



Speech by

Hon. Neil Roberts

MEMBER FOR NUDGEE

Hansard Wednesday, 14 November 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Wear Orange to Work Day; Cyclone Season

Hon. N ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (9.55 am): Today is Wear Orange to Work Day. It is a celebration of the contributions made by our dedicated State Emergency Service volunteers. My office has arranged for orange ribbons and badges to be distributed to all members in the House today. SES volunteers provide a valuable service to our community. They go out in the community at all hours of the day and night to help people in need, and today Wear Orange to Work Day as part of SES Week is one small way of saying thank you to our SES volunteers for a job well done.

I am pleased that in this year's budget the government committed \$24.5 million over five years for training and equipment for the SES. These efforts are being supported by NRMA Insurance. Last weekend I joined with the member for Ashgrove and NRMA Insurance to launch their three-year sponsorship of the SES, which is worth more than \$1 million in financial and in-kind support. Thanks to Brisbane's Triple M radio station, British author and comedian Ben Elton also joined SES volunteers to celebrate SES Week this morning in Shaw Park, Kalinga. Ben Elton fittingly described the SES as 'Australia's tangerine dream' in recognition of their distinctive bright orange uniform and their dedication to community service.

Honourable members would also be aware that the Bureau of Meteorology is closely monitoring a tropical low in the Coral Sea. I am pleased to say that preparations for the cyclone season throughout Queensland are well advanced. Planning and training for cyclones is an ongoing job for the SES and Emergency Management Queensland personnel. To date almost 300 personnel have attended the preseason storm and cyclone workshops held in Brisbane, Caloundra, Maryborough, the Gold Coast, Roma, Mount Isa and Rockhampton. Further workshops are scheduled for Mackay, Cairns and Townsville.

The government is also delivering on its commitment of additional equipment for the SES. Last month I announced the delivery of 10 new flood boats, and \$6.7 million has also been allocated to upgrade technical and communications equipment including new radios and communication towers. The most important factor in minimising risk to life and property is to be prepared and to follow the advice issued by the Bureau of Meteorology and Emergency Management Queensland. Every home in a cyclone-prone area should have an emergency kit including a battery operated radio, torch, spare clothing and a store of non-perishable food. Once again, I would like to pay tribute to the role of our SES volunteers and their dedication to assisting our community in times of need.