Speech By

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Record of Proceedings, 15 February 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Logan Electorate, Flashing 'Road Flooded' Signs

Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (9.26 pm): On 1 May almost two years ago we had hours of intense drenching rain that in some areas of Logan represented a one-in-100-year event. Quickly the headwaters of Norris Creek began rising, the various inlets adding together and the dams filling up. A family found themselves in Norris Creek bobbing up and down in their car as it began sinking. A young girl, Caitlin, thinking first of her sister, reached out to pop her seatbelt and push her through the window to the rushing waters outside. Her mother grabbed the toddler and clung to a tree and then, to her relief, young Caitlin also surfaced and they all clung to a tree in the darkness with the water raging below them.

Luckily, a neighbour checking the rain saw the car and called emergency services. The officers of the Beenleigh swiftwater rescue team arrived quickly. They could see nothing of the car and the family still clinging to the tree. The neighbour directed them to where they were. The story once again is extraordinary. The neighbour told me the emergency service worker instantly transformed—she said—into a superhero, locking the cord to a tree, then powerfully running then swimming to the tree where Caitlin and her family were clinging, relaying the tired, frightened family to the shore and safety.

Some time later I stood with local councillor Laurie Smith. The sun was shining and Norris Creek just a trickle. Councillor Smith, who had himself in his youth experienced being in a car being swept away by a flood, committed to look for a safer way to ensure people would not drive into a flooded creek. Amongst other steps that were taken, council has developed a new way of warning motorists. Council engineers and workers, along with the tinkers and innovators of substation 33, developed a system using off-the-rack items—Arduino processors, float switches, recycled laptop batteries, steel from the roads department and solar panels—to develop an automatic flashing 'road flooded' sign. It is a low-cost option and will be installed at 25 priority sites crossing fast-flowing creeks. Logan council will also allow the idea to be used by other councils.

This is an example of governments working together—$375,000 from the state government and $250,000 from the Logan council—along with community groups and council adding expertise and innovation to protect the community. If there is a dark, rainy night this May there will be a bright light for motorists—a bright flashing light letting Logan locals know the message we all say: if it's flooded, forget it.