government area, had their homes badly affected and were being helped out with the grant application processes. It was great to see.

I also had the opportunity to have a briefing from the QRA. I commend them on the great work that they did in the 2011 floods in building back better. I had the opportunity to meet with representatives from Cox Architecture, the firm that designed the ferry terminals on the Brisbane River. The design did exactly what it was meant to do with the pontoons swinging on a pivot. I know that QRA will continue to look at how we build back our communities better and stronger to be more resilient going forward. I think there is a lot of work our local governments, with the state government, need to do in terms of reviewing and assessing flood levels and what that means for local planning schemes. I look forward to seeing that good piece of work done so that we continue to build back better and be more resilient. As the member for Bonney said, we will continue to see this and we want to make sure we build back better.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.45 pm): In speaking to this motion, I acknowledge the tragedy and sorrow as a result of the repeat event of major flooding in Queensland. It is no surprise. It has happened before. It will happen again. On a personal level, my son and his family were caught up in the serious flooding in New South Wales. We are all affected by it in some way. I think it was Albert Einstein who said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Over on the government benches we have the most insane people that you could ever meet in terms of them making no attempt whatsoever to address the recurrent flooding events in Queensland. It will happen again. We do need to address the matter.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member, I will pull you up there. Part of your previous statements were unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr STEVENS:** I withdraw. In terms of history, the Labor Party is littered with mistakes in relation to water, dams and floods. This motion says that the House is very sorry that it has happened, but it will happen again. If we go back to 1974, I am reliably informed that Wolffdene Dam was going to be built before Wivenhoe Dam. Following the 1974 floods in Brisbane, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, the premier of the day, brought the building of Wivenhoe Dam forward to help Brisbane with flood mitigation and prevention for future rain events. They will come again. We will get heavy downpours.

I note the Premier used climate change as her excuse for not communicating better flood information to the people of Brisbane. The fact of the matter is there needs to be communication and mitigation efforts. I believe Wivenhoe Dam catchment was 175 per cent full. Wolffdene Dam would have saved those Logan areas if it had been built.

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There was much less flooding on the Albert River. The member is misleading the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** The Wolffdene Dam would have helped in terms of mitigation for the Logan River but the Goss Labor government and the chief of staff to Wayne Goss, Kevin Rudd, stopped it. It is all over the Labor Party's DNA because they listen to their mates the Greens. The Greens do not want a dam built in Queensland. Those opposite cannot win an election without Greens preferences. If the Greens say that they are not doing something then the lefties over there will not be doing it. That is why we do not have any dams.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I would ask all members to come to order. If it continues, I will start issuing warnings under the standing orders.

**Mr STEVENS:** They do not like it but it is a fact that they cannot win an election without Greens preferences. The Greens, with their loony-bin ideas, are against building dams in Queensland. If we had Big Bill Ludwig back here running the show in the Labor Party we would get something done, but now the lefties on the other side of the parliament—

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is a serious debate about those affected by the floods. This is not relevant to the debate that we are having.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order, member for Logan.


**Mr STEVENS:** The truth really hurts a lot of the members opposite. I mentioned Big Bill Ludwig, who was the AWU boss. Some members might take offence at those things as they are now in the minority in a leftie government. The fact of the matter is that we need—

**Mr TANTARI:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. Can the speaker be asked to come back to the actual debate?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, I ask you to ensure that your points refer back to the motion.

**Mr STEVENS:** Without a doubt, because this motion is all about the serious flooding that we have had in Queensland and how that needs to be addressed as it will happen again. We need it to be addressed in the future. We need communications upgraded so that when the big rains are coming we do not hear the excuse that it is climate change. We need to expand the capacity of the dams for mitigation purposes. Certainly we need better planning for future dams.

Unfortunately, the current government is all about excuses and apologies. They are not about doing anything to fix the problems from the flooding that we have experienced. People are blaming the government. Bligh's popularity went through the roof in 2011 with the mud army. Unfortunately, the current Premier has gone from 71 per cent to 51 per cent. That shows exactly what the public thinks about what this government is doing about flooding.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.51 pm): There are people who live in Ipswich, like myself, and other Queenslanders who live in areas that are vulnerable to flooding for whom the word 'flood' strikes fear within their hearts. I am sure it is the same for people in the north when they hear the word 'cyclone' and people in the south when they hear the word 'bushfire'. My first experience of a serious Ipswich flood was in 1974 when, as a 16-year-old, I had the surreal experience of walking through my parents' home at Woodend with floodwater up to my shoulders. The floods came back in 2011 but that time my parents' house was spared and it was spared again in 2022.

With the 2022 flood, the first warning I received was at 2.30 pm on Friday, 25 February from the Somerset Regional Council. I continued to receive SMS notifications from the Somerset council throughout the flood. I thank the council and, in particular, Mayor Graeme Lehmann. At 11.02 pm on Friday, 25 February, I received my first communication from the Ipswich City Council. Throughout the flood I continued to receive SMS notifications, emails and texts from the council. I would like to thank Mayor Teresa Harding, Councillor Kate Kunzelmann and the council staff. Our emergency services officers did a fantastic job during the flood. I particularly acknowledge officers of the Queensland Police Service, the State Emergency Service, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Rural Fire Service as well as our community groups such as the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Lifeline and St Vincent de Paul.

Tragically, the 2022 flood saw thirteen Queenslanders lose their lives. They include Merryl Dray, an officer with the Lowood State Emergency Service. A dedicated SES officer, over the past 4½ years Merryl had volunteered more than 520 hours of her time to the Lowood SES. My condolences go to the families and friends of the 13 people whose lives were lost during the flood. I was pleased to be able to visit Lowood as soon as the roads to the town opened after the flood to personally thank the Lowood SES officers and Andy Bickerton, the Somerset SES controller.


Another person I would like to thank is the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, who came to Ipswich during the flood to review the council's flood recovery program. Her visit was very much appreciated. I thank Mark Bailey, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who visited my electorate to see firsthand the full extent of the damage caused to our rail and road networks. I also thank Glenn Butcher, the Minister for Water, with whom I am working to ensure that a new high-level bridge is built across the Brisbane River at Mount Crosby so that suburbs such as Karana Downs and Mount Crosby are no longer isolated during flood times.

My Assistant Electorate Officer, Lynne Anderson, and I have been working hard to assist flood victims who require assistance. We are working closely with Pastor Fred Muys at the Tivoli Recovery Centre, which is located at the Tivoli Drive-In Theatre. A number of local businesses have made donations to the Tivoli Recovery Centre. I thank the Manildra Group, based at Rocklea, and particularly Accounts Manager Peter Wells. The Manildra Group donated a ute load of hand sanitiser. I also thank the Yamanto Country Markets, which donated a pallet load of oranges and biscuits.

Finally, I thank Department of Transport and Main Roads staff and contractors who worked hard to complete the repairs to the Brisbane Valley Highway at Fernvale, which allowed that important highway to reopen in record time. I thank the RoadTec workers who worked hard to reopen Colleges

Crossing bridge, once the flood waters went down. I also thank the railway workers who did the impossible and installed a temporary railway line to allow the Rosewood line to reopen after a landslide blocked one of the lines. Freight trains resumed today and commuter trains will resume tomorrow.

As Dorothea Mackellar said so well in her poem *My Country*, Australia is a land of drought and flooding rains. Floods are nothing new and we will have more floods in the future, but the period after each flood is an opportunity to review our preparations for the next flood. We can always do better. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.56 pm): ‘Krause, we dodged a bullet.’ On the morning of the peak that was how a local farmer described the flood to me, looking at it particularly from a farm perspective. In fact, his language was a little bit more colourful than that, but we must not use unparliamentary terms in the House. We will not follow in the footsteps of the member for Mermaid Beach in using unparliamentary language.

With crop losses and damage to fences and equipment, this flood was a bad flood but it could have been a lot worse for our farmers in the Scenic Rim electorate. I am sure like a lot of other members, on the night of Sunday, 27 February I was watching the Bureau of Meteorology website and saw all of those rain systems sitting off the coast. If those systems had come in and dumped a whole lot of rain into the headwaters of the Albert and Logan rivers and into the Teviot Creek and Warrill Creek catchments, things could have been a lot worse. All the way from Calvert in the west, near Rosewood, through Harrisville, around Boonah, in the Logan basin south of Beaudesert and over to Canungra and Tamborine, there was a lot of damage across the land. However, it could have been a lot worse if we had received all of that rain, which fell further south and we are seeing the results of that in northern New South Wales. If that had happened in the Scenic Rim, I think we would have seen a disaster worse than those of 2017 and 2013. Thank goodness, for the Scenic Rim electorate, that did not occur.

However, this was a terrible flood for many parts of South-East Queensland. In the Scenic Rim electorate, sadly, around Beaudesert, Tamborine and Cedar Grove people’s homes were inundated.


**Mr Boothman:** Flying Fox Creek.

**Mr KRAUSE:** As the member for Theodore reminds me, a bridge was washed away on Flying Fox Creek at the back of Illinbah, cutting off the population there. When that happened, the ingenuity and community support was great. Ironically, a flying fox was set up across Flying Fox Creek to get supplies into that community because the road was cut for quite a few days until the council was able to mobilise equipment to put in a temporary road access. I want to thank all members of the community for supporting each other through the event. In particular, I thank the SES, police and other emergency services workers at the council for their work during the event and after the event as well. That includes the rural firefighters who have taken it upon themselves to assist with the clean-up of houses, not only in our area but also further afield in South-East Queensland.

Soon there will be a convoy of motorhomes driven by rural fires from Queensland into northern New South Wales to assist people, many of whom have lost their homes. It shows the great community spirit of Australians who are supporting each other at this time.

No doubt there were some businesses affected by loss of stock and lost trade. The huge amount of damage to local roads, parks and other public assets will take a long time to repair. I thank the federal government for moving so quickly to activate so many categories of assistance—grants for individuals and also for public assets, community groups, sporting organisations, small businesses and primary producers. In the past it has not been so fast, but it is great to see that the federal government did activate that very quickly—obviously working closely together with the state authorities to get that done so that we can get repair money flowing as soon as possible.

There are some issues that need to be addressed ahead of another natural disaster. One is Boonah Beaudesert Road and the causeway at Coulson which cuts off Boonah from Beaudesert, basically cutting the Scenic Rim in two, after a very moderate rainfall event. That section of road needs to be raised. Unfortunately, despite it being requested for many years, it remains off the radar altogether for Transport and Main Roads. There was also a missed opportunity to raise the Rogers Flat section of Beaudesert-Nerang Road at Tabragalba when a \$12 million upgrade was carried out with federal and state government funding. That was a perfect opportunity to raise that road to avoid it going into flood, but that opportunity was missed by Main Roads. That is just poor planning which results in more flood damage and more people being cut off. I make special mention of Noel from Ace Computer World in Ipswich who was flooded again, even though he is still waiting for closure on the 2011 flooding.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.02 pm): At 3 pm on Friday, 25 February an emergency alert was issued throughout the Moreton Bay region for intense rainfall and flash flooding. By that stage, roads and bridges were already starting to be impacted, and residents could see that the event was

seemingly unrelenting. My community was already feeling the effects of the intense inundation of rainfall. The event saw close to two metres of rain fall at Mount Glorious, with 1,170 millimetres of that coming down in the first 48 hours. That rainfall from Mount Glorious was quickly transferred into Kobbie Creek and Laceys Creek to the north and into the North Pine River and dam and into the South Pine River catchment to the south. Mount Mee also had approximately 700 millimetres of rain that fell at this time. The low points through Dayboro and surrounds became a basin of sorts as the combined impact of riverine flooding mixed with flash flooding from the volume of water continuing to inundate our community through rainfall.

By the Saturday morning we awoke to scenes of flooding through Dayboro. Hundreds of families were cut off, including families at Laceys Creek that remained isolated for many days. Businesses and properties were submerged and there was no end in sight for this event as it hovered unrelentingly, continuing to dump masses of water from above. Long-term residents in Dayboro have credited the dam releases at North Pine for the ability for water to move downstream, vacating the town, which allowed much of their clean-up to happen in the early parts of the new week. Throughout Sunday our suburban community suffered road closures of a magnitude not seen in many years. Along the North Pine River we saw Youngs Crossing and AJ Wyllie Bridge at Lawnton closed by Saturday. The already inundated Gympie Road at the Bald Hills Flats that was restricted only to the high road saw that then submerged, and significant damage occurred as it went underwater. Still, weeks later, Brisbane City Council is working to reopen Mount Nebo Road on The Gap side which is closed due to significant land slips.

There was a moment in time when two consecutive systems hit our community on Sunday, 27 February which saw the impact intensify further. The South Pine River system saw flooding intensify through Highvale and through the Samford Valley, together with the submersion of businesses through Main Street in Samford Village. As these systems continued with their deluge, homes were submerged in low-lying areas of Strathpine and Bray Park. March greeted us before we really got to appreciate the breadth of the damage in many of these locations. I joined the mayor, deputy mayor and local councillor on 1 March to meet with locals. Amongst them were Margaret and Gary, who had lived in their Bray Park home for 43 years and had never seen it flood before.

Of course, there was an enormous and varied impact on the community of sporting clubs—the lifeblood of our community—in every corner of my electorate. The Samford Bowls Club, for instance, saw water rage not from the river beside it but down the hill, submerging its playing greens with such ferocity that it upended concrete benches and flooded its facility. Our small business minister, Minister Farmer, came with me on Wednesday to connect with small businesses as we worked through what package of support would be best suited and tailored to the needs of businesses. I thank 3D Logistics, the Long Yard Larder and also Little Tree Bake and Brewhouse for their time and input into the process as we rebuild.

I place on record the admiration and thanks of our community to our Queensland Fire and Emergency Services personnel, our Queensland Police Service, our SES, our phenomenal rural fire brigades and the remarkable volunteers who kept information up to date and community needs attended to. I particularly single out Alison Taylor and the team at the Dayboro District Community Management Team; our Moreton Bay Regional Council team, particularly Councillor Constance, Councillor Grimwade and Councillor Gillam, for their constant communication; the roads crew who built back our roads so quickly; and every person who got out there to help neighbours and friends when they were in need, demonstrating the beauty of the Queensland spirit and the strength, power and resilience of our community. I also put on record and pass along my condolences and those of my community to those who lost their lives and our sorrow for those who have lost their livelihoods and homes through this event. Finally, I thank our phenomenal Premier, a stoic and strong leader who provided the steady, calm direction that Queenslanders value. I support the motion wholeheartedly.



**Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.07 pm): First, I place on the record my sympathies and condolences to the families who lost loved ones in this weather event and the flooding it caused and to those who lost property and are suffering financially and in mental stress at this time. We hear you and we will do all we can to support and help. That brings me to the point that concerns me about all of this. That is, we need to communicate better and more clearly and we need to make sure that we are looking at various mitigation techniques and at what we might be able to do. Obviously, we should build back better. Betterment is something that should definitely be done.

On communication, I have a lot of schools in my electorate—26 to be exact. When the announcement was made that schools in the south-east corner needed to close, it was very confusing. First of all, the government is not sure whether or not Toowoomba is in the south-east corner—that



changes depending on the department—so the schools are uncertain as to whether or not they are. Therefore, the schools were uncertain as to whether or not they had to close. They were looking at various elements of social media to try to get that information, and that is not the best source. We can definitely do a better job of communication.

There were certainly some impacts on my community in Toowoomba North. East and West creeks travel through the CBD. Rowes, one of the furniture stores there, was flooded for the second time in just a few short weeks after the hailstorm of a few weeks earlier. My heart goes out to that business. We have done a lot of work since 2011 in flood mitigation. When we were in government we spent a lot of money widening the channel of West Creek and put a new bridge in place at Russell and Victoria streets. The places where East and West creeks cross James Street have been enlarged and widened. A lot of the mitigation that has been done means that our community was not as impacted as it was in 2011. We spent millions of dollars doing that in those short months and years after the 2011 floods. There is a little more work to be done. Stress testing through this event showed that there are opportunities for us to improve it more.

One area where betterment needs to be looked at quite seriously is the Warrego Highway. In 2011 we were completely cut off. We only had one range crossing and it was cut. Both range crossings had impacts this weather event but survived. The Warrego Highway was cut at Forest Hill Fernvale Road at Glenore Grove—Raymonts crossing is what it is called. What people need to understand is that the Warrego is the freight lifeblood of the whole of Western Queensland. If we cannot get through the Warrego we are going to lose food, we are going to lose fuel and we are going to lose the ability for businesses to look after their regular customer base when it comes to the necessities of life.

It is critical that we take a look at that crossing. It is a dangerous crossing. There have been some serious accidents there in the past. I think it is time for us to commit to a serious study looking at putting a flyover over the road and the creek so that when there is an event like this the Warrego Highway—the main artery west and the lifeblood of all those communities to the west, including Toowoomba—is preserved and fuel, food and other necessities of life can be moved through as well as general freight.

It would have the added benefit that those people high and dry on the hill could get down to Brisbane to help and provide support. That could be those in our emergency services—the SES, police and others. I thank them very much for standing out there and getting us through this event. The police were out in the rain stopping traffic because people could not get through this crossing. I ask the government to have a look at this crossing and build back better.



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the motion. It has been absolutely devastating to see the damage and destruction inflicted right across South-East Queensland. I, along with all members of this House, extend my condolences and deepest sympathies to the friends and family who lost loved ones as a result of this natural disaster. My heart also goes out to all Queenslanders who have lost their homes, property and personal possessions.

In my electorate of Waterford, it seems like only yesterday that we were battling the 2017 floods. It is heartbreaking to see us back in this situation so soon. But it is also incredibly heartwarming to see Logan's community spirit in full swing. My electorate office has become a hub for people coming and going, dropping off food and supplies for those in need—locals like Wally and Anne who donated trays of fruit and other supplies; Bren and Justine who donated fresh pillows and blankets; and the wonderful Louie Naumovski from the Logan House Fire Support Network. They have all demonstrated the enormous heart of Logan City. It is not just Logan. We know all Queenslanders have been looking out for one another and giving generously to those in need.

Disappointingly, we also know that fake charities and fundraisers often pop up in the wake of disasters and take advantage of this generosity. I take this opportunity to remind Queenslanders how important it is to do due diligence before donating money to charities and fundraisers. Any organisation that wishes to publicly fundraise must be registered with the Office of Fair Trading. The OFT keeps a list of registered charities on its website. The OFT makes regular contact with organisations to ensure that they are complying with Queensland's legislation.

I was surprised when I was informed that the Office of Fair Trading had made contact with the starter of a GoFundMe page who was looking to raise money but was not compliant with Queensland legislation. I was most surprised to learn that this person was the federal member for Dickson, Peter Dutton. I understand Mr Dutton has now fixed his GoFundMe page to comply with state law, but it begs the question as to why this was ever a problem to begin with. Peter Dutton is one of the most powerful

ministers in this country. If he chose to he could pick up the phone and ask Scott Morrison to make sure that his community had the funding they need to recover from the floods. Instead, he set up a GoFundMe page not in accordance with Queensland law.

It is not that there is not enough money to go around. Some \$5 billion is how much is currently sitting in the federal government's Emergency Response Fund, and barely a cent has been spent. What good is the Emergency Response Fund if it cannot be used to respond to emergencies? This money has garnered almost a billion dollars in interest and yet the federal LNP is withholding it from the people who need it most. Peter Dutton has the audacity to ask the community to fund the response.

Now, in my community of Waterford residents who have lost their homes are being told that they are not eligible for the same assistance that victims in New South Wales are eligible for. The fact that people in flood-affected Lismore are eligible for assistance payments whereas Queenslanders are not eligible for those same payments—thousands of dollars—is a slap in the face to Queenslanders who have lost everything and have had to, for over weeks now, stare at their entire possessions on the side of the road. People are coming by to look at everything they have owned completely trashed. Yet this Prime Minister thinks Queenslanders do not deserve the same as those in New South Wales. I am sure it had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that Lismore is held by the Nationals. The surrounding councils and shires in New South Wales did not get the funding and Queensland is certainly not getting the funding.

As the Deputy Premier made very clear in the House this morning, what have we heard from those opposite? Have those who represent seats and communities in Queensland that have been affected picked up the phone to urge their federal counterparts to make sure that Queenslanders who have suffered get the support they need? We have heard nothing. I have not heard one thing from a member of the opposition about standing up for Queenslanders who have been affected. Not one of them has asked their mates in Canberra—

**Mr Powell:** How do you know?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I would love to hear it. I take the interjection from the Manager of Opposition Business: how do I know? I can only go on public comments. There have been no comments made on social media. If they have picked up the phone, good on them. Let us know about it. So far I have not heard a thing.

We on this side of the House are committed to helping Queenslanders. We will not throw our constituents under the bus like the Prime Minister.



**Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.16 pm): I too rise to address the motion. In the decades that I have lived in the northern parts of the Moreton Bay Regional Council area and in the hinterland parts of the Sunshine Coast Council, I have not seen a disaster of this scope nor scale. It began with extraordinary rain that started on the Sunshine Coast on the Wednesday that we were all here in parliament. Over the course of the next four days in a lot of the electorate of Glass House more than a metre of rain fell. In Woodford we have reportedly had the largest flood on record—a foot higher than that of 2011.

All roads between Caboolture and the Sunshine Coast were cut off for days. Trust me, as the local member, I know a lot of the back roads. Even they were cut off. Every single road was cut—the Bruce Highway, Steve Irwin Way, Beerburrum Road, the D'Aguilar Highway. Places like my kids' soccer club went under four times in 10 days. There were landslides on key transport routes like Kilcoy Beerwah Road at Cedarton. We will see a lane closed there for many weeks if not months to come. It culminated nearly eight days later in a microburst that again struck Peachester, Beerwah and Landsborough. That is something that the same communities went through four years ago.

I thank all of the tireless volunteers and emergency crews—particularly in this instance the Energex crews who worked to restore power. I understand there were 37 line breaks in that one microburst. They had power back on in most places in 24 hours. I thank the volunteers—the SES, the rural fire brigades—Transport and Main Roads and their contractors.

I give a huge thank you to Kathleen, Geoff and Maureen from the Australian Red Cross for manning the Woodford evacuation centre. They looked after people like Carly and her family who sadly had their house destroyed; it is uninhabitable. My heart goes out to the Woodford Show Society, the Woodford Warriors Netball Club, the Stanley River Junior Rugby League Club who are having to clean up.

