



Speech by

Mr D. BRISKEY

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard 7 November 2002

FIRE ANTS

Mr BRISKEY (Cleveland—ALP) (10.26 a.m.): The first community based fire ant watch group is up and running in my electorate. The volunteer fire ant hunters are part of the Department of Primary Industries' new community engagement strategy to assist the national eradication program in the search for all fire ant nests. The program to eradicate the South American ants has been a great success to date, with up to 90 per cent of fire ant nests at monitoring sites across the treatment area now inactive.

The South American fire ant is arguably the worst ecological pests we have seen in Australia. To stamp it out we need to be sure that we find every nest. The pilot group will search for new infestations and monitor their presence in parks, schools and bushland. I am informed that the formation of a group in the Redlands is the start of many more new fire ant watch groups throughout Brisbane and surrounding areas.

I congratulate the community on its support of the national fire ant eradication program and the many people who have expressed a desire to do more to help out. The new group is supported by the Department of Primary Industries Fire Ant Control Centre. The centre will provide entomological training, display kits, promotional material and secretarial support to ensure that the volunteers can work closely with their communities in providing information and looking for fire ants.

The volunteers include John Aitken and Myrna and Bob Levick of Victoria Point; Malcolm Armitage, Kath Hughes, Doug Simmons and Ray Wilson of Redland Bay; Faith Campbell, Brenden Davy, Joyce Hansen, Graeme Harrison, Sid Hooson; Daryl and Janice Lock, Ken Rawlins of Alexandra Hills; Scott Churchill, Bill Keen and Peter Todd of Ormiston; Angus Graham, Matty McKenna, Thomas Schwartz and Peter Trevethan of Birkdale; Debra Henry and George Haughtey of Thornlands; Kevin Yule and John Snell of Cleveland; Rena and Tony Hurtado and Phoebe Dupont of Russell Island; Brian Hurst, Derek Jackson, Kevin McMaster, Rod Smith, Scott Stephens, Jason Ward, Peter Pleasants and John Witham of Wellington Point; Beryl Lahey of Sheldon; Dr John Moss, Harold Sanders, Clara Smallbone, John Wood, Peter Campbell, Daniel Stonefield of Capalaba; and Richard Tennis of Mount Cotton. Many thanks to those volunteers for their commitment to the fight against the fire ant.
