



Speech by

Hon. Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Wednesday, 29 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rural and Remote Paramedics

Hon. PD PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (10.18 am): Last week I had the pleasure of launching the new Graduate Certificate of Rural and Remote Paramedic Practice and met the 20 paramedics who are now undertaking the course to help boost health services in isolated Queensland communities. This course is the first of its kind in Australia and is part of a Beattie government election commitment to explore an expanded scope of practice for QAS paramedics working in rural and remote areas.

This is new and exciting ground for the Queensland Ambulance Service and is a key part of our efforts to look for better ways to maximise the clinical expertise of our highly trained paramedics who do such a fine job in rural and remote communities across Queensland. The course was developed in partnership with the James Cook University, Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health and the North Queensland Workforce Unit of Queensland Health. I commend them for their help and cooperation.

The establishment of this qualification will enable 60 paramedics over three years to develop an extended scope of practice to isolated communities in Queensland, providing greater assistance to rural doctors and remote area nurses in the communities where they live and work.

After completion of the course, the paramedics will be classified as isolated practice paramedics. The course will equip graduates with contemporary skills, knowledge and abilities to complement the isolated health teams; help paramedics working in isolated communities to integrate their pre-hospital emergency care knowledge with low acuity community care; give graduates an understanding of international and national health strategies; and provide them with a range of skills, drugs and understanding that equips graduates to assist the health teams to develop localised strategies.

The Beattie government is committed to providing all Queenslanders with the best possible pre-hospital care, regardless of where they live. From Camooweal out west, to Thursday Island in the Cape and the border communities down south, the Queensland Ambulance Service delivers an innovative, effective and efficient service to rural and remote communities, and this new course is an excellent addition.