



Speech by

Hon. MERRI ROSE

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Ambulance Week

Hon. M. ROSE (Currumbin—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.56 a.m.), by leave: Ambulance Week 1999 began on Sunday and continues until Saturday. It provides a chance for Queenslanders to focus on our pre-hospital emergency health care providers and the various services they provide for each of us.

Queensland's ambulance officers are the most dedicated and professional in the nation and among the best in the world. They prove that every day of every week of every month of the year. They are ordinary people who do extraordinary things. But sometimes we take our ambos for granted. We may only think about them when someone we know is sick or injured and needing emergency treatment. It is also easy to think of our ambulance service as just lights and sirens. But, of course, it is much more than that.

As well as providing pre-hospital emergency care, our ambos offer non-urgent patient transport services for those people who have difficulty making their own way to clinic or hospital appointments. They provide first aid and CPR training. They are on hand at major events. They offer baby capsule fitting and hire services. They deliver programs to enhance the safety of children and our seniors as they go about their daily lives. And they save lives. Hundreds of Queenslanders each year owe their lives to a Queensland ambo. Our ambos last year treated and transported nearly half a million Queenslanders and travelled more than 22 million kilometres in doing so. More than 130,000 of their call-outs were to life-threatening Code One emergencies.

They never know just what their next case will involve. They may have the tragic task of treating the injured at a car accident. They may attend an incident where their own lives are put at risk or they may be called to assist in the unexpected delivery of a new baby. Regardless of the incident, what our on-road ambos do now at emergencies would never have been considered 20, 15, or even 10 years ago.

Ambulance Week also provides the opportunity for the service to say thanks to the hundreds of volunteers who give of their time to serve on local ambulance committees. Without that assistance, the QAS would not be able to provide the level of service it now does to communities right across the State. LACs raise money to buy state-of-the-art equipment for our ambulance officers. They also help provide better working conditions and accommodation for our hardworking officers.

A highlight of yesterday's official opening was the naming of Home Hill's Bruce Reid as the Queensland Ambulance Officer of the Year. Bruce epitomises what the QAS is all about and personifies the dedication and professionalism of our ambos.

During Ambulance Week, the QAS will highlight its role within the community and the services it provides on a daily basis. Throughout the State, ambulance officers are opening the doors of their stations to the public and holding demonstrations and displays at major shopping centres. I would like to take this opportunity to pledge the Government's continuing support of the QAS and to thank every officer and every QAS employee for the magnificent work they perform for their fellow Queenslanders.
