




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Toohey Electorate, Flooding

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.52 pm): The suburb of Rocklea was once again severely impacted in the most recent flood event. As we all know, in late February and into March the east coast of Australia was hit by extreme flooding events following multiple rounds of heavy rain, including rain bombs. This unusual event occurs when the air hits the ground at such force that it creates tornado strength winds. Eastern Australia endured three intense weather systems in six weeks that led to record rains and flooding. By the end of the first week in March, parts of Southern Queensland had more than a year's worth of rainfall in a week. Rainfall of over 400 millimetres—or, in the old scale, 16 inches—was recorded across the Greater Brisbane area. In the three days to 28 February, Greater Brisbane received 676.8 millimetres, or 26.65 inches, of rainfall—the largest three- and seven-day totals ever recorded in Brisbane. The rainfall recorded was higher than that of the 1974 Brisbane flood, with 30 locations across the south-east recording over 1,000 millimetres. Daily weather observations from Archerfield recorded 197.8 millimetres of rain on 26 February, with 163 millimetres and 185 millimetres falling over the next two days. These falls were on top of 89 millimetres in the three days before 26 February.

More than 20,000 homes and businesses flooded in Queensland. Recovery efforts will obviously take some time. Thousands of Queenslanders have started returning to their homes. However, many are not able to. Sadly, 14 people in Queensland died during the flood disaster. Throughout South-East Queensland and Wide Bay-Burnett almost 1,000 schools were closed in response to the flooding, evacuations took place and the public were advised to avoid non-essential travel.

Rocklea State School in my electorate was badly hit and students had to relocate to the Salisbury State School while repairs took place. I was able to visit the school over the school holidays to catch up on how the building works were progressing. I want to thank Alex and the rebuild team at the school. They worked tirelessly to bring the school back to working order so that students were able to return. The team at QBuild and associated services did a fantastic job and school at Rocklea was able to recommence this term. Rocklea State School was not the only building badly damaged. Many homes and businesses went under water and owners returned to mud and ruined possessions. Brothers St Brendan's Football Club was one of those. I want to thank all of the hardworking people in my electorate who assisted those in need.