




Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

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MOTION

Queensland Floods

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.20 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the motion. I spoke yesterday during the MPI debate about the impact of the floods. Today in speaking to the motion I would like to illustrate the heroism, resilience and spirit of community that I have personally witnessed over the past couple of weeks. I start by acknowledging the efforts of the women and men from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the SES. I took the opportunity to visit the disaster coordination centre in Newmarket. The men and women there were literally working around the clock: firstly to assist in flood mitigation—helping with sandbagging and giving really useful information and advice to people who were very overwhelmed and stressed at the time—and later, obviously, to participate in rescues. We know that they completed around 600 rescues over that weekend, including Paul and Debbie, whom I spoke about yesterday, in Ashgrove Avenue who were involved in a swiftwater rescue—something we never thought we would see in the suburbs of Ashgrove.

I acknowledge those involved in our sporting groups. As we know, a lot of our sporting facilities are placed in really low-lying areas and many experienced significant flooding of not only their facilities but also their clubhouses. That is absolutely devastating for community groups. Ashgrove Golf Club was one of those impacted. The creek that runs through the middle of their course completely blew up and not only compromised the integrity of a lot of their bridges but also washed out so many of their greens, completely stripping the sand from bunkers. I have learned so much about bunkers in the past couple of weeks! The anticipated cost for this one club is well over a million dollars. The cost of that recovery will go quite some way into the future. It was really great to be able to go, along with our federal candidate for Ryan, Peter Cossar, and facilitate a working bee there, with many members mucking in and helping out to make sure the club is back up and running as soon as we can get it operational.

I acknowledge and thank our school communities, which have had to adapt to so much in the past couple of years particularly. Many schools experienced flash flooding, turning their ovals not just into lakes but into rivers, really. We still have students who are impacted today by road closures. The greatest impact was on Milton State School, which remains closed. I had the chance to visit with senior officers from the department and Minister Grace to see the impact to classrooms. Everything has to be torn out. I did not quite appreciate it until going there. The artificial turf and everything touched by the floodwaters has been compromised and needs to be replaced. When we were there the men and women from QBuild were already onsite doing a fantastic job in restoring that school and readying it for reopening.

It was a great opportunity to stress-test the Milton State School's new vertical learning centre, purpose-built as part of the flood mitigation. I acknowledge the leadership of Principal Paul Zernicke. He is an excellent principal. We are so fortunate to have him in our electorate. He is a wonderful guy and has transformed that school. I of course want to acknowledge our people—people like the Torwood Tumblers, the residents of Torwood Street who formed their own mud army to clean out homes, hose down walls, take people in and make meals. They generally just looked after each other, which is what

we need in times of real hardship. Kim Scubris, whom we would all recognise as a local journalist, Caylie Jeffery and Kerry Forsythe from Paddington Then and Now worked together with Heidi McKellar from Bardon Girl Guides to run a donation drive for people impacted. Community continue to do fantastic work for those who are very vulnerable through these circumstances. There is Meals on Wheels Ashgrove, for which I am a proud volunteer. When the roads were shut down they actually walked meals to their clients. They are a really proud and hardworking community group.

The Ashgrove/The Gap Lions Club, with support from Meat at Billy's, Gerbino's and Newstead Brewing Co, helped me to throw a street party in Ashgrove for those impacted in the area. I mention the legends at Picklehead Pickles—including Mike Hilburger—Rode Meats, Elementi Restaurant in Paddo and the boys at Nasty Barber who punched out hundreds of gourmet paninis for our hardworking volunteers over the period. I personally thank all of our first responders who really have not stopped working through this period. Police have helped out with additional patrols through this time.

While I am on my feet, I acknowledge the hardworking paramedics who have had to continue to deliver quality health care to people impacted through this time. One patient they assisted was my niece, who prematurely went into labour with her first child in the middle of the floods in Gympie. She is on the south side. She was cut off completely by floodwaters. Three ambulances were used to get her from Gympie to the Royal in Brisbane. We all are very excited and relieved by the birth of Ardyn. I am now a great-aunt.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Congratulations, member. If you ever want to learn anything more about bunkers, come and have a round of golf with me!