I saw the emotionally spent business owners who, after the last two years, have now had to bear the brunt of this disaster and what that has meant for their businesses. At the same time, I cheer on the Maleny and Montville chambers of commerce—presidents Shiralee Cooper and Spencer Shaw and

their administration support Nicole Hilton—for what they are calling ‘Hinterland Healing’. In the midst of all this, they have gathered together 12 midweek stays at accommodation venues throughout my electorate. I am sitting down with the members for Gympie and Nanango and we are going to go and deliver them to those businesses in Gympie, Kilkivan, Goomeri, Tansey and Boobyjan to help those businesses have a break after what they have experienced.

We need to do better and we can do better. My constituents were screaming out for better communication, especially around school closures. It is extraordinary that every time I put up a post with information it was sucked up by the people in my community. We need to get better at that.

We need to understand that recovery is not black and white. Let me give two examples. One is Beausangs Lane at Conondale. This is a gazetted road but it is an unformed road, which means council have not built it or maintained it; the landholders have. It has been washed out now to a point where the landholders simply cannot repair it. Because of the way the funding is structured, council cannot apply for funding, as I understand it, and therefore cannot repair it.


That means that families like the Hungerfords and the Sandersons—my good friends David and Louise Sanderson, who is a PE teacher, and their two kids—are now walking a kilometre from where they can park their car to where they access another car. I have taken this up with Brendan Moon and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. We are looking at ways that we can potentially help them, but that shows that recovery is not black and white. We need to come up with solutions where these kinds of problems are presented.

Equally, there are a number of microbusinesses that do not quite fit under a primary producer or a small producer. One example is Belvedere Farm at Cedarton. They do not quite meet that eligibility. It is a case of trying to work with them and the various recovery authorities that make those payments to see if we can assist them. We are talking about a lovely couple who after the first lot of rain spent \$5,000 repairing their access road only for it to wash out completely two days later. Surely we can find a way to extend a hand to help people such as those.

In the time remaining I plead with the government to sit down with Queensland shows. What our regions need at the moment is to know that they will have their shows coming up. In my case, Maleny, Woodford, Nambour and Caboolture all will be holding shows between now and June. The last thing we want to hear is that those shows have been cancelled. Please, can the government sit down with those organisations—

**Ms Leahy:** Take the health advice.

**Mr POWELL:**—take the health advice, give us something to look forward to and bring some smiles back to the faces of my communities.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.21 pm): I rise to support the Premier’s motion. It truly has been very difficult to grasp the immensity of the flood event that impacted the Pumicestone communities over the last couple of weeks. We had over a metre of rain at Caboolture, as the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services said. Beachmere copped 811 millimetres in just a handful of days. Bribie had over 900 millimetres, with 331 millimetres on Sunday, the 27th—being the highest daily total ever experienced.

We had over 200 local roads closed. Bribie Island Road was closed for the first time since 2011. Beachmere was entirely cut off for five days. Other hamlets like Toorbul and Donnybrook were cut off, and there was a catastrophic causeway failure at White Patch that led to an entire suburb being isolated. We lost our trains and the Bruce Highway was cut.

There was a real patchwork of impacts across our community. We saw the slow creep of dark, polluted water across Beachmere in areas like Christen Drive and Mynott Road. Other parts of Beachmere turned into a horrifying, raging, neck-deep torrent. I can barely believe that we suffered no fatalities. My heart goes out to every community in Queensland and New South Wales that did.

The riverine and creek flooding hit areas of Caboolture very hard. I want to reflect that in many cases the people who copped that flooding worst were those who had the least resources to recover. That is why the comments from Shane Stone, the Coordinator-General of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency, were so hurtful. These are not people who have chosen to live among the gum trees; they are people who have limited choices in housing. I call upon him to retract those comments.

Consistently people said that what they saw was the worst they had ever seen. The water came faster, it came heavier, it came higher, and the services were cut for longer. There was rapid flash flooding in suburban Bribie areas that have never seen that before. In Ford Street, Bongaree, localised

flooding is a matter that we are still dealing with right now. In contrast to all of that difficulty though, the community response was absolutely incredible. My greatest fear in giving this speech is that there will be somebody I forget momentarily to acknowledge.

Walking through the hardest hit areas, up to our ankles in mud, people who had seen a metre or more of contaminated water flow through their homes—sometimes dangerously, sometimes at night—always said the same thing—and I note that the member for Bundamba made this same comment—‘There are people worse off than us.’ Some of them were in dire financial need but they did not want to apply for grants because they felt that others were doing it tougher than them. I had to say, ‘No. In fact, you are as severely impacted as anybody I have met.’

As always we look for the helpers in times of crisis. I particularly want to acknowledge Karen Darlington, whom I met when she was running the Beachmere volunteer emergency centre. Karen did an extraordinary job. She was awake for days. Karen Harris and the team from BANG and so many other community organisations were at the heart of the response. I think about Greg and Paula and Michelle who were the heroes of Ford Street. They took in 82-year-old Beverley. They paid for pumps out of their own pockets to clear a huge reservoir of water that was inundating houses.

Then there was everybody who stepped up to support the frail aged-care residents at Palm Lake Care at Beachmere. We are so lucky that I am not standing here reporting on another Earle Haven. The aged-care facility at Beachmere was cut off for five days. They were running out of food and water. They had to call on community volunteers to support them. They had residents delivering aged care to residents. Through all of that they told me that the federal government agencies did not respond, did not support them. It is absolutely shameless and a failure of the support and respect our elders deserve. I am ashamed to be standing here raising this matter in this House.

Our rural fire brigades were amazing, as were our SES crews. QFES were hailed as heroes when they came to pump out water at Ford Street. VMR at Bribie delivered food and did medical evacuations. Many community members had not even finished their own clean-ups when they turned to helping people in northern New South Wales.

I want to remind my community to please take extra care of your mental health at this time. I can already see the cracks showing. It is not weakness to reach out for support in the wake of such extraordinary impacts. Queenslanders had the best emergency response in the nation and I am proud to be part of this government.

*(Time expired)*



**Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.26 pm): I firstly wish to extend my condolences to the families—all too many—who have suffered the great distress of losing loved ones due to the recent deluge. I know that there will be Coroner's reviews into a number of these matters, but the circumstances have to be looked at very honestly to find the best ways that we can keep people safe in the future. However, the distress that people are feeling is incredible.

I also wish to acknowledge the great work of our emergency service personnel—the volunteers, the professional operators and ordinary citizens from the SES through to QFES Fire and Rescue Service and police. So many people worked together tirelessly to do their best to keep people safe and to help in the recovery efforts.

We have also been addressing the issues around the need for the review that is to be done to take into account all factors, not just the terms of reference that have been flagged by the government but also the need to look at betterment and how we ensure that going forward there are greater mitigations, wherever possible, to lessen the impact upon people from events such as this.

I want to table a photo that I took on 28 February of Perrin Park, Brisbane, which is a proposed school site. It was well and truly under water.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting local flooding in electorate [\[302\]](#).


I find it extraordinary that, when the Deputy Premier talks about looking at planning schemes and avoiding building houses that will flood, the state government is clearly not taking their own advice and has a proposal to build a new school in an area that clearly goes under water. I took that photo because I could not get home. The Bruce Highway was cut. Like a number of us, we were on our way home and the Bruce Highway was cut at King John Creek, north of Caboolture.

That was a small price to pay: I was safe. My family was safe on the other side, but many people were not safe during the extraordinary floods that cut the Bruce Highway and many roads. That photo shows that, if the government is serious about building back better and not putting things onto flood plains, they would not be building what looks like a swimming school at Perrin Park. It is just nuts; it is

crazy. We do have to be very serious about how we treat our flood plains. I live in an area where a lot of my community is on a flood plain. It is complex and difficult. We see houses that do flood and others that potentially will flood in a major event. This is an issue that we also need to tackle because planning regulations now require a certain amount of fill before people can put houses there. Then there is a patchwork quilt where houses are built at different heights. Those that are on the lower level are left with the overland flow, so water does not get away and it can potentially pool on their property.

I flag these issues as all flood mitigation and some of the regulations have other implications. We need to ensure there is a smarter approach to planning so that mitigations improve the situation for all and do not create adverse impacts for those left behind. It is relevant with regard to that school site in Brisbane, because the state government probably thinks they are going to put a whole lot of fill in there, build on it and fill things up. That means in the future that water will potentially go elsewhere. It will be pushed elsewhere into other communities. Let's have flood mitigation that keeps communities safe but does not push the problem on to somebody else. We have to get serious about how we address the fact that we have people living on flood plains. There are others who will potentially seek to build on those flood plains, and the mitigations that are talked about have to keep people safe and not maybe cause an unintended consequence and push the problem elsewhere.

When the Nambour bypass was built years ago it failed in a section because they got the flood modelling wrong. When they initially built the Sunshine Motorway north of the river they got the flood modelling wrong and there were adverse impacts, flooding occurred and they had to go back—certainly to the Nambour bypass—and fix it. Flooding is a serious issue. It is going to get more complex. We have to be very careful. When you talk about putting major infrastructure into areas that already flood great attention must be taken.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier. In doing so, I too would like to acknowledge the lives that we have lost over the past few weeks, those first responders who stepped up and did their job and those community members who dropped everything to go and help their neighbours.

We have heard about the unprecedented weather event that precipitated these floods throughout South-East Queensland, the rain bomb. We have heard the figures, the inches of rain, and how it hovered over South-East Queensland. There have been many speakers on this motion and I do not think there is anything further I can add, but I am here so I will give it my best shot. We sat here in this chamber during the last sitting week as the Premier advised us of upcoming weather predictions. These were updated further daily in the morning press conferences. These are the kind of predictions and warnings that make the people of my electorate take notice.


For the information of members of the House, the electorate of Macalister largely sits between two rivers: the Logan and Albert. In my first speech in this House I made reference to my twin rivers community and how it really does define Beenleigh and surrounds. Prior to this year the most recent flood event was in 2017. Both the Logan and Albert rivers exceeded the major flood levels, and as a result not only did the banks break but the bridges were washed away. We watched on live television as houses were swept away. Eagleby, at the delta where the two rivers meet, was awash.

What we do know is that no two weather events are the same, and that means the flooding that follows will not always be predictable. For those who had 2017 still in their recent memory, it was their measuring stick. The original advice received was that neither the Logan nor the Albert would reach 2017 levels. Flash flooding would occur in the usual areas, and locals know these, but on Monday, the 28th, the advice changed and we were told that the Logan River would exceed the 2017 flood levels. It was most incongruent, as the skies were blue that Monday and the rain had stopped. I walked the streets of Beenleigh that day and observed the flooding already present in the area. The Beenleigh train station was offline and under water. I spoke to shop owners and I joined locals at the usual flood points: Alamein Street and Boundary Street. The thought that this would get higher was a prescient cause for concern among locals, but what resulted were varying experiences for the residents of Beenleigh.

If you lived on the Logan River side, the water rose higher than people had ever seen in living memory. The fact that the Waterford Bridge went under was unprecedented. As predicted, the usual pockets of Macalister were cut off and isolated. I am not talking about reaches of the river, but entire suburbs. The suburbs of Windaroo and Bannockburn were cut off for several days with no power. This equated to thousands of residents in suburban Logan with no access to power or internet. The main thoroughfares in Eagleby were cut. The closure of the Waterford Bridge meant that swathes of Logan had to navigate its way through the tiny streets of Beenleigh just to get to the M1.

As response turned to recovery, locals were left to assess the damage. In the vicinity of Manila and Kokoda streets we could not provide assistance to the residents until Thursday when the waters receded. The damage was astounding. I spoke to residents as they were cleaning out entire levels of their houses. Some were renters who were never even made aware of what the 2017 flood level was, let alone what something higher would mean for them. I joined the Minister for Public Works alongside our QBuild recovery team to inspect the damage to our public housing stock in Eagleby. We met some of our social housing tenants, including Shirley, Dot and Rebecca. You could see the care and pride they had in their homes, and the inspection teams worked swiftly to identify what needed to be fixed.

The hardest hit were our sporting clubs, which occupy the low-lying terrain along the riverbanks. The Beenleigh BMX Club, Logan Lightning soccer club and their Beenleigh grounds and our international standard BMX freestyle course were under water. The four golf clubs in Macalister are still trying to recover. My office will not only be helping these sports clubs but also the small businesses of Macalister to access flood recovery grants, and I thank the Premier for ensuring the availability of these grants as the clean-up began. It was another big weekend just gone in Macalister, with Volunteering Queensland and pro-active community clubs like the Eagleby Giants bringing residents together to coordinate the ongoing clean-up. As many other Logan MPs have done, I would like to acknowledge the work of Louie Noumauvski.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (3.37 pm): It has been a very difficult few weeks in my community, and I want to join this House in acknowledging this devastation with great sadness and extend our deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones, including a man who very sadly died at Stones Corner.

Like so many Queenslanders, people in my electorate were hit by massive rainfall, high tides, rising stormwater and floods that followed along the Brisbane River and Norman Creek. Like everywhere, throughout South Brisbane it was the most marginalised who were hit the hardest. Renters, pensioners, migrant families and people with disabilities, hit with power outages, flooding, no public transport and displacement, lost possessions and damaged homes. I spoke with a resident who uses a wheelchair who was stuck in their apartment when the lifts stopped working and an elderly couple who walked up and down a dozen flights of stairs with no lights. We spoke with people who had lost precious family photos. We did loads of laundry for a single mum who had all of her family's clothes destroyed by the flood. We helped an elderly migrant in East Brisbane haul his flooded fridge to the sidewalk. We spoke with people who had been displaced from their homes and were sleeping with neighbours and friends.

I was so grateful to help with the clean-up and see up close the immense resilience of the South Brisbane community. Organisations like West End Community House, West End Community Association, Kurilpa Futures, local P&Cs, the East Brisbane Bowls Club, Micah Projects and local small businesses as well as our emergency services stepped up to provide support, food, accommodation, a place to charge phones, help with the clean-up and a friendly face. I was also proud to be part of a huge team of volunteers who helped clean up from West End to East Brisbane, Woolloongabba and Kangaroo Point.

One clean-up stands out particularly to me. Residents from an apartment tower in Ferry Road, West End, asked for help cleaning up their basement as the Mud Army had bafflingly been called off. This section of West End has seen an incredible boom in large apartment blocks, many of which were approved after the 2011 floods. I met up with Greens volunteers and about a dozen residents from that apartment tower. The residents had spent the morning hauling out flooded possessions and the road was piled high with furniture and ruined goods. Going into the basement was an apocalyptic scene. Lights and fans in the basement were not working. The building was so poorly designed that all of the basement electrics had flooded and broken.

We entered the basement by walking down a pitch-black stairwell. On the bottom floor, there were a few floodlights plugged in. The air was thick and hazy, and it smelt like sewage and mud. The air quality was so bad that residents were carrying carbon dioxide monitors. We had about 20 or so young people—home owners, renters and volunteers—spending their weekend cleaning this basement, cleaning up the mess created by poor planning, property developers and multinational fossil fuel corporations.

This flood was a climate catastrophe—exactly in line with the predictions that experts have been making for decades. As sea levels rise, as the atmosphere heats up and as weather patterns become wildly variable, we will see more and more catastrophic floods on a less predictable basis. Yet the big mining companies who profit off coal and gas and the property developers who have made millions off our community, including developing on flood plains, walk away with massive profits, leaving ordinary people literally to clean up their mess.

Yesterday when the member for Maiwar asked the Premier if this catastrophe meant anything for Queensland's ambitions for more coal and gas, we got no answer. We got a reference to Queensland's renewable energy target, which does nothing to avoid catastrophic climate change because it does nothing to transition away from fossil fuels. We need a science based climate pollution cut of at least 75 per cent and an orderly phase-out of coal and gas by at least 2030, with support for workers and coal communities who have given us so much.

The Treasurer got up yesterday to talk about how expensive this crisis was for the state's bottom line, but the government would rather make everyday people pay with power outages, lost property, clean-up, lost days of work and trauma than stand up to the fossil fuel companies. Labor crow about their links to these industries constantly, but they never say the quiet bit out loud—that their plan is to make the community shoulder the burden of the chaos of climate change and let these companies keep profiting off the impacts on everyday Queenslanders. As we just saw, it is everyday people, particularly young people, who will live with this mess. I move the following amendment—

That a new paragraph 6. be added:


- '6. commits to protecting Queenslanders from even more deadly and dangerous floods and extreme weather by adopting a science based climate pollution cut of 75 per cent on 2005 levels and an orderly phase-out of coal and gas by 2030.'

I table this amendment, and I urge the House to take action on the causes of climate change.

*Tabled paper:* Amendment moved by the member for South Brisbane, Dr Amy MacMahon MP, to the motion moved by the Premier and Minister for the Olympics, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, titled 'Queensland Floods' [303].

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Resolved in the negative under special sessional orders.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier. In recent times I, like many members of this House, was stunned to see the relentless and unprecedented rainfall in the south-east corner. Many of our communities were devastated and are still recovering both mentally and physically, and still the cleaning up continues. In my brief tenure, I have learned that there are times as an MP when you do feel slightly helpless, and this was one of those times. I watched with incredible pride as my parliamentary colleagues in Brisbane and Ipswich went out into their communities in the filthiest weather imaginable, leading from the front because they understand, as our Prime Minister has never understood, that in times of crisis a leader must be present, visible and leading from the front.

Although Caloundra was the victim of road closures, property damage, flooding, disruption to schooling and so on, there was more to the story in my community. What did occur in my community was a horrific déjà vu for the residents of Landsborough and Beerwah. Four years after a microcell burst devastated this area in a narrow and highly concentrated corridor, it happened again. In the small hours of the morning, an incredibly violent storm front associated with the ongoing weather hit Beerwah and Landsborough. The hail was so intense that the residents did not hear gigantic fig and eucalypt trees crashing down in their own yards. It was not until the next morning when they ventured out that the full extent of the destruction was apparent.

When I went to visit the residents of Sidney Drive, there were walls of greenery two metres high and dozens of metres long out the front of each house, as the residents tried to cut up and drag the remains of the trees out into the front of their yards. Fortunately, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council was able to process most of the green waste and cart it away.

I spoke to Lisa and Darren, Pete and Kath, Rian and Will, all of whom emerged from their yards covered in mud, exhausted and, if I am honest, a little bewildered. Then there was Chrissy, whose roof was damaged from the hail and who needed a few sandbags to tarp it. Fortunately, I had 30 full sandbags in the tray of my Triton, and I was able to leave 10 with her.

From there I went to visit the Twinnies. For those of you unfamiliar with them, these amazing women operate Twinnies Pelican and Seabird Rescue in Landsborough. It was not that long ago that I was there with the Premier delivering them a very welcomed grant. The Twinnies facility was also flood-affected—cages damaged, inundation damage, trees down and all the usual cleaning up that has to occur after a storm of that type. However, these women never missed a beat in their usual routine. Not a single injured bird was left unattended. In fact, as weather events often do, this one took a toll on the local wildlife, so not only were the Twinnies and their mum, Helen, picking up the pieces after the storm but also their rescue services were being inundated with calls to come and pick up injured birds. Helen, Bridgette and Paula, you are incredible human beings.

I give a huge shout-out to our local SES in Caloundra as well. Working around the clock during the crisis, they also distributed sandbags at an astonishing rate. When I visited, Audrey, Dave and Marita were just coming back from a callout and Loreen put me to work filling sandbags at the distribution point. My assistant electorate officer and I put in a good three hours shovelling sand and suddenly I did not feel as helpless anymore. Our SES are quite simply amazing. Strangely, my assistant electorate officer resigned the next week; I hope the two incidents are not related!

Lastly, I mention the men and women of the North Coast Traffic Control Centre. Early in the morning I visited the centre—and what a workplace that is. These incredibly skilled people, in a large room that resembles nothing short of a NASA control room, were simultaneously monitoring the weather conditions, sections of road, road repairs, critical incidents and traffic cameras, and at one point one of them was guiding a courier carrying transplant organs through the best and quickest non-flooded roads. Talk about a high-pressure job!

As always in these times, I am reminded of the value of our Public Service and feel nothing but scorn for those who devalue our public sector. To all of our first responders I say a very heartfelt thanks. I support this motion in its entirety.



**Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.53 pm): There are so many to thank in our community who, as with our horrific fires just over two years ago, came to everyone's aid with our floods and shone in ways that often leave me speechless through their selflessness. For some, the water came suddenly while residents slept, including into my own home; for others there was time to lift furniture. Many were isolated for days on end, cut off from roads and bridges by in excess of a metre recorded in some of our beautiful countryside. Others were trapped on car and shed roofs and in terrifying rescues were thankfully saved. In some areas it took four days before visitors could be flood boated out to return home. Getting out is replaced with the stress of getting back in to view the damage. The speed at which this happened was shocking. Then there were subsequent rain events after the initial flooding.

As with everywhere else across South-East Queensland, there was heartbreaking loss—from family heirlooms to crops, including our famous Noosa Reds, to stock and cars. We can replace things but we cannot replace lives. Every moment of every day our teams were there, whether online or in person, as soon as they could access precincts—including myself when it was safe to travel the river via tinnie.

Our local disaster management group met morning and afternoon and did a phenomenal job in all realms. Constant updates to the community reassured, as well as assured, what was happening and when. This was vital not only during the emergency but also heading to recovery. How blessed we are in Noosa that we have these incredible teams. Even though there is no time to name people individually because there are so many, they all know who they are.

Yes, we have room for improvement. There was confusion relating to picking up children from schools and school closures. There was need for quicker flood support for our small businesses; provision of assistance to remove flood-affected household goods to landfill; and rapid access to resources to clean up the polystyrene, which was a disaster in our ocean and on our beaches from those pontoons, as well as contamination in our catchments. We also have those impacted by land and road slips who are not considered eligible under the emergency disaster payment. We learn more with each disaster, making us better prepared and even more resilient for future ones.

We now have much to do in Noosa, with severe road damage that will leave impacted residents very little access for months, even for waste removal. Assistance is needed from state and federal governments to our council as we are not equipped to handle this large-scale damage all at once, not to mention the roads impacted by the efforts to address the Traveston train derailment.


We extend our gratitude to all frontliners and first responders who not only saved lives but also assisted in hosing out mud-filled homes amongst the many hundreds of urgencies when the water went down. To our volunteer organisations, the SES, rural fires and everybody who again went above and beyond, making themselves available for any task, whether filling sandbags, lifting sodden furniture, directing traffic or ensuring all were fed: what would we do without you?

To Noosa council and the staff who often would go through the night without sleep, whether responding to calls or ensuring facilities were ready to act as refuges or evacuation centres: you all rocked. To Minister Ryan and his staff for contacting us to ensure we had everything needed: it was deeply appreciated. I mention residents who rescued others or worked tirelessly assisting their neighbours, friends as well as strangers. The incredible stories of bravery and generosity did not end with the offers of muscles, shovelling, food, beds or transport within our own community; they extended



to Gympie and anywhere that asked for assistance, especially for those who lost all. How beautiful you all are. The one thing we did learn is the need for a central portal for all offers to go to as it can be a full-time job in itself responding and connecting needs to those offers.

