




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 26 February 2019

MOTION

Natural Disasters

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.31 pm): On behalf of all of my constituents in the electorate of Gregory, I rise to speak in support of this condolence motion. I know that they would wish me to acknowledge their great sadness at the losses suffered by Queenslanders owing to these natural disasters over summer. I also wish to express my thanks and admiration to the people of Queensland for their calm courage in the face of these disasters.

I would also like to thank the Premier and her staff for their responsiveness to my requests on behalf of my constituents in the Winton and Diamantina shires. These shires are still experiencing in the south the stages of that monsoon. I would also like to acknowledge the member for Traeger, whose electorate has been at the epicentre of the north-west floods. He and his staff have worked tirelessly to assist his constituents and I thank him for that. I would also like to commend the Leader of the Opposition for her compassion when we toured the area last week. It was difficult, not the least because of the stench of the hundreds of thousands of dead cattle and wildlife.

This week, the Governor-General remarked on what he called Queensland's institutional memory of natural disasters past and how it helps us respond better to challenges. As members of this House know, that institutional memory has been painfully built and it is fragile. It needs our ongoing bipartisan commitment. We must strive not just to respond but also to understand what happened and what we can learn for next time. Key to both the response and the learning is the people on the ground. I mention the local mayors, councillors and all of their staff of my electorate, the Fire and Emergency Services personnel, the SES volunteers, the natural disaster committees and the local coordinators. They did an absolutely fantastic job. I do not have the time to thank everybody but, as shadow minister for fire, emergency services and volunteers, I must acknowledge with admiration the work of the many volunteers and volunteers from other parts of the state who helped on the ground.

I will also respond to an email that I received yesterday from Katie Riethmuller from *Allambee* at Rolleston asking me not to let the bushfire victims be forgotten. Katie writes—

The fires are still burning along the Carnarvon Highway between Rolleston and Injune and up into Expedition Range. They are still burning and the weather last week was the same as that of the crisis—43 degrees Celsius and windy.

I would also like to give a big thankyou to a group of Central Highlands people called Baked with Love—families from Springsure, Lochington, Gindie, Rolleston and Emerald—who baked biscuits and cakes. We loaded those baked biscuits up in the back of my car and went out to Winton, Kynuna and Corfield and dropped them off to people. It was not much, but it meant that we cared. I thank them from the bottom of my heart. I also thank all the earthmoving contractors in the Central Highlands who got loaders on to trucks and went up there. Lastly, we must also not forget that we are still in drought.

(Time expired)