



Speech by

JACK PAFF

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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EMERGENCY SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr PAFF (Ipswich West—ONP) (3.41 p.m.): I support removing the board structures of the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and replacing them with a more appropriate management structure. I support the removal of these antiquated structures because I am not convinced that they are providing good value for money. According to the Bill's Explanatory Notes, the removal of these structures will save about \$300,000 per year in administrative costs. These savings, if they eventuate, could be put to better use by purchasing an ambulance or fire appliance.

I also like the concept of establishing an Emergency Services Advisory Council to liaise with the Minister about the operation and performance of emergency services. I understand that this advisory council will be representative of the community and will provide valuable feedback to the Government. I am very much in favour of community consultation groups in general. This is probably the best and most efficient way to ensure that Government services are performing up to the expectations of the public, while also allowing industry groups to present their side of the story.

Today people will speak a lot of rhetoric and rubbish about this matter, not to mention the normal political trash. However, I might speak with some knowledge on this, having spent some many years involved in many rescues, and today I still receive feedback from the people involved at the coalface. The set-up today is a tired old system, and everyone out there working in emergency services knows it. I recommend the removal of the board structures. These hardworking, well trained people need our collective support. Be assured that, if this building collapses, the cries of honourable members for help will be answered by those people and not by politicians. It is time for a change. That change will remove the bureaucracy that is a financial burden on all Queenslanders. I also accept the concept of an Emergency Services Advisory Council to liaise with the Minister about overseeing the performance of emergency services. But is this not the function of the Minister?