I mention our state disaster recovery teams, who set up as soon as possible. These pop-ups are invaluable, as wading through what assistance is available when you are exhausted and traumatised—and many are in shock—is essential to recovery. To all other electorates impacted: our thoughts are with you and will continue to be right through your own recoveries. To those who lost a loved one: our deepest, heartfelt sympathies to you and your families. Thank you again to everyone. How proud I am of my electorate, as well as all of Queensland, for who you are and what you do every day.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.58 pm): The devastation and destruction of the recent severe weather events have been felt all across Queensland. We are a state that is prone to natural disasters and we all share in our care and our compassion for our fellow Queenslanders no matter where those disasters occur. In the Bundaberg region we were largely spared the comparative destruction that has taken its toll on the communities south of Bundaberg. However, we did experience minor and moderate flooding, storm damage to properties and power outages, and our disaster response crews worked tirelessly across the summer. I would also like to give a special mention to our SES crews who, in responding to the most recent weather events, went south to support our neighbours, our friends and our greater Wide Bay family. They are truly an outstanding bunch of individuals.

The people in my electorate whom I represent are not strangers to flood disasters. That is why I cannot be silent on this motion. It cannot go without mentioning that it is the federal government that has failed Queensland in disaster recovery and disaster mitigation. They have failed to fund projects and have failed to distribute suitably the \$4.8 billion Emergency Response Fund. The Palaszczuk government applied for \$127 million from the fund in 2020, but priority project 1 and priority project 2 did not receive any funding. There was no funding for a \$14 million upgrade to the flood warning infrastructure network and no funding for the No. 1 priority project in the state, the Bundaberg East flood levee.


The Bundaberg East flood levee will protect over 600 properties. Those properties are businesses, family homes, primary schools and sporting clubs. Multiple independent engineering reports have consistently scored the levee as the most effective and most protective project against flood devastation in Bundaberg. Where we can stop flooding in Bundaberg, we should stop flooding in Bundaberg. Where we can build evacuation routes and evacuation centres for residents in Bundaberg, we should build those evacuation routes and those evacuation centres, regardless of whether they are in the north, the south, to the east or to the west of our great community.

There is only one elected official in the Bundaberg region who does not support the state's No. 1 project and that is the federal member for Hinkler, a cabinet minister. Every single councillor in the Bundaberg Regional Council supports the Bundaberg East flood levee regardless of the division they represent. The member for Burnett supports the levee—and I note that he was on radio only two weeks ago giving his support—yet he will not call out the federal member for Hinkler. I say to the member for Burnett: we have worked in together in the past; let's work together now to get this done.

The Nationals used to stand up for the regions and now all they do is stand down to the Liberals. Whether it is the federal government or a state opposition, they stand down to the Liberals. We can see what happened this week when their own federal candidate for Flynn was swapped out for a Liberal member on the Gold Coast. I cannot be silent on this matter because I have tried to meet with the member for Hinkler on multiple occasions. I have even tried to meet with him virtually, online, and have asked repeatedly to have this conversation. Now I need to reveal to this House that the member for Hinkler is working actively against the Bundaberg community.

Last year I met with Minister David Littleproud. He said to me that when the federal government was about to pass its budget, for which he was the responsible minister, he was about to sign off on the funding for the Bundaberg East flood levee. He said that the document was on the table and he was ready to sign it until he received a call from the member for Hinkler, Keith Pitt, who berated him on the phone and personally intervened to stop funding to the No. 1 priority project in Queensland. This was a cabinet minister calling up and bullying another cabinet minister to stop flood mitigation in Bundaberg. This is a disgrace. It is an absolute shame. I call upon the member for Hinkler to not wait for the election; resign now so the people of Bundaberg can have someone who stands up for them in the federal parliament regardless of the party.

The Bundaberg community need this priority project. I support this motion. I want to say thank you to all those members who supported their communities.


 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.03 pm): I rise to support the motion. In doing so, I acknowledge the lives lost. My thoughts are with the families of those individuals. I also acknowledge our emergency services crews right across the state, particularly in the south-east. Many pockets of the Coomera electorate, particularly the northern end, were impacted by these floods, as they were in 2017. In fact, they were impacted far more devastatingly in 2017 compared to today. The rural communities are the usual suspects. The canelands, of course, is a very low-lying area and quite a bit of that was impacted with roads being cut, which caused more pressure on other road services. The Cedar Creek area is also a usual suspect, being located along the beautiful Albert River. The Albert River is prone to flooding and that impacts major roads which are cut off, forcing traffic into other areas.

The big issue is the massive traffic jams that occur due to the floods. All of that traffic is funnelled into other areas. Sadly, most of that is often forced on to the M1 somehow or other. For instance, some are forced to travel further down the coast and then back on to the M1 to try to travel north. When there are accidents, as occurred during the peak of the floods, that makes things even worse. The classic one is exit 38. In 2017 exit 38 was flooded. The nearby Beenleigh Yatala Motor Inn was flooded and so too was the Yatala Pies shop. That was quite devastating for them; it took them out of business for quite some time. We saw that flooding again in this current flood.

In 2017 there was no business case in place for any work to be done at exit 38. In 2018 a business case was prepared and provided to the minister for him to consider. That was 2018, and one might wonder how much money is in place now to progress that given it is four years down the road. I can confirm for the House that there is not one dollar. That business case has been on the minister's desk since 2018 and there has not been one dollar for exit 38 upgrades in the last two budgets. I am hoping—fingers crossed—we will see something in the upcoming budget, because something has to be done at exit 38. Had work been done there, we would have seen some improvement in the traffic flows in and around that area. Of course, it would not have resolved the whole issue.

I wish to raise another issue that was impacted by the floods, and once again I am talking about another exit, exit 45. Members hear from me often about all of the exits, but exit 45 is seeing a bandaied solution put in place instead of a full-blown solution. Another major issue was the impact the floods had on the schools. Most of the students live on one side of the highway and have to travel to the other side of the highway to get to their school. The chair of the Ormeau Woods Parents and Citizens Association contacted me as well as the minister. I can confirm that nothing fruitful came from that contact with the minister. The P&C chair argues that we have to do something about exit 45 because things are bad at the best of times, but during times of flood things are absolutely impossible.

As a community, with our community groups and individuals pitching in and working together, at the end of the day we are resilient in the northern Gold Coast and we will bounce back from this flood event.

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (4.08 pm): With over a metre of rain in under a week in parts of our area it was incredible there was not even more destruction. Parts of the Aspley electorate received their annual rainfall average during this very short period. Aspley, Geebung and parts of Carseldine copped it particularly badly.

In relation to the area around Brickfield Road in Aspley, I heard stories from locals about swiftwater rescue crews going up the street like it was a canal. Of course, this area is very close to where, tragically, in December last year a woman lost her life when she was swept away from the Hungry Jack's car park along Little Cabbage Tree Creek.

Long-term residents of Nemira Street in Carseldine that have never flooded before had two feet of water through their lowset houses. Many other parts of the electorate—in fact, all suburbs in our electorate—have sustained damage in one way or another. There was the tragic incident of the Carseldine local being swept away in floodwaters in Fitzgibbon. I express my condolences to the family and friends of all those who have lost their lives during these terrible occurrences.


I thank the efforts of the police, SES and Fire and Emergency Services in preventing more deaths locally. Amidst this, there have been some incredible stories of locals in our community helping each other. Thanks to Aspley 10 Pin Bowl which provided some free vouchers to people who helped each other during the floods. Some of the stories we have heard from there include Michael and Alistair, who saw a call for help on a Facebook community group and went out to drive a lady and her daughter to a safe place when their house started flooding; and Jan and her daughter had flood damage to their own home but selflessly went to help their neighbours in the clean-up, spending hours pulling out damaged contents from their neighbours' houses the next day, piling it up on the sidewalk. There are countless other stories like that across our part of the north side.

Thanks to Carseldine Sushi Train for contacting my office to offer free meals to affected locals. I was very happy to deliver them to Brisbane North Rental Village in addition to some other emergency supplies earlier in the week after the flooding on the Sunday. A big thanks to local organisation Streetlight. Brisbane North Rental Village, also known as Aspley Acres, was heavily affected. Residents were thankful that Streetlight was there on the Sunday night to help them evacuate and to help provide for residents following the flooding. Thanks to Singh Sabha Gurudawara from the member for Sandgate's electorate who helped out with free meals for members of my community as well. The Aspley Hornets saw that the Sandgate Hawks were heavily affected and went and helped out.

Many of our local schools were affected, as were many of our early learning centres. It would probably be quicker to mention those that were not affected. It was very sad to see Goodstart Early Learning Aspley will have to close its doors for many months. With regard to Marchant Park kindy, it was heartbreaking to see the damage it sustained. When you visit the kindy, which I have done twice since the flooding, it is clear that its drainage situation may be able to be resolved in the future. Much of the flooding there quite clearly came from a stormwater pipe which points directly at the western side of the centre, so I will be strongly advocating for council to fix this issue once and for all for that centre going forward. I visited the Aspley East C&K kindy the day after the flooding. It looked like a river went through there. It was shocking to see the amount of water, but already on the Monday locals were very quickly on to removing the floors and drying out the place as much as they could with the help of a massive team of volunteers.

Now is not the time for finger-pointing, but it was clear from Sunday morning onwards that the demand for sandbags from council was outstripping supply. With only four locations across Brisbane from which to collect sandbags, there was a substantial queue for most of the weekend at the Zillmere depot. I absolutely praise the efforts of the council staff working without rest all weekend of the floods, but they clearly needed more support. When I went down there to check on operations on the Sunday morning, I ended up helping out the member for Lilley, Anika Wells, and the councillor for Deagon, Jared Cassidy, as being the only people there to actually direct traffic to the sandbag depot. It was heartbreaking to see the looks on people's faces when they had to make the decision of whether to go home and bail out the water as best they could or wait in the queue for two hours for sandbags. Of course there were many urgent issues to attend to across the north side and I am not criticising council officers themselves, but it clearly should not be down to the local opposition councillor, the opposition federal member and the neighbouring state MP—myself—to be sorting out access to the council depot.

I do commend council for standing up the Kedron-Wavell evacuation centre very quickly and well done to Kedron-Wavell itself for hosting it. When I visited the centre I was very impressed with the professionalism and care of the staff and community organisations. The state community hubs were stood up very quickly, and thanks to the Zillmere Community Centre for all of the work it will do going forward. Thanks to the road crews in our area who got out there and fixed a number of state roads very quickly. There were some big issues at Gympie Road at Bald Hills Flats. They were remarkably able to fix that within a few days, so thank you to all of those involved.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.13 pm): Nearly every suburb in Maiwar was hit hard by the floods. St Lucia, Fig Tree Pocket, Indooroopilly, Toowong, Taringa, Milton, Auchenflower and Rosalie all felt it. Essentially, everyone hit this time was affected in 2011. Whether locals experienced the previous floods or had moved into the area since, I do not think anyone was expecting a repeat of 2011 in such quick succession. The community coordination in getting the suburbs cleaned up has been quite extraordinary to watch and it was something my team and I have been really privileged to support. There were parts of the electorate that did not get help from the Mud Army and it was fortuitous that we had already chosen one of these areas for a clean-up on Sunday after the Lord Mayor announced mission accomplished. I know that the folks we helped that day still needed it, and I am sure there were countless others in that position.

Like many climate fuelled disasters, this one hit poorer people, pensioners, renters, international students and migrants harder than most. I have heard countless stories already from renters whose homes were trashed and many who were simply turfed out to fend for themselves in an increasingly hopeless rental market. It was disgraceful that once again the federal government excluded international students and migrant workers from its \$1,000 disaster payments. I heard of students sleeping in the UQ libraries, at the student centre and at the Toowong shopping centre, relying on free meals provided by the UQ Union, Meals on Wheels and other locals. The generally smaller state government grants have unfortunately proved difficult to access for some, especially given that many international students do not have a driver's licence and a Medicare card. I was really pleased to get

help from department of communities and housing staff out to the temporary student accommodation around the city to help a bit, but it has been perplexing that it has so far failed to send those staff to the UQ campus where so many students are going to seek help.

The Indooroopilly community was really rocked by the tragic death of a 34-year-old man on Witton Road in the early hours of 27 February. Waking up to that news will stay with me as one of the most harrowing moments of the 2022 floods and the point at which the seriousness of the looming disaster became clear. In the following days I spoke to Ramy, one of the residents on Witton Road who was there in the moments before the tragedy. It was only because of a brief pause in the torrential rain that he heard the young man's cries for help. Ramy called 000 while another young couple was desperately trying to call him back to their side of the overflowing creek, but he was not able to swim to safety and emergency services located his body soon after. Like so many other people in and around Maiwar, Ramy and his family are still cleaning up their house and I know they will get through that process eventually, but this experience will be with him forever and that man's family and friends will be without him in their lives forever.

This is the very real human cost of climate fuelled disasters, and it is a cost that will only grow over time if we do not do what the science and experts have been telling us for decades now. Just as the disaster unfolded, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its latest report on the effects of runaway climate change caused by burning coal, gas and other fossil fuels. The timing was devastating but significant and it confirmed that this is just the beginning.

Sea level rise of just half a metre along with more rain and wild weather means that floods like those we just endured could happen every single year. More people will die. More people will lose their homes. Whole cities and suburbs will disappear. Here and across the world billions of people will be displaced and many thousands will die. It is just so galling to hear the Premier make comments like she did just this morning—that is, to acknowledge that climate change is making disasters worse, all while the state government is doing nothing like what is necessary to avoid 1.5 or two degrees of warming.

The coal billionaires and their backers in Labor and the LNP have made this mess, but it is my constituents and thousands of the people that we represent who are out there quite literally cleaning up the mud and the mess and piecing their lives back together. Queensland Labor is, to quote a recent ABC article, 'in lock step' with the federal coalition on cutting greenhouse gas emissions, matching its 2030 and 2050 targets almost exactly. Of the states with an emissions reduction target, Queensland Labor's is the worst—just a 30 per cent cut by 2030, net zero by 2050. Instead, we need to cut pollution by 75 per cent by 2030 and completely phase out coal and gas with a transition plan that guarantees jobs and incomes for workers and communities. Without a plan like that, all the concern from both sides of this chamber will be so many crocodile tears. Burning coal makes floods more frequent, unpredictable and deadly and it is simply time to stop.



**Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (4.18 pm): I rise in the House this afternoon to support this motion. It is with heartfelt gratitude that we all acknowledge the sacrifice and the hard work that we have recently seen from our fellow Queenslanders as they once again have risen to the challenge of a natural disaster. This has been a harrowing time for so many families, as we have already heard from many speakers, and I join with my colleagues in extending my condolences to the loved ones of those who have lost their lives as well as those we have heard about today who have lost their homes and their livelihoods.


We have talked a lot about the good performance of our water infrastructure. I want to take the opportunity this afternoon to tell the House about the magnificent team of people behind the flood response. Seqwater's flood operation centre mobilised at 7 am on Wednesday, 23 February to prepare for the potential of an extreme weather event here in South-East Queensland. Over the coming days we saw the forecast change as a very unpredictable event unfolded right in front of us. No matter what happened, our flood engineers were stood up and were ready for whatever eventuated.

It was on the Friday of that week that the flood engineers got to work doing what they do best, with a flood event commencing at Somerset Dam around midday. As conditions worsened on the Friday, the drinking supply in Wivenhoe Dam filled up and Seqwater started utilising the extensive flood storage space. When we say Wivenhoe did its job, we know that Wivenhoe cannot do its job without a team of expert, round-the-clock flood engineers. This was an unpredictable event and these dedicated professionals managed our dams in real time, responding to real conditions to hold back, as we have heard, four Sydney Harbour's worth of water from hitting Brisbane. The work that they did did not stop when the rain stopped. They stayed on the job 24/7 to ensure that water was released in a steady

controlled way so that the natural flood peaks of the river were not exacerbated downstream. They did this until Wednesday, 9 March, to make sure that our flood storage capacity was once again ready to go at a moment's notice because this very event showed us how things can change so quickly.

I was lucky enough to be briefed at the flood operations centre and speak with some of our flood engineers. I am so grateful to them for the work that they do, which is often unrecognised or misunderstood. Their expertise kept us safe during this event. I was also honoured to meet some of our other unsung heroes on that day. The crews at Mount Crosby water treatment plant stayed on site in terrible conditions battling mother nature and the extensive flood debris in the water to make sure that South-East Queenslanders had clean, safe drinking water during this time. It was not just at Mount Crosby, the crew at North Pine Water Treatment Plant and the Tugun desalination plant battled the same wild weather around the clock in a vital contribution to not only keep our drinking water flowing but also provide water for people to clean up their properties.

We also had countless Seqwater crews at dams and reservoirs right around the state ensuring that they were operating safely and were reporting back to the flood operations centre, which we know they did so well. I am extremely proud of the work that all of our frontline workers did and I am looking forward to getting out in the next couple of weeks and thanking them personally for their work and their efforts over the last couple of weeks. There are many unsung heroes of the floods and I only have time today to talk about a few of them. To all of the Queenslanders who pulled together during this event and looked after each other during these trying times, our first responders and those behind the scenes, I sincerely thank you. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (4.23 pm): At the outset I want to express my condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of those persons who lost their lives in this event. That extends to the family and friends of Lowood SES volunteer Merryll Dray who tragically lost her life in the line of duty. I also, as shadow minister for emergency services, want to acknowledge the work of all of our emergency services personnel who worked tirelessly throughout this event to keep our communities safe. I know, as a former area director of EMQ, just how many hours those personnel would have been putting in throughout this event, under enormous pressure and stress.

Whilst flooding events may be a regular occurrence in the north of the state, they are not so regular in the south-east. With that comes risk. As in any disaster event, it is only right that there should be a full and transparent inquiry into the event and that needs to include everything. Nothing should be left off the table when examining the response to this event, including the role and actions of the government and its associated agencies. Of course this inquiry should examine mitigation and betterment because that is how we reduce the risk to our communities. If we do not learn from this event, if we do not act on the recommendations and if we do not take heed of the feedback from our community then unfortunately we will be repeating the same mistakes, because there is nothing to say that this event could not happen again next month or next year.


The minister stated earlier today that this was the biggest wet weather event in 130 years. However, we should not become complacent and think that it will not happen again in our lifetime. The minister has talked at length about the role of the SES. If he was fair dinkum he would release the review into the SES which was handed to the minister in July 2020. That review was commissioned for a reason and Queenslanders deserve to know what is contained within that report.

If there is one golden rule when responding to disaster events it is communication. Communication, or messaging, needs to be accurate, it needs to be timely and it needs to be managed in a way that the community can understand. The government, and indeed the personnel responsible for managing the disaster response, have an enormous responsibility. They are literally responsible for people's lives. In times of disaster, the information being disseminated through our disaster coordination centres is crucial. In very simple terms, it can be the difference between life and death.

When your property is being flooded, when you have no power, when your life and that of your family's is at risk, people turn to our disaster responders for advice, assistance and reassurance that if they are calling for help then help will be on its way. They rely on that advice when it comes to evacuations, when it comes to warnings about what to prepare for, and it is imperative that we get that right. Too often we are blaming agencies such as the Bureau of Meteorology. Too often I have seen, in reports and debriefs after disaster events, blame being apportioned. We are failing to heed the lessons learned.

If there were mistakes made during this event, and clearly there were mistakes, then we need to learn from those mistakes and ensure the appropriate actions are put in place to mitigate the effects of future flood events in this community. I certainly hope the Premier immediately tables the report by the

Inspector General of Emergency Management with a commitment to implement the recommendations contained therein. It is the least we can do for our community and it would go a long way to ensuring we are better prepared for future disaster events. Right now there are people out there who lost their properties in the flood who had no insurance, who could not afford to pay an insurance premium, and one has to ask what happens to those people, to their families. I certainly hope that as Queenslanders we are offering the hand of help and assistance to ensure that those people can once again get a roof over their heads.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.28 pm): I would like to start by putting on record my condolences to the family and friends of Peter Thomas who was the gentleman who died in Stones Corner. It is a place in my electorate where many people live, work and play, where they walk their dog and watch the footy. It is sad when it becomes a place of tragedy for families. I would also like to put on record my condolences to the family and friends of Merryl Dray, someone who was serving the community very selflessly and I put on record my condolences for all the other people who have perished in these floods.

My electorate was not significantly affected. Gladstone Street, Jellicoe Street, Adina Street and Milsom Street flood regularly. They flooded in 2011, 2015, 2017 and now this year as well. As other people have spoken about, the flooding was worse in some areas and not as bad in other areas, but I do not think people care about comparisons when they have water washing through their house, robbing them of their memories and possessions.

In the area of Stones Corner many businesses were directly impacted. The iconic Doll and Teddy Hospital went under but I was very pleased to see that it was very quickly back up and operational. We put out a call to the community and the community showed up to help that small business get back on its feet. It has been there for a long time and it will be there for a long time to come. The speed with which people responded to that call for help is really a testament to the people of Queensland. People do not sit around waiting to be shuffled around the place and told how to help; they just find ways to help each other. It was great to see how many people contacted my electorate office. The majority of people in my electorate were not affected directly but they wanted to play some role in assisting people in other communities. People do not see our electorate boundaries. They do not see Yeronga or Bulimba and think of different electorates. They just see people who are doing it tough on the south side of Brisbane and they want to help out.

I mentioned Adina Street and Milsom Street. I genuinely believe that there are things that council could do to stop houses in those streets from flooding over and over again. As I have said, they have flooded multiple times over the past 10 years that I am aware of. I think there are fixes that could be put in place. The flooding that happens on Gladstone Street and around the back of Stones Corner is really difficult to stop, but the flooding on Adina Street and Milsom Street, in particular, could be rectified. On Gladstone and Jellicoe streets the houses have been there for a long time. The people who live there are well used to flooding and the houses are designed around it. However, there is an argument, in those areas and in other areas that I have seen around Brisbane, for us to really think through some sort of a buyback scheme because there are houses that we will never be able to protect from flooding. I found myself and my good friend Matthew Campbell with a few hours to spare on a Friday afternoon so we rang Minister Bailey and asked if he needed a hand. He directed us to Rocklea. I have to say that things were pretty shocking over there. Some people will choose to continue to live in those areas, but if there were a buyback scheme others might choose to get out.

