




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Floods, Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.19 am): The Palaszczuk government puts people at the centre of our response—whether that be the pandemic or the floods. The recent SEQ flooding event has had a huge impact on so many Queenslanders, and this government has responded swiftly and with compassion.

We have been working hard to get people back on their feet and into homes as we recover from the floods. We were quick to act. We had housing officers on the ground in evacuation centres and in our community hubs and pop-up hubs that we stood up within days of the event to help make sure people had a roof over their heads. So far we have assisted 621 households who have requested help. That is 1,386 people with emergency or temporary accommodation who have been impacted by the floods. I am advised that there are 96 motel and hotel accommodation providers being utilised to enable that assistance. Housing staff are conducting regular wellbeing checks with people in temporary emergency accommodation.

We have had more than 20 community recovery hubs and pop-up hubs open across the south-east, operating from Maryborough on the Fraser Coast to Palm Beach on the Gold Coast and Gatton in the Lockyer Valley. So far, more than 65,000 people have been supported with grants for emergency hardship and other service assistance following the recent flood, with over 28,000 payments made totalling more than \$11.8 million.

I also announced a \$600,000 Rapid Response Fund to deliver enhanced housing and homelessness services in impacted areas. We continue to work closely with specialist homelessness services and community housing providers, providing essential housing support. We also acted quickly to expand the eligibility for bond loans and rental grants, easing added pressure on people in the private rental market.

For our residents in social housing, we had QBuild teams on the ground quickly, assessing damage to social housing homes. In some instances, QBuild were on site the same day that issues were raised by our tenants. I want to acknowledge the Minister for Public Works for the great work of QBuild.

Yesterday I convened the same meeting of emergency housing security stakeholders where I provided an update on the suite of housing supports being offered on the ground and we continued our work on next best steps. Whether it is supplying emergency housing, planning longer term housing solutions or providing immediate financial relief, we have been supporting the people at the centre of this disaster.

I encourage people impacted by the floods that if they need help please reach out. We have many contact points, including community recovery hubs and housing service centres, where people can receive the support they need. We know there was unprecedented demand on Queensland's

housing market prior to this most recent flooding event which was why we announced \$2.9 billion at the last budget to build 7,400 new social and affordable homes over four years—the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history.

Record interstate migration, rising house prices, very low vacancy rates, COVID-19 and now severe weather has sadly created a perfect storm. Every Queenslanders deserves a roof over their head and the Palaszczuk government continues to look at all options to inject more supply into the housing market. As always, the Palaszczuk government is laser focused on delivering safe, secure and affordable housing and providing the right supports in times of crisis. It matters. We are getting on with the job. It is what Labor governments do.