



Speech by

Hon. Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Thursday, 2 March 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Ambulance Service

Hon. PD PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.56 am): I would like to clarify a question raised by the member for Moggill yesterday about the triage system used by the Queensland Ambulance Service.

I am pleased to confirm that Queensland has a comprehensive emergency medical system. It is known as the Queensland Emergency Medical System, or QEMS. This system ensures that patients are provided with seamless care from the first response through to definitive medical care. QEMS also means that patients are seen in order of their clinical priority, not in terms of who was first in the queue. There is a coding system from one through to four. This applies from the initial ambulance assessment of 000 calls through to access to treatment and care in emergency departments. For example, a paramedic has the ability to call a hospital in advance of their arrival at the emergency department with a critically injured patient to ensure the right health professionals are waiting for the patient to arrive.

It is important to understand that these decisions are made collaboratively between paramedics and emergency department staff. These decisions are supported when necessary by the QEMS coordination centre for all aeromedical cases and complex road ambulance transfers. This is usually in cases where the patient's condition and a requirement for specialist care may determine the most appropriate health facility—for example, a burns patient, a patient with spinal injuries or a heart condition.

What is most important, however, is that our paramedics and our emergency department doctors and nurses work together to provide Queenslanders with emergency medical care that is absolutely world class. I would like to congratulate our intensive care paramedics and our commissioner for the work that they are doing at the moment to make sure that our patients continue to get world-class care here in Queensland.