

Question on Notice

No. 1827

Asked on Wednesday, 26 November 2008

MR WENDT asked the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Seniors and Youth (**MS NELSON-CARR**) –

With reference to the Premier's visit to flood affected areas in Ipswich last week – What emergency assistance is being provided by the Department of Communities?

ANSWER:

Following the severe storm on the evening of 18 November 2008, which caused damage and flooding in Ipswich, the Department of Communities established a Community Recovery Centre at the Hayden Centre in Ipswich. In creating the centre the department brought together a range of government, non-government, industry and community bodies under the one roof to give residents in Ipswich easy access to personal hardship financial assistance, information, emotional support and referrals to relevant services.

Staff from the Department of Communities, Lifeline Community Care, Australian Red Cross, Salvation Army, Centrelink, the Building Services Authority and insurance representatives have been co-located at the recovery centre to assist affected Ipswich residents and ensure they could access the following types of services:

- material assistance, eg clothing, personal items, toiletries
- personal support and psychological counselling
- financial counselling
- insurance industry advice
- income support information and assistance with application processes.

The department also conducted outreach services to visit affected residents in their homes to determine their needs.

As of Monday 1 December 2008, the Department of Communities has assisted over 1069 Ipswich residents by providing over \$465 000 in Emergent Assistance grants. Individuals were eligible for \$165 and couples and families were eligible for up to \$765 to meet their basic needs for food, emergency accommodation, essential clothing or medication following the storms.

The Department of Communities also provides means tested grants for uninsured people to replace essential household contents or to repair their owner/occupied dwelling.

Departmental officers have commenced home visits to more than 560 affected residents to progress their claims for an Essential Household Content grant and to 41 Ipswich residents who have applied for a Structural Assistance Grant.