



Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**


**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2022

## MOTION

### Queensland Floods

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier. In doing so, I too would like to acknowledge the lives that we have lost over the past few weeks, those first responders who stepped up and did their job and those community members who dropped everything to go and help their neighbours.

We have heard about the unprecedented weather event that precipitated these floods throughout South-East Queensland, the rain bomb. We have heard the figures, the inches of rain, and how it hovered over South-East Queensland. There have been many speakers on this motion and I do not think there is anything further I can add, but I am here so I will give it my best shot. We sat here in this chamber during the last sitting week as the Premier advised us of upcoming weather predictions. These were updated further daily in the morning press conferences. These are the kind of predictions and warnings that make the people of my electorate take notice.

For the information of members of the House, the electorate of Macalister largely sits between two rivers: the Logan and Albert. In my first speech in this House I made reference to my twin rivers community and how it really does define Beenleigh and surrounds. Prior to this year the most recent flood event was in 2017. Both the Logan and Albert rivers exceeded the major flood levels, and as a result not only did the banks break but the bridges were washed away. We watched on live television as houses were swept away. Eagleby, at the delta where the two rivers meet, was awash.

What we do know is that no two weather events are the same, and that means the flooding that follows will not always be predictable. For those who had 2017 still in their recent memory, it was their measuring stick. The original advice received was that neither the Logan nor the Albert would reach 2017 levels. Flash flooding would occur in the usual areas, and locals know these, but on Monday, the 28th, the advice changed and we were told that the Logan River would exceed the 2017 flood levels. It was most incongruent, as the skies were blue that Monday and the rain had stopped. I walked the streets of Beenleigh that day and observed the flooding already present in the area. The Beenleigh train station was offline and under water. I spoke to shop owners and I joined locals at the usual flood points: Alamein Street and Boundary Street. The thought that this would get higher was a prescient cause for concern among locals, but what resulted were varying experiences for the residents of Beenleigh.

If you lived on the Logan River side, the water rose higher than people had ever seen in living memory. The fact that the Waterford Bridge went under was unprecedented. As predicted, the usual pockets of Macalister were cut off and isolated. I am not talking about reaches of the river, but entire suburbs. The suburbs of Windaroo and Bannockburn were cut off for several days with no power. This equated to thousands of residents in suburban Logan with no access to power or internet. The main thoroughfares in Eagleby were cut. The closure of the Waterford Bridge meant that swathes of Logan had to navigate its way through the tiny streets of Beenleigh just to get to the M1.

As response turned to recovery, locals were left to assess the damage. In the vicinity of Manila and Kokoda streets we could not provide assistance to the residents until Thursday when the waters receded. The damage was astounding. I spoke to residents as they were cleaning out entire levels of their houses. Some were renters who were never even made aware of what the 2017 flood level was, let alone what something higher would mean for them. I joined the Minister for Public Works alongside our QBuild recovery team to inspect the damage to our public housing stock in Eagleby. We met some of our social housing tenants, including Shirley, Dot and Rebecca. You could see the care and pride they had in their homes, and the inspection teams worked swiftly to identify what needed to be fixed.

The hardest hit were our sporting clubs, which occupy the low-lying terrain along the riverbanks. The Beenleigh BMX Club, Logan Lightning soccer club and their Beenleigh grounds and our international standard BMX freestyle course were under water. The four golf clubs in Macalister are still trying to recover. My office will not only be helping these sports clubs but also the small businesses of Macalister to access flood recovery grants, and I thank the Premier for ensuring the availability of these grants as the clean-up began. It was another big weekend just gone in Macalister, with Volunteering Queensland and pro-active community clubs like the Eagleby Giants bringing residents together to coordinate the ongoing clean-up. As many other Logan MPs have done, I would like to acknowledge the work of Louie Noumauvski.