




Speech By
Hon. Michael Healy

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2024

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

Cairns, Community Cabinet

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (2.22 pm): Riveting! At the end of February I, along with my far northern colleagues, welcomed the Premier, the Deputy Premier and cabinet to the beautiful city of Cairns for community cabinet. Community cabinet presents a fabulous vehicle for local families, members of the public, business owners and organisations to meet face-to-face with ministers to express their concerns and, more importantly, to share what matters to them. They can discuss local issues face-to-face or simply provide some feedback. Community cabinet includes deputation, which allows not only ministers but also the Premier an insight into community needs and priorities and the challenges faced by our community and the region. It also helps them influence policy and procedures and, more importantly, government initiatives. I note that a number from those still very heavily rain-affected areas north of Cape Tribulation met with the Premier in key areas. They were keen to get those outcomes. That is what these meetings are about.

With 78 meetings being split between 18 ministers in 15-minute time slots, it was akin to minister speed dating. In the allocated 95 minutes, a variety of topics were discussed: from brain drain to the Cairns area, housing, insurance, the recent floods events, the rental crisis and the cost of living. All of these things were discussed in detail. It is fantastic that the people in our community had the opportunity to do that.

The town hall event was booked out. It allowed members of the community—as well as all of the people from Cape Tribulation that he spoke to and the people from the Mossman Mill that he went outside and spoke to—to ask the Premier questions and speak to him about anything that was important to them. The community could ask, 'What are you doing about it?' It was well done. It also provides a valuable platform for the Premier to listen and to gauge what matters most.

Community cabinet also provided a great opportunity for me to accompany Minister Scanlon on a visit to the Cairns Rapid Accommodation Apprenticeship Centre, which is modelled on the QBuild facility at Eagle Farm. This facility has begun producing modular homes for social housing and to be used for remote disaster impacted areas. In fact, the first 10 houses will be delivered to Cooktown by the end of March. This is unprecedented. These portable homes are being built and fitted out under a covered hangar in the industrial area at Redden Street in Cairns to avoid weather delays and the heat challenges that particularly affect this part of the world.

The factory-built homes are built at the same time as the site works are being carried out with the finished home. That is then transported for installation. This process will save valuable time and provide more Queenslanders with a roof over their head in a quicker time frame. I thank everybody who turned up, and I want to thank the people of Cairns for their contribution to what was a successful event.