



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 29 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cyclone Larry Recovery Task Force

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.45 am): Today it is also my pleasure to table the latest report from General Peter Cosgrove AC, the head of the Operation Recovery Task Force, which continues its important work with the communities affected by tropical Cyclone Larry. In his 16th report, General Cosgrove says that the recovery is on track despite 150 wet days badly affecting efforts to weatherproof cyclone damaged homes. The General expects that fewer than 100 homes will still be protected by tarpaulins by the end of this week—an extraordinary effort by the home owners, insurance companies and tradespeople involved when we consider some 14,000 homes were damaged by the cyclone only in March.

In his report the General notes that, while some individuals and families are still doing it tough, many of the communities have returned to normal. He also reports that a series of thank you concerts and barbecues were a success. I table that report.

Tabled paper: Operation Recovery Task Force Overview Report 16 dated 22 November 2006.

I seek leave to incorporate more details in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Operation Farm Clear is also in full swing—many farmers have taken up the offer of assistance to help clear up the debris on their properties.

Mr Speaker, the General also provides an update on the recovery of primary industry in the region affected by the cyclone—noting the successes and difficulties of farmers growing bananas (a steady increase in the number of cases going to market); sugar cane (vastly reduced crops this season) and mangoes (expecting a good crop and picking has started).

There are still concerns about possible labour shortages and the Taskforce is working with local producers to help address this problem.

I would like to again—pass on my thanks to the General and Taskforce members and the communities who are rebuilding following Cyclone Larry.

I look forward to discussing the recovery effort and any remaining issues with members of the affected communities during my visit to the Far North early next month.