




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Weather Events, Insurance Claims; Gold, Mr B

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (7.01 pm): It has been almost eight months since the devastating Christmas Day storm ripped a track through the Logan City, Scenic Rim and northern Gold Coast. The damage across the region has been truly catastrophic. The Insurance Council of Australia estimates that 100,000 claims have been made, adding up to a total of around \$1.39 billion. To this day, there are countless houses across the region that still have tarps on their roofs, structural damage, fences down and other damage. There is currently \$523 million worth of outstanding claims. Whilst I understand that 100,000 claims is an enormous task, especially when we have a shortage of tradies for the bigger jobs, with the next storm season just around the corner it is cold comfort for all these residents waiting for necessary repairs.

Of equal concern is the shocking increase in insurance premiums. My good friend Aaron Hope and his partner live in a duplex that was damaged during the Christmas Day storms. Their insurance cost has gone from \$2,000 annually to \$6,000 annually. As a further insult, they still have not had their house repaired; they are still fighting with their insurance company. We have residents who are forced to live with their family and friends because their houses are not fit for habitation. Some are also forced to seek other forms of accommodation like caravans. These insurance companies need to finalise their claims faster to prepare these houses for the next storm season and also ensure it is done in a reasonable manner in the best interests of their customers.

Finally, I would like to make special mention of a local champion, a local hero. His name is Brendan Gold, the first officer of Guanaba Rural Fire Brigade. He has recently been awarded the Rural Fire Service Volunteer of the Year for 2024. He is an outstanding rural fire brigade member and an outstanding leader of his brigade. He embodies everything that is good about our community. He led people through the recent storms, working day in and day out, taking time off work and not getting paid. That is a testament to his true character. To Brendan and his team at Guanaba Rural Fire Brigade, to Coomera Valley Rural Fire Brigade and to all the other volunteers who helped during the storms, we thank you for everything you did.