



Claire presided at the Lions Club of Kuraby Australia Day Ceremony, this family drove from Gladstone.

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Weekly Update

1 February 2013

"This week I have been attending Committee hearings in Townsville, Brisbane, Newcastle, and Sydney, listening to the disabled, carers and disability sector organisations submissions to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

"The Committee consults with people with disability and their advocates, carers and families to work out the key issues and questions, such as assessment and eligibility. There is more on the NDIS in the Update."

Key dates for the 2013 federal election - the Prime Minister announced Sat 14 Sep 2013 as polling day for the 2013 federal election, she will advise the Governor-General to dissolve the House of Representatives with writs to be issued on **Monday 12 August** for an election for the House and half of the Senate, on Saturday 14 September. The 2013 election timetable will be:

Issue of Writ	Mon 12 Aug 2013
Close of Rolls	8pm, Mon 19 Aug 2013
Close of Candidates Nominations	12 noon, Thu 22 Aug 2013
Declaration of Candidates Nominations	12 noon, Fri 23 Aug 2013
Polling Day	Sat 14 Sep 2013

Assistance for Disaster Affected Communities - six more communities in Queensland - Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Somerset, Southern Downs Toowoomba and Western Downs under the **Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA)**, assistance will be made to other communities if they are impacted.

Assistance includes **Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme** payments for accommodation, clothing, food, and medical supplies - **\$180 for individuals and \$900 for couples/families**. This includes essential household contents grants and structural assistance grants. The payments are income and asset tested.

Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme is activated and includes maximum grants of **\$5,000 per household** comprising of safety inspections for reconnection of essential services and replacement/repair of electrical, gas, water and sewerage equipment.

Counter Disaster Operations is activated in the 26 councils of: Aurukun, Banana, Bundaberg, Burdekin, Burke, Cairns, Carpentaria, Cassowary Coast, Central Highlands, Cook, Gladstone, Hinchinbrook, Isaac, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mackay, Mapoon, **Moreton Bay**, Napranum, Palm Island, Pormpuraaw, Rockhampton, Tablelands, Torres Shire, Torres Strait Island and Whitsunday.

Restoration of Essential Public Assets measures are available in the 19 LGAs of: Aurukun, Burdekin, Burke, Carpentaria, Central Highlands, Cook, Doomadgee, Gladstone, Hinchinbrook, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Mornington, Napranum, Palm Island, Rockhampton, Torres Strait Island and Wujal Wujal.

Assistance information available in each affected local government area at www.disasterassist.gov.au.

Personal Hardship: <http://www.qld.gov.au/community/disasters-emergencies/recovery-after-disaster/>

The NDIS Committee hearings - after the next couple of weeks of Parliamentary sittings; will continue from 18 Feb in Perth, Adelaide, Geelong, Hobart and Canberra and will continue up until the end of March. More information [here](#).

Elements the Committee will cover include:

- Who is eligible for support and what does reasonable and necessary support look like?
- What national quality standards can be applied or ensure a person in a regional or rural area receives the same quality of support as a person in an urban or metropolitan setting?
 - What assessment tools are available to consistently measure the needs of people with disability in their individual circumstances?
- What business systems are needed for an independent insurance framework so we can build a system that works for people with disability and their careers as well as managing the costs over time?

The Australian Government has released a **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Consultation Paper** on the Rules that explain in detail how the NDIS will operate at 4pm today - Fri 1 Feb 2013.

Available via: <http://www.ndis.gov.au/towards/rules-consultation-paper/>

Extra funding for literacy and numeracy in Queensland schools - The Federal Government is investing a further \$60.5 million in a new agreement via the **Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership** program with the Queensland Government to boost literacy and numeracy results in the state's schools. More than 120,000 students in 279 Queensland schools benefited from their participation in the original **Smarter Schools Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership**,

For more information, visit here <http://deewr.gov.au/literacy-and-numeracy-schools>.

\$14m Project to help cut emissions in new fridges - one of Australia's leading household appliances companies will use a grant of more than \$4.7 million from the Gillard Labor Government to upgrade its manufacturing facility. The grant announced on Thursday as part of the \$800 million **Clean Technology Investment Program**, funded by revenue from the carbon price, the company will contribute \$9.4 m to modify existing production processes and invest in new plant and equipment, to enable the manufacture of more energy efficient refrigerators. More information on this program or **the \$200 million Clean Technology Food and Foundries Program**, also funded by carbon price revenue visit www.ausindustry.gov.au.

Consultation continues on Anti-Discrimination Bill- stakeholders were thanked for their submissions and evidence to the **Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee in relation to the Exposure Draft of the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Bill 2012**. This is a complex piece of legislation and the Government has been careful to consult through each stage of its development, including through the release of the exposure draft.

