

KIMBERLEY FLOODS — RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS

**86. Ms D.G. D'ANNA to the Premier:**

I refer to the impacts of ex-tropical cyclone Ellie and the subsequent flooding across the Kimberley region.

- (1) Can the Premier please advise the house on how the McGowan Labor government is working with the federal Albanese government to respond?
- (2) Can the Premier provide an update on the WA government's ongoing role in the recovery efforts?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Kimberley for the question and I congratulate her. When I was up there a few weeks ago, I saw the member in action with local residents, helping people and taking up issues. It was really terrific; it was a great performance. I know it has been ongoing and the member for Kimberley deserves a great deal of credit.

The once-in-100-year flood saw 400 millimetres of rain in just 48 hours in some areas. Obviously, it was a dramatic and traumatic event that damaged roads, houses and infrastructure across a large part of the Kimberley. The commonwealth and state governments have been working cooperatively on recovery arrangements. We can announce today two significant steps towards recovery through the joint commonwealth–state disaster recovery funding arrangements. The first is a freight subsidy scheme for \$42 million to assist in transparent costs. As we know, because the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge is down and because some of the roads are damaged, transport by freight from the East Kimberley to the southern parts of the state is disrupted—and it has to go the other way, which is an enormous distance. That is impacting costs on houses and businesses across that part of the Kimberley. State and federal governments have agreed on a freight subsidy scheme backdated to 1 January. As I understand it, this is the first time it has occurred as part of disaster relief funding arrangements. It is obvious because of the geography that doing something such as this is a good thing; so we have agreed that between the state and commonwealth governments. I thank the commonwealth government for its support for that.

The second initiative we have agreed under this is the installation of temporary residential accommodation. Currently, displaced people have emergency accommodation, but we are working on the arrangements for temporary accommodation to be put in place as soon as possible. Houses will be built; the housing rebuild is at least 60 houses that we know of, which will be very expensive to achieve, but we are absolutely committed to providing that housing. I thank the commonwealth for the temporary accommodation arrangement as well, which will be jointly funded between the two. We have further things to announce in coming days and weeks as part of the recovery effort for the Kimberley. I thank everyone involved. I thank the people of the Kimberley for their forbearance. I thank all the emergency responders, volunteers, local, state and federal governments and the Australian Defence Force—the list goes on—for the recovery. It will take some time to get it back to where it was, but we are on our way.