



Speech by

# Hon. Neil Roberts

MEMBER FOR NUDGEE

Hansard Thursday, 15 November 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Cyclone Guba; House Fire Prevention

**Hon. N ROBERTS** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.59 am): I wish to update the House on the movement of Tropical Cyclone Guba. A cyclone watch is currently in place for coastal and island communities from Thursday Island to Cape Flattery. The latest advice from the Bureau of Meteorology is that Tropical Cyclone Guba, now a category 1 cyclone, is about 385 kilometres north-east of the Lockhart River and has been moving north-west at five kilometres per hour. Tropical Cyclone Guba is expected to turn south this morning and intensify over the next two days. Further advice from the bureau is expected at 11 am today.

Emergency Management Queensland has already been in contact with local disaster management groups in the area that may be potentially affected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the chamber and across the chamber. Could members please listen to the Minister for Emergency Services. This is a very important topic for far-north Queenslanders.

**Mr ROBERTS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. These groups are being advised in order to be ready to activate their local disaster management plans should the situation deteriorate. I strongly advise all communities to be keep tuned to their local radio for further updates and advice.

On another matter, I want to provide advice to householders on how to reduce the risk of a serious house fire or loss of valuable possessions. That advice is simple: turn your television set off at the wall or on the set and not by the remote control. According to Queensland Fire and Rescue Service records, 67 fires over the last five years can be attributed to overheating TV sets. Unfortunately, the rate of these incidents has been increasing, with 16 cases recorded last financial year and eight since July this year.

Fires started by television sets represent almost 15 per cent of electrical fires recorded by the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. For increased safety, residents should develop the habit of turning their television off at the wall and not by the remote control. They should not leave it on standby, even overnight, as this can lead to overheating.

This is a message that I, too, must heed as, like many others, I have slipped into the bad habit of turning our TV on and off with the remote control. This measure can not only prevent fire but can also produce savings on electricity bills. When it comes to TVs in the home, people should be turning off properly before turning in.