




Speech By
Sean Dillon

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Western Queensland, Weather Events

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (2.34 pm): I rise to continue my contribution regarding the advice and provide more updates around the unfolding flooding situation occurring in my electorate and the electorate of Warrego. We have spoken a lot about the hard infrastructure, but I am sure, given the scenes that are unfolding on our TV screens, in our newspapers and on our social media, that a lot of members will return to their electorates after this week in parliament and be confronted by people who ask what they can do to help the people of Western Queensland.

I commend the local governments, the state authorities and the relevant ministers for the way they are handling the crisis management that comes with a disaster. Following that, there is so much soft infrastructure that requires considerable work—and this is something that Queenslanders across the state are, sadly, used to. Many Queenslanders—whether they be coastal in the north, urban in the south or in the centre of the state—have had to, unfortunately, clean their homes and businesses following a flood over the last few decades. They are aware of a lot of the things that can happen.

The problem in Western Queensland is that neighbours are not 50 metres away; they are dozens of kilometres away and are all consumed by the same problem. Electricians and mechanics will be at the top of the list of skills that individual businesses, properties and towns will require. A lot of these properties have the heavy equipment they need, but that equipment has just been submerged. There is a need for basic servicing of a lot of that machinery and an undersupply of mechanics in those western areas to undertake that work quickly. It is the same with electricians and electrical inspections. I am aware that local governments are undertaking those inspections with approved contractors to get people into their homes, but the sheds and shearing sheds of Western Queensland will require the same.

I also point to the stock water points. Something that is not known about flooding events as serious as this is that cattle and sheep will actually perish because the water they are surrounded by is too heavily silted for them to consume. There is a need to return water to troughs and get water infrastructure back on track. That does not necessarily require a plumber; it just requires two willing sets of hands to help these people out. The assistance that is required cannot be handled haphazardly. The local governments are a great touchpoint, so if there are people in members' electorates who are asking to help, please put them in contact with the local governments or district disaster coordinators.

In my last few seconds, I place on record my thanks to the SES volunteers I met in Longreach yesterday. They had travelled from Sarina, Mackay and Gladstone, and I thank those communities for that. Can I also name—and this is a dangerous thing—the district disaster coordinator inspector, Chris Smith, and all of the QPS staff who have managed this disaster so well in my electorate.