




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2022

MOTION

Queensland Floods

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.04 pm): It was devastating to drive through areas of the Gold Coast after the rain stopped last week to have a look at the damage that was done, as well as in New South Wales. There is a lot of damage down there. As you drove through the streets it was heartbreaking to see those houses with furniture outside and people still mopping up and hosing down their houses, trying to recover from it all.

The Leader of the Opposition has already said that we need better communication, mitigation and betterment. On the communication fund side of things, the real issue that I saw during this crisis was the government's response to closing down the schools. I had 20 or 30 houses inundated in my electorate, and I think we got off fairly lightly compared to a lot of other places, but it was bad enough. Closing down the schools just added to the problems. A number of my schools could have been opened. They could have been teaching the kids and giving the parents the opportunity to protect businesses and protect their homes from what was coming. When the government announced that they were going to shut down all the schools, it sent a panic into the people that did not need to happen, and I would suggest that was because the union demanded that the schools be closed down.

On the communication side of things, initially Palm Beach was not included in the disaster grants. We had to urge the government to put Palm Beach into the disaster grants; I am glad that we were able to get that done. Communication? How could there be good communication about funding when the Treasurer of the state was in Dubai, having a good time rather than being with his people during the floods? The Premier was completely absent initially from the whole project. She was not to be seen anywhere. Then when she was seen, the information that flowed out of the Premier was wishy-washy, all over the place, and nobody really knew what was going on.

We need to mitigate these issues. I have written to the Minister for Transport to ask him to have a look at issues in my electorate and the member for Currumbin's area where a number of residents have contacted both of us and suggested that it might be a problem with the M1 construction down there; that that may have caused houses that have never been inundated before to get inundated this time. This was a very bad rain event, but there were houses that were inundated this time that had never been inundated before.

There is construction happening around the transfer area between Tallebudgera Creek and the Tallebudgera canal systems that may have led to an issue—only may have. There is also the construction of the M1 bridges that may have led to an issue. I wrote to the Minister for Transport—and I understand the member for Currumbin has as well—and just asked him to have look at that. If that is the case, let's make sure this does not happen again.

The minister went straightaway to the Labor attack plan and that is to attack the messenger and attack me in the media. He has not actually responded to me yet. I understand he has responded to the member for Currumbin, but he has not responded to me. I do not know why that would be. I will table that.

Tabled paper: Bundles of letters from member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, regarding flood mitigation [300](#).

I also wrote to the Premier and said that we need to look at flood mitigation further up the valley in Tallebudgera because these things have now happened a number of times. Dams would be a good thing for the government to build. The government spruik loudly about building dams, but they have not actually built any dams. They are talking about building dams, they are planning to build dams, but they have not actually built any dams.

A government member interjected.

Mr HART: I am glad someone opposite mentioned Rookwood Weir because I will table a document from 2017.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 4 November 2017, titled 'Big Read: Questions raised over LNP pushing on with Rookwood' [301](#).

At that time I went to Rockhampton as the shadow water minister and announced that we would build Rookwood Weir, and what did we hear from the Labor government? 'No, it's not a good idea. The business case doesn't stack up.' We were going to do it had we been elected. We built the Wivenhoe Dam. Those opposite cancelled Wolffdene dam. They tore down Paradise Dam. They do not like the concept of building dams. Dams mitigate our flood issues and we need to build more of them.