



Speech By  
**Ali King**


**MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2022

## MOTION

### Queensland Floods

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.21 pm): I rise to support the Premier's motion. It truly has been very difficult to grasp the immensity of the flood event that impacted the Pumicestone communities over the last couple of weeks. We had over a metre of rain at Caboolture, as the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services said. Beachmere copped 811 millimetres in just a handful of days. Bribie had over 900 millimetres, with 331 millimetres on Sunday, the 27th—being the highest daily total ever experienced.

We had over 200 local roads closed. Bribie Island Road was closed for the first time since 2011. Beachmere was entirely cut off for five days. Other hamlets like Toorbul and Donnybrook were cut off, and there was a catastrophic causeway failure at White Patch that led to an entire suburb being isolated. We lost our trains and the Bruce Highway was cut.

There was a real patchwork of impacts across our community. We saw the slow creep of dark, polluted water across Beachmere in areas like Christen Drive and Mynott Road. Other parts of Beachmere turned into a horrifying, raging, neck-deep torrent. I can barely believe that we suffered no fatalities. My heart goes out to every community in Queensland and New South Wales that did.

The riverine and creek flooding hit areas of Caboolture very hard. I want to reflect that in many cases the people who copped that flooding worst were those who had the least resources to recover. That is why the comments from Shane Stone, the Coordinator-General of the National Recovery and Resilience Agency, were so hurtful. These are not people who have chosen to live among the gum trees; they are people who have limited choices in housing. I call upon him to retract those comments.

Consistently people said that what they saw was the worst they had ever seen. The water came faster, it came heavier, it came higher, and the services were cut for longer. There was rapid flash flooding in suburban Bribie areas that have never seen that before. In Ford Street, Bongaree, localised flooding is a matter that we are still dealing with right now. In contrast to all of that difficulty though, the community response was absolutely incredible. My greatest fear in giving this speech is that there will be somebody I forget momentarily to acknowledge.

Walking through the hardest hit areas, up to our ankles in mud, people who had seen a metre or more of contaminated water flow through their homes—sometimes dangerously, sometimes at night—always said the same thing—and I note that the member for Bundamba made this same comment—'There are people worse off than us.' Some of them were in dire financial need but they did not want to apply for grants because they felt that others were doing it tougher than them. I had to say, 'No. In fact, you are as severely impacted as anybody I have met.'

As always we look for the helpers in times of crisis. I particularly want to acknowledge Karen Darlington, whom I met when she was running the Beachmere volunteer emergency centre. Karen did an extraordinary job. She was awake for days. Karen Harris and the team from BANG and so many

other community organisations were at the heart of the response. I think about Greg and Paula and Michelle who were the heroes of Ford Street. They took in 82-year-old Beverley. They paid for pumps out of their own pockets to clear a huge reservoir of water that was inundating houses.

Then there was everybody who stepped up to support the frail aged-care residents at Palm Lake Care at Beachmere. We are so lucky that I am not standing here reporting on another Earle Haven. The aged-care facility at Beachmere was cut off for five days. They were running out of food and water. They had to call on community volunteers to support them. They had residents delivering aged care to residents. Through all of that they told me that the federal government agencies did not respond, did not support them. It is absolutely shameless and a failure of the support and respect our elders deserve. I am ashamed to be standing here raising this matter in this House.

Our rural fire brigades were amazing, as were our SES crews. QFES were hailed as heroes when they came to pump out water at Ford Street. VMR at Bribie delivered food and did medical evacuations. Many community members had not even finished their own clean-ups when they turned to helping people in northern New South Wales.

I want to remind my community to please take extra care of your mental health at this time. I can already see the cracks showing. It is not weakness to reach out for support in the wake of such extraordinary impacts. Queenslanders had the best emergency response in the nation and I am proud to be part of this government.

*(Time expired)*