

Question on Notice

No. 352

Asked on Friday 11 April 2008

Mr Cripps asked the Minister for Main Roads and Local Government (MR PITT) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the recent floods experienced in central, northern and far northern districts of Queensland and consequent road restrictions placed on rural roads –

1. How many people were specifically employed to repair road damage caused by floods during January to March 2008?
2. What estimated financial losses have transport and primary industry enterprises suffered as a result of road restriction caused by floods?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Hinchinbrook for the questions.

- (1) Main Roads district staff and RoadTek crews worked to assess and repair damage to roads caused by flooding in Central and Northern Queensland as soon as access was possible.

Main Roads deployed all available resources to flood-affected areas on an "as needs" basis. Local government staff also played an integral role in repairing flood damage.

In far northern districts an estimated 100 staff were involved in repairing road damage caused by flooding.

In the northern district 243 staff worked on flood damage repairs. 55 people carried out flood repairs at the peak of the floods in Mackay. In Rockhampton 28 people carried out repairs at the peak of the floods with about 18 still working on repairs. In Emerald 21 people worked on road repairs.

Expert staff such as two bridge inspectors from Rockhampton and a pavement deflection testing unit team from Main Roads' Engineering and Technology branch supported the work of district staff in the aftermath of flooding.

- (2) Main Roads understands the impact flooding has had on the community and has worked as quickly as possible to restore the road network to normal.

Load restrictions were placed on some sections of state-controlled roads after widespread flooding in central and northern areas of the state earlier this year. The restrictions were needed to ensure driver safety and to prevent further damage to water-saturated roads.

From the outset Main Roads sought to balance the short-term access needs of residents and industry with the long-term protection of the road network.

In cases where it was appropriate, the load restrictions gave trucks access to the road network and the ability to carry 80% of their usual axle loads. As floodwaters dropped, access was restored with load limits appropriate for the road conditions.

Main Roads does not have access to the financial records of commercial enterprises. As a result, the department is unable to estimate any financial losses incurred as a result of road restrictions caused by flooding.