It is really telling in my electorate because, with some of the houses that flood repeatedly, people may go through one or two floods but then they will sell the property. I have been back to those houses four or five times and every time I do there is a new resident who has been told by a real estate agent, 'This doesn't flood. There are no problems here. It's on a flood map, mate, but don't worry about it. It won't flood. It's one in 100 years.' I can understand why the owners want to offload the property, but we have to give them another option.

I acknowledge Terri Butler and the work that she does in our local community. She rolled up her sleeves and worked right across the electorate of Griffith.

I do not have time to respond to the nonsense from the Greens. Their amendment was about a Facebook post. The reality is that the Palaszczuk Labor government acknowledges that climate change is real and we are taking real action on it. Just today there was the announcement around electric vehicles. That is what a real government does. That is how you really tackle climate change—not through nonsense around Facebook, as they are trying to do.



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.33 pm): There was over 700 millilitres of rain in three days, over \$2.5 billion worth of damage and tragically 13 lives lost. One of those lives lost was a member of our Currumbin community. I take this moment to again extend my deepest sympathies to the family and friends of the Currumbin Valley resident who lost his life in the floodwaters on 27 February 2022. He lost his life alongside his dog. It is a very sad loss for our community. I pay tribute to the members of the Surf Life Saving Queensland Point Danger Branch who attended the tragedy and worked with police and swiftwater rescue to bring his body and the body of his dog home.

In Currumbin, residents in the Tallebudgera Valley, Currumbin Valley and Elanora experienced devastating localised flooding the likes of which we have not seen before. Homes in Elanora, particularly in the streets around Avocado Street and Nineteenth Avenue, were completely inundated. Locals had to be evacuated from their homes, the valleys were cut off by landslides and flooding, and sporting clubs and fields were ruined.

However, during that extraordinary time of emergency we saw the true spirit of Queenslanders. In Currumbin, our local Mud Army mobilised to help those whose homes had been inundated in Elanora and the community organisations that went under, such as the Tallebudgera Pony Club and the Tallebudgera Valley Football Club. I thank the member for Bonney, the shadow minister for the environment, for selflessly dropping everything to help me and the Currumbin community to clean up. Together we went door to door, loading up his ute and my trailer with flood-damaged carpet and furniture to help those most affected by the floods.

Once we got our locals back on their feet, we turned our attention to our New South Wales neighbours. While the damage in the Currumbin electorate was localised to particular parts of suburbs, we know that the damage in Northern New South Wales was catastrophic. I give a shout-out, in particular, to the Coolangatta branch of the Queensland Country Women's Association, the Coolangatta Surf Life Saving Club, Cornerstone Stores in Currumbin, the Currumbin RSL, a number of our local schools including Elanora State School and the Currumbin Community Special School, Southern Cross University, the Community Bank Tugun and Palm Beach Currumbin Junior AFL club. Those organisations and the people within them dropped everything to help those who needed it most, rallying volunteers and organising collection points. I am so proud of the efforts of our beautiful community—efforts that are ongoing as I speak.

Now that the clean-up and help are underway, it is time to look at preparation for future floods. I have been contacted by several constituents who are extremely concerned that the ongoing M1 roadworks may have contributed to the flooding of their roads and homes in and around Elanora. One local wrote to me saying—

We believe the Flood Mitigation Channel was being used to store gravel and rocks from the construction on the M1 and this in turn caused it to block.

Another resident summarised their concerns as follows—

All the area from Guineas Creek Road to the 19th Avenue shops was flooded. We have lived here for 24 years and it has never looked like this, so something has caused this to happen. The M1 has been raised higher than surrounding houses on the western side of it—could that have had something to do with it? Or was there a blockage in the creek around Schuster Park?

I have raised these concerns with the government directly. I was disappointed in the response that I received from the minister as the terms of reference for the flood review, which was announced yesterday, are narrow and do not address the causation concerns of my community. This is not the transparent review that my constituents are calling for.

The review should also look at the government's disaster messaging. In a time of emergency, Queenslanders need clear and timely messages. Instead, what we heard from the Premier was mixed messaging about the closure of schools across the south-east corner and we had chaos as parents and teachers tried to interpret and act on the chaotic messaging. The blanket closure of all schools was not good leadership or good governance. We deserve a government that will listen to Queenslanders and properly, extensively and transparently review how the Queensland government prepared for and responded to the 2022 floods.

Currumbin constituents deserve to be informed of any contributing factors to the flooding of their homes, the flooding of their businesses and the destruction of their roads and infrastructure. Locals deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing that everything possible will be done to prepare for future flooding events. That can only happen if our community is comprehensively included in the state government's review of the 2022 flood disaster. I am calling on the state government to ensure that the M1 roadworks are included in the review so that my community can get the answers they deserve.



**Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (4.38 pm): I rise to support the Premier's motion. Firstly I would like to acknowledge everyone who has been impacted by the recent floods and those who have rolled up their sleeves to help with the recovery. Like many communities across Queensland, parts of the Gold Coast have been impacted by floods, including through the tragic loss of life. During times of crisis, we certainly rally together to help families, businesses and communities get back on their feet. That is what Queenslanders do and, over the years, they have had to do it more than most.

This fortnight has been a terrifying reminder of what climate change is already doing. Brisbane experienced the largest three-day rainfall record in history. As the Premier spoke about last week, it is here, it is on us and we need to act. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has recently reiterated to the world that human induced climate change, including more frequent, intense and extreme events, has already caused widespread adverse impacts. On Monday, former QFES commissioner Lee Johnson said—

... the disasters of today are not like the disasters of the past. Over my decades of service I experienced floods and bushfires that were more frequent and intense, and cyclones that were more damaging.

As Queensland's environment minister, I take my responsibility to reduce emissions extremely seriously—and I know that every member of the Palaszczuk government does as well. Whether it is through setting targets for renewable energy or emissions reduction or through actions like the \$55 million investment in electric vehicles announced this morning, we are working every single day to address the threat of climate change. Recently we have seen the federal government finally acknowledge that climate change is a reality but, like in so many other critical areas, its members are all talk and no action. When asked about responding to climate change on Monday, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said—

Responding to climate change is not just about reducing emissions ... [it is] about boosting your resilience and your adaptation ...

I agree. It is both of those. That is why, alongside our actions to reduce emissions, the Palaszczuk government has worked with councils to deliver climate risk management strategies, climate resilient alliances and QCoast 2100 to safeguard coastal towns. Meanwhile, not only has the federal government railed against actions to reduce emissions, like vetoing funding for renewable energy projects; it has also failed on adaptation and resilience. Nine years ago the Productivity Commissioner wrote a lengthy report on what the federal government should be doing to adapt to climate change. How many of those recommendations were implemented? The answer is none. They have had an enormous bucket of money that they could have used for adaptation but, of the 20 applications Queensland made for the \$4.8 billion supposed disaster recovery fund, only three have been accepted. They have had almost a decade to deliver, and what do they have to show for it? Floods, fires, cyclones.

The alarms have been ringing for many years but Scott Morrison is clearly tone-deaf. The past fortnight has told two stories: one story of Queensland resilience, of people banding together to help one another, of frontline workers responding to immediate and devastating floods; and the other story of the federal government—inept, unequipped and unprepared yet again to deal with natural disasters, that waited 10 days to declare an emergency just so Scott Morrison could be there to announce it, that has a natural disaster fund that has accrued more money in interest than it has spent, and that has set one rule for disaster assistance in its own marginal seats in New South Wales and another rule for the thousands of Queenslanders affected.

Last week I was with Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate at the start of the construction of the Gold Coast Disaster Management Coordination Centre, a critical project to ensure we are equipped for future climate disasters. The Palaszczuk government has proudly contributed \$10 million to this project but, unfortunately, again, the federal government will not contribute a single dollar. The mayor of the Gold Coast City council said, 'I hope the government gets the message. The people of the Gold Coast don't want to be taken for granted. We've got five federal seats here, all blue, and you can't give us a few dollars of disaster management money to save lives and property.'

We see the same at a state level, though, from those opposite. Time and time again, Gold Coast MPs in this House, the dominant political force in Queensland's second-largest city, fail to stand up and secure our fair share from their friends in Canberra. There is nothing from the members for Currumbin or Coomera, whose communities were impacted, yet their constituents will be worse off than those across the border. We have all talked about the devastating impact of these floods on people, but we in this House are privileged to be legislators—to have the real power to make change, whether that is on climate change, on resilience or on standing up for our communities when things get tough. That is what we are doing. I commend the motion to the House.





**Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (4.43 pm): I, too, would like to give my sincere condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives, especially the Dray family and the Lowood SES. As a former member of the SES in Logan for many years, I know that those individuals give so much and ask for so little. They certainly are heroes. I commend them for the wonderful work they do and the hours they volunteer.

While the electorate of Theodore escaped major inundation, for a very brief period the Coomera River made it to moderate flood level. Many residents participated in any way they could to help out victims in other areas. My local rural fire brigades actively went out into flood-affected areas and gave up their time—and were very proud to do so. I acknowledge their efforts. My local businesses acted as collection points and handed on much needed goods to those areas affected by floods. I give a shout-out to one of my local cafes, Cafe Tahbella, for its efforts and to the chaplain from Helensvale State School, Ben Findley. Ben did some runs to New South Wales to take down much needed goods to help out flood-affected individuals around Murwillumbah. Paragraph 5 of the motion states—

5. commits to working with all Queenslanders and affected communities to ensure that Queensland recovers from these natural disasters and rebuilds better than ever.

In 2017, the connection road to the infamous John Muntz Bridge washed away. Main Roads quite quickly restored the connection road so that traffic could use that very important arterial link. How important is that arterial link? As reported in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* recently, some 15,000 cars use it daily. It is the main thoroughfare for Upper Coomera, Oxenford and all the way up to Mount Tamborine. That road is the lifeblood of Mount Tamborine. Every time that road is knocked out of action, it causes absolute chaos for motorists in that area. Let us be clear: the road is so important that the last time it was knocked out of action it took people 40 minutes to take their children from Maudsland to Highland Reserve State School. Normally that trip would take around five minutes. It shows that that road is so crucial to that area.

I will table some images of the riverbank. In 2017 they did the original works to fix the connection road. They did some additional works for the abutment but no works to the riverbank. I table the image of the original works.

Fast-forward to February 2020. We had another flood event which resulted in the erosion of many more metres of riverbank. I table an image along with an image of the 2022 flood event. That shows a bit more clearly how much land was washed away.

Fast-forward to 2021. We had another flood event. It scoured even more land from the riverbank upstream of the John Muntz Bridge. I table that image.

We come to March this year. As I said, the floodwaters rose to a moderate level for a very short period of time. It tended to stay a minor flood, yet the amount of land again scoured away from that riverbank was phenomenal. We lost around 12 metres in just this flood alone. I will table that picture along with a picture showing fences actually going into the river.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of photographs depicting flooding [304].

(Time expired)



**Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.49 pm): We have heard so much in the House. I want to paint a picture for the House about what it is like for those who experienced the flooding in Logan both in 2017 and this year. Walking and cutting across a paddock that I have never crossed before as the street that I would normally drive up was underwater, with the water going halfway up the street signs, I saw bemused horses looking at me.

I went up the street to a home that I knew had flooded in 2017. Already, I could see through the carport the brown water of Norris Creek and the Logan River beginning to lap at the back door of this home. The police minister knows this house well. It is one of the homes he helped out with in 2017. I yelled out to the couple living in the house. The lady came out and she saw and recognised me from 2017. I came up to the carport and I could see the water behind her lapping at the back door of her house. It was already 20 metres up from the Logan River. As she moved up the driveway, in her typical laconic style, she said to me, 'Linus, we have to stop meeting here like this.'

Faced with a flood you can either laugh or cry. In the last couple of weeks, Logan residents have done their fair share of both. I recognise those residents who have been flooded more than once. I do not want to be political about this. I think some of the things that those on other side of the House have done—that is, repeat talking points—in the face of such a tragedy is not the way to go.

We have seen people insult people like this, saying that they are tree changers making a choice to live in danger. I notice the member for Waterford is in the chamber. We know that these people in Logan are hardworking people who have limited choices about their housing. At worst, we see people

who are passionate about horses making that choice and not having the economic means to live in other areas. I recognise that the people facing these situations often have limited choices. They are great people who deserve our respect, our help and our support in getting through what they have faced.


In that same street I helped a family rip up the floorboards they had recently installed over the top of the older floorboards. It was the house where I did the very same thing in 2017.

I want to talk about a group in North Maclean doing disability relief and all the things they had built up to provide relief to those with a disability who had lost things. I want to talk about people like Josip and Kathy, who had not been flooded before and were deeply shocked and hurt by the flood that came through their house. I want to talk about people like Louie Naumovski, who did such extraordinary things as in the middle of the night rescuing Shetland ponies. That is amongst the other amazing things he did.

I want to talk about the family who had to leave—and this may sound extreme—but said that they could not catch the llamas in the paddock. Their neighbours—I imagine they were not experienced llama wranglers—took the llamas into a safer paddock. I do not think the llamas appreciated it, but I know the owners did. I want to talk about the people in Chambers Flat who run a dog rescue home. They have huge fluffy dogs that others have abandoned. They had lost their way to care for them.

There are many stories of people who have done so much good. I want to talk about the Vietnamese farmers on Chambers Flat Road who produce a crop for our markets and had all of that flooded and lost. These are people who are worthy of support. These are hardworking Logan people. These are people that this House should recognise.

I especially want to recognise the work of the SES, the RFS, David Heck, who ran the RFS coordination centre, and the Logan City Council—people like Darren Power, Teresa Lane, Jon Raven, Laurie Koranski and Scott Bannan, who did a fantastic fundraiser recently at the Mustangs. I know that Mr Deputy Speaker Krause gave a donation to that. I want to thank the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, the football teams, the charity groups and Pastor Mike from the Parklands Christian College. I want to thank the RoadTek workers from TMR and the ministers. RoadTek did a fantastic job opening up the Mount Lindesay Highway. There are so many people to thank who have worked to help those in the community of Logan.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.54 pm): I rise to pay tribute to those Queensland families who lost people in this event, those Queensland households who lost most of the things in their house and all the volunteers and workers who did or are doing so much to help with the recovery. Queensland shows the rest of Australia how to do these things. We lead the way.

When I talk about Major Street in Deception Bay and floods, this is what I want people to remember. This is a street in Deception Bay that keeps going under—2011, 2015 and 2022. In 2015 and 2022 we saw the same thing—24 houses go under within about an hour. That includes some houses in Samantha Court, Delven Court and Embassy Street as well. Walking along this street after the flood it was like I was back in 2015. I was looking at the same houses with their furniture out the front and council skips out the front. People were washing down their houses. The people in the same houses were already stripping the gyprock off the walls, hosing their houses out and preparing for the rebuild. It is *deja vu*.

One of the couples I spoke to told me—and this is interesting—that the insurance company wants to pay them out for their house and pay them for the demolition of their house. It is not going to pay for a rebuild of their house. They will be left with a vacant block of land. I do not know what we are going to do to help them out with that. That is something new this year.

The McGahey Street part of this area was even worse. The Northshore Pet Resort has completely gone under this time. In 2015 it only partially went under. They rebuilt and built new buildings and everything went completely under. I spoke to a gentleman in one house and he told me he pays \$27,000 a year in insurance. This is the sixth or eighth time his property has flooded. It keeps repeating. My people are resilient, but they do have their limits. They are reacting by moving out. They are under incredible stress. Every time it rains they are incredibly stressed and some of them panic.

I cannot keep going back there every five years to offer my comfort to these people time and time again. We need action in this particular location. That is why I welcomed what the Deputy Premier said recently about possible future mitigation works. He canvassed a range of options such as levees, stormwater improvements, higher rebuilds and resumptions if necessary. I table that article from the *Brisbane Times*.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Brisbane Times*, dated 9 March 2022, titled 'Qld slams Commonwealth disaster relief, considers buying flood-prone homes' [\[305\]](#).

It was heartening to hear that. I was chasing these things up in 2015 after the flood event at Major Street. We looked at works under the state resilience fund that we had back them. I worked with the council to investigate different options for works that could be done. I promoted the Brisbane City Council's resilience scheme to the council—that is, how to make your house more resilient. I commend that scheme to members.

It is very clear that the time for options has now come. I will keep on pushing for them. We need the federal government to open their \$4 billion resilience fund. It is absolutely crucial. What we have learned is that the only way we can do this is by the three levels of government working together.

I say that because we have an example in my area. At Dale Street, Burpengary, 10 years ago we built a levee system. There was some buyback, basins were created and walls were created. Three levels of government funded this. It cost \$7 million back then. We saw that it worked this year. The flooding did not come up through the levees. There was a little flooding that came from the other streets. It is a template in terms of how we can do these works and help create safer communities. I remember being with Minister Ryan in Dale Street in 2011 and literally taking people's whitegoods up from downstairs and putting them on their verandas. We were soaked to the bone for a day doing that.

I want to thank all those involved with the Queensland government response. They were outstanding. I met them when I walked up and down Major Street on three different days. The people from QBuild were out looking at how to rebuild the houses. The community response team was there. The SES was there. The council was there. We had a range of ministers who came out. I thank the Deputy Premier for coming down to Dale Street and chatting with people. I commend what we have done.

Debate, on motion of Mr Whiting, adjourned.

### Cairns, Youth Crime



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (4.59 pm): I move—

That this House recognises the devastating impacts of youth crime on the people of Cairns and notes:

1. the member for Cairns' solution to the youth crime crisis was for constituents to 'write a letter'
2. the deafening silence of the members for Barron River and Cook and
3. the local community's cry for help leading to yet another crime rally on 2 April 2022

and calls on the members for Cairns, Barron River and Cook to admit they got it wrong and reverse their opposition to making breach of bail an offence for young criminals.

'We should not be afraid to go to sleep at night in our own home.' Those are the exact words of Sylvia Carswell of Cairns spoken at a crime rally on 18 February this year. From the outset, I want to issue a challenge to those opposite: debate the motion that I have just moved, defend the performance of your government and explain why Mrs Carswell and others live in fear in the Cairns community, or will you ignore them just like the victims of crime in other centres?

Mr Speaker, Cairns is in the grip of a crime wave. If you do not believe me, let me share some Queensland police statistics with you. In 2021, in the Cairns Regional Council area, almost 1,000 charges for unlawful entry were filed against juveniles. In the same period, 696 juveniles were charged with unlawful use of a motor vehicle in the Cairns Regional Council area. Of even more concern, 20 juveniles were also charged with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, and we have seen the tragic consequences of that type of behaviour in that community in recent months.

Those figures should send a shiver up the spine of every member in this chamber. Sadly, they will come as little surprise to the people of Cairns who, just like the victims of crime in communities like Townsville and many other centres, woke today not knowing whether their house has been broken into or their motor vehicle has been stolen. If any member of this House needs proof, despite those horrific statistics Labor's so-called response is achieving nothing.

Let us talk about the first two months of this year. In January and February the number of robbery charges against juveniles is already 25 per cent of the total number in 2021. It is not only robbery offences; unlawful entry and unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges are also on track to eclipse last year. In short, Cairns is having its heart ripped out and the residents and the business owners in that community are saying, 'Enough is enough.'


Just this morning the police minister said that this government invests to ensure safety in times of emergency or crisis. Well, what do you call having 81 motor vehicles stolen a month? If that is not a crisis then what is? The people of Cairns and Far North Queensland want to know where the response

is to their crisis, because there is absolutely no response from their local members. Maybe the minister has not heard what the local members have to say in this place when it comes to youth crime. You would expect that with crime so rampant they would be standing up in this place at every available opportunity.

Let me share this with the chamber. A search of the parliamentary website shows the last and only time the member for Cook has mentioned crime in a speech in this House was to oppose a motion calling on Labor to get serious on crime all the way back in 2020. The member for Barron River's results are even worse. There is not one speech showing up on the parliamentary website where he has referred to local crime—not one! At least the member for Cairns has mentioned crime, albeit back on 15 May 2019, when he spoke about steering at-risk people away from crime. Here we are three years later and clearly that has not worked.

The member for Cairns has form because he is quoted in the local paper on 21 February this year as saying he supports 'anything that supported the efforts of police', but he will not walk out his front door and go to a crime rally to hear from the people of Cairns who made it clear that they do support their local police, and the best that he can do is to tell his constituents to put their complaint in writing. That is right: when it comes to constituents, the member's diary is planned weeks in advance. Yet when two ministers jet into town a few days after the loss of a young life, suddenly the member materialises for a photo shoot.

It is time for the members for Cook, Cairns and Barron River to speak up for their communities because their communities need their help. While their communities live in fear, the members for Cook, Cairns and Barron River are silent in this House. In fact, you could say that they are asleep when it comes to crime, which takes me right back to where I started today—at least someone is sleeping, Mrs Carswell.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.04 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'the' first occurring be omitted and the following inserted:

'Palaszczuk government's record to support community safety, including the prevention of youth and adult crime in Cairns and Queensland and notes the LNP's record of failed policies, cuts and sackings, in relation to community safety.'

It goes without saying that all Queenslanders deserve to be safe in their homes, in their workplaces and in their communities. Our government is absolutely committed and our fabulous local members for Cairns, Cook, Barron River and Mulgrave are committed to protecting our communities and acting decisively when it comes to repeat youth offenders. That is why we have invested more than half a billion dollars in new detention centre beds and early intervention programs plus put more police on the ground.

Since 2017, we have invested more than \$13.6 million in Cairns in delivering youth justice programs, and from 2022 and 2023 we are investing more than \$4.5 million in programs and services responding to youth crime. We have also invested more than \$13.1 million in Mount Isa and we are investing more than \$3.5 million in programs and services responding to youth crime. We have also taken strong action to strengthen youth bail laws. If a young person is a risk to the community, they must be refused bail.

We know what does not work when it comes to young people—and that is called the breach of bail offence. In 2014, the Newman government created an offence in the Youth Justice Act of a 'finding of guilt while on bail'. The offence operated from 28 March 2014 to 1 July 2016. It was promoted—and still is, I might say—as a solution to children offending on bail. It did not work. That is why the offence was repealed.

Let us go through the statistics: 185 young people were convicted of this offence. More than 90 per cent were charged again within 12 months and 94 per cent were charged again within 24 months. This is their solution—a complete failure on every measure! The offence was not just bad in policy; it was also bad in law.


The offence did not withstand judicial scrutiny. The Childrens Court noted that the offence breached a longstanding prohibition against double punishment found in section 16 of the Criminal Code. As a result, the court held that a young person convicted of the offence could have no punishment imposed. That is their solution to youth crime—going back to a failed policy under a failed youth justice minister where 90 per cent of young people convicted offended again and they could not even get any additional punishment.

