



Speech By  
**Hon. Brent Mickelberg**


**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 February 2025

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**North Queensland, Weather Events**

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.51 am): As communities across North Queensland begin their recovery from the recent severe wet weather event, I acknowledge the significant and ongoing efforts of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, other agencies and local governments to restore our vital road and transport networks throughout the region.

The unprecedented flooding caused widespread damage across the state controlled road network and rail links in North Queensland. The Department of Transport and Main Roads and Queensland Rail have worked tirelessly to reconnect North Queensland communities. While rail is still cut between Townsville and Cairns, along with Hughenden and Charters Towers, the Bruce Highway and many other vital road links have now reopened to traffic.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work done by so many people to reopen the Bruce Highway at Ollera Creek between Townsville and Ingham. This was achieved firstly through the use, as noted by the Premier, of an ADF temporary bridge structure, then through repairs led by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. There are too many people to thank individually, but in particular I want to thank the ADF, RoadTek, the TMR Structures Team, the PDO team, including Regional Director Ross Hodgman and District Director Kylee Petersen, as well as the many local subcontractors that helped reopen the Ollera Creek Bridge in just 11 days. I also want to acknowledge the constructive and proactive engagement of the Queensland Trucking Association and the trucking industry, which dealt with many challenges as we sought to reopen the state controlled road network.

I want to acknowledge the work done by Queensland Rail to ferry people across Ollera Creek using the rail bridge, delivering a vital link for the community. I am not sure if the 2,900 people carried across the creek will be included in the Queensland Rail official patronage numbers, but it is important that we recognise their contribution in this House. Reopening the road was a long, difficult and very wet task. It involved 13 cubic metres of concrete, over 1,600 tonnes of rock, 90 tonnes of sand, 400 tonnes of recycled crushed concrete and 88 tonnes of asphalt.

Roads across Queensland have been impacted by this weather event, and the department have been out managing road closures, clearing debris, inspecting and assessing damaged roads and bridges, patching potholes and undertaking emergency repairs to reopen roads, and they continue to do so. The work is not yet complete, and I note that there are many roads, such as Mount Spec Road, that have been significantly impacted by extensive landslips and remain closed to all traffic due to debris on the road. Further assessments are being carried out at this time, and my department will continue to work towards reopening this and other roads as soon as possible.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is working with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to secure extraordinary assistance under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to enable Ollera Creek Bridge and other priority sites damaged by the recent flooding to be built back better. Details of this package are still being finalised. As noted by the Premier, the focus of the package will be on increasing the resilience of key road infrastructure.

As we transition from the emergency response to recovery and restoration, our focus remains on ensuring the safety of all road users, maintaining vital freight movements, and supporting the economic recovery of our regional communities. This work is made possible by the dedication and hard work of TMR public servants, with ongoing assistance from other agencies and local governments, and once again I acknowledge their continued efforts to reconnect Queensland.