

Question on Notice
No. 230
Asked on 27 February 2008

MR LINGARD asked the Premier (MS BLIGH) -

QUESTION:

As the Beaudesert area has been declared a natural disaster area, will she confirm that small businesses and farms in the area should be able to access \$25,000 grants for cleanup damage?

ANSWER:

The Beaudesert area was not declared a natural disaster area under the provisions of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*. However, following the flooding associated with a low pressure system in South East Queensland from 27 December 2007 to 7 January 2008, the Acting Minister for Emergency Services activated assistance under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements for the former Beaudesert Shire and other parts of South East Queensland.

The Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements are jointly funded by the Queensland and Australian Governments and provide assistance for immediate hardship, essential household contents and structural assistance, aid to restore public assets, freight subsidies for primary producers and concessional loans to assist primary producers and small businesses.

The concessional loans were made available for eligible primary producers and small businesses in the Beaudesert area following the flooding in early January 2008.

These various financial assistance arrangements are not designed to meet the full cost of replacement or repair, or to replace insurance. They also do not compensate for loss of income as a result of the disaster.

As you would be aware, widespread flooding occurred across almost two thirds of the State during January and February this year. The extent of damage and destruction varied considerably with the worst affected areas of the State being around Emerald and Belyando during the January 2008 monsoonal flooding and Mackay during February 2008.

Given the extent of the damage in these worst affected communities, the Prime Minister and I announced special non-repayable grants provided through the Special Disaster Flood Assistance Scheme to assist small businesses and primary producers in relevant affected areas. This additional assistance was aimed at helping small businesses and primary producers in those areas to clean and restore their business to enable trading or production to resume.

The standard levels of assistance under the State and Commonwealth Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements activated by the Acting Minister for Emergency Services continue to be available to eligible small businesses and primary producers in the Beaudesert area. However, the special grant assistance is not available.