

Question on Notice

No. 37

Asked on 16 February 2011

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for Main Roads (MR WALLACE) -

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline the magnificent work of the Origin Alliance, builders of the Ipswich Motorway from Dinmore to Goodna, following the recent flood in terms of their assistance to the community as well as rebuilding their own offices and facilities at 'Origin City'?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Bundamba for the question and for her long-term support for upgrading the Ipswich Motorway.

As the Member is well aware, the Ipswich Motorway is a vital artery connecting Brisbane with Ipswich and western communities, carrying up to 90 000 vehicles each day. It is a vital part of our state road network.

The section of motorway between Dinmore and Goodna was cut by rising floodwaters at several places on January 11, including at Woogaroo Creek, Goodna Creek and Six Mile Creek.

Origin's first priority after the flood peak receded was to inspect and clean the motorway to make it safe to re-open to traffic. A complete electrical and structural inspection of all critical elements of the motorway was undertaken.

A large amount of debris had to be cleared, but due to the efforts of Origin's engineering, safety and traffic teams the motorway was able to be re-opened by 6:30 pm on Friday evening, January 14.

Many houses and businesses adjacent to the project were inundated by the flood waters, and Origin Alliance staff soon realised that the two things they were best placed to provide were people and machinery.

Almost 200 Origin workers were involved in the clean up effort over subsequent days, clearing debris, cleaning roads, removing rubbish, repairing potholes and controlling traffic in Goodna, Redbank and Riverview.

The teams worked closely with Ipswich City Council crews and the Australian Army to prioritise tasks and coordinate the clean up efforts. Origin teams used 60 trucks, 20 water trucks, 10 bobcats, 10 backhoes, 10 excavators and six loaders. Much of this equipment was subsequently made available to assist the Ipswich City Council in continuing the recovery efforts.

Efforts focused on removing the heaviest debris and perishable goods from the choked footpaths, before they became a health hazard to local residents and the teams of volunteers.

In Goodna, Origin Alliance teams helped home owners and St Ives shopping centre businesses to remove rubbish. They helped remove debris from the Gales Caravan Park and cleaned the netball courts at Goodna so they could be used as temporary parking for army and emergency vehicles.

The Alliance also provided a crew to assist Riverview Neighbourhood House to distribute donated items, and provided portaloos and portable showers to help residents in Goodna without power and water.

Beyond the motorway and affected suburbs, around 150 workers helped with the massive task of cleaning out the fruit and vegetable markets at Rocklea, and a construction crew undertook emergency remedial works on the Warrego Highway near Marburg, following the collapse of batters following the floods.

The ground floor of more than nine offices of the Origin Alliance site office at Redbank was also inundated by up to three metres of floodwater, and much of the office infrastructure, plant and equipment was severely damaged. The office is now operational again and works have recommenced on the Ipswich Motorway upgrade.

Origin Alliance's efforts were yet another example of how our community can come together to help others in a crisis.