



Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**


**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

---

Record of Proceedings, 10 August 2017

**MOTION**

**Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (4.47 pm): I rise to speak on the motion. This government is haemorrhaging from the lack of action and political spin. No better example is the John Muntz Bridge and associated riverbank located on the Tamborine Oxenford Road at Upper Coomera. The flooding event from Cyclone Debbie ripped a section of riverbank from the quarry site upstream from the John Muntz Bridge. Sections of the riverine erosion were up to 40 metres deep. This erosion undermined the connection road to the John Muntz Bridge. I table a photo of that bridge.

*Tabled paper:* Photographs of bridge in Albert Shire damaged by Cyclone Debbie [\[1307\]](#).

Firstly, it took weeks for this government to get machines on site to start the repair project, which I must say was most disconcerting for residents who were forced to use alternative routes to travel to and from work and drop off and pick up their kids from local school. The blight this caused to local residents and businesses was horrendous. It would put an extra 30 minutes on a round trip for residents getting to and from their homes in the Upper Coomera area. After many not-so-positive news articles and a parliamentary petition demanding the bridge be opened as soon as possible, the Minister for Main Roads finally ordered construction teams on site.

However, the fundamental problem remained: the riverbank erosion would continue if reinforcement works were not undertaken. Therefore, as any good representative would do, I enlisted the help of experts. I asked Water Technology coastal and environmental consultants to look at the site and give their opinion. Their report stated, 'Left as it is the bank will continue to erode and the failure of the bridge during future floods is highly likely.' Therefore, I enlisted the help of the Premier. I wrote to the Premier on 27 April. The Premier replied—

I acknowledge your concerns around the potential for further erosion, and the associated risks to the structural integrity of the nearby infrastructure. I agree that sensible options for riverine protection and road network safety should be properly considered. As such, I have forwarded your letter along with the contact details for Water Technology Coastal and Environmental Consultants to the Minister for Main Roads Mark Bailey.

I ask the Premier what email address she sent it to, because he certainly did not get the message.

I refer to a *Gold Coast Bulletin* article of 13 May, in which the minister is quoted as saying, 'Mr Boothman needs to let the experts get on with the job.' Water Technology is an expert. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 26 May 2017, from the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, to the member for Albert, Mr Mark Boothman MP, regarding river bank erosion and two *Gold Coast Bulletin* articles, dated 13 May 2017, regarding John Muntz bridge [\[1308\]](#).

On 19 June, posing like Superman, with Labor candidates in tow, the minister announced that the opening of the bridge will be delayed until the end of July for one lane and August for two lanes. That was after months of promising it would be open midyear, which is 30 June. I table an article headlined 'Anger at bridge delay'.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 20 June 2017, titled 'Anger at bridge delay' [[1309](#)].

After much outcry and massive community pressure, the bridge was opened on 30 June with no minister in sight. However, let me add a twist: now the Premier has changed her mind. A response to a question on notice states—

I am also advised the City of Gold Coast (CoGC) is currently investigating the area upstream of the TMR road corridor and the reinforcement of the embankment that was swept downstream during the rain event. TMR will continue working with CoGC to ensure that any remedial works that may occur upstream support the reinstatement works that it is currently undertaking.

After a quick investigation, on 20 July the *Gold Coast Bulletin* reported that a council spokesman said, 'The Government had not formally approached it about the work.' I table the document.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 20 July 2017, regarding repairs to riverbanks and bridges and the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk's response to question on notice No. 902 asked by the member for Albert, Mr Mark Boothman MP on 14 June 2017 [[1310](#)].

As local resident and Oxenford Pony Club president stated, 'They're not talking to each other. After the first bit of flooding it will wash away again!' This government does not know what it is doing. They cannot even get the dates right. They play political spin. They play political pork-barrelling. They do not care about Queenslanders and they certainly do not care about the Gold Coast.