

Question on Notice

No. 575

Asked on 6 August 2014

MR HOBBS asked the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience (MR CRISAFULLI) –

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what benefits there are from building flood mitigation projects across Queensland?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Warrego for his question.

The Queensland Government is building better infrastructure and developing initiatives and strategies to enhance our resilience to all kinds of natural disasters. We are helping communities become more resilient to future flood events through flood mitigation projects.

The Queensland Government has committed over \$50 million for the 2014–15 disaster mitigation and resilience program.

There are many benefits that result from investment in flood mitigation projects across Queensland, some easily quantified, some hard to measure. Some of the more obvious benefits include:

- protection of community health and welfare, including mitigation against loss of life and essential services;
- decreased recovery costs due to more resilient infrastructure and mitigation projects such as levees and fire breaks;
- increased planning capability for councils, using flood mapping and modelling;
- increased protection for private individual, business and government infrastructure;
- reduced insurance premiums within flood mitigated areas;
- increased economic continuity during and after events, fostering decreased loss of earnings; and
- decreased social impact, including community mental health and social stability

Some notable recipients of these benefits are the towns of Roma, Charleville and St George, which have all received Queensland Government funding for levees and other flood mitigation works.

Along with the previously mentioned benefits, these councils have all experienced decreased insurance premiums and increased eligibility. Most notably, Suncorp has dropped premiums as directly attributed to flood mitigation works completions.

In Roma, approximately 90 per cent of properties are now considered to have zero flood risk by Suncorp, with premiums to drop 45 per cent on average and up to 90 per cent in some cases. Charleville would have faced premiums at greater than three times the price without any flood mitigation. Meanwhile, the town of St George is reported to be receiving a 15 per cent premium reduction following the completion of its new flood levee.

Another major section of work with obvious benefit is 'betterment' funding, whereby infrastructure that has failed in an event is built back to a more resilient standard rather than to the standard that was shown to fail. The application of 'betterment' during reconstruction offers greatly improved community resilience and decreased future disaster recovery funding requirements.

The resilience measures the Queensland Government is implementing differ from community to community, though our commitment to rebuild better than before remains constant.