




Speech By
Adam Baillie

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2025

MOTION

North Queensland, Weather Events

 **Mr BAILLIE** (Townsville—LNP) (11.58 am): I rise today to acknowledge the devastation caused in North Queensland by the heavy rainfall and flooding earlier this month and to reflect on the efforts of all those who contributed during the initial disaster response and subsequent recovery efforts. Rain began falling in Townsville during the last week of January. It is our wet season—that is not uncommon. However, at the beginning of this month, we were struck with so much rain that many Townsvillians feared we would experience devastation rivalling the 2019 flood event, with over half a metre of water recorded over a weekend in some suburbs.

Local disaster management groups were stood up across North Queensland. For the next two weeks dedicated teams worked tirelessly to ensure our community was safe and to minimise damage caused to infrastructure by the weather event. In addition to the rain, over the same weekend, increased wind gusts shut down travel by air and sea, resulting in our already remote communities becoming even more isolated. Palm Island received six feet of rain in a two-week period. This caused landslips which took out power to the entire island including the water plant, which left Palm residents without power or water. The wind hampered the response but as soon as access could be provided, Ergon Energy in combination with Palm Island council worked around the clock to restore power and get drinking water flowing again across the island.

Magnetic Island suffered significant infrastructure damage to roads and bridges and lost power. As with Palm Island, access to Magnetic Island to enable key personnel to conduct repairs was cut and that made restoration of critical infrastructure such as power and water difficult. However, our Ergon Energy crews and our local emergency service personnel were up to the challenge. Townsville residents were instructed to evacuate their homes; they suffered from flash flooding, sewage and water inundation, car damage, mould inundation, and interruptions to work and school. The community banded together. We have been supported by assistance from across the country and we, the state government, stood with them.

The Premier joined us on the ground in Townsville before the rain had stopped, while the disaster was still unfolding, and he did not leave the region until we were well on the way to recovery. We had ministers from across the cabinet join us for several days each throughout the event, some visiting twice over the period, as damage assessments were made and the recovery efforts began with some truly amazing efforts already behind us. North Queenslanders witnessed firsthand what a government focused on outcomes can achieve.

The road to recovery is not going to be fast or easy. We have committed to supporting those who were impacted and we will work with all North Queensland communities to ensure we will be more resilient to future events.

(Time expired)