



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 24 May 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

General P Cosgrove

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.43 am): I have received the latest report from General Peter Cosgrove. When these reports are received while parliament is sitting I table them. I seek leave to incorporate that report in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Operation Recovery Task Force
General Peter Cosgrove AC MC (Retd)
c/- Johnstone Shire Council
PO Box 887
Innisfail Qld 4860
23 May 2006

Our Ref: ORTF.....

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Dear Premier

I have the honour to present my ninth overview report on the relief and recovery effort in the Cyclone Larry disaster area in Far North Queensland. The major area of progress since last week has been the completion and brief back of the interim industry sector reports by the industry action groups. The Operation Recovery Task Force will continue its analysis and synthesis of these sector reports and present them to you, with a commentary from the Task Force, within one week. I expect that the focus on the further development of industry relief measures will be in the area of employment support and perhaps freight subsidies.

I commend to you the work of many officials from several Departments in conducting the rapid but comprehensive series of consultative meetings with industry representatives, followed by preparation of the sector reports. In particular, Mr Bruce Turner and Mr Geoff Bulow of the Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries have been most professional as leaders of the project.

While considering the area of recognition, in recalling your advice to me at the outset of the Task Force's work, I have urged the Shires and Council through the medium of the Operation Recovery Task Force Consultative Committee to prepare as a matter of priority appropriate nominations for honours and awards within the Order Of Australia for early consideration through the State and Commonwealth system. I have stressed that the usual system of consideration will apply and that specifically the Task Force will have no role in this regard. I imagine that relevant Departments will take care of simultaneous nominations of public servants and volunteers under their hand. I will convey advice on the Queensland approach informally to the Commonwealth, for information.

Over the last weekend, a major insurance company, the IAG, conducted an 'Expo' in Innisfail for insurance, building and home design suppliers at the PCYC facility. It was a very well organised and attended function and I warmly applaud the initiative as contributing strongly to a sense of optimism and progress. The BCC had a booth at the Expo and the people and the work of the BCC continue to impress.

While not underplaying the important challenges still ahead, I am happy to report that there is a very positive and forward looking mood prevailing in the disaster area. People are both determined and hopeful. I attended the first home fixture for the Innisfail 'Leprechauns' rugby league club last Saturday and crushing wins were recorded in all three grades. This optimism was also the predominant sentiment in a radio network 'voxpath' news segment over the weekend. Of course this positive mood is fragile and good weather and plenty of 'delivery' by insurers would be excellent nourishment to the morale of everybody in the disaster area.

In conclusion the Task Force work is arriving at a 'phase point' in the imminent forwarding of the industry impact and recovery package. Once Government is able to consider the way ahead in that regard a most important milestone in Operation recovery will have been reached.

Yours Sincerely,

General Peter Cosgrove AC MC (Retd)
Head
Operation Recovery Task Force.