



Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

North Queensland, Floods

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.10 am): In the aftermath of damaging floods in parts of Queensland, our first responders took swift action. Today I pay tribute to all our hardworking police and emergency service crews and members of other government agencies including the Department of Housing and Public Works and the department of communities for reaching out to flood stricken communities in their times of need.

I pay tribute to our police for being out and about in bad weather, sending out timely warnings to residents and motorists, directing traffic and responding to emergencies as the flood waters rose. Their job is not nine to five. Their job is often challenging and often dangerous, and for that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

I also pay tribute to low-security prisoners from the Innisfail work camp who lent some elbow grease to the massive clean-up operation in Innisfail. I visited their work site on the foreshore of the Johnstone River on the weekend, just before the Commonwealth Games baton went through with the Mayor of Cassowary Coast Regional Council and the work camp supervisor. The work camp shovelled mud from the esplanade on the banks of the Johnstone River and removed flood debris from the local cemetery.

Mr Speaker, as you may be aware, work camps have been helping out in our community long before Cyclone Larry struck the region with a vengeance in 2006. They were founded as part of the emergency response to help the people of Charleville after the devastating floods there in 1990. In a year, low-security prisoners in work camps have completed almost 180,000 hours of community service. That is a contribution of more than \$4 million in labour value to communities right across regional Queensland. It is a milestone that shows positive outcomes are being achieved by prisoners wanting to turn their lives around. It is one of the real success stories of Corrective Services, and it gives prisoners the opportunity to gain new skills and give something back to the community.