



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Wednesday, 10 March 2010

FLOODS

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): I rise to speak about the floods in south-west Queensland that the Premier spoke about yesterday during ministerial statements. Last Friday I visited Roma and St George and was impressed by the resilience and spirit of residents. When I was in Roma it of course had had its flood event and was just beginning the clean-up while St George was awaiting it. I want to acknowledge the efforts of the local member, the member for Warrego, Howard Hobbs, who is still in the area. Yesterday he sent me photos of what was happening in Thargomindah where water is rising slowly in the main street. The surrounding areas are inundated and there will be significant upstream flows. Senator Barnaby Joyce was there when I visited St George, as was Mayor Donna Stewart of the Balonne shire and Mayor Rob Loughnan from the Maranoa Regional Council in Roma.

There has been magnificent work done by the volunteers, the SES, the police, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service as well as the mayors I have mentioned and councillors, council staff and workers, NGOs such as the Red Cross, the RSL and churches. Many of those people devoted long hours, often without sleep, while neglecting their own properties. A great sign of the Queensland spirit was that very few people were left in community areas to sleep overnight. Families in Roma took other families and other people in to take care of them, and that was great to see.

I also want to acknowledge the Premier's waiving of means tests for those people who were without insurance. However, I am concerned that the Premier's appeal donation of \$500,000 from the state government matches the donation that the government is giving to earthquake victims in Chile. I would have thought that we could take care of our own in a slightly more generous way, and I commend others who are going to donate to this cause. I have been unable to visit Charleville due to the floods, but we need to consider the issues there about Bradley's Gully. Perhaps we need to consider making flood-prone areas flood smart.

(Time expired)