



Speech by

Mr M. VEIVERS

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard 17 September 1998

QUEENSLAND FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Mr VEIVERS (Southport—NPA) (10.14 a.m.): I take this opportunity to clear the air once again in relation to certain uninformed statements made by the Minister for Emergency Services. I wish to emphasise strongly that the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority is not currently in trouble, contrary to the political mischief being peddled by the Minister and her myopic political advisers and a report that has not seen the light of day and which the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority Board has not seen. The Minister brought it in, made them pay \$40,000 for it, but they have not been able to see it yet. She has been quoting from a report that none of us has seen.

When I came in as Minister, the Staib report said that we had to have \$30m in extra funding for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority. The Masters report, commissioned by that board, indicated a trust fund balance of \$6m in the red in 1997-98 and an \$8.5m deficit in 1998-99. This year's budget came in \$18m in the black. Does the Minister know what that means? Does she need a statement about it? There was an \$11m carryover and \$7m in savings through good management by the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority. At the changeover from the old Queensland Fire Service there was a debt of \$21m. That is now \$13.5m. The 1997-98 budget indicated that the trust fund would be in an overdraft situation for eight months. The actual time was two months. That was achieved despite not drawing down on loan funds available for the Kedron Park complex. During 1997-98, under my guidance, we also focused on bedding down a range of industrial relations and human relations issues, and a new award and certified agreement was finalised. I also bedded down an enterprise partnership as well as funding the cost of a change to a 38-hour week. I hear that the new Minister is now known as "Mrs Airhead".

Time expired.
