



Speech by

**Mrs J. SHELDON**

**MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA**

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Hansard 24 November 1999

### **SUNSHINE COAST SES**

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—LP) (10.19 a.m.): Today I would like to pay tribute to the members of the Sunshine Coast SES teams who participated in the recent search for the body of young Sunshine Coast girl Jessica Gowdie within our Kenilworth forest. That young lass has allegedly been murdered. Over 750 hectares of rough and often impenetrable bush and creek were covered by our 400 men and women, often working in extreme heat and conditions. In all, 5,256 person-hours were worked. I believe that was one of the biggest searches ever undertaken, and it occurred over approximately four weeks. The SES volunteers were asked to be involved by members of the Police Service, who had themselves done a wonderful job in difficult circumstances. Teams from as far away as Hervey Bay and Redcliffe were involved, but the majority of personnel came from the Sunshine Coast teams.

I would like to pay particular tribute to members within the confines of the SES teams in Caloundra City. Jim Case, the Caloundra City SES controller, deserves special mention, as does Ann Booth, a prominent unit training officer and deputy group leader; deputy controller Richard Eley; group leader Lloyd Larney; group leader Janet Scott; Jim Jones, group leader for the area; and Graham Cheal, whose group also contributed. The searchers came from Kawana, Caloundra, Maleny, Beerwah and Glass House. Unfortunately, Sunshine Coast members of Parliament were not invited to the awards given to those deserving people on Tuesday, 9 November at Parliament House by the Emergency Services Minister, Merri Rose. Surely a bipartisan approach was the way to go, not indulge in politicking!

There will be a major barbecue in our hinterland this week to honour those very deserving local people. They deserve a good day, and our community most certainly salutes and congratulates them on the work that they do. These volunteers are always looking after the people of our community and often putting themselves at risk for us.

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