



Speech By  
**Hon. Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2025

**MOTION**

**North Queensland, Weather Events**

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (12.08 pm): I rise to speak to the motion as moved by the Premier. Again, we have witnessed Queenslanders respond to nature's challenges bravely, selflessly and without hesitation. Despite those brave efforts, the cost of this weather event is substantial. Damaged homes and infrastructure will take time to repair, but nothing will replace those who lost their lives. I, too, would like to offer my sympathies to their families, friends and communities.

In the Burdekin electorate the town of Giru and nearby areas were again hit hard. In Giru itself the water level eclipsed that of the flooding in 2019 with many long-term locals saying it is the biggest flood they had ever experienced. Flooding, it must be said, is not a rare event in Giru. When I visited the community, residents aired their concerns about issues such as drainage, access to a landing site for emergency helicopters and a safe place to park their cars during flood events. A few days later I visited the community again, along with the Premier and the Minister for Police. We met with the emergency services personnel and volunteers, who worked day and night to protect and serve their community. I want to acknowledge the work they have done, and continue to do, right throughout North Queensland.

I also want to pay tribute to people like Jay, June and the team at the Country Ayr Motel who cooked some 300-plus meals to keep their community fed during the worst of the flooding and the other businesses and volunteers who stepped up during our hour of need. While actual flooding in the communities of Ayr and Home Hill was largely avoided, the impact of the weather event cannot be understated. Just like people at Majors Creek, for the residents of Groper Creek, Rita Island and other areas this weather event prevented access to work, to loved ones and to essential goods and services, including medication.

The Bruce Highway is Queensland's main artery. Closures meant food shortages, not just at the site of the closure but further afield. The closure at Plantation Creek, for example, contributed to food shortages in Cairns and Far North Queensland—more than 500 kilometres away. In 2019 I raised the issue of Plantation Creek with the then transport minister. What was the result? Absolutely nothing—more studies, more spin. Unlike the former government, the Crisafulli LNP government is taking action. Before the floodwaters had even receded, work had commenced on addressing the highway closures at Plantation Creek. My message to those affected by this weather event is simple: the Crisafulli LNP government will be with you every step of the way, right through that recovery process. To those who went above and beyond for their communities, on behalf of the Burdekin community I say thank you. We were hit hard and Mother Nature tested us, but it did not break our spirit.