A further issue was that the poor construction of the offence led the court to find that the offence must be read to exclude the maximum penalty of one year imprisonment. That meant that penalties could not be imposed under the Youth Justice Act and they were extremely limited. The offence was a joke.

When the offence was examined by the then legal affairs and community safety committee, legal and community stakeholders made submissions to the committee criticising the offence. During the committee's examination of the bill which repealed the offence, the committee noted that widespread submissions from prominent community and legal stakeholders supported its repeal. Pretty much every stakeholder agreed that bail support programs are a much better approach. That is the approach the Palaszczuk government has taken.

The whole youth justice strategy of those opposite is to bring back this failed breach of bail. It is a joke. No penalties can be imposed. What is a young marginalised person with complex factors at home—perhaps domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems—going to do? You know what they are going to do. They are not going to go and commit a crime because there is a breach of bail offence which means they get no extra punishment for committing a crime. It is so laughable.

I have not heard one positive solution from those opposite about what it would take to reduce youth crime. We know what it takes. It is incredibly complex. We have to support families who are experiencing domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and mental health issues and we have to support those young people. That is what we are investing in. Clearly we need to continue to do more. We need to continue our millions of dollars of investment and our millions of dollars supporting police on the ground. Those opposite have absolutely no ideas, and their one idea has been found to be the biggest joke of them all.


 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.09 pm): What a pathetic contribution from the Attorney-General regarding this amendment. The government pats itself on the back, 'Nothing to see here. There's no problem. We've got it in hand.' The community of Cairns and surrounding regions are crying out for action. This amendment is a disgrace. It is like poking them in the eye and say, 'Victims, it's your fault. Everything's to hand. We're dealing with it.' The people are roaring while the members of the Labor Party in the region are mice. They are silent. They whisper in the corridors, but they do not listen to the people. The people of Cairns and the greater region are saying enough is enough.

The crime figures do not tell a mistruth. The crime figures are surging in the area. The Attorney-General might say, 'We're doing things and everything's under control,' but that is not the story from victims of crime whose homes are being broken into, whose cars are being stolen, whose right to feel safe in their homes has been ripped away. It is a basic human right to feel safe in your home. It is a basic human right to not have your car—which you rely on for work or whatever purpose—stolen by someone who does not respect your property. It is a basic human right to walk in your street and not fear for your life. These beautiful communities deserve better than this government, which pats itself on the back and ignores the cries of the people. Shame on those Labor Party MPs who, as we have heard, have been quiet as mice in this place. They have not spoken up. The government has passed laws that are not doing the job. We are calling for stronger laws that do recognise there should be consequences for committing crime.

We can talk about the complex issues that arise in relation to young people—and we do recognise there are complex issues—but the laws of this government are not addressing or fixing it. If you do not fix it crimes will escalate, and you will then have intergenerational crime because the young ones who have committed crimes are not having that break in recidivism. That is what we are seeing with the increase in crime that has happened under this government. Everybody knows Labor is soft on crime. Everybody knows they do not back the police. Everybody knows they undermine the police and the job they are there to do, and it is a heck of a difficult job to do. It is time the people were listened to.

We know that communities from Cairns up to Mareeba and all throughout the region are speaking up because they are seeing things they know are not right. They care for their community. I say to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice: shame on this government! To think she would dare come into this place and put such an insulting amendment on the table. Now we are going to see all the sheep on the other side follow along after the Attorney-General and vote for the government while ignoring the voice of the people. Listen to the voice of the people in Cairns and the greater region. Listen to their concerns. Listen to the figures that are on the record. The member for Burdekin outlined the increase in crime rates. There is an increase in the number of young people coming before the courts, and the fact is that there are not appropriate sentences in order to break the cycle.

It is time for these communities to not only have human rights on a piece of paper in the law; they should have it in their streets every day. It is time that they were listened to. It is time that the voices of the people in the rallies in the streets outside, who are calling for their voices to be heard, are finally listened to by this government. It seems to me that the only thing this Labor government knows how to do is put out media releases. They do not back our police and the justice system so we can break the cycle of crime among these beautiful young people. That needs to be addressed. It is time to return breach of bail as an offence for young criminals. It is time for appropriate resourcing of police so they can do their job. It is time that people were listened to and that the streets of this area are once again safe and people know they can go to bed in their own homes and not have someone break in and rip away their right to peace, goodwill and safety.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.14 pm): This is a very serious topic, and it is a topic this government takes very seriously. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that we do everything we can to increase community safety in our communities, because it is a right. It is a right for people to feel safe in their homes. It is a right for people to feel safe in their communities. That is why the government takes this matter so seriously. It is why the local members from the Far North take this matter seriously.


Can I say that you, Speaker, and the member for Barron River, the member for Cairns and the member for Cook are constant advocates for their communities on this issue because they take it seriously as well. They do not play political stunts on this issue. They take it seriously, and they are more regular advocates on this issue than those opposite. They are regular advocates for community safety in the Far North. It is because of their advocacy that this government is committing more resources to the Far North, not only boosting police resources—in fact, an extra 150 coming to the Far North region—but also investing in the resources and facilities that police need. Facilities in your electorate, Mr Speaker, like the new facility at Gordonvale and Moree; facilities like the ones in the member for Cairns' electorate, Cairns west, Cairns city and McLeod Street. These are things that show this government is not only committed to supporting the police but also doing everything we can to improve community safety.

Just a moment ago I mentioned the people who are strong advocates who are in regular contact with me on this issue like the members in the Far North, but there is some silence from those opposite. I have to reflect on a publication that I think the member for Thuringowa thinks is a very fine publication. In the *Townsville Bulletin* on 8 January last year—there is a nice little picture of the member for Burdekin there—he said, 'We're going to get our crime plan right. Give us six months to get our crime plan right.' That was 432 days, 61 weeks ago, 14 months ago. They do not take this issue seriously, because if they did they would honour KPI No. 1 from the member for Burdekin. He said, 'Give us six months and we'll give you a crime plan.' Well, the member for Burdekin and his colleagues do not take this seriously because they cannot even deliver the promised crime plan within the time allocated.

The only plan they had, which they took to the last election, would involve cutting police resources. We would see fewer police in Cairns and the Far North if those opposite had been elected than under Labor. They did not take a plan around new facilities for the police to the last election, so there would be fewer facilities. They did not take a plan around more equipment for our police to the last election. All they had was recycled policies and cuts. They keep recycling this concept from the former attorney-general around bringing back breach of bail. We heard the statistics from the Attorney-General. It had a 94 per cent failure rate. It actually led to young people receiving fewer penalties rather than more. Mr Speaker, I put a proposition to you. They say, 'Bring it back and youth crime will stop.' If it was the silver bullet, why did 94 per cent of young people reoffend? If it was the silver bullet, wouldn't you think—given the nonsense they carry on with—that youth crime would have stopped the day after they introduced that law? It is nonsense. It is a political stunt. They are playing with people's concerns around community safety.

On the other hand, we do take this issue very, very seriously. It is why we are committing record amounts to the Queensland Police Service to boost their resources. It is why we are increasing resources for the police and why we are strengthening laws around bail for recidivist youth offenders. The feedback we are getting from people on the ground—the police, youth justice workers and those who observe court proceedings—shows that the tougher laws we have are leading to more young people in custody more often.

(Time expired)

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.19 pm): I sometimes wonder how many victims of crime the police minister and the Attorney-General have actually spoken with.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am personally offended by the proposition that the member is putting and I ask him to withdraw it.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, I will be making a ruling on the point of order. Member for Toowoomba South, the minister has found those words offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I withdraw. The two words that caught my attention in this motion that was so well drafted by the—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, member for Toowoomba South. It appears that there are interjections happening to my left which is making it difficult for me to hear you.

**An opposition member:** We are very supportive.

**Mr SPEAKER:** They may well be in support but I cannot hear the speaker on his feet.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The two words of the member for Burdekin's motion that caught my eye were 'devastating impacts'. What we know from speaking to victims of crime is the personal cost of crime. When we see in Cairns a 115 per cent increase in the unlawful use of a motor vehicle in the last quarter compared to 12 months previous, when we see a 115 per cent increase in unlawful entries in the previous quarter compared to 12 months before, we know the human cost that that involves. Even in the last month, there were 59 vehicles stolen in Cairns, and five houses and businesses every day were broken into. Imagine the devastating impacts on those people—the sanctity of their home, the trust that has been lost.

They are the 'devastating impacts' and that is why on this side of the House we will always bring motions like this. When the members in the Far North are silent on this, we will speak on their behalf. This crisis has not just come about recently. I look really fondly upon the former member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt. Marty would speak so brilliantly in the five o'clock scream. Marty Hunt would talk about—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We are going to come to that; there are going to be motions about that in time. The former member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt, would speak about a generational failure of Labor to address youth crime in Queensland. We do not have a couple of hours to deal with youth crime tonight, but I want to talk briefly about the last seven years of failure because we will never hear about that from those opposite or the Far North members. Do members remember when Labor brought 17-year-olds into the youth justice system with no plan which created the watch house crisis? Do members remember the watch house crisis?

**An opposition member:** It's still going on.

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is still going on. Do members remember that there was a public servant they also wanted to shut down back then, the Public Guardian, Natalie Siegel-Brown? They were pretty keen over there not to hear from her. That is another public servant who wanted to blow the whistle on the watch house crisis. Then out of the blue they created a brand new youth justice system. They walked in and changed section 48 of the Youth Justice Act. They spent hundreds of millions of dollars after the worst *Four Corners* interview we have ever seen by the then youth justice minister. That was \$500 million thanks to Mark Willacy. We saw thousands of pages of reviews—much of which was redacted—and hundreds of recommendations that were never implemented.


Now we have the member for Cairns who is silent. I think he has now given up on seriously trying to solve this problem. In 2020 the member for Cairns was blaming the baby bonus for the youth crime crisis. In 2021 he was saying, 'We've got to write letters and be penpal friends.' He thought letters were going to solve the problem. Even in the last month, the member for Cairns has been saying that putting up some drones will solve the problem. He wrote an op-ed at the start saying that he shares the frustration of the people, but the truth is that the member for Cairns is completely out of ideas, bereft of ideas, as to how to solve this youth crime crisis.

What we have in this motion tonight is once again the LNP standing up for the people of Cairns. We could have made this motion about the economic failures of the Labor government to address a small business package in Cairns, but at a time when Cairns is getting ready to welcome 30,000 or 40,000 tourists, what was the story last week in the *Cairns Post*? Under the heading 'Cairns public urination problem makes CBD, Shields St stink ...', the article stated—

What is meant to be the premier pedestrian retail thoroughfare of Cairns, Shields St mall, has become a public toilet ...

The member for Cairns and other members over there are out of ideas. If the member for Cairns cannot speak with conviction in Cairns, there is no-one listening to him in Brisbane.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.25 pm): Very rarely have I been called silent. Those who know me know that. The more I listen to what is happening here, the more it reminds me of that famous quote by Eleanor Roosevelt: 'Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.' I have a speech that I would like to talk about.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members, I appreciate there is a great deal of feeling with regards to this motion before the House, but I cannot hear the member for Cairns, which in itself is unusual. I ask that if members wish to make a contribution they rise to their feet and speak. Apart from that, I ask that interjections be kept to a minimum.

**Mr HEALY:** I rise to speak in support of the Attorney-General's proposed amendments. Before I do, I want to touch on a crime protest recently held in Cairns. I was not notified until a couple of days before. I rang the person who was organising it, and this is a person who is known to me and somebody I have had in the office. It might come as a surprise that they are not actually a constituent of mine. They live in the seat of Mulgrave, but I am always happy to sit down and talk to people who have issues. I am more than happy to have those discussions.

What I did find interesting was that on that Friday afternoon I received a call from a person who owned a business next door. They said to me that the member for Burdekin was arguing with the person who had organised the protest because he had not allowed him to have a speech. The protest group had turned up. They had these lovely big banners—I do not know who paid for them but they looked very nice—and they were all there. When the member for Burdekin was not allowed to have his speech, they had a barney in the street. This is a crime issue. With those sorts of skills, he should be the deputy leader. It was an absolute joke and I spoke to a lot of those people and they walked away embarrassed.

We recognise we have significant challenges, but the inability of that mob over there to present any real solutions or even reflect a basic understanding of the complex issues highlights the fact that they do not have any plan at all and they are happy to sit on the sideline and throw stones. I meet with constituents in my electorate on this matter and I remind them that this government is absolutely committed and we work with the police and Child Safety. There has literally been \$517 million spent since 2015. We have had a terrible period, but the police tell me now that February's numbers are looking a lot better and we are working towards this.

I think it is important that we recognise that in the absence of children being loved, cared for, nurtured and raised in an environment of respect and understanding, where they are exposed to substance abuse, sexual assault and violence, where they are safer on the streets at night than in their own homes, there will always be a need for intervention and there will always be a need for child safety, and we continue to resource these areas and we resource them well.


We are also expanding police numbers, as we heard from the Minister for Police. We are continuing to expand our youth detention centre; we have had an increase in beds by 33 per cent. We know that we need to be hard on the causes of crime. This is the bit that those on the other side just do not get. They cannot articulate it. If you think throwing people in detention and locking them up will be the solution, you are wrong. The people of Queensland listened to some of your ridiculous ideas in the closing weeks of the election campaign and rejected any concept of reality that you think you had. The people said no to some of your ideas.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** They said no. They said absolutely no!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr HEALY:** Through Transition 2 Success, which is a program that is helping young people into jobs, training and back to school, there has been a 77 per cent reduction in offending. Through restorative justice conferencing we have seen a 67 per cent reduction in offending. It is absolutely fundamental that we stick with these programs and continue the work. In the absence of any facts and any figures, I find it remarkable that those opposite are here to entertain themselves on what is an enormously challenging issue.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.31 pm): I remind the member for Barron River, the member for Cook and the member for Cairns—if he prefers the member for 'Cahns', I can pronounce it that way too—that the member for Burdekin met with constituents, met with regional community members,



sponsored petitions, listened to the concerns of victims of crime, listened to former child protection staff, listened to youth justice workers, listened to youth advocates and, most importantly, listened to residents and business owners who every single day are walking the streets of Cairns in fear and returning to their homes in fear—fear that their businesses and livelihoods will be disrupted.

It must be great for the members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra to learn that Cairns—and I was there last week—has now surpassed Townsville when it comes to vehicle theft. It is quite incredible that, despite the policies that the Attorney and the Minister for Police tout and the millions of dollars spent—it is really working!—we are seeing significant increases in crime in North Queensland. One thing we know is that the members representing the Cairns and Townsville regions are united in one way: silence on behalf of their communities.

**Mr HARPER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence. Hardly silent! I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, member! I had not recognised you or given you the call. In future, do not rise to your feet and start talking. Seek the call or let us know that you have a point of order. Do you have a point of order?

**Mr HARPER:** I do, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I apologise. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence and asks you to withdraw.

**Ms CAMM:** I withdraw. In light of the amendment moved to the motion, I would like to highlight the Attorney's record when it comes to community safety—their version of always acting decisively, the significant investment in youth justice programs et cetera. I refer to some real responses that I received on my recent visit to Cairns. Under the watch of Child Safety, a 14-year-old child died. Under the care of this state government, a juvenile died. What a proud record this government has! Two youths, aged 14 and 15, waited three months to be approved by Child Safety for bedding, for housing, for mobile phones and even for food vouchers—and we wonder why children are committing crimes under this state government! The state government's policies and the delivery of child safety are working so fantastically! For the record, that was sarcasm.

Child Safety are making promises to young people and not keeping them. It is the child safety system that is fundamentally failing these children. The minister flew in for a morning and flew out after making an announcement. I spent the day engaging with those who have formerly worked in Child Safety and who are consistently having to step in because Child Safety and Youth Justice are inconsistently attending court and inconsistently supporting young people. When young girls and boys are residing together in residential placements resulting in a 14-year-old girl becoming pregnant, this state government is doing nothing but facilitating intergenerational cycles of crime and of marginalisation. The members who represent that community should hang their heads in shame.


It is the abuse, the violence and the sexual assault that the member for Cairns just highlighted that is being facilitated by the structural, systemic failings of this Labor government—the failings of this government to adequately implement best practice principles in a practical way. The Carmody inquiry recommendations demonstrated the lip-service paid by this minister and that the government is failing our First Nations people and our next generation of First Nations children.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana and member for McConnel, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms CAMM:** Under this government's failed policy we have seen nothing but an increase in crime, an increase in the number of children in the child safety system and an increase in the number of youth in the youth justice system. It is this government that is failing when it comes to ensuring public safety for the people in the community of Cairns. It is this government and its lack of policy, its lack of implementation and the lack of leadership by the minister that continuously fails the people of North Queensland. I am proud to stand next to the member for Burdekin because it is we who have to travel to North Queensland to hear from that community.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (5.36 pm): Can you believe the hypocrisy from across the chamber? When the LNP were in government, they sacked over 300 police personnel. They failed to fund the rollout of automatic numberplate recognition technology which helps police track stolen vehicles. In the LNP budget of 2012-13, police were told to tighten their belts. Shame! I say to the member for Burdekin: all talk and no action is not going to do anything to address the issue of youth crime and community safety.

Flying into Cairns and scooting up to Mareeba for a cheap photo op is not going to address the issue. The LNP's cheap political stunt does nothing for my community. My community needs more than the cheap talk of those opposite. If they want to help—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I am having difficulty hearing the member, so I am sure Hansard is having difficulty hearing the member. I ask members to cease their interjections. Many of you have had an opportunity already to have your say. There are another couple of speakers on the list who I am sure will make erudite points.

**Ms LUI:** If the member for Burdekin really wants to help—and I mean really wants to help—I invite him to come and be part of the solution in our communities. I have had many meetings with constituents and stakeholders alike to talk about the issue and I—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, you are warned.

**Ms LUI:** One visit into the community is not going to solve the issue.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Moving the office out of the community?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you are warned.

**Ms LUI:** One visit into the community is not going to solve the issue. We listened to the concerns of the people of Mareeba and those of other Queenslanders and we acted. Last week, Minister Linard visited my electorate and together we met with Mareeba Shire Council Mayor Angela Toppin, PCYC's Sergeant Mary-Anne West, local stakeholders and Youth Justice and Child Safety. I would like to say to the member for Burdekin that there are so many good things happening in the community—local initiatives and local people standing up because they are passionate about their community—and nothing that the LNP is doing is going to help this community address the issue of community safety.

They provided us with the opportunity to talk about people on the ground, to meet with people on the ground and to hear about all the good things that are happening. We met with staff from Youth Justice and Child Safety. A new office means that staff will be able to spend more time in the community—and less time travelling—where they can provide quality engagement to kids to address some of the issues. With regard to the office that will be in Mareeba we have made the decision to—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members.

**Ms LUI:** Youth justice officers and case workers hold young people accountable for their actions by working with them to fulfil a range of court orders and bail conditions such as community service, restorative justice, probation orders and conditional release orders. They deliver programs that help change their behaviours, control their emotions and reduce aggression. They work with stakeholders such as Education, Health and Police to address the issues that contribute to young people's offending.

We acknowledge that it is a complex issue and we acknowledge that there needs to be a collaborative approach to addressing this issue. This is exactly what we are doing. Examples of their work include getting young people back into school, connecting them to drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs and mental health services as well as other supports related to housing, domestic and family violence and disability.


**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms LUI:** An understanding of complexity of the issue that we are dealing with here is missing from those opposite. They have not mentioned the complex nature of working with these vulnerable kids in the community. The minister and I also took the opportunity to learn about programs being implemented in Mareeba that engage vulnerable young people. We dropped into the PCYC and met with the staff in the community—

**Mr Last** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burdekin, you are warned.

**Ms LUI:**—who are working hard to address the issue of youth crime and community safety on this issue. I can say that that is nothing that the member for Burdekin would understand. The Pulse Cafe was a local initiative developed from the ground up by a brilliant PCYC local person, Sergeant Mary-Anne West. Mary-Anne and her team developed a program which engages vulnerable young people in Mareeba. These are the types of positive solutions that we need to hear more often because there is so much negativity out there. There is so much negativity about young kids committing crime, but there are not enough solutions offered to address this issue.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.41 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister for police and corrective services, Dale Last. What a great police minister he would be. Crime is out of control in Queensland. It does not matter where you live; everyone has a story of stolen vehicles, home invasions, destruction of property, theft and assaults. All these crimes plus sexual offences and domestic violence are on the rise. Youth crime is at an all-time high with recidivist juvenile offenders thumbing their nose at authorities who are at a complete loss as to what to do to control these criminals, many of whom are not even in their teens.

North Queensland is suffering huge increases in the rates of youth criminal activity with appalling statistics of rises of over 110 per cent. In the last 12 months the Cairns Police Division has seen an increase in the unlawful use of motor vehicles of 64 per cent, with the last three months seeing a rise of 115 per cent. In the last 30 days 59 cars have been stolen. That is almost two per day. Unlawful entry is up by 90 per cent. From March 2020 to February 2021 there were 1,066 unlawful entries and from March 2021 to February 2022 there were 2,026 unlawful entries. In the past three months there has been an increase in unlawful entries of 115 per cent. What is this telling the people of Queensland? It is telling them that whatever this government is doing it is not working.

These rises in criminal activity are massive. They are a disgrace, and the three local members—the members for Cairns, Barron River and Cook—remain in denial, as we are hearing. They should hang their heads in shame. This is happening in their backyard to the very people they were elected to represent. The member for Cairns did say he had the answer to youth crime, though. It is simple really: get constituents to write a letter. Who should they send it to? The Premier, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services or home to mum perhaps? Crime is spiralling out of control and their answer is to write a letter! This situation requires some immediate decisive action. The members for Cairns, Barron River and Cook should go to the Premier and the minister and admit they got it wrong and reverse their opposition to making breach of bail an offence for young criminals.


The local community is crying out for help. They want some real action to stop this crime rampage and the devastating impacts it is having on their day-to-day lives, their businesses and their property. Another community rally against crime will be held on 2 April. I am sure both the Premier and the minister will be conveniently unavailable to attend.

The LNP has consistently stood up for victims of crime and in calling for some action from this government. This Palaszczuk government went to the last election campaign with one message and one message only with the onset of COVID. How often did we hear the Premier repeat this line, 'I am keeping you safe'? The people of Cairns, Barron River and Cook clearly do not feel safe—not in terms of their own personal safety or for the security of their property. Our policy strategies would have delivered protection for the community and the confidence to walk down the streets of North Queensland without fear their car would be stolen or their home broken into. It does not matter how we look at the crime situation in Cairns and North Queensland; it is particularly bad. The Palaszczuk government's strategies are not working.

