



Speech By  
**Ian Rickuss**


**MEMBER FOR LOCKYER**

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## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.41 am): The Premier mentioned the Grantham flood inquiry this morning and it was a sad occasion, but what evidence did the Premier have to call this inquiry? None! We have ample evidence that the CFMEU are corrupt. They have destroyed evidence on an industrial scale and ignored court orders, yet the Premier does nothing but act as a quasi-bagman for the Queensland CFMEU. But no inquiry has been called. The old adage is that a little bit of knowledge is dangerous, but was it? This was highlighted last week with the handing down of the Sofronoff report.

I have read all four volumes of the report. Unfortunately, the Premier and the member for Nicklin appear not to have read the first three volumes. I have also read the coroner's report. I am sure they will not even read the fourth report. Former Justice Kate Holmes, now Chief Justice, was the former commissioner of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. In March this year she took the media to task about their reporting of the Grantham floods, and I will table some documents.

*Tabled paper:* Articles and correspondence, various dates, relating to the Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry [\[1365\]](#).

In April of this year I wrote to the Premier and the member for Nicklin not supporting this inquiry. I never saw the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, or the member for Nicklin in 2011 or 2013 when the Lockyer had floods, but all of a sudden they have become experts on how to spend money by calling another inquiry. The Premier did take advice from the local mayor, whose council was found wanting in the disaster. The Lockyer Valley Regional Council did not follow the disaster management legislation. The mayor went missing in action during the clean-up. The CEO could not find the mayor and the police had to search for him. The mayor could not chair some of the local disaster management group meetings, and the assistant commissioner of police had to ask him to leave a public meeting because of his inappropriate conduct.

Justin Fisher, a young engineer, brought the lack of preparation to the attention of the council during a meeting in September 2010. Unfortunately he was ignored and no money was put aside for flood preparations. Who gave the Premier and the member for Nicklin the supporting evidence that millions of dollars of taxpayers' money needed to be spent? Hundreds of thousands of dollars of Lockyer Valley Regional Council ratepayers' and private citizens' money were wasted. The Premier said it was \$2.5 million, but this was before the extension of time for the Sofronoff inquiry. Does this take into account the extra money that was spent by the Department of Natural Resources, police, emergency services, EPA, Queensland Rail, Lockyer Valley Regional Council and other agencies? I know the Wagners were talking about in the vicinity of a million dollars. I would not be surprised if the total expenditure was in excess of \$5 million. This does not include the angst it has brought to my community, people who experienced this flood and others. Will the Premier assist with providing \$5 million for people who have had their homes inundated locally throughout the Lockyer?

I cannot believe the Premier acknowledged that it was media pressure that brought on this inquiry. I could be a cynical old politician and say it was a win-win for the Premier. The seat is fairly conservative and the Labor vote is somewhere between 15 and 25 per cent—at about 24 per cent—so at present it is not affecting Labor leadership or Labor politicians. The media, Fairfax and News Limited and that sad old has-been who directed all of his vitriol at the Wagners, Alan Jones, were the groups who called for this review. We all know about Alan Jones and his defamation cases, we know about his London case and we know about cash for comments. That silly old man is still trying to give himself a profile at the expense of others. It is over, Alan. You are past it, mate. Give it up; retire.

This government has highlighted how it gives jobs to the good old boys and girls: you only need to look at the appointments to boards that have just happened. There is no experience needed and no managerial expertise required, but union membership is a must. An expertise in dodgy deals is preferred for board positions. The Queensland government now has 68 of these types of inquiries going. As I stated, this inquiry has cost \$5 million plus and there are a further 68 still in progress, so I would say they will cost at least \$300 million.

Could I be underestimating the Premier? Never call an inquiry unless you know the answer. Did the Premier know the answer all along, but she wasted \$5 million to obtain false kudos and support her media and legal friends? Yet she is terrified to do anything about the substantial corruption in the community that has been carried out by Queensland CFMEU. She knows that an inquiry into Queensland CFMEU would be devastating to her Labor administration, the Labor Party leaders and Labor MPs. Never call an inquiry unless you know the answer. There has been no inquiry into the corruption of the Queensland CFMEU.

Unfortunately, the do-nothing Premier antagonised a lot of my electorate, who understood that this inquiry was a waste of money. As a longstanding riparian landholder, I really do feel that I was totally ignored in this and that, unfortunately, we could have saved \$5 million with a desktop audit of the appropriate work.