




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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MOTION

Queensland Floods

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.07 pm): I am glad to be following the member for Nanango, who said that she was very happy with the input from the federal government. I can tell the House that the City of Maryborough is not happy. We are not happy at all. We have not heard from or seen our federal member. We have not had any help from the federal government.

Mr Harper: Disgraceful.

Mr SAUNDERS: It is absolutely disgraceful; I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. It is absolutely terrible. Who is the prime minister? We think Menzies is still the prime minister because we don't know this bloke.

The first flood hit on 8 January. We had a big rain event at Gunalda that caused a lot of flooding in Maryborough. That was the first rain event. One person who turned up straightaway to talk to the rural fires was the federal opposition leader. You would not believe it, but there he was, talking to the rural fires. He, Jim Chalmers and Senator Murray Watt were all having a yarn and talking about the help that they could give. We also received a lot of assistance from the state government. We had the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the transport minister, the education minister, the small business minister and the housing minister all there helping people after the first flood. Once again, all we heard from the federal government was crickets. We are still looking around for the federal government. Then we found out that they changed the criteria for the flood money, but once again we could not contact the federal member or anyone in the federal government.

Then we had our second flood event, which was a record flood event. I would like to thank all of the people involved. I thank the mayor and the deputy mayor. In particular I want to thank the men and women of the Fraser Coast Regional Council: the CEO; the chief engineer, Davendra; the head of the local disaster management committee, Brendan; the rural fires; the SES; Superintendent Mick Sawrey; and QFES. They were all absolutely amazing. I say to the minister sitting in the House today: if you ever want to see a blueprint on how to handle a disaster, look at what the QFES and police in my region did. It was outstanding. The members of my community are saying that, too, minister. They were there, backing up the community.

What about Ergon? The minister is here today. The Ergon staff were also fantastic in getting people's power reconnected to houses and in making sure that things were safe. What about TMR and RoadTek? It was the quickest we have ever seen in terms of bridges being reopened and roads fixed in Maryborough city. The TMR crew were there to make sure that the roads were safe. The engineers were at Lamington Bridge and Granville Bridge and at Maryborough Hervey Bay Road. The flood response of the state government in Maryborough city was absolutely amazing. Today, we still have not seen a visit from the Prime Minister. I think Bridget McKenzie had a fleeting visit after being dropped

off in a helicopter. We have not seen anyone from the federal government come through and talk to people about the drama of having two floods inside six weeks. People lost everything. We heard the Premier speak about it today.

The Premier came up and talked to members of my rural firies, the Aldershot Rural Fire Brigade. People's belongings were sitting on the footpath. I was talking to people last week. Businesses such as Richers Transport, one of the largest transport companies in this state, suffered a significant amount of damage from the floodwaters that went through its yards in Maryborough. I cannot thank enough the rural firies, the SES and the crew from Downer. It was amazing to watch the train crew from Downer. With the warning of the first flood on 8 January, Pete Kaleen and the crew from Downer moved all the NGR trains to higher ground. These are the trains that we are fixing up in Maryborough because of the LNP's mistakes. The Downer crew were so polished in terms of moving the trains out. What about the damage to the Downer factory during the first and second floods?

Once again, we are grateful for the response of the Queensland state Labor government in terms of housing, QFES, police and rural firies. Steve Mulders, of the Burrum Heads SES, drove in every day to organise the crew. The Ergon crew were working in 40-degree heat to make sure that people had power on. That is what a traditional Labor government does.