

**TROPICAL CYCLONE DAMIEN — DISASTER RELIEF**

*Statement by Minister for Emergency Services*

**MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services)** [9.02 am]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house about the recovery efforts that are underway in response to tropical cyclone Damien and acknowledge the fantastic efforts of the community. Just recently, our state's north was impacted by the third cyclone of the season, which caused significant damage from 4 to 9 February this year. Fortunately, no lives were lost due to cyclone Damien's destructive winds of over 220 kilometres an hour. After the worst of the cyclone had passed, I travelled to the Pilbara with the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner and the member for Pilbara, Kevin Michel, to see firsthand the damage the cyclone had wrought. We also wanted to personally thank the local government and the emergency services personnel who travelled across the state to help the Pilbara community.

Cyclone Damien's path meant that the risk that the area would experience destructive winds, high rainfall and flooding was significant. These destructive elements presented a real threat to the communities of Ashburton, Karratha, Port Hedland and Meekatharra, as well as many Aboriginal communities throughout the area. As Damien hit, State Emergency Service volunteers handled more than 220 requests for assistance—largely for roof damage, water damage and fallen trees.

Now the hard work of recovery begins. Tropical cyclone Damien has been proclaimed an eligible disaster under the disaster recovery funding arrangements. Department of Fire and Emergency Services recovery staff, who administer the disaster recovery funding arrangements for WA, have contacted the impacted local governments included in the proclamation to provide support and guidance. These local governments are the Shire of Ashburton, the City of Karratha, the Town of Port Hedland and the Shire of Meekatharra. The DFES recovery team will continue to assess the damage in surrounding shires.

I am sure that everyone in this house will join me in thanking all the career and volunteer emergency services personnel for putting their lives on hold to help the local community. I appreciate their extraordinary efforts assisting in the preparation, response and recovery efforts. Finally, I wish to extend my gratitude to the Pilbara residents and visitors who prepared their properties, stayed inside and followed the public warnings from authorities.