



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 10 August 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.46 am): I want to update the House in relation to the Tropical Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal. I seek leave to have the details incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I am pleased to advise the House that the Tropical Cyclone Larry Relief Appeal has collected donations of \$21.41 million.

The generosity of the Australian public and business community has been overwhelming.

There has also been international support, and I thank the Papua New Guinean Government for its \$100,000 donation.

Under Phase One of the Appeal, emergency payments of \$2,000 per household were made to over 1,100 people whose homes were left uninhabitable after the cyclone hit.

Appeal Distribution Committee Chairman, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, has advised that this stage of the Appeal is now coming to an end, with only 45 applications to be assessed by the local sub-committees.

Phase One of disbursements has expended approximately \$2 million.

Phase Two is in full swing to help home owners repair structural damage to their own residences. So far 443 applications for aid have been received with 190 approved at last week's Committee meeting.

It is important that public donations are not expended prematurely because all avenues of Government assistance need to be exhausted before this occurs.

This is about responsibly managing public donations through a coordinated approach.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to advise the House that recent amendments to the Commonwealth Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 have removed some of the constraints on disbursements from the Appeal Fund.

Last week the Australian Taxation Office approved a new Trust Deed to facilitate wider disbursements from the Appeal Fund.

The Distribution Committee has responded immediately by calling for applications from not-for-profit organisations to repair community facilities.

Application forms are available from Council offices, one-stop-shops and from my website.

The rebuilding of homes and community facilities remains an absolute priority and this is where the bulk of the Appeal funds are going to be needed.