



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2025

**MOTION**

**North Queensland, Weather Events**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (12.14 pm): As we have heard in this chamber and as people across this state and the Commonwealth would be acutely aware, we have suffered an unprecedented rain event in the far north and the north. There is no doubt about it: it seems to happen a little more frequently than expected. This flooding emergency saw severe flooding and the evacuation of thousands, power cut to homes, businesses having to shut down and significant damage to the Bruce Highway, and we are very pleased to see the federal government make a significant announcement in relation to funding in that area.

This weather event saw homes from Gordonvale to Townsville flooded, with the hardest hit regions being Townsville, Ingham, Cardwell and a lot of smaller communities impacted in and around there that do not always make the headlines. Those residents suffered. They lost their houses, their possessions, livestock and crops, but it is absolutely heartening to see people come together to speak about this and I acknowledge the work that is being done to assist those people. Tragically, two people lost their lives in this emergency—one who made the ultimate sacrifice in responding to calls for assistance. Our hearts and thoughts go out to those grieving families and loved ones.

As in any emergency, the extraordinary and selfless SES are immediately mobilised the minute a weather warning is issued. I want to thank those wonderful people who risk life and limb for the work that they do. It is absolutely remarkable, and the only thing more impressive than that is their ability to be consistent in providing that support. To community groups, individuals and councils who opened and manned evacuation centres and brought comfort and a cuppa to residents who were riding the wave of emotions, we thank you very much for that. To the incredible Ergon crews who worked tirelessly to get the electricity supply up and running, to the council utility workers, disaster management teams and first responders and emergency services, we know your contribution is significant and remains enormously appreciated by the broader community. It is at times like these that we see the true spirit shining through—as we have heard, through communities coming together to support one another at a time of great challenge, whether it is brushing and scrubbing and hosing out properties or providing meals and donations or food or simply a hug for those people who need that at the time.

The Defence Force has also played its role. I want to acknowledge that and the frontline workers who have tirelessly contributed to ensure the roads have been opened. We certainly learned that without trucks Australia stops, so I give a big shout-out to our truckies who had their share of challenges in getting these vital supplies into flood-affected areas. I say thank you. They were certainly a very welcome sight in Cairns on Friday afternoon where they had been very much needed. I want to extend the courtesies and thanks to everybody who contributed. When we come together we know the strength of our communities. We will face such disasters again and let us hope that we face them with as much resilience and initiative.