




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disaster Preparedness

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure) (9.43 am): Australia is in the grip of a third La Nina season, with flooding having already hit the southern part of our state. As the most disaster impacted state in Australia, we know the importance of getting ready for disaster season and increasing our resilience where we can. This is particularly important in Queensland's north, a region that is at great risk of cyclones, flooding, severe storms, heat waves and bushfires. While the south of our state continues to recover from heavy rainfall and the devastating floods of the 2021-22 disaster season, our northern communities know it is not if but when the next event will strike.

That is why I am pleased to announce the first ever North Queensland Natural Disasters Mitigation Program. The Palaszczuk government will invest \$10 million in the region to help reduce the risk posed by natural disaster events and make insurance for Queensland communities more affordable. The funding will help 22 council projects reduce disaster risk and lower insurance costs for residents, businesses and communities across Northern Queensland. Some projects include rock and sand protection to help prevent erosion in Bundaberg, realigning stormwater drainage in Torres Shire and a potential levee system in Mackay to reduce storm surge inundation. We can all remember the extraordinary devastation from the 2019 Far North and North Queensland monsoon event. This program is aimed at helping protect communities from a repeat of that extreme destruction and escalating insurance costs.

The Australian and Queensland governments continue to work together to help support disaster recovery in Queensland's north, leveraging \$242 million in Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements we announced in 2019. Eight million dollars in flood warning infrastructure network upgrades formed part of the North Queensland DRFA package and now I am pleased to announce the completion of that project. In total, 180 new flood warning assets have been installed across 28 council areas in the far north, north and north-west of our state.

Since 2011 Queensland has been impacted by more than 100 natural disasters. During this time the Queensland Reconstruction Authority has managed a reconstruction program in excess of \$22 billion. Much of that was under the stewardship of Brendan Moon who has been at the QRA since 2011. He has seen over 100 disaster events and managed 65 as its CEO. He served three ministers and five state recovery coordinators and has addressed the United Nations on multiple occasions. Brendan Moon is now Australia's first Coordinator-General for National Emergency Management. On behalf of Queensland I would like to thank him for his service to our state and wish him all the best as he helps all Australians in their hour of need.