



Speech by

CARRYN SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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TOORBUL RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.32 a.m.): I rise to alert members to the valuable work of the Toorbul rural fire brigade over the past 20 years. It all began in June 1981 when a meeting was convened in the Toorbul hall and under the guidance of Mr Alan Johnson from the Brisbane Rural Fires Board the Toorbul Fire Brigade was formed. Jack Berich was elected as the first fire warden. John Van Peype Snr was elected as first officer, followed by Roy Willmer, Joe Chapel and Alan Clarke as second and third officers respectively. Joan Willmer was elected secretary/treasurer, and Bob Bailey was elected equipment officer two weeks later.

The first vehicle was a 1970 two-tonne Isuzu purchased for \$700 and paid for partly by a subsidy of \$350 from Rural Fire Services. The Caboolture Fire Brigade fitted the tank and the boxes for equipment, which included four knapsacks, four rake hoes, one drip torch, one hose, one hose kit and one first aid kit. They purchased a pump and were set to go. Some were so keen to do their community duty that they fought a couple of fires before the equipment arrived with only wet bags.

Obviously, being a non-profit organisation, the brigade relies heavily on donations from individuals and groups within the community. With donations from the Toorbul Progress Association and the Donnybrook Pensioners Club and local residents and with the help of subsidies from Rural Fire Services, the Toorbul rural fire brigade was able to build its first half of a station in 1982. It was built by volunteers under the direction of John Van Peype Snr and was officially opened in January 1983 by Mr J. Martin. The final stage of the station was built and paid for by fire levy money. A further extension of a toilet, shower, office and fuel storage area will begin shortly with the help of a grant from Jupiters Casino.

Today the brigade has a 1999 Mitsubishi and a 2000 Nissan. I have been asked to write a covering letter of support to the state government's Gaming Community Benefit Fund to obtain a grant to buy a personnel carrier to take firefighters and equipment to fires where necessary. I only hope that the Caboolture Shire Council rescinds its latest decision not to fund such vital services as rural fire brigades and supports Councillor John McNaught's motion, which was seconded by Councillor Lyn Devereaux, to provide some council funding.

I, along with the local community, was delighted to attend the 20th anniversary celebrations of the Toorbul rural fire brigade on 23 September. A large crowd witnessed the cutting of the cake, and several spoke about the important role of the brigade and the tremendous efforts of the volunteers. They even install smoke alarms if requested. I trust that future weather patterns will be kinder and that there will be a reduction in fires that threaten communities and the lives of those who fight them.
