



Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2019

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Townsville Electorate, Flood Recovery**

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.50 pm): I would like to update the House on Townsville's flood recovery, but I would like to kick off my speech by thanking each and every person who came along to the Premier's flood relief fundraiser on Thursday evening. If you came along, if you brought someone with you or if people from your communities attended, I thank you so much on behalf of all of us from North Queensland. I am sure I speak on behalf of the member for Thuringowa and the member for Mundingburra. From what the Premier has told us, over 550 people attended that event. It would have been great out on the Speaker's Green, but unfortunately due to the rain we had to move it inside. We were also told that over \$150,000 was raised from that event. Thank you, everyone. Thank you for your support. I would also like to give a shout-out to Spencer Jolly, who coordinated everything. Within 24 hours he had it all organised. It ran like clockwork until we got to the auction. We all wanted to talk rather than place bids, but it all went successfully on the night.

I would like to update the House on what is happening in Townsville, particularly when it comes to social housing. There were 163 public housing properties that were uninhabitable after the floods. I was in Hodel Street, which is in my electorate, with Minister de Brenni and the member for Thuringowa, and BAS were there working to repair units and properties. From what we saw the turnaround rate was absolutely phenomenal. Of the 163 public housing properties that were deemed uninhabitable as a result of the floods, every single one of those properties except one now has people back living in them. I think that is outstanding. It really shows the strength and commitment of BAS to ensure that people in public and social housing were able to get back into their homes. This is the thing we hear all the time. Everyone says to us, 'The media shower of kindness was absolutely fantastic, but it has moved on to something else.' We cannot be forgotten about. Each time I stand up in this House I will continue to talk about what is happening in Townsville and wholeheartedly thank everyone for the support they have given time and time again, particularly tradies. We will continue until the very last person is back in their home, Townsville is back on its feet and we are the great city we have always been.

I have some statistics: 3,299 properties were assessed by QFES, and of those 1,236 were deemed uninhabitable; 2,063 had minor damage; a billion dollars in insurance claims have been processed; 440 claims are now closed and 1,000 remain open. Some of those are in my own street. My neighbours are still getting their houses stripped out and work is being done on our streets. Probably one in three properties has residents in it, which is a bit tough when you see residents coming back and seeing their houses.

It is also great to see businesses reopen, particularly down in the most affected areas. We saw the images of the tinny flotilla down around Fairfield Central Shopping Centre. Whenever we have a Sunday morning off my wife and I go to Cafe Bambini—it is our favourite haunt—and they were absolutely inundated. Steve Law and Tara McDonald spoke to me when I was there, and they basically said that while they were not able to be open they continued to pay the wages of all their people. That

is the commitment of small business back to their people. That is the strength of our community. I do not care what side of the chamber you are on, if that does not tear at your heartstrings about how good people in our communities are I do not know what will. This is what it is about. I give a big shout-out to Steve and Tara. They moved back in and their business is open again. Steve and Tara, we haven't got back there yet but we certainly will.

I also have an update from one of the big insurance companies. They received over 5,600 claims; 91 per cent of those claims have been assessed; \$78 million in home claims have been paid out already; 21 per cent of home claims have been finalised; more than 500 local trades, companies and suppliers are currently being sourced; 1,059 customers have been provided with temporary accommodation to date; \$52 million contents claims have been paid; and 99 per cent of motor claims have been assessed and completed. There were over 3,000 cars destroyed in that event.