



Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman


MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 2 June 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Tropical Cyclone Marcia

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Minister, I anticipate that we will finish ministerial statements at 10.12 am.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.10 am): I rise to talk about the work being done to rebuild the community in Central Queensland following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Marcia. Visiting the region last week for community cabinet, I was pleased to see that people seem to be turning a corner. However, the recovery will take time and concerted investment to rebuild the region.

In the weeks immediately following the cyclone, we provided over \$5 million in Immediate Hardship Assistance grants to nearly 30,000 people, along with \$1.2 million in household grants to help people purchase basic items to set up their homes again. However, Tropical Cyclone Marcia damaged so much more than bricks and mortar. The emotional toll is high and the community has been deeply affected. That is why the Palaszczuk government is giving five Central Queensland local government regions \$5.1 million for counselling and support for residents affected by the cyclone. That funding will ensure support is available to help people through these difficult times. However, we believe more funding is needed.

The Australian and Queensland governments jointly fund the Community Recovery Fund under category C of the Commonwealth and state Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. The \$5.1 million is less than the Palaszczuk government requested to undertake this important work to help people and communities get back on their feet. Therefore, the Queensland government has gone back to the federal government to seek to convince it to recognise the actual cost of what it will take for councils and NGOs to deliver the support these communities require. I echo the comments of the member for Rockhampton about the need for category D funding, which the Queensland government has also requested.