



Speech by

CATE MOLLOY

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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APPROPRIATION BILLS [ESTIMATES COMMITTEE D]

Ms MOLLOY (Noosa—ALP) (12.12 p.m.): Firstly, I place on the record my support for the work that all Queensland Emergency Services personnel carry out seven days a week, 365 days a year. Those men and women are on the front line. It is those men and women whom we call on in times of emergency and disasters. They are the best in Australia and are among the best in the world. As the Minister has said, this budget enables improvements in all phases of emergency management and continues our commitment to front-line service delivery across the state. Importantly, it enables us to continue to deliver enhanced services to all Queenslanders, no matter where they live.

Today I would like to address one issue raised by the opposition spokesman in his statement of reservation. I take this opportunity to highlight the additional funding provided to our emergency service volunteers. Mr Malone seems intent on running down the QAS at every opportunity, despite record funding under the Beattie Labor government. While Mr Malone continues this whingeing, the QAS is getting on with providing world-class services to Queenslanders. I would also suggest that while ambulance services in this state have advanced in leaps and bounds over the past decade, under predominantly Labor Governments I might add, it is going to take some time to turn around 30 years of National Party neglect. It is a shame that Mr Malone cannot share my enthusiasm for the Queensland Ambulance Service, which stands as a world leader in pre-hospital care.

The Queensland Ambulance Service receives an extra \$20.1 million to maintain its world-class service delivery standards in this year's budget. That means 85 new ambulances, more ambulance stations and better communications, leading to better response times. As a regional member of parliament, I can inform the House that the provision of those funds will be well received within my electorate.

Once again, this budget provides a strong capital works focus, with an additional \$20.6 million being invested into facilities that will enable the QAS to meet the ever-increasing demand for ambulance services. Other QAS budget highlights include \$8.8 million to replace 85 ambulances to further improve response capabilities. Twenty-six ambulance stations will be commenced or completed at a cost of \$3.94 million. The capital program includes four new stations, 21 replacement stations and one refurbishment.

The four new ambulance services are to be established at Douglas in Townsville, Howard, Narangba and Helensvale. The 21 replacement stations will be at Atherton, Balmoral, Boonah, Burnett Coast, Chinchilla, Dirranbandi, Hughenden, Innisfail, Longreach, Magnetic Island, Millaa Millaa, Mount Garnet, Mount Larcom, North Mackay, Redbank, Warwick and West Logan. The capital works budget also includes additional funding to progress the Buderim, Durack, Nambour and Nathan Ambulance Stations. The Mount Isa Ambulance Station will also be refurbished.

A sum of \$0.83 million has been set aside for land purchases for future stations at Calen, Hervey Bay, Innisfail, and Kowanyama, as well as minor land purchases. The budget provides for the construction of paramedic accommodation in remote locations including Boonah, Injune and Torres Strait. The ambulance residence at Bamaga will be refurbished. The total budget allocation is \$0.73 million.

Our valued emergency service volunteers are the big winners in this budget, with a further \$1 million allocation to ensure that they are adequately resourced. I place on the record my support for the

volunteers within my own electorate of Noosa for their selfless commitment to our community. The additional funding this year will ensure that volunteers across the state can respond to the challenges that they are faced with. Approximately 2,500 volunteers will receive wet weather gear at a cost of \$125,000. A sum of \$25,000 has been allocated for the provision of personal protective equipment, including overalls, boots, helmets and safety glasses.

Safety at height equipment worth \$180,000 will go to 180 SES groups across the state. Forty-nine SES groups will be issued with new and replacement communications equipment including mobiles, hand-helds and repeaters, at a cost of \$200,000. Well done!
