




Speech By
Sean Dillon

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2025

MOTION

Weather Events, Response

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (7.52 pm): I would like to echo the comments of all of the members who have spoken before me to the Premier's motion and, without repeating them, wholeheartedly support them. The same goes, I am sure, for the comments of those who will speak after me. Western Queensland is still facing an unfolding disaster. We are talking recovery in some places, but there is an unfolding disaster with water still peaking in the Thomson and in the upper parts of the Cooper Creek Catchment. Considerable water is still flowing in the Barcoo after rainfall in the last 24 hours.

Last Wednesday night, it became apparent that this was not going to be an ordinary Western Queensland flood, with the Vergemont channels right through to the Barcoo and Adavale all receiving torrential rain on top of already sodden paddocks. We have seen whole communities evacuated and partial communities evacuated, whole homesteads evacuated and partial homesteads evacuated. Today in Longreach, the Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries, the Minister for Local Government and Water and I met with town community members from Jundah like Bob, an opal miner. He has a full understanding of what has happened to his house, but there is no access into that community for him to return.

The community of Jundah, through the leadership of the Barcoo Shire Council and the mayor, not only have a rural agricultural crisis on their hands but also have to recover the power, water and sewerage as well as clean individual private dwellings. This is replicated in Adavale, where I met with Ray on a couple of nights. Not only have their community services gone; their own private services and their pets have gone too, as I talked about yesterday.

The government is working in partnership with private industry. The member for Warrego singled out the chopper pilots. I would like to make a special mention of Bob and Andrea Speed at Retreat Station near Jundah because they have been a base outside of Jundah for up to six helicopters. They are providing feed and a base for avgas, all of their own volition. Retreat is a station off the grid. The solar panels went under water so they are running on generators and housing dozens of helicopter pilots.

Shane and Lauren at Channel Country Helicopters in Quilpie are back on power, and they have a dozen helicopter pilots. Those helicopter pilots are at the front line of our emergency response, along with the SES and Ergon workers. We will stand with the communities of the central-west and the south-west as they rebuild, but it will be a long road.