The people of North Queensland have been seeking the government's help to deal with youth crime for years and in return there has been nothing—only a worsening of the situation and no plan to improve the safety of residents or their property. This government places more importance on the rights of the offender than the victim. The offenders know this government is weak on crime and that there is no punishment for committing offences, so they are back out on the streets again as soon as they walk out of the police station door. The police are doing their job. They are making the arrests and then watching in frustration as these recidivist offenders are released to continue where they left off.

The impact on the mental health of the victims cannot be overstated, as the member for Toowoomba South said. They do not feel safe in their own homes. This is not acceptable. This is not Mexico City we are talking about; this is Cairns. Expecting that your house will be broken into or your car stolen should not be a way of life.

The members for Cairns, Barron River and Cook are failing their constituents. They are failing to do the job they were elected to do and that is represent their constituents.

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (5.46 pm): I rise to support the amendment put forward by the Attorney-General. I am astounded by the temerity of those opposite that they would bring such a motion before the House. Who remembers the boot camps under the infamous Newman government? The then attorney-general, the member for Kawana—and I am surprised the member for Kawana is not contributing to this debate because he is normally part of the beating-up program—was the architect of the botched Kuranda youth boot camp, the plan to take troubled youth into the bush and treat them badly. It blew up in the LNP's face. I do not need to remind members of

headlines like 'Teens recaptured after boot camp breakout'. The LNP's Kuranda boot camp had only been in operation for three weeks when the entire first intake managed to escape, arm themselves with a knife and rob a 59-year-old woman in her own home before they were caught by police. This was the way the LNP handled youth justice issues in Far North Queensland: extremely badly.


Those of us who live in Cairns will not be lectured to by the LNP on law and order or youth justice. Far North Queensland kicked out the LNP decisively in 2015 and kept them out in 2017 and again in 2020. When those opposite were in government did they deliver better housing? No! Did they deliver more nurses? No! Did they deliver more police? No! Did they take away frontline services? Yes! Did they cut support workers for Child Safety? Yes! Did they hide the crime stats? Yes!

The most northern LNP member is the member for Burdekin. If the people of Cairns want to go and see him, it is nearly a six-hour drive. If, as some in this House may want—and I note the member for Hinchinbrook up in the corner who is from the KAP. If, as the KAP would like, we had a North Queensland state, the KAP would be the opposition because they hold three seats. How many seats does the LNP hold in North Queensland? Two! They would be crossbenchers. Welcome to the opposition, KAP.

The LNP in North Queensland and Far North Queensland is irrelevant. The voters of Far North Queensland gave the LNP a go and they were sorely disappointed: Gavin King, one term; Michael Trout, one term; David Kempton, one term. Not only did it fail; the LNP is trying to stir up an issue in Cairns to deflect the focus from a dysfunctional Prime Minister and a federal member whose time has well and truly expired and needs lots of diversions like this in the upcoming election. Labor has a strong team in Far North Queensland with the member for Mulgrave, and I note that the member for Mulgrave is not even mentioned in the motion. Those opposite are not prepared to take on the Speaker but think, 'Let's just pick on three other MPs.' We have a great arrangement in Far North Queensland with the member for Mulgrave, the member for Cook, the member for Cairns and myself. We are a united team and we are a strong team, and that is why the LNP is 436 kilometres away from us.

We value the work our ministers do. Many ministers including the police minister and the child safety minister are regular visitors to our city. We work closely with the police. We regularly speak to police command. We regularly get updates on offending stats and briefings on operations. We support the judiciary and, unlike those opposite, we understand and support the separation of powers. We allow our magistrates to do their job.

Recently the death of a 14-year-old boy who was a passenger in a stolen car devastated our city. Once the tragic circumstances of his short life were made public, it turned the debate and touched the hearts of many Cairns residents. It diffused public anger and raised awareness of the complex reality of youth offenders. As local MPs we understand that. This is about more than the triggers and stats; this is about what brings people to be in those situations in the first place—cognitive impairment, poverty, overcrowding in housing, family dynamics. The people of Cairns know that it takes a village to raise a child and they know the answer does not rest with the LNP.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (5.51 pm): This Palaszczuk government is lazy when it comes to the causes of crime, it is lazy when it comes to cracking down on crime and it is lazy in dealing with offenders. This is a government that is full of platitudes and excuses and low on action, and the people of Cairns know it. Because the three members named in this motion tonight are not doing anything about it, someone else has to step up and raise the issue, and that has been the member for Burdekin and the LNP.

When I listened to the litany of stories put forward by those on the opposite side in relation to matters relating to crime, I hark back to a brighter time between 2012 and 2015, because I remember when we cracked down on the bikies. I remember when people could walk the streets safely at night and not worry about getting bludgeoned by a bikie or the break-outs on the Gold Coast or the sale of methamphetamine and ice no matter where you were in the state. I remember the thousand extra police we delivered to the people of Queensland. I remember the dedicated police helicopter that we made available that Labor opposed for over a decade on the basis of the advice of the police commissioner at the time. I remember the digital radio network so police would have secure communications when they wanted to talk to each other. I remember we had police officers' backs and the police knew it. They knew if they went out and did their job they would not be second-guessed by a bunch of left-wing softies more worried about what their mates would be saying at trade union headquarters than the public were feeling when they got news of what was going on.

I remember the failed bail watch houses of this government—four of them. There was going to be a fifth in South Brisbane, but for some reason it did not go ahead. I cannot remember why! I wonder who the member was. I remember the \$30.8 million that was wasted on those schemes and I remember

the half a million dollars that was spent getting three consultants to tell those opposite it did not work. I remember the then minister and now minister saying, 'Oh no. They were a success. They didn't fail. We're just not going to continue with them,' in one of the greatest efforts of doublespeak I have ever heard.


I also remember the four changes in youth bail laws that we have had over the last 30 months. I remember the promises about GPS trackers and the briefings. There were going to be up to 100 of them in the first 12 months. How many have we had? Three, because those opposite worked out they did not have the tracking system.

Now we have the promise for North Queensland of not dedicated helicopters for Far North Queensland that we have been promising—I promised in 2017 a dedicated police helicopter—but drones. Fair enough. That seems like good technology. People like drones. How far do those drones go? Five kilometres, line of sight, so pretty handy when you are chasing someone in a car and they are driving through the night! That will work well: 'Hang on a second. No, they've just gone over the horizon. We'll get out of there.' That is what they are delivering.

I heard the member for Cairns say, 'Very rarely do I hear myself being described as silent.' Well, we know why he very rarely hears himself being described as anything; it is because he does not listen to his constituents in that he wants them to send him a letter. Instead of seeing them, he would rather them send him an email. He should be listening to his constituents. He should be doing what they asked him to do, and that is representing their interests down here in Brisbane about law and order.

We heard the member for Cook speak about flying into Mareeba for a cheap photo op. If anyone should be speaking about cheap photo ops and flying into it, it should be the member for Cook, who does not even have an electorate office in her own electorate and flies in and out of her own electorate for cheap photo ops.

Then we heard the member for Barron River attempting to defend the indefensible and his failures to deliver. He conveniently forgets the member for Cairns who preceded the current member for Cairns who disappeared off the radar screen extraordinarily rapidly with a few parting shots about the former member for South Brisbane as well—let us not forget that—and the member for Cook preceding the current member for Cook who did not last, if memory serves me, more than three months in this place in relation to it. Is it no wonder that those opposite are silent and weak on crime?

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.56 pm): Firstly, how dare those on the other side suggest that the member for Cairns is somehow abrogating his duty on the issue of youth justice. This man is absolutely tireless in the work he does to improve the lives of the people of Cairns and to address head-on the complex, really hard issue that youth justice is. He has never shied away from it. I know that from being the former youth justice minister, and I know that the current youth justice minister says the same thing. I say the same thing for the member for Cook and the member for Barron River and the member for Mulgrave. In fact, the current minister was only just telling me the other day about the new youth justice office she has set up at the Edmonton PCYC with six youth justice staff and how hard the local MPs lobbied for it and what a great example of local advocacy it was. I need to say that up-front. I just will not hear any criticism at all of the work that the local members do up there.

As for the LNP setting itself up to be the expert on every issue—in this case youth justice—it is all just getting a bit silly, because with this motion it is rolling out the same old policies or, in this case, the same one policy, but why would we expect anything else? This week with the election of the member for Kawana as deputy opposition leader those opposite just elected the same old, same old. These are the boys from the old Campbell Newman government days that were so bad that they got kicked out after one term. What a message to send to the Queensland public that the LNP is being led by the two of them. Those newer members like the member for Currumbin and the member for Whitsunday and younger ones like the member for Bonney must absolutely despair that there are ever going to be any new ideas coming from that side of the House.

The member for Kawana was the greatest object of ridicule in that government. They had to hide him away during the election campaign because he was such a disaster and so disliked. He was the worst attorney-general anyone had ever seen. As for the then youth justice minister, all we need to say is 'boot camps' and people roll their eyes. In case anyone has forgotten what happened with the boot camps, if you went there you were 65 per cent more likely to reoffend.

Why would anyone in this House, or anyone in Queensland, expect those opposite to be coming up with any new ideas. Now they are rolling out the breach of bail story again. They go on and on about their one idea that is going to solve youth justice. They make it sound so good. We have heard it before,

but I am going to say it again: do members know what happened with their breach of bail law? It was called committing an offence on bail and it did not work as a deterrent. In fact, the courts rarely used it because it was so ineffective. Of the 185 young people convicted of the offence in that time, 90 per cent reoffended with 12 months and 94 per cent reoffended within 24 months. That is what those opposite are putting to the people of Cairns to fix everything. This is how good they are at solving youth justice.

We know that youth justice and the issues around it are distressing to the community. We understand that, but those opposite cannot come in here and be so disingenuous and so dishonest by promising the people of Cairns a quick fix. The member for Whitsunday stands up and says that she is proud to be part of that side of the House when this is in fact just a dog whistle. The people of Cairns, the people of Queensland, need to know that what is actually being put up to solve this complex, hard issue will actually work.

We took youth justice out of that too-hard basket and said we were going to confront it full on. We committed half a billion dollars towards it and we are in it for the long haul. We know kids who commit an offence are held accountable. We have some fantastic initiatives that are gradually making a difference in that region. We have initiatives like the Specialist Multiagency Response Team, the Cairns Community Youth Response program, the Cairns Safer Streets program, the complex case management panel, the On Country program and Transition 2 Success. These programs are all making a difference.

The police minister and the current minister for youth justice are up in Cairns all the time talking to the local members and the community because they are committed to a solution. They are committed to being true and honest with the people of Queensland about what we can expect. If those on that side of the House want to solve it, come up with new ideas and stop rolling out the ones that do not work.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 34:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Janetzki, Krause, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

Pairs: D'Ath, Langbroek; Linard, Robinson; Russo, Molhoek.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 34:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Janetzki, Krause, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

Pairs: D'Ath, Langbroek; Linard, Robinson; Russo, Molhoek.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion as agreed—

That this House recognises the Palaszczuk government's record to support community safety, including the prevention of youth and adult crime in Cairns and Queensland and notes the LNP's record of failed policies, cuts and sackings, in relation to community safety.

## Queensland Floods

Resumed from p. 479, on motion of Ms Palaszczuk—



**Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (6.10 pm): I rise in support of the Premier's motion to speak of the community spirit in my home electorate of Nicklin during the recent flooding event. My electorate was not as impacted as severely as some other places in our state, however, it was very quick and started in my electorate late Tuesday. Unfortunately the timing could not have been worse. When people were returning home from work the rainfall and darkness combined to lead to the first fatality in this disaster which occurred in Belli Park and I offer my condolences to family and friends, as I do to all Queenslanders who have lost someone in this disaster.

Emergency services, volunteers and community members quickly rallied to assist those who were affected. The communities I represent are Nambour, Yandina, Cooroy, Kenilworth, Mapleton, Woombye, Palmwoods, Cooran, Federal, Black Mountain, Ridgewood, Belli Park, Eerwah Vale, Cooloolabin, Bridges, Kiamba, Kulangoor, Kureelipa, Image Flat, Chevallum, Ilkley, Hunchy, Dulong, Obi Obi, Kidaman Creek, Coolabine and parts of North Arm, Tanawah and Flaxton.

I thank all of our volunteers and emergency services staff for their tireless efforts in ensuring that our communities were protected at this time of need. I recognise that many of them have had a long disaster season, having been deployed to other regions since Christmas. I thank the many residents who directed traffic and provided up-to-date information on community noticeboards. I mention the members of the Palmwoods RFB who stood in waste-deep water to direct traffic safely at the rail underpass. While I can speak about only some in our community, this in no way diminishes the efforts of so many.

I am proud to say that the Queensland spirit is alive and well in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, the Blackall Ranges and the Mary Valley. The town of Kenilworth and surrounds were cut off for multiple days and several homes were inundated by rising waters. Thankfully, emergency services workers and volunteers were on hand to assist residents and business owners to protect their properties. As soon as the water sank low enough, local farmers got on their tractors and went out onto the main road to town to clear debris and the huge pieces of bitumen that had broken loose, enabling access once more. I thank the officer in charge of the Kenilworth Police Station, Senior Constable Pierre Senekal, for showing me some of the worst affected areas in the town and surrounds once access was restored.

One constituent, Summa Lee, kept a journal of her experience in Federal, which I will read without alteration. On 23 February, Summa wrote—


Well yep feeling a little scared now. The creek is not far off coming over the bank near the house. It is the most the creek has ever come up since we moved here. I'm not sure if my car is still there on the other side of the creek. We moved most things to higher ground. Next, I have packed a bag for us to escape up the hill if it gets much worse. Fingers crossed we get a decent break, and the creek goes down just a bit to keep the creek level. Fingers crossed. No sleep for us tonight.

Well, we managed to evacuate myself, our 5 yr. Old, hubby and the dog to higher ground for the night. Stayed in the 4wd no sleep. We could hear the roar of the creek but couldn't see or keep track of how fast it was coming up. The safest thing to do was to just go to higher ground. We are still flooded in now, but the creek has receded at least 15m. Hopefully we don't get any heavier rain tonight.

Once the water was knee deep under the house, we evacuated to the 4wd to wait till daylight. We just could keep track of how high the creek was coming up.

In the community of Palmwoods, the sporting fields quickly filled with water while the new clubhouse—home to the Hinterland Blues AFL Club and Hinterland Hawks Cricket Club, and paid for by the Queensland government's COVID Works for Queensland program, and council and state sporting bodies—managed to stay high and dry after being raised above the Q100 level, because in Queensland we build back better. The Woombye Snakes Football Club's facilities and fields also went under but, thanks to the massive community clean-up effort, I am reliably informed that training was able to resume in a limited capacity. I will be seeking some support for them to have upgraded facilities.

Again I would like to thank all in my electorate of Nicklin for their resilience, their determination to get on with things and their compassion in looking after their neighbours and lending a helping hand wherever required. I can only offer a brief snapshot of events. I understand that there are more stories and many groups and individuals affected. I acknowledge everyone who contributed to our region's collective safety and recovery, including my staff, Jo, Dan and Lachy, who are working hard to get affected residents, businesses and community groups assistance through grant funding. I have seen the flood damage to sporting clubs, community groups, schools, businesses and farms in many parts of our region. I acknowledge the loss of crops, stock and equipment as well. We will work hard together to recover. Finally, again I offer my condolences to the families of the 13 Queenslanders who lost their lives during this tragic event.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.14 pm): As the Deputy Premier acknowledged this morning, Oxley is one of the worst affected suburbs in South-East Queensland. Some people in my community have lost everything but, of course, that pales in comparison to the loss of life. I join with my community and this entire House in mourning the loss of 13 Queenslanders. It is a tragedy that those lives have been cut short.

In my humble opinion, Oxley is the exemplar model for natural disaster recovery. Over the past few weeks, as I walked each street and spoke to locals, it seemed like the half of Oxley that had flooded was being helped by the half that had not. That occurred in tandem with our amazing public services, which I will touch on later. I know that I have yet to truly uncover the magnitude of people in my community who helped with that flood recovery, but I will name just a few: Lou Bromley; Mikayla and Warwick Leese; Shelby and Kylie Robinson; the Tovey family; Anita Dale and her husband, the 'mayor of Oxley'; and Mickey Lou who looked after Corinda Chase. However, I thank those individuals knowing that there are hundreds more I have not and cannot mention because there were hundreds, if not thousands, of acts of everyday heroism that happened in my community and right across Queensland.


There are literally thousands of locals who played an integral role in our local clean-up. Hundreds of Oxley and Corinda locals were displaced but only 30 ended up at our local Riverlife evacuation centre. That means that hundreds of Oxley locals were able to find a place to stay with their neighbours and friends who opened their hearts and their homes and gave them a place to stay. I thank Riverlife Church for opening their own evacuation or refuge centre, giving residents safe harbour when they needed it. Thanks will never be enough for that amazing church, which stepped in when they saw a need. Thanks also goes to Gary at the Corinda Bowls Club for providing a safe place for people to go, until the bowls club lost power. Our school communities with impacted families are doing wonderful work as we speak. The Oxley Uniting Church and Reverend Dave stepped up to provide a haven for Oxley in a very big way, providing a real communal point.

Every single day the Hare Krishnas and the Sikhs in our community cooked hundreds of hot meals so that the people of Oxley were fed during the clean-up. One of my favourite memories was helping the Hare Krishnas set up their food tent on Lawson Street. I was not sure if people would come to get food, but within five minutes every pine sleeper in Ed Keupper Park had a family perched on it, eating a hot lunch and talking with their neighbours. It made me a little weepy to see my community coming together in that way as it was really ground zero in terms of the flood impacts on our community. The Hare Krishnas were out again the next day, feeding everyone. Givit have done a fantastic job in coordinating what people need. In our community we are lucky to be home to an organisation called Baby Give Back. They organise everything that a baby could need from cots to nappies, formula—you name it—from their warehouse in Sumner.

I thank all the hardworking public servants. Our heroes in Energex were the most popular people and daily sightings of the Energex trucks were a topic of conversation. Whenever I went on my street walks, I would come across crews working to restore power. I remember one stinking hot Sunday I stopped for a chat. There were about 10 workers restoring power to a part of the electorate that had been flooded. One of the fellows, Dave, showed me the actual work that they do. It is a lot. They are legends in high vis. The police were out in droves, roaming the streets on horseback and providing a reassuring visual presence and moral support to locals who were disturbed by people roaming the streets and going through items not only on the kerb but also inside yards and homes. QFES and SES teams went door to door to speak with and evacuate people. They were absolutely sensational in my community—just sensational.

Now that the floodwaters have receded, the department of communities is located in the Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre working alongside the Red Cross, the Salvos and more to provide that one-stop shop in getting people back on their feet. A number of my sports clubs and community groups were impacted: the Oxley Bowls Club, Sherwood Meals on Wheels, Jindalee Bowls Club, Centenary Meals on Wheels, the Centenary RSL, the Jindalee Jags, Little A's and Netball Club, Centenary Rowing and the Jindalee Swimming Pool. Each has done a mighty job in recovery and clean-up.

Finally, I say to my community that recovery is a marathon and not a sprint. There are so many people here, ready and willing to help you when you need it. Everyone's recovery journey looks different and you all need different things. Whatever it is you need, we are here. We are not going anywhere and we want to help.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.20 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the motion. I spoke yesterday during the MPI debate about the impact of the floods. Today in speaking to the motion I would like to illustrate the heroism, resilience and spirit of community that I have personally witnessed



over the past couple of weeks. I start by acknowledging the efforts of the women and men from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the SES. I took the opportunity to visit the disaster coordination centre in Newmarket. The men and women there were literally working around the clock: firstly to assist in flood mitigation—helping with sandbagging and giving really useful information and advice to people who were very overwhelmed and stressed at the time—and later, obviously, to participate in rescues. We know that they completed around 600 rescues over that weekend, including Paul and Debbie, whom I spoke about yesterday, in Ashgrove Avenue who were involved in a swiftwater rescue—something we never thought we would see in the suburbs of Ashgrove.

I acknowledge those involved in our sporting groups. As we know, a lot of our sporting facilities are placed in really low-lying areas and many experienced significant flooding of not only their facilities but also their clubhouses. That is absolutely devastating for community groups. Ashgrove Golf Club was one of those impacted. The creek that runs through the middle of their course completely blew up and not only compromised the integrity of a lot of their bridges but also washed out so many of their greens, completely stripping the sand from bunkers. I have learned so much about bunkers in the past couple of weeks! The anticipated cost for this one club is well over a million dollars. The cost of that recovery will go quite some way into the future. It was really great to be able to go, along with our federal candidate for Ryan, Peter Cossar, and facilitate a working bee there, with many members mucking in and helping out to make sure the club is back up and running as soon as we can get it operational.

I acknowledge and thank our school communities, which have had to adapt to so much in the past couple of years particularly. Many schools experienced flash flooding, turning their ovals not just into lakes but into rivers, really. We still have students who are impacted today by road closures. The greatest impact was on Milton State School, which remains closed. I had the chance to visit with senior officers from the department and Minister Grace to see the impact to classrooms. Everything has to be torn out. I did not quite appreciate it until going there. The artificial turf and everything touched by the floodwaters has been compromised and needs to be replaced. When we were there the men and women from QBuild were already onsite doing a fantastic job in restoring that school and readying it for reopening.

It was a great opportunity to stress-test the Milton State School's new vertical learning centre, purpose-built as part of the flood mitigation. I acknowledge the leadership of Principal Paul Zernicke. He is an excellent principal. We are so fortunate to have him in our electorate. He is a wonderful guy and has transformed that school. I of course want to acknowledge our people—people like the Torwood Tumblers, the residents of Torwood Street who formed their own mud army to clean out homes, hose down walls, take people in and make meals. They generally just looked after each other, which is what we need in times of real hardship. Kim Scubris, whom we would all recognise as a local journalist, Caylie Jeffery and Kerry Forsythe from Paddington Then and Now worked together with Heidi McKellar from Bardon Girl Guides to run a donation drive for people impacted. Community continue to do fantastic work for those who are very vulnerable through these circumstances. There is Meals on Wheels Ashgrove, for which I am a proud volunteer. When the roads were shut down they actually walked meals to their clients. They are a really proud and hardworking community group.

The Ashgrove/The Gap Lions Club, with support from Meat at Billy's, Gerbino's and Newstead Brewing Co, helped me to throw a street party in Ashgrove for those impacted in the area. I mention the legends at Picklehead Pickles—including Mike Hilburger—Rode Meats, Elementi Restaurant in Paddo and the boys at Nasty Barber who punched out hundreds of gourmet paninis for our hardworking volunteers over the period. I personally thank all of our first responders who really have not stopped working through this period. Police have helped out with additional patrols through this time.

