



Speech by

Hon. Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Thursday, 2 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rural Fire Service Vehicles

Hon. PD PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.59 pm): I am pleased to announce that construction is now underway on 53 emergency response vehicles for the Rural Fire Service including 40 medium attack units, five heavy attack vehicles and eight light attack vehicles.

Over the past year I have had the pleasure of travelling throughout Queensland and meeting with thousands of volunteer members of the rural fire brigades. These men and women provide a vital service to their communities either as first responders in an emergency situation or by assisting their full-time counterparts.

These vehicles are worth nearly \$4 million. With the exception of the five heavy attack vehicles, they are being constructed by a Crows Nest based company, AAA Engineering Technologies. They will be distributed to brigades throughout Queensland over the coming 12 months. AAA Engineering Technologies do a great job on our fire vehicles. I commend their workers and their management for the great job they do on the vehicles and the extra mile they go in turning out great rural fire brigade vehicles.

The Rural Fire Service recently completed its five-year veteran replacement program on ageing vehicles. With that program now complete, these additional vehicles will add to the fleet and ensure that volunteers are supplied with the latest equipment and technology. Across Queensland there are more than 1,500 rural fire brigades. They are currently in the middle of what is shaping up as a longer than usual bushfire season, with the current dry conditions suggesting that they will be busy for some time yet. In fact, since early August these volunteers have attended more than 550 bush and grass fires throughout the state.

I call on all Queenslanders, particularly those who live in the rural-urban fringe—the iZone—to do their bit to assist our fires and make sure that their homes and properties are bushfire prepared. Our firefighting men and women play an important role in protecting their communities. This government will continue to ensure that they are well equipped and well trained to meet that challenge.