




Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Wednesday, 9 March 2011

QUEENSLAND FLOODS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.33 am): The Premier has told Queenslanders affected by the floods that they will be heard at the flood inquiry, yet today we have learnt that victims of the flood—in this case Rocklea business owners who have lost many millions of dollars in the Brisbane floods—are not being granted leave to appear and cross-examine witnesses at the flood inquiry. It would appear that the same fate awaits any person or group of people who may have been adversely affected. Victims of the floods are being denied the right to appear at the inquiry and ask legitimate questions of those people who made decisions that had major impacts on their families or their businesses.

We have secret cabinet minutes, secret water releases and secret pages of dam manuals, and now victims of the floods are prevented from having leave to appear and cross-examine government officials. This is not the way the Patel inquiry operated. This is not the way the Victorian bushfire inquiry operated. Victims in Victoria were granted leave to appear. When I sought the reassurance of an extra term of reference for the commission of inquiry to investigate any other matter that the commissioner should seek information about, the Premier rejected that and said everything was on the table.

Queenslanders cannot have confidence in an inquiry where victims are silenced or restricted to only making written submissions. I will not have confidence in an inquiry that stifles the voices of victims. The Queensland flood inquiry should be focused on allowing a full, frank and unfettered examination of the events that led to the floods. I expressed my extreme disquiet and unease at the flood commission's refusal to allow leave to appear to those who have been severely affected by these floods. This ridiculous situation needs to be rectified immediately and I urge the Premier to amend her terms of reference to guarantee victims a right to appear at the flood inquiry.

(Time expired)