While I am on my feet, I acknowledge the hardworking paramedics who have had to continue to deliver quality health care to people impacted through this time. One patient they assisted was my niece, who prematurely went into labour with her first child in the middle of the floods in Gympie. She is on the south side. She was cut off completely by floodwaters. Three ambulances were used to get her from Gympie to the Royal in Brisbane. We all are very excited and relieved by the birth of Ardyn. I am now a great-aunt.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Congratulations, member. If you ever want to learn anything more about bunkers, come and have a round of golf with me!



**Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (6.26 pm): I start by offering my condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives during the floods. I particularly pay my respects to Meryll Dray, the SES volunteer who died serving our community, trying to save so many. I pass on my condolences to her family and friends.

My electorate of Capalaba received a record amount of rain—855 millimetres over three days. We were quite fortunate: our waterways were quite clear and it got out to the ocean. A number of people were hit by flash flooding and roof damage. I thank the SES volunteers for fielding so many calls and covering up so many roofs in people's hour of need. I also thank the council staff who filled up a record number of sandbags during this period of time—so many that the machine broke down. I hope council will replace the machine. It just shows how many sandbags were used across my community.

What happened in my local area? Three sporting clubs that border Tingalpa Creek went under quite significantly, Leslie Harrison Dam reached 173 per cent capacity and we saw water inundate three fantastic clubs: the Capalaba Greyhound Club, the Capalaba Warriors Rugby League Club and the Capalaba Bulldogs Soccer Club. I was able to go down to the Capalaba Warriors. President Tanya Bonney and the crew were there helping to clean out the mud. The water was only 30 centimetres away from the top level, which held a lot of their gear. There would have been total devastation if it went over that. I thank the New Zealand Warriors, who helped their warriors in arms with the clean-up. It means a lot to the club. Some of the Capalaba Bulldogs' goalposts might be at Stradbroke or Moreton Island by now. They lost fencing and goalposts. I really hope that Redland City Council comes to the party on the replacement of that fencing, because the club has the season coming up. We have the \$5,000 grants, which are helping out, but that fencing is expensive and is needed for the safety of juniors at the club.

The Capalaba Greyhounds, a fantastic club run by John Catton, Erin and Patchy, got straight back into it. They have suffered floods and fires before but were caught out on this occasion. Racing Queensland has come to the party to help get that club back up and running. The kids were cleaning up the track. Hopefully races will resume there soon. I know that the greyhound industry is doing it particularly hard at the moment with Albion and Capalaba out. I hope they get back on their feet as soon as possible.

I mention Ricketts Road. I have spoken about this many times in this place. Ricketts Road is the main arterial north to the city. It is a council road, shared between Redland City Council and Brisbane City Council. I want to talk about the Brisbane City Council side. They have recently upgraded the intersection at Chelsea Road. They said that they would carry out flood mitigation, but it was absolutely hopeless. Well before the major rain came down on Friday night, that main arterial road was cut. They did a good job. The upgrade just around the corner at Green Camp Road, particularly at Tilley Road, where they put in culverts and major drainage, worked. They had an opportunity this time to do it right. We have gone through months and months of heartache and suffering due to traffic jams because of roadworks there. They could have upgraded this intersection and upgraded the road at the same time.

This is the last bit of two-lane road between Birkdale and the city. The Brisbane City Council only had to do another 80 metres on each side to upgrade the drainage and to upgrade the road to four lanes. They had the opportunity to do it, but they failed to do it. What did we see? We saw it go under before the major flooding occurred. It was closed off for days. As I said, this is one of the main arterial roads from Redlands to Brisbane City.

I thank the Premier and ministers for their hard work. I thank the public servants and emergency services staff who went above and beyond in this time of need. We cannot thank them enough. I know they do not get thanked a lot, but they came to the fore in this flood event.



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.30 pm): What began as two days of heavy rain became three and then four and then went on to escalate into what was the worst flood in at least 11 years. For some people it was the worst flood in a much longer time. Every catchment from Maryborough down was hit. This included not just my constituency which was heavily impacted but constituencies from Maryborough to the border and out past Toowoomba. I express my condolences to the families of those 13 people who lost their lives, including our SES volunteer. I offer my condolences to all those people who have lost a loved one at such a terrible time.

Our houses are very much our castles. Our house is often our retreat. It is our buffer. It is where we regenerate. It is where our family is. When our houses are breached there is something about us that is breached quite profoundly. There is a vulnerability that comes with that. We are stripped back of what we have and who we are. That is what a lot of people are dealing with in our state at the moment. It is very confronting and very difficult.

As a member of parliament, I am committed to doing everything I can to help every person in my electorate who has been impacted by these terrible floods. There are some things I will always remember. I will remember people rushing to save things as the waters rose. I will remember people being fairly oblivious as the Brisbane River broke its banks and headed towards houses. Some people

could not accept what was happening and needed help to evacuate. These are very difficult things. It is difficult to know that Pamphlet Bridge is going to go under and that people's houses are going to go under. It was very clear by Saturday night that that was what was going to happen.

I am heartened by the level of community support and people looking out for each other. We bind together when we are under threat. I thank everybody in my community who did that and everybody who continues to do that for people. It is incredibly inspiring. As I have gone around my flooded streets, the level of engagement of people who are grateful for help, any help despite the fact that their lives have been turned upside down is inspiring.

I thank all of our frontline responders—those in QFES, the SES, police, councils, RoadTek, transport and rail; all those who did so much on the ground to help people. I say a big thank you to all of our leaders at Kedron. We have an incredible model in terms of disaster management. We put all our key people together. Everyone needed is right there to solve problems and they have to be solved quickly. We have the best in this state. I say thank you to all of our senior leaders in departments who do a magnificent job.

I thank the ADF that solved a problem of 4,000 pallets of food going off in Rocklea on a scale that is hard to fathom. I give a special shout-out to Brigadier Armstrong whom I worked with on that. Only the Army could deal with something of that scale. They did a magnificent job.

A lot of my sports clubs had severe impacts. South Brisbane District Cricket Club, Brisbane Knights Football Club, Yeronga Eagles Football Club and Olympic FC all had their clubhouses and buildings breached. Other clubs had impacts but not quite so severe. Thanks to everybody who supported those clubs in their clean-up.

At Milpera State High School 10 of their 11 buildings went under. Thanks to Yeronga State High School for looking after the students there.

When the chips are down, it is our role as MPs to be on the ground solving problems and dealing with the fact that people respond in all kinds of ways to a disaster. Sometimes they respond well and sometimes they respond not so well. Sometimes people have no idea what to do. We need to be on the ground to help them know what to do to be safe and to look out for other people.

I say a huge thank you to the Yeronga Community Centre. It came out of the 2011 floods on the south side. I thank Melinda, Billy and the team. I thank the Sherwood Neighbourhood Centre and the Clubhouse Moorooka. I thank all our community recovery staff in Minister Enoch's area. I thank Minister Enoch for her help in getting people on the ground to help constituents. I thank Minister Grace, who went out to see Milpera State High School. I thank the Premier. I thank Minister Hinchliffe, who was out seeing the South Brisbane District Cricket Club. I thank the member for Mount Ommaney, who was out on the ground helping people. It was pleasure to work with her. Let us hope we do not see another flood for a very long time.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 15 March (see p. 384), on motion of Ms Farmer—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.35 pm): I rise to address the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021. This legislation before the Queensland parliament, and as articulated via the explanatory notes, seeks to give effect to the Queensland government's commitments to permanently establish the Queensland Small Business Commissioner and a supporting office. In addition, this legislation provides a statutory basis for the commissioner's dispute resolution functions relating to retail tenancy disputes and enables mediation for commercial leasing and small business franchise disputes on an opt-in basis only. It is worth noting also that this legislation will, in effect, cease the operation of the temporary commissioner on commencement of the permanent Small Business Commissioner and, in doing so, will provide for the transition of the commissioner's role from being one of managing and responding to COVID-19 impacts to a role with a wider scope to support small business.

As articulated by the LNP's shadow minister for small and family business, the Liberal National Party will not be opposing this legislation. Indeed, the LNP opposition acknowledges the positive role that the existing Small Business Commissioner has played to date. That is why the Liberal National

Party is determined to ensure that the position of a permanent Small Business Commissioner is appropriately supported, with the power and independence required to ensure that the Labor state government treats small businesses fairly. To that end, there are a number of concerns that pertain to this legislation which warrant immediate attention, which is why the Liberal National Party will be moving the amendments as circulated by the LNP's shadow minister for small and family business.

Perhaps one of the most concerning aspects of this legislation is the level of degree to which the Small Business Commissioner will be independent of the state government. As the legislation allows for the minister to give a written direction, a number of submitters to the Education, Employment and Training Committee highlighted their concerns, including—

To truly advocate on behalf of business is likely to be a challenge for the office, given that it is a body that reports to the Minister.

Further, the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman submitted—

The concern with the ministerial direction power is that it might be used to guide the commissioner away from subject matter that might be awkward or difficult for government of the day.

In response to these concerns, the committee was advised by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training—

Under Clause 17(3), the Commissioner will be required to include details in its annual report of any Ministerial direction during the financial year, and the actions taken by the Commissioner as a result of the direction.

Given the integrity and accountability crisis that is engulfing the state Labor government, Queenslanders have every right to question the real independence that will be granted to the Small Business Commissioner under the legislation as it is currently proposed. This is particularly true given the serious allegations of previous interference and altering of annual reports provided to the Labor state government.

This legislation is full of missed opportunities which could have brought further protections and support for small businesses. However, this is not surprising given the Palaszczuk state Labor government's inability to understand the needs of small and family businesses, let alone even consult with the small business sector. Nowhere has this been more evident than throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, where small businesses across Queensland have been crying out for economic support.

As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for education, and following the release of the Labor government's return-to-school plan, I was contacted by a number of business owners who provide and organise school camps, outdoor activities and associated services for Queensland schools. Whilst I acknowledge and accept the expert health advice in relation to the suspension of all school camps from the commencement of term 1, the decision had serious repercussions for these providers at the time who received no consultation or consideration prior to the state government's announcement.

Each year, the first term of school is the equivalent of the Christmas trading season for this industry, and the Labor government's decision, with no economic support and no understanding of the job implications, has had a devastating and negative financial impact on these providers and businesses at the time. The desperate pleas of this business sector for support from the Palaszczuk state Labor government have been absolutely ignored, as evidenced during the last sitting week when the Labor Minister for Education, in response to a question without notice, told this House—

I have not had too many complaints about our back-to-school policy. I have not had condemnation about what we did. The system is working extremely well.

Such a statement has been reported to me by camp businesses right across Queensland as being insulting given the economic hardship they have experienced as small business owners and operations.

In my remaining time I wish to acknowledge the incredibly challenging circumstances that local small and family businesses in my electorate of Moggill have had endure, especially over the last two years of the COVID-19 health pandemic. There are many small business owners and operators including: Lance and Christine Zhou from Plum Cafe; Jamie Stewart from Cafe Bliss; Reagan Nongkhlaw and Urvik Bhalani from Method to the Madness Cafe; Colin Hobson and Tamara Ward from MoccaBella Cafe at Bellbowrie; Russell and Tracy Thompson from the Mount Crosby Post Office, General Store & Cafe; and Eric Samra at Karana Downs.

All of these small business owners and operators have had to face significant challenges throughout the COVID pandemic. I certainly acknowledge them and many other small business owners and operators for what they have had to endure given the circumstances of the health pandemic and


the restrictions that had to be enacted, which were necessary to control the community transmission of COVID. There were certainly significant impacts for them, for their small businesses and for those who worked within those businesses.

Through countless and regular visits that I have undertaken and continue to undertake with local small and family businesses, as well as through my active involvement with both the Brisbane West Chamber of Commerce and the Brisbane Inner West Chamber of Commerce, I constantly receive feedback about just how devastating the Palaszczuk state Labor government's lack of interest and economic support has been over the last two years when compared with other state jurisdictions. As the local state member for Moggill, I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the amazing resilience and determination of business owners and their employees to persevere in the face of devastating economic impacts, coupled with, as I have said, a noticeable lack of targeted financial support by the Palaszczuk state Labor government for the small business sector.

It is so imperative that small businesses in the electorate of Moggill and across the western suburbs of Brisbane—and, indeed, throughout the state of Queensland—are given every support possible to rebuild and recover from the COVID-19 health pandemic and the associated economic circumstances. After two years of economic hardship and heartache, Queensland's small and family businesses deserve nothing less.

There is also no doubt that there has been a mental health impact in this sector. Being a member of the Mental Health Select Committee, we heard testimony in relation to the business sector on one of our regional visits to Bundaberg. Information was provided by some of the submitters there back to committee. I am sure, without pre-empting the determinations and deliberations of the committee, there is concern as to those impacts in that sector, let alone what is being experienced by Queenslanders in various areas, whether that be here in Brisbane or across rural, regional and remote Queensland.

Finally, I thank all submitters who contributed to the Education, Employment and Training Committee's consideration of this legislation and also the secretariat for the work they do. I also acknowledge all committee members on that parliamentary committee including the deputy chair, the LNP's member for Southern Downs, and the LNP's member for Theodore.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (6.44 pm): I am very pleased to rise in support of the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021, which confirms our government's commitment made at the 2020 state election to make the role of Small Business Commissioner a permanent position. As was noted in the parliamentary report, the complexity of the operating environment for small business increased considerably in 2020 following the impact of measures to reduce the spread of COVID—and we are now seeing even further impacts through these recent floods.

In March 2020, when our state—and, indeed, the country—went into its first significant lockdown, I was contacted by a number of local businesses in my electorate who sought assistance and who specifically had concerns around their retail leases. It was very stressful for those businesses. I recall making individual calls to leasing agents and centre management representatives to see what assistance could be provided.

Some were fantastic to deal with. They understood the pressures being faced by their tenants during an unprecedented period and at that time what was a real unknown. We were not sure when things would resume. They supported those tenants with rent relief, delayed payments and other measures. There were some landlords, frankly, who were very disappointing and, if anything, made it more difficult for their tenants during this time.

Certainly, when national cabinet endorsed the mandatory code of conduct SME commercial leasing principles, which applied to all tenancies that were suffering financial stress or hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, things did settle, but it was really the decision of our government to appoint a temporary Small Business Commissioner to oversee and implement this national code that proved most helpful. Maree Adshead was a fantastic choice for Small Business Commissioner. She and her office hit the ground running by providing the dispute resolution support that many small businesses were seeking, including the provision of mediation for leasing disputes rather than a more costly and time-consuming court process.

The proposed legislation will provide a statutory basis for the commissioner's dispute resolution functions relating to retail tenancy disputes and enable mediation for commercial leasing and small business franchise disputes on an opt-in basis. Importantly, the legislation will also broaden the role of the commissioner from its previous arrangements focused primarily on managing and responding to COVID-19 impacts to a role with wider application to support small businesses, including an advocacy role.

The current commissioner continues to administer mediation for both eligible COVID-19 affected leasing dispute matters—retail shop leases and other commercial leases—and small business tenancy disputes. We know the percentage of matters received by the temporary commissioner's office involving small business tenancy disputes has increased over time, and we do anticipate that these disputes are likely to increase further as the economy progressively recovers and the services of the commissioner become more widely known. I think anything we can do to provide a clear pathway tailored to our small businesses in Queensland to get the information they need and to resolve disputes faster and more easily is welcomed and will support them to reduce costs and red tape.

From our government's perspective, we want to do all we can to drive Queensland's private sector employment. In my own electorate, 97 per cent of all businesses are small businesses, and I work closely with our small businesses to further their requirements and needs. I am very fortunate to also have three very effective and constructive chambers of commerce—with the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce and the Logan Regional Chamber of Commerce—who work hard and advocate for their members.

I do wish to single out the Logan Regional Chamber of Commerce and president Chyerl Pridham, who is an incredibly strong supporter of training for young people in our Logan region, particularly in new and growing areas like mine, Flagstone and Yarrabilba, which is in the member for Logan's electorate. In fact, Chyerl and the chamber have gone as far as to get a Queensland government grant for a chamber bus that helps to transport our high school students to training opportunities when they have no access to transport. It is such a fantastic initiative and I was really pleased to be there when they launched the bus. Importantly, Chyerl and the chamber see the benefit for their members—which is trained workers who can then take on available jobs in those businesses.

The Queensland government supported this initiative, and of course over the last two years we have seen significant funding to support our small businesses—though, if you were listening to those opposite, you would think that the Queensland government did not provide one single cent to small businesses over the last two years. In fact, it is quite the opposite: \$1 billion in COVID-19 job support loans were delivered between March and September 2020. They were able to directly assist 7,000 Queensland businesses, supporting 86,000 local jobs. We provided up to \$950 million in payroll tax relief including refunds, payment holidays and deferrals for eligible businesses, and we ensured that all JobKeeper payments were exempt from Queensland payroll tax.

We also delivered \$400 million in support for retail and commercial tenants as land tax relief and payment deferrals. Our Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant Program was highly successful. Close to \$900,000 was handed out in the Jordan electorate to support businesses to pivot their work practices, adapt to new ideas or simply assist with keeping their businesses going and, of course, the \$600 million in COVID-19 Business Support Grants jointly funded with the federal government. I was pleased to see almost \$2 million for Logan small businesses and over \$960,000 for those in Ipswich. Many of my local businesses told me how helpful those grants were following the last lockdown in SEQ.

Of course, we are also providing funding beyond COVID-19 support. Our \$100 million Business Investment Fund is specifically targeting government investments in small- and medium sized businesses that are creating Queensland based jobs, have a proven product, but require significant capital to aggressively build scale or grow market share—companies like Gilmour Space Technologies, which is supporting our burgeoning space industry; Buildsafe on the Gold Coast, which is looking to add an additional 40 staff to its company; or Brisbane sports technology company VALD Performance, which is on the cutting edge of musculoskeletal testing for health and performance.


Businesses that are just starting out are also being supported by our government, and I have had great feedback about our Business Basics grants. One of our local Jordan business owners told me that getting the grant gave them the boost to believe in themselves, knowing our government was backing them as well. I have seen the value of our small business grants across my electorate, and whether it is the Business Basics grants, the Business Boost grants or the Social Enterprise Growth grants, small businesses know that our government is here to support them with ongoing financial assistance and support.

One measure I have been really happy to see is the growth of the Small Business Friendly Program. I know it is something the current Small Business Commissioner has certainly been championing. Local governments, Queensland government agencies and large enterprises all play a part in either enabling or restricting the growth and prosperity of small businesses throughout Queensland. We also know that in Queensland there are more than 452,000 small businesses. Small businesses employ more than 914,000 people—around 42 per cent of the private sector workforce—and they contribute around \$120 billion to the Queensland economy. We know that, whilst they may be

small in size, small business makes a big impact and their value cannot be ignored. Small businesses are significant job creators and employers and they contribute to our economy, so it makes sense that we help them succeed.

It has been fantastic to see a number of local governments in Queensland join the program and become Small Business Friendly councils. In fact, Ipswich City Council in my patch was the first council to sign up. I was there along with my Ipswich-based parliamentary colleagues and the Small Business Commissioner for the official ceremony. Logan City Council has also signed up, which is fantastic news. The program is really driven by a series of simple yet powerful commitments by Small Business Friendly members to improve the way they transact, interact and support small businesses across Queensland. There are around 25 local governments in Queensland that have joined the program, and that is encouraging. It is great to see that some state government departments are also taking on the commitment to be small business friendly and join the program.

We know that the economic effects of the Covid-19 global pandemic will continue to be felt for quite some time, so it is more important than ever that we support small businesses within our local communities. I would like to thank the Minister for Small Business, who has always been a strong and passionate advocate. She is continually out there spruiking and supporting our businesses. The minister and our government recognise that the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021 is one way we can provide tangible assistance and long-term support for our local businesses. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021, which was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by the Hon. Di Farmer, Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development and referred to the committee on 12 October 2021. Thirteen submissions to the inquiry into the bill were received. When introducing the bill, the minister stated—

The main objectives of the proposed bill are: to enhance the operating environment for small business in Queensland and to reduce the time and costs associated with resolving disputes involving small businesses.

The explanatory notes state that the objectives of the bill are—

... to give effect to the Queensland Government's commitments to permanently establish a Queensland Small Business Commissioner and a supporting office ... provide a statutory basis for the commissioner's dispute resolution functions relating to retail tenancy disputes and enable mediation for commercial leasing and small business franchise disputes on an opt-in basis only ... cease the operation of the temporary commissioner on commencement of the permanent commissioner ... to transition the temporary commissioner role from its previous arrangements focused primarily on managing and responding to COVID-19 impacts to a role with wider application to support small businesses.

As further stated in the explanatory notes—

In April 2020, National Cabinet endorsed the Mandatory Code of Conduct SME Commercial Leasing Principles during COVID-19 (the National Code), which applied to all tenancies that were suffering financial stress or hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as defined by their eligibility for the Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper program.

As part of Queensland's approach to implementing the national code, provision was made for a temporary small business commissioner to be established under the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020. The temporary commissioner was appointed to deliver advocacy and dispute resolution functions for Queensland small businesses, including: providing information and advisory services to the public about matters relevant to small businesses, particularly in relation to the COVID-19 response measures; assisting small businesses in reaching an informal resolution for disputes relating to small business leases; and administering a mediation process prescribed by regulation for responding to the COVID-19 emergency in relation to small business tenancy disputes.

The regulation was extended by the COVID-19 Emergency Response and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020. While the appointment of the temporary commissioner was initially scheduled to expire 31 December 2021, the extension act removed the reference to this expiry date. While all submitters supported the bill's objective to permanently establish a Queensland Small Business Commissioner, there were a number of issues raised. These concerns included: the independence of the commissioner; the definition of small business; functions of the commissioner; the scope of disputes for which the commissioner should provide mediation; and mediation fees.

The lack of definition of what constitutes a small business is a valid concern. Some submitters recommended that specific definitions or criteria be included in the bill. In its response to submissions I note the department said there was no single definition of small business that is used consistently across government legislation or programs in Australia and that on balance it was considered that not defining small business in the bill allows some flexibility and discretion for the commissioner to support businesses that are small in nature but may sit just outside a definition based on full-time-equivalent or maximum turnover.

