



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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Hansard 24 August 1999

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### State Emergency Service Cadets

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.38 a.m.), by leave: There is little doubt that the State Emergency Service cadets scheme run by the Department of Emergency Services is one of the most successful youth programs in this State. Established by former Deputy Premier Tom Burns in 1995, the three-year program has expanded to involve more than 800 young Queenslanders between the ages of 13 and 16.

Today, I am happy to announce that my Government will continue to fund this very worthwhile program on a permanent basis. We will make available \$1m a year under the Supporting Our Volunteers program from next financial year. It will be included in base funding for the Department of Emergency Services' counter disaster and rescue services division. In the meantime, the final \$1m instalment under the Department of Sport's youth development program will be included in this year's Budget.

Continued funding of this program proves this Government's commitment to our volunteers, young and old. It will also allow for long-term planning and provides stability and certainty to the program. The scheme provides skills to young Queenslanders—leadership, first aid, bushcraft and camping, map reading and navigation, search and rescue techniques, field craft, and community awareness. The scheme teaches young people skills that will be with them for life, and they have fun in the process. My colleague the Emergency Services Minister, Merri Rose, says the program gives a sense of belonging, teaches people to be responsible and provides them with a high degree of self-esteem. She tells me many cadets have graduated from the ranks to become cadet instructors themselves and adult volunteers, particularly in the SES.

The Emergency Services Minister has plans this financial year to extend the SES cadets into a joint Emergency Services youth program aimed at further involving fire, ambulance and volunteer marine rescue organisations. This will provide more varied and more interesting training and expose cadets to other emergency services and, importantly, help provide a recruiting base for these agencies. Ten cadet groups were formed in the first year of the program. The program has since been expanded to 33 units across the State. It is anticipated that another five groups will be created in 1999-2000, taking the number of cadets across the State to around 1,000.

One of the new groups already has been formed at Maroochydore. Other centres which have shown an interest include Palm Island and Toowoomba, with a number of schools in Brisbane also being considered. The scheme has helped young people grow into happy and helpful members of their communities—with many going on to become adult volunteers in the SES and members of other emergency services. SES cadet groups have been formed at Allora, Biloela, Bundaberg, Cairns, Charters Towers, Charleville, Goodna, Hervey Bay, Hughenden, Ingham, Ipswich, Kingaroy, Lowood, Mackay, Mackay North, Mareeba, Middlemount, Maroochydore, Mirani, Moranbah, Mossman, Moura, Mount Morgan, Mount Isa, Mitchelton, Napranam/Weipa, Sarina, Southport, Springsure, Stanthorpe, Tambo, Tully and Yeppoon. I look forward to many more being established.

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