




Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2025

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

North Queensland, Weather Events; Queensland Fire Department

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.22 pm): Queensland Fire Department personnel have worked around the clock to keep North Queenslanders safe and support the recovery.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Members to my left.

Ms LEAHY: Throughout the peak of this devastating weather event, around 500 fire and rescue personnel from across the state were providing support daily to impacted communities. These personnel responded to over 1,070 incidents relating to this weather event. The Queensland Fire and Rescue swiftwater floodwater rescue crews rescued 106 persons and two animals and evacuated 103 persons and 16 animals. The swiftwater rescue crews were strategically pre-positioned in high-risk areas ready to respond. Rural Fire Service staff and volunteer members, as well as auxiliary and permanent firefighters, were also on the ground in impacted communities. They completed washouts of more than 160 homes and businesses as part of the recovery efforts.

Specialist fire and rescue firefighters completed over 2,900 damage assessments, providing valuable data for the recovery operations. QFD drones were also used to gather crucial aerial intelligence. Their 276 flights clocked up in excess of 28 flying hours, which is a very big effort from them. Nine aircraft from bases in Townsville, Innisfail and Cairns were also deployed throughout the region to provide support by transporting rescue crews, essential supplies and freight to impacted communities. The total number of aircraft hours during the disaster was in excess of 149 hours.

The QFD also set up two 90-person temporary accommodation facilities in Ingham and Townsville to accommodate emergency services personnel, including hundreds of State Emergency Service volunteers and interstate colleagues. This critical capability eases the burden on accommodation in these impacted communities so support personnel can be in place but not to the detriment of housing displaced members of the community. In many cases, those community members need that emergency accommodation.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am going to start warning members. Members to my left, that is your final general warning. Your interjections are not being taken.

Ms LEAHY: The facilities provided crews with a place to eat, shower and sleep. The disaster response and recovery efforts have been massive and the work of everyone involved cannot be overstated. The Queensland Fire Department continues to assist during the recovery phase, through conducting damage assessments and supporting the SES with washout tasks. There are quite a number of those to undertake. On behalf of all Queenslanders and the parliament, I would like to thank all of those frontline personnel for their huge efforts during this devastating flood event in North Queensland.