



Speech by

**Hon. Pat Purcell**

**MEMBER FOR BULIMBA**

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2007

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Smoke Alarms**

**Hon. PD PURCELL** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (10.12 am): As members would be aware, new legislation comes into force on 1 July that makes it compulsory for all Queensland homes to have smoke alarms. Last Wednesday, I launched the public education campaign, which was prepared by the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, to promote this important new legislation. By now members may have seen the advertisements featuring an image of hands made of smoke. This image captures the message that the campaign aims to promote: that smoke from house fires kills. I know that a lot of effort went into the development of the campaign and it is a credit to those from the QFRS who were involved.

The evidence suggests that smoke alarms help to save lives, because the risk of death from fire in a home is up to three times higher in homes without smoke alarms. In Queensland, nearly 80 per cent of all home fire deaths occur in homes without smoke alarms and almost 50 per cent of deaths occur between 12 am and 8 am, when people are sleeping. So the introduction of compulsory smoke alarms is an important measure to improve public safety. In fact, it is estimated that having working smoke alarms in every dwelling in Queensland will potentially save as many as 106 lives over the next 20 years and around \$70 million in property loss and personal injury.

While the primary aim of the compulsory smoke alarm legislation is to save lives, the potential to minimise property damage is also significant. Under the new laws, homeowners will be responsible for the installation and maintenance of fire alarms while landlords will be responsible for the installation of working smoke alarms and rental tenants will be required to maintain them.

As I have said in this place previously, I encourage all those Queenslanders who have not installed a smoke alarm yet not to wait for 1 July and to get out there and install one now. It could save their life or the life of one of their loved ones.