



Speech by

Hon. Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Friday, 9 June 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Ambulance Service; Child Restraints

Hon. PD PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.57 am): The opposition hates ambulance officers. In its latest chapter of unfair and unfounded criticism, the member for Chatsworth has hit another low. During the debate on his failed private member's bill in the House on Wednesday night, the member for Chatsworth made wild and scurrilous statements. He alleged that there is not a 100 per cent guarantee that our ambulance officers fit child restraints correctly. Our hardworking and trusted ambulance officers offer a great service to the community. For the honourable member to publicly infer, under privilege in this House, that it is done haphazardly or inappropriately is offensive and nothing short of dangerous.

The QAS staff who do the free checks on child restraints and who install them as part of the baby capsule hire service go through a comprehensive training program. The QAS is recognised statewide as the benchmark for quality service in child restraint fitting, and I believe it is the best in Australia. Each year the QAS fits 10,000 capsules, which accounts for about 20 per cent of the state's average annual rate of 50,000 births. The QAS also does about 5,000 checks annually. The motivating factor for these services is saving the lives of our youngest Queenslanders. If members of the public cannot turn to the Queensland Ambulance Service, who can they turn to? Can the people turn to the Liberal Party? I think not.

The member for Chatsworth is trying to con and scare the public with unfounded and unsubstantiated claims that child restraints installed by ambulance officers are unsafe. The opposition's constant attacks on our ambulance officers are in conflict with the views of the greater community who voted ambulance officers as the most trusted people in the community. I hope the member for Chatsworth's constituents notice the contempt their member shows for our ambulance officers.

The Beattie government loves our ambulance officers. We will continue to show public support and gratitude to them with record funding and excellent working conditions. People will never hear any member on this side of the House criticising our wonderful ambulance officers.

Tabled paper: Copy of ministerial statement by Hon. P Purcell titled 'Opposition Attack on Queensland Ambulance Service'.