



Speech by

Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Thursday, 21 May 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

South-East Queensland Floods

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.49 am): Queensland Transport commenced disaster management preparation for public transport services here in South-East Queensland as soon as flooding commenced yesterday. Times like this require additional effort from Public Service staff, and yesterday certainly highlighted the commitment of Queensland Transport, TransLink and QR staff.

I would particularly like to thank the staff of the Bribie Island bus service on the TransLink network who were unable to get about 40 children to school at Caboolture due to flooding yesterday morning. The children were driven to the company's depot where they were housed and entertained until their parents could safely collect them. If not for them at work, we might today have been hearing stories about kids stuck in the rain and locked outside empty houses while parents worried on the wrong side of blocked roads and swollen waterways. I would like to personally and genuinely thank the operators and the drivers for playing such a crucial role in ensuring the safety of these children.

The impact of the rain and floods should not be understated. TransLink's call centre received almost 6,800 calls on their 24-hour phone line yesterday, while the website provided information to 45,000 people seeking transport updates. My department worked jointly with Brisbane City Council in the Traffic Management Centre, assisting to manage the peak-hour traffic delays both late yesterday afternoon and also this morning.

I am also advised that QR track staff worked throughout the night last night to repair a damaged track that had been washed out yesterday between Keperra and Ferny Grove. Thanks to their efforts, the track was opened again at 8.10 this morning. There are still a number of bus, train and ferry service delays this morning as a result of flooding, and all transport agencies will continue to update the public on road closures and public transport disruptions throughout the day. I would also very much like to thank the commuters here in South-East Queensland for their patience and understanding while we work to ensure their safety on our public transport services.