



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2024

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Natural Disasters, Preparedness**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (9.59 am): Queensland endures the most natural disasters of any other state or territory in Australia, and this past summer reminded us just how destructive severe weather can be. We know all too well the devastation that bushfires, floods and cyclones cause. It is why the work of our response agencies, including the Community Recovery team, is so very important. Through jointly funded state and Commonwealth disaster recovery funding arrangements, we support Queenslanders to recover and rebuild.

I am pleased to update the House today on the recent change to one of the key Community Recovery grants—the Structural Assistance Grant—which will help even more Queenslanders get back on their feet. For the second time in two years, the Structural Assistance Grant has been given an uplift, this time to a maximum of \$80,000 per household. This is an increase of \$30,000 from last year's limit of \$50,000 per household. This uplift is a boost for eligible Queenslanders affected by severe weather events, particularly those whose homes have been destroyed or suffered catastrophic damage.

This extra support will benefit people like Belinda from Tara in the Warrego electorate who can now fund the replacement of her household septic system as part of her Structural Assistance Grant rebuild plan. This is on top of funds that Belinda has already accessed to complete her council approvals and preliminary works and to establish her new cabin-style house onsite. This is a fantastic result and a massive step forward for Belinda and her family in their recovery and demonstrates the importance of Community Recovery grants following a natural disaster.

As well as increasing the maximum amount claimable for the Structural Assistance Grant, we have removed the requirement for applicants to have building approval prior to meeting the eligibility criteria. This is a significant change that allows eligible residents of non-building approved properties that are damaged or destroyed in future events to apply for help. I am pleased to advise the House that this record uplift has been backdated to benefit eligible applicants from the February 2023 Western Downs bushfires.

In the last season alone, my department processed \$80.1 million in personal hardship assistance grants, benefiting more than 377,000 people. That is more than the previous three seasons combined. The Miles government is doing what matters for Queenslanders, whether that be in times of natural disaster or through our record cost-of-living relief. We know that only a Labor government will continue to support these vital community and social services, and all of this is at risk under those opposite.