



Speech by

## Hon. Neil Roberts

MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

Hansard Thursday, 1 November 2007

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### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Paramedics

**Hon. N ROBERTS** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (10.18 am): The government has committed record funding for the Queensland Ambulance Service, and we have provided funding for an additional 250 ambulance officers this financial year. QAS has advised that 48 student paramedics are now undertaking their on-road training with the Ambulance Service across the state. These first-year students have completed the first block of class based tuition and will undergo 10 months practical on-road training. These student paramedics will perform the role of second officer at their new stations, assisting qualified paramedics in the assessment and treatment of patients. Over the coming months they will experience the full range of tasks that a paramedic can expect to encounter, ranging from delivering babies to attending accidents. When the student paramedics graduate with a Diploma of Paramedical Science (Ambulance), they will return to their regions to begin their role as a fully qualified paramedic.

On a separate matter, it is now four months since the introduction of the SES hotline 132500. It has replaced more than 1,200 existing phone numbers used by members of the public to contact their local SES. To date, more than 7,000 calls have been received on the new hotline number. I am pleased to say that the hotline is one of four Queensland projects vying for the Australian Safer Communities Awards to be announced early next year.

The government has provided Emergency Management Queensland with an extra \$24.5 million over five years for SES training and equipment. The government, through Emergency Management Queensland, continues to work in partnership with local governments to support our SES volunteers. Emergency Management Queensland has recently undertaken an assessment of SES membership across the state. According to the responses from local controllers and SES regions, I am advised by EMQ that there are 6,430 members of the SES across the state. Of that number, 4,574 are regarded as active members and another 1,856 are regarded as reserve members. Active members are those who have undertaken training and they have been or are able to be called out for assistance.

With the government's commitment of additional funds for training and equipment we intend to support efforts to recruit more SES volunteers. My department is currently finalising a new recruitment initiative, which I hope to be able to announce in time for SES Week later this month.