

**Question on Notice
No. 2034
Asked on 7 October 2010**

MS GRACE asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (MR ROBERTS) -

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what is being done to prepare local Brisbane residents ahead of this year's storm season and what can emergency services provide people who want to get their homes ready?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question and acknowledge her continuing support for local emergency services.

The Bligh Government is committed to ensuring that government agencies, local governments and the community are well prepared to respond to and recover from the impacts of storm, floods and cyclones.

The memories of the Gap storm that devastated parts of Brisbane's northside in 2008 are still vivid. The unseasonal storm dramatically reinforced the need for residents to be prepared for the worst.

On 21 September 2010, the Bligh Government and NRMA Insurance launched the awareness campaign for the 2010-2011 storm season at the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre. The campaign encourages people to take a community approach to their storm season planning by lending a helping hand in their neighbourhoods when preparing for, and responding to, a storm event.

At the same event, and in the company of the Member for Brisbane Central, I was pleased to launch the "State Emergency Service Get Ready Guide" – a comprehensive booklet outlining the steps for household preparedness, safety tips for cyclone, storm, flood and tsunami and contact and emergency planning templates. The user-friendly guide is designed to hang on the fridge door and includes templates for preparing evacuation plans and kits as well as identifying key contact numbers for use during emergencies.

The Government's Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) provides a range of practical information on how to prepare for severe storms and other natural disaster events. The information and resources are based around the following key messages:

- Prepare your household emergency plan;
- Prepare your household emergency kit ;
- Prepare your household for evacuation;
- Prepare your home;
- Tune into warnings; and
- Know your neighbours.

EMQ also provide a range of on-line resources for local governments to provide links via their websites, including:

- Internet web pages and downloadable fact sheets on key steps to prepare for cyclone, storm and flood in English and 12 other languages; and
- Steps you can take toward preparing pets for disasters.

The Department of Community Safety (DCS) has developed a range of “Tune into Warnings”, material which encourages members of the community to be alert to emergency warning information by tuning into their local ABC radio station, logging onto the Bureau of Meteorology website, listening out for Emergency Alert messages that are sent to their telephones, and to act immediately on the messages that are provided.

Brisbane Region State Emergency Service will be distributing the “Tune into Warnings” material at community education field days in the coming months.

The Bligh Government also recognises the important role Local Governments play in co-ordinating Queenslanders preparation for the storm season.

The DCS has partnered with five councils to install 10 highway billboards encouraging coastal communities to prepare for the cyclone season. An advertising campaign for the SES 132 500 telephone number is currently underway and includes advertisements on ABC radio, information on the Get Ready Guide and NMRA Insurance radio and television advertisements, which are scheduled to commence on 1 November 2010.

The DCS is also active in providing Queensland communities with the tools they need to respond to emergency weather events.

Through the ClimateQ Strategy, EMQ was provided \$3.37 million to enhance the storage of equipment and improve its ability to respond to natural disasters. EMQ has recently purchased a Disaster Warehouse at Ormeau to service South East Queensland which will be stocked with appropriate equipment in readiness for Storm Season. To support disaster preparedness, the DCS also maintains caches of disaster stores including sandbags, tarpaulins, ladders, chainsaws, and generators at Brendale in Brisbane’s north, Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Beenleigh and Maryborough.

Emergency Management Queensland has also led the \$4.56 million “Protecting Our Coastal Communities” program to acquire high resolution elevation data over coastal communities to help identify areas susceptible to storm-tide inundation. This data will enable local governments and disaster planners in all agencies to more accurately plan for evacuations.

The Bligh Government is committed to helping Queensland communities prepare for and reduce the impact of natural disasters.