



Speech by

**Hon. RUSSELL COOPER**

**MEMBER FOR CROWS NEST**

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Hansard 4 March 1999

### **FLOODS**

**Hon. T. R. COOPER** (Crows Nest—NPA) (7.18 p.m.): Tonight I refer to the damage caused in the Esk and Crows Nest shires by the recent floods. I acknowledge Mrs Crystal Stark of Blue Haze, Crows Nest, who was the first to alert me to the damage occurring in that area. For the past eight years, since 1991-92, everyone in that area has been looking for about 13 inches of rain. Eight years later they got it. A lot of positive things have come out of the floods. Perseverance, Somerset, Wivenhoe and Cressbrook Dams are full. Atkinsons Dam is about half full.

Damage did occur and we need to be alerted about that. I greatly appreciate the briefings I received from Crows Nest Shire Mayor Geoff Patch, and from Esk Shire Mayor Jean Bray, who took me, with Councillor Lynn Vandersee, on an extensive tour of the shire so that I could assess the damage. I will certainly follow up with those shires. The extent of the damage in the Crows Nest Shire is approximately \$750,000 and in the Esk Shire is approximately \$4m. Roads, bridges and culverts were damaged. A 120-metre bridge over the Brisbane River is gone. Of course, it will take time to replace those bridges and people will have to be patient. Nevertheless, in the meantime people will have to find other ways to get around.

Another good thing to come out of that flooding has been the replenishment of the aquifers. The subsoil has been replenished. After eight long years of drought, it is nice to know that it can rain. I wish well the people and small businesses affected because they have been hit so hard for so long. I hope that their bank accounts also become replenished. The hardships they have faced will heal in time.

Quite frankly, that area—the salad bowl of the Lockyer Valley—has been in a drought situation for such a long time. It is amazing that they are still standing. Many of them are very resilient. They are still there, battling on. I think it is timely for us to remember them and wish them well.

Time expired.

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