The recommendations from the Committee will provide helpful advice as the Government finalises the legislation. Officials from the AG's Department will present the options to the committee at their next hearing for consideration.

These options will include removal of section 19(2)(b). The main objective of this bill is to simplify and consolidate many discrimination laws into one. It has never been the Government's intention to restrict free speech. The original wording of this section of the exposure draft sought to consolidate into legislation the decisions and precedents of the courts - that discrimination includes harassment. It was not an attempt to extend the laws to new areas.

The Attorney-General's Department is scheduled to present to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee in early February 2013.

Election sounds death knell for Direct Action - the election announcement will put renewed focus on the Coalition's lack of credibility when it comes to climate change. Australians now have a choice between the Government's **Clean Energy Future** plan, and the Coalition's discredited Direct Action scheme, which has been described by Malcolm Turnbull as a "con" and a "figleaf to cover a determination to do nothing." Independent costings of Direct Action or similar schemes have put the cost to taxpayers at between \$48 billion and \$100 billion.

Carbon price revenue is funding increases in pensions, in Family Tax Benefits and tax cuts for millions of Australian families. It has meant nearly one million Australians no longer have to file an income tax return.

What's on – What's URGENT!

Important Flood & Emergency Contacts

Natural Disaster Information Counselling for Families:

http://www.health.qld.gov.au/recovery_resources/html/the_centre.asp

Government: <http://www.qld.gov.au/disaster/>; **State Wide Road reports:** 1300 130 595 24-hr

Department of Community Safety: <http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au/>;

QLD Govt Disaster Management: <http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/default.asp>;

SES flood and storm assist: 132 500; **Loss of power– Energex** 13 62 62; **Ergon** : 13 22 96

Department of Transport & Main Rds: <http://www.131940.qld.gov.au/> or phone: 131 940

Power supply – Damaged, Dangerous, Downed lines: Energex 13 19 62; Ergon : 13 16

Road conditions: http://www.racq.com.au/travel/Maps_and_Directions/road_conditions

Further Information - in support of children and families affected by flooding or previous by natural disaster and may have been re-triggered by current events. Attached brochure, [here](#), for the Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Recovery and Resilience Team, who provide service to Brisbane City Council, Logan City Council and Moreton Bay City Council Areas.

Free TV & Computer Recycling Services - Chandler 728 Tilley Rd; Nudgee 1560 Nudgee Rd; Willawong 360 Sherbrooke Rd; Ferny Grove 101 Upper Kedron Rd. Further Info [here](#).

TECHFEST 2013 - Great Hall, Parliament House Wed, 13 Feb 2013, 1.00 - 6:00 pm (EST). Info [link](#).

Queensland's Electoral Law [discussion paper](#) . Consultation closes **1 Mar 2013**. Submissions by email: electoralreform@justice.qld.gov.au

World's Greatest Shave 14-17 Mar 2013 – Leukaemia Foundation Event. [Link here](#) to participate
Purple Day (26th March) dedicated to raising epilepsy awareness, to get people talking about the condition and inform those with seizures that they are not alone. More [here](#)

Current Senate Committee Inquiries

To make a submission to an inquiry, visit the Parliament website, [here](#)

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse – An interim report will be prepared by no later than **30 June 2014**. Updated information and **Terms of Reference** on this [website](#). [A plain English version is on Claire's [webpage](#)].

Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Amendment [Retaining Federal Approval Powers] Bill 2012. Reporting 25 Feb. [Link](#).

Australian Broadcasting Corporation's commitment to reflecting & representing regional diversity. Reporting 14 Mar. [Link](#).

Recent Trends in & preparedness for extreme weather events. Reporting: 20 Mar. [Link](#).

Private Health Insurance Amendment (Lifetime Health Cover Loading & Other Measures) Bill 2012. Reporting 12 Mar. [Link](#).

National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill Reporting 3 Mar 2013. [Link](#).

The Involuntary or Coerced Sterilisation of people with disabilities in Australia. Submissions **22 Feb**. Reporting 24 April 2013. [Link](#).

The conditions of employment of state public sector employees & the adequacy of protection of their rights at work compared with other employees. Submissions **15 Feb**. Reporting 7 Jun. [Link](#).

The impacts on health of air quality in Australia Submissions **8 Mar**. Reporting 16 May. [Link](#).

Australia's domestic response to the World health Organisation's (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of health report "Closing the gap within a generation" Reporting 27 Mar. [Link](#).

Keep up to date on all [Senate Inquiries here](#), and all [House Representatives Inquiries here](#).

Petitioning the Senate [here](#). Petitioning the House of Representatives [here](#)