As stated in the explanatory notes, the proposed functions of the commissioner are—

- To provide a central point of contact in relation to matters affecting small businesses; and
- To provide information and advisory services to the public about matters relating to small businesses; and
- To assist parties reaching an informal resolution for small business disputes, including by facilitating the exchange of information between parties; and
- To provide alternative dispute resolution services and administer a mediation process for small business disputes; and
- To advocate on behalf of small businesses to the State, the Commonwealth, another State or a local government, or any another entity involved in administering matters relevant to small businesses; and
- To work collaboratively with the equivalent of the small business commissioner in other States or the Commonwealth to enhance conditions for small businesses; and
- To perform the functions conferred on the commissioner under another Act; and
- To carry out other activities to further the objects of the Act, as directed by the Minister.

A number of submitters commented on the independence of the commissioner's role, noting that to truly advocate on behalf of business it is likely to be a challenge for the office given that it is a body that reports to the minister. Also, it is important that the commissioner has an appropriate degree of independence from government. The concern with ministerial direction is that it might be used to guide the commissioner away from subject matter that might be awkward or difficult for the government of the day. The member for Buderim, Brent Mickelberg, the shadow minister for small business, will be moving an amendment to address these concerns.

Part 3 of the bill prescribes the requirements and processes associated with the commission's mediation function. The commissioner is to provide informal dispute resolution assistance and administer a voluntary mediation process for small business disputes.

Debate, on motion of Mr Weir, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Queensland Floods, Recovery



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (7.00 pm): The South-East Queensland floods hit parts of the community of Logan hard, but there is a reason we say in Logan 'You've gotta love Logan.' From sporting clubs to the State Emergency Service, the council and its awesome members of parliament, Logan is ready every day to help when it is needed most. When the rains hit, the Logan SES based at Daisy Hill were there, as they always are. I would like to pay tribute to Fiona Vickers, group leader at the Logan East SES, who led the locals in orange helping other locals. They filled sandbags with help from the PCYC cadets from Slacks Creek, they responded to hundreds of calls for assistance, and they helped the Logan City Council set up the evacuation centre in Crestmead as the rain kept thundering down.

Some of our sporting clubs were hard hit by flood damage while others stood ready to help them. Take the Springwood Sharks Little Athletics, for example, where my own kids compete. They lost almost everything in this deluge, again. The nearby Meadowbrook Golf Club offered storage space before the muddy waters rose so some equipment was saved, but their sheds and the canteen all went under. It was heartbreaking for the club and its members, but our community is rallying around to support them.


On Saturday, club members, their families and community members showed up to clean up and salvage what we could. Special thanks go to Tracey, Matt, Nick, Rachael, Rob, Kiri, Carmel, Tahlia, Rebecca, David, Darren, Tim and Simon. I would like to extend thanks to the Rotary Club of Rochedale-South East Technology Park. They called in an organisation called the Merciful Servants who lent us four brand new petrol Karchers and hose reel sets for the day. I would also like to give a shout-out to Eden Morris from the Springwood Youth Advisory Committee, who turned out and sweated in the mud with the rest of us for hours.

The Slacks Creek Tigers Rugby League Club held a fundraising night with the profits to go to another club, the Sharks. The Tigers are one of hundreds of examples of clubs that have mobilised volunteers across South-East Queensland to help in the recovery effort. They became an informal community hub, alongside the formal community hubs established by the Palaszczuk government. They opened up their clubhouse so those displaced could have a shower, charge their mobile phones or have a cuppa. They made it a place where others could put their arms around those in need. They joined forces with Community Clubs Logan and Woodridge North State School to serve hot meals, and Tigers volunteers went out into the community to help households who needed a hand cleaning up.



It would be impossible to list all of the amazing examples of community spirit that have shone through the devastation of these floods, but on behalf of everyone in this state—who are again reminded of why we are so proud to be Queenslanders—we say thank you.

### **Southern Downs Electorate, Inglewood Floods**


 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.03 pm): We have been talking about floods today and I was impressed to hear the contributions by members on all sides about the floods which have affected parts of Queensland. I thought I might take an opportunity during the adjournment to inform the House of the flooding which occurred in Inglewood late last year. I am sure the House would pardon me for having left the sitting early that week to try to get to my electorate and visit the people of Inglewood who had been affected by floods. Inglewood is on the confluence of a brook and a creek and if they both flood at the same time then the town becomes inundated. Unfortunately, on the night of 30 November and 1 December, that is what happened and there was only a relatively small amount of notice that that was going to happen. The Goondiwindi Regional Council and the mayor, Lawrence Springwood, and his councillors did a great job in organising and leading the emergency response there.

I was not able to get to the town until 2 December because it was completely isolated. When I got there, I was amazed and delighted to see that the community—like so many others around the state in recent times—had pulled together. Strangers were there to help people out. It was mostly the main street in the town of Inglewood which was affected. Small businesses were inundated and many of them lost stock and trade and suffered damage to their buildings. I think in particular of Trish, who is a well-loved shopfront operator who runs the newsagent in Inglewood. She had her shop inundated and because her living quarters were at the back of the shop she also had her own home inundated. I take my hat off to the courage and the grit that she showed to get her business up and running to serve the community again as soon as possible.

I was very pleased to bring the opposition leader and the shadow minister for local government, disaster recovery and volunteers to Inglewood to meet people and see what had happened there. One thing that was clear to us was that people had volunteered en masse to pull the community together—particularly SES and rural fire brigade volunteers who had come from far and wide. I spoke to people who had come from Jondaryan, Dalby and so forth and that was wonderful to see.

There is a need for better flood management for Inglewood, including a better place for an evacuation site, because the evacuation site itself was very nearly inundated, as well as other measures which may protect the town and its folk in future. I know that the Goondiwindi Regional Council is going to lead on this. I would ask the state government to please give the Goondiwindi Regional Council every possible assistance and funding to assist them with that very good work. I take my hat off to the people of Inglewood. I will be taking the shadow minister for small business and training, Brent Mickelberg, to Inglewood in the coming weeks to introduce him to some of the businesses.

### **Federal Government, Performance**


 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (7.06 pm): I rise to speak on the federal government's dereliction of duty in properly supporting its constituents in my region. It is always a case of too little too late from this tired and terminal federal government. When it comes to disaster funding, aged care, ensuring there are enough GPs in our communities or even just making sure a constituent can receive their mail, this federal government has let the people of my region down time and time again.

Why does the Morrison government continually show such contempt for this state? Why is it that he cannot offer the same amount of support to flood-affected Queenslanders as he does to those in New South Wales? The Bureau of Meteorology, which is another agency victim of the LNP's continued infatuation with cutting public services—and I thank the member for Keppel for bringing that to our attention in Rockhampton—has confirmed that this was the biggest weather event to impact Queensland in recorded history, but apparently that is not good enough for this Prime Minister. Where is the party that purports to represent farmers, graziers and remote and regional Queensland?

Another area of concern—or should I say a lack of concern—from the federal government is their response to the royal commission into aged care. I have sent correspondence and also supported the QNMU in this space, only to be met with silence from the federal LNP and also those opposite. This is another example of a government that shirks its responsibilities. Not only can my constituents not rely on their federal representatives to support them in old age, but now under this government they can no longer even expect to be able to see a doctor within a humane time frame. I can think of two former premiers from the opposite side who would be rolling in their graves whilst Queensland does not get its fair share from Canberra. Live up to that legacy.

Residents of Black Mountain woke up last week to find their postal service will be cut off without any consultation, forcing residents to purchase PO boxes just to get their post. This is an unreasonable extra expense imposed on residents who are already struggling with the impacts of flooding and cost-of-living pressures exacerbated by this federal government, which has all but given up governing. The national Country Party should rename itself the thylacine party because like the Tasmanian tiger it does not exist.

### **Beyond DV, HOPE Hub**

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.09 pm): I rise this evening to acknowledge the people and organisations who have come together to create a new and innovative response to domestic and family violence in the Chatsworth electorate and beyond. As a member of parliament I am privileged to meet many inspiring people, and the highlight for me was meeting a woman by the name of Carolyn Robinson. I met Carolyn a few years ago, when she established an organisation in my electorate called Beyond DV. As a result of a lived experience supporting a loved one through a domestic violence situation, it sparked a fire within her to start an organisation and create programs to help women and children rebuild their lives following domestic violence. Fast-forward to now, and Carolyn and the team at Beyond DV have pioneered incredible change in their response to family and domestic violence. They have created many one-of-a-kind programs for women and children to rebuild after experiencing domestic violence and have also launched educational programs such as their Love & Learn Teen app, which aims to educate young women and men on healthy relationships and what they look like.


Last week I was honoured to attend the opening of Beyond DV's latest concept, the HOPE Hub, located in the heart of the Chatsworth electorate at Westfield Carindale. This new space is incredibly powerful as it creates a safe and discreet place for women and children to access vital information, referrals and support when escaping domestic violence. During the opening ceremony we heard firsthand the positive impacts that programs like this can have. Cathy, for example, a survivor of domestic violence, gave an inspiring insight into how the support and empowerment from Beyond DV has enabled her to rebuild her life and achieve major goals. It is incredible what can be accomplished when the community comes together.

A huge thank you goes to Westfield Carindale for partnering with Beyond DV on this project and the suppliers, contractors and retailers who donated goods and services to get this hub up and running. A mention must also go to Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust for a \$30,000 grant towards furnishing the hub, and the state government, which has funded an employee to work within the space. This is a great example of various levels of government working together to achieve a common goal.

To Carolyn, her husband, Craig, the Beyond DV staff and board members: thank you for all that you have done in making this a reality. It is amazing to see this concept come to life after only about eight months. Although it is sad that places like the HOPE Hub even need to exist, I am so pleased that there is now another place for women and children to reach out to during their darkest times, to have a safe and accessible place to go when they are at their lowest—a network to support them and to give them hope. On behalf of the Chatsworth community, I thank everyone who has contributed to this important program. Domestic and family violence is a scourge on society.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): They are indeed a wonderful organisation.

### **Rockhampton Base Hospital, Staff**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.12 pm): I recently had the pleasure of welcoming 40 new medical interns to the Rockhampton Base Hospital. Rockhampton and Central Queensland will be home to the new interns as they start the next stage of their medical careers. They will work in various specialist areas for a couple of months at a time to gain a broad knowledge of the health system. Through this training process, our interns will be positioned well for the future. The Central Queensland Health workforce was further boosted with the intake of graduate nurses.


Our hospital staff have been working in very trying times in meeting the increased client demand. I thank all of our health staff. I hope the recent intake of these health professionals will help ease workloads. I hope the new medical staff enjoy their time in Rockhampton and Central Queensland and make our region home permanently. I was doing a radio interview regarding our new medical interns with Michael J Bailey from local radio station 4RO. You could hear the excitement in his voice. I am sure a lot of other listeners in the regions would have been excited as well.

I also would like to thank the wonderful staff who have been working at the Rockhampton vaccination hub, providing vaccines for the Central Queensland community. They have done an excellent job. They have been not only working in the hub but also travelling around Central Queensland providing vaccinations. Like all of us in the House know, travelling away from our home base has an impact on our loved ones. I also thank their families and friends for the support they have provided.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Belinda, nurse unit manager; Candice, Director of Nursing—COVID; Chloe and Maria, pharmacists; Angela and Hannah, lead admin; and Liz, Helen, Suzanne, Robyn, Glen, Karen, Louise, Jessica, Allison and Sarah and my son Harry who are just a few of the nurses who have worked tirelessly for the Central Queensland community.

I know that there have been challenging times in delivering the vaccinations to our community and to the very vulnerable, particularly those who are unable to leave their homes. I know that the staff in the Central Queensland hospital and health district have done outreach work to support those very vulnerable people, and I thank them on behalf of the Central Queensland community. To all our health staff I say: you have done an amazing job in very challenging times, and on behalf of the Central Queensland community I thank you.

### **Mooloolaba Harbour, Report**

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (7.15 pm): A report about fixing the dangerous Mooloolah River entrance for boaties must be released urgently. The Minister for Transport needs to release the Mooloolaba Harbour breakwater extension study now so that the public is aware of the options the government is considering and so that the best solution for marine safety and the environment is chosen.


The report's release date has shifted as much as the sand in front of the entrance to this vital harbour. This harbour entrance is like a highway for those who are in the marine industry, whether it is the marine pilots who go out of Mooloolaba to service and keep safe the ships coming in and out of Moreton Bay, the fishers who supply our beautiful Mooloolaba prawns and other seafood or the recreational boaties. It is a vital service. They need to be able to get safely in and out of this trained harbour entrance into Mooloolaba Harbour.

The shoaling sands have become incredibly treacherous. Dredging attempts have helped, but the problem with the shoaling has become so bad that, where dredging cannot effectively clear it, boats have had to come in at right angles to the harbour entrance, with massive waves then coming at them at right angles, and we have seen boats come to grief.

This should be a safe harbour entrance, but currently it is not. That is why an extensive study was done. However, the study report has not been released. We were told by the government that it would be released by the end of 2020. Then in February 2021 they said they were doing more work. Finally, Minister Bailey told the parliament it would be available in November 2021, yet we are still to see this report. In November 2021, in the minister's response to my question on notice, he advised again that he requested the report be completed. I asked Minister Bailey again in December if the report had been completed. To date, as far as I am aware, there is still no response.

We are waiting for this desperately needed report. The delay is putting lives at risk. We do need the right solution for safety and the right solution for the environment because river mouths are complex. The report relating to those matters needs to be released, and the public must be consulted. There needs to be action, because while the delays occur more lives are at risk. It is time for action. It is time to have no more secrecy and it is time that the public saw those options and the best solution was chosen to make it safe.

### **Bribie Island Community Kindergarten**

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (7.18 pm): In the midst of our flood clean-up and recovery, today I have a good news story to share from the Pumicestone community about our prized Bribie Island Community Kindergarten. The heartbeat of Bribie kindy is Narelle Dawson, who has been with the kindy as educator and leader for 28 years. Bribie kindy is one of only 34 kindergartens in Australia and only nine in Queensland that are rated as 'excellent'. 'Excellent' is the highest possible rating under the national quality framework by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

Narelle and her team of educators and volunteers have maintained Bribie kindy's excellent rating since 2014. Anyone who has any familiarity whatsoever with the framework knows what an incredibly impressive achievement and a huge commitment maintaining that rating has been for them. Narelle describes herself modestly as 'like part of the furniture at kindy'. She says there is no place like it and she would not want to be anywhere else. I can absolutely see why.

It is truly a delight to visit the kindy. You walk through the gate into a joyous, fantastical space that is nestled under spreading native trees located in Bongaree. The kindy is not shiny or fancy. The play spaces and equipment are creatively recycled and re-used like the upcycled sailboat that has been reinvented for young adventurers. The kindy team support families in challenging social and economic circumstances, and every single day they enrich the lives, the education and the early start for our youngest Pumicestonians.

First Nations people are central to the success of Bribie kindy. I acknowledge community elder Uncle Ron, who generously shows up at kindy every single day to share the stories and cultural knowledge of our Gubbi Gubbi and Joondubarri peoples with the kids. I really welcome the news that Bribie Island Community Kindergarten will receive enhanced support as part of the Kindy Uplift program along with 12 other kindies in our community. I thank and acknowledge Minister Grace for that support.

What shines brightest about Bribie Island Community Kindergarten is how they teach the value of community. Narelle says, 'Teaching community matters because our kids in turn grow up to be people who support and build community.' Even while dealing with the aftermath of the floods, which did impact the kindy, Narelle and the kindy teamed up with local teacher Nick Eddy to spearhead the Bribie Island flood relief network that donated supplies and had them shipped down to the New South Wales Northern Rivers. They made the kindy a drop-off and temporary storage location for donations, pooled together resources and organised the transport of donated items.

Bribie kindy absolutely epitomises our strong community spirit on Bribie. It delights me more than I can say that the young people of Pumicestone have one of the best kindies of Australia in their community.

### Queensland Floods, South Brisbane Electorate



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (7.21 pm): Twice now in the space of 11 years my community has experienced devastating flooding. Queensland is a huge state and weather extremes go along with much of the territory, but climate change is making disasters more frequent, more extreme and less predictable. In the past few weeks it has been the most marginalised who have been hit the hardest. It has been renters, pensioners, migrant families and people with disabilities who have faced power outages, flooding, displacement, lost possessions, damaged housing and a huge clean-up ahead of them. Financial support, we are hearing from the ground, has been lacking.

The government launched a grants program, which was initially meant to close after seven days. After seven days many of these people are still dealing with clean-up and the smell of mud is still on their clothes. Thankfully, the time for people to apply for these grants has been extended, but these grants contrast rather sharply with the federal grants of \$1,000 per adult promptly paid to claimants. The state grants are too small, too hard to apply for and too narrow in terms of who can get them.

Let's contrast them with the help available from the state government after the 2011 floods: a first round of \$1,000 per person affected by the floods and a second round of up to \$100,000 to help with rehoming people and rebuilding homes. We simply have not seen this level of leadership in the current floods. It is this government's common approach to grants and community support that we have seen, including during the pandemic. It is not enough to announce grants and programs for individuals or small businesses if eligibility is too narrow, they close too quickly or they expire when a tiny pot of money runs out. Even now with the pandemic still going, people and small business are calling out for help, with many grants that were available in 2020 no longer available.

Joining members of my local community in the flood clean-up, I was struck by seeing everyday people clean up the mess made by fossil fuel companies and property developers, who have been let off the hook. Developers in Queensland, facilitated by the councils and state government, have made huge gains from building cheap housing on flood plains. They have been allowed to build higher and wider and with more car parking than stipulated in neighbourhood plans while local residents have no say. With low infrastructure charges and skyrocketing house prices, they have made millions in profit but are completely off the hook when it comes to the clean-up. If we were to put a tax on their windfalls from rezoning, enact inclusionary zoning and lift caps on infrastructure charges, we would make a start towards ensuring that the big end of town pays its way. We also need a ban on development on flood plains, offer house buybacks and mandate that apartment blocks have flood response plans to protect people and possessions. Our campaigns to expand riverside parkland would help flood-proof our city as well. Parkland in places like Riverside Drive and the former ABC site in Maiwar is a much more flood-proof use of land than cramming housing onto it and putting people at risk.

### **Scleroderma; Motor Neurone Disease; Usman Khawaja**



**Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.24 pm): What a start to 2022! In between COVID and then the floods that have hit Queensland I had the opportunity to meet with a couple of fantastic advocates for some rare health conditions, and I want to shine a light on these today. First, I met with Rose, a Mount Ommaney local, who has a condition called scleroderma. The word scleroderma comes from two Greek words: 'sclero', meaning hard and 'derma' meaning skin. As well as the skin being affected, the internal organs and joints can also be involved. It is a complex disease, it is often difficult to diagnose and the symptoms can range from mild to very serious.

My father had a cousin who was diagnosed at a relatively young age with this awful condition. Alison was an amazing woman who had very severe symptoms for as long as I knew her. What I did not realise before meeting Rose was the variability of symptoms that people with scleroderma could experience, although some could experience relatively normal lives. I really appreciated the opportunity to meet with Rose because I learned something really important that day.

People with scleroderma really love living in Queensland because of our warm weather. The cold weather is terrible for people with the condition. It makes it painful and uncomfortable. For that reason Queensland has a high proportion of the overall number of Australians with the condition because if they are not born here they often end up settling here, as was the case for my dad's cousin who came to Melbourne from New Zealand before moving to Brisbane. There are 30,000-odd people in Australia with scleroderma and many of them live here in Queensland. I am also informed that Cairns in particular is a very popular location to move to for people with the condition. I ask every member in the House to take five minutes to learn about it if they have not heard of the condition. If I had not had a family member with it, I certainly would not know about it. It is something for us all to think about.

I also want to highlight the amazing work of Mount Ommaney local Wayne Cooper on his recent completion of the Tassie Overland trek, raising funds and awareness for motor neurone disease and Me Foundation. Shortly before he left, I met with Wayne, who is a member of our local RSL, and some fantastic advocates for motor neurone disease so they could tell me about their plans. Sadly, I expect most members of this House will have met someone who has or has had motor neurone disease. It is a cruel condition; it cuts young lives short. The motor neurone disease foundation, with the help of amazing volunteers and advocates like Terry, is aiming to change this by raising funds for a cure.

In the time remaining I want to reflect, which is unusual for me, on the stellar run that Usman Khawaja has had in the cricket this summer. We all know our mate Duncan Pegg was a massive 'Uzzie' fan; he had a picture of him in his room. When 'Uzzie' made it to the Ashes team, I realised that Duncan's time in heaven had been very well spent designing his ideal cricket team. When 'Uzzie' made his first ton this summer, I am not ashamed to say that I cried because I knew Duncan was up there watching, too.

Duncan was a huge advocate for health. He would want me to remind everybody that having a good relationship with your GP is vital because whether it is scleroderma, motor neurone or cancer, early detection is key.

### **Currumbin Electorate, Crime**



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.27 pm): I ask the members in this chamber to imagine themselves driving a friend home late on a Saturday night. They have just stopped at a local 7-Eleven in Coolangatta. This is the situation one local recounted to me last week—

We went and got a coffee and stood outside for about five minutes having a conversation. Then all of a sudden, I am bashed in the back of my head. I looked up and said 'why would you do that'. There were about ten of them, kids, with knives. They punched me to the ground, kicked my head in, and no one came to my defence.

When faced with situations like this, it is not good enough for this government to simply be concerned with how things look. They must actually be concerned with how things are. Last week the member for Burleigh and I held a crime forum at the Palm Beach Currumbin Sports Club. It was attended by 58 local residents, and this was just one of the horrifying stories that we heard.

Youth crime is running rampant in our state and police are very much aware of it. The problem is that these young offenders know that under a Labor government weak on crime they can get away with just a slap on the wrist. It was abundantly clear from our crime forum that the current youth justice system leaves much to be desired, both for the victims and for the youth offenders. At the forum we heard from Leisa Logan. Her team at Fight 4 Youth is an incredible organisation and I am extremely proud to have them in my electorate. Leisa has partnered with local schools to support suspended

students, vulnerable youth and young offenders with the early intervention programs that she runs. She is not currently funded but her organisation should be because Fight 4 Youth is achieving what this state government should be achieving when it comes to youth crime and young offenders.

Our local police at the Coolangatta and Palm Beach police stations are doing absolutely everything they can to support our community, but without the appropriate laws and the resources they need they can only do so much. Our local police attended our crime forum last week and I take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their time and for listening to the concerns of our community. I will always support our community and our local police and it is high time that the state government started doing the same, because the concerning increase in crime cannot be ignored by this government. Under Labor the Currumbin electorate has seen unlawful entry up by 51 per cent, assault up by 41 per cent, robbery up by 89 per cent and sexual offences up by a staggering 94 per cent. These statistics cannot be ignored and the Labor government must start listening to the community and must start doing more in terms of the youth justice system and its laws. Our community will not stand for its weak-on-crime approach any longer.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting