



Speech by

**Hon. HENRY PALASZCZUK**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Hansard 27 November 2001

### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

#### **Rainfall and Storms**

**Hon. H. PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: The recent rain has been very welcome, particularly for the state's summer crop. Falls from 9 a.m. yesterday include 24 millimetres in Stanthorpe, 44 millimetres in Toowoomba, 43 millimetres in Oakey and 31 millimetres in Kingaroy. For many growers the recent rain will be the best start to the summer cropping season in two to three years. However, the rain has been patchy and it has not fallen for all those who need it.

The drought declarations over more than six per cent of the state remain in place. Those declarations are based on the advice of local drought committees, as are the revocations of such declarations. While the rain has been an obvious benefit to many, the rain has not been as welcomed by those producers who were able to plant a winter crop and have not yet harvested it. The Queensland Centre for Climate Applications forecast the improved rainfall probabilities, but QCCA also identified an increase in the potential for severe storm activity over summer across southern Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Producers in parts of Australia, including Queensland, report that they cannot obtain insurance for their crops through commercial providers. To address this and allow farmers to employ better risk management strategies, the federal government announced its intention in 1999 to establish a multi-peril insurance scheme by the end of that year. As a government we contributed towards a study into this scheme. However, the federal government announced that it would not progress the establishment of the scheme that it originally intended to underwrite.

I will be urging the federal government to revisit the proposal. I will be encouraging the federal Agriculture Minister, Warren Truss, to ensure that the issue is back on his government's agenda this term. I have welcomed Mr Truss's reappointment, because I believe it is important to have continuity. I look forward to working with him for the betterment of Queensland's primary industries sector.

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