



Speech by

Phil Weightman

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Wednesday, 5 September 2007

QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr WEIGHTMAN (Cleveland—ALP) (6.10 pm): It is with great pleasure to rise to speak of the great achievements of the Queensland Ambulance Service and to place on record my support for the fine work of the paramedics and the QAS staff across the state. I would especially like to acknowledge the wonderful service that is provided by the paramedics and the patient transport officers in my electorate of Cleveland. I believe that I am in a very good position to make that statement. I worked very closely with members of the Ambulance Service while I was working as a police officer in the Redlands for many years. I also say that because some of these people who work down there are good friends of mine and I speak with them on a regular basis. I am also a community support member of the Cleveland Local Ambulance Committee. I support the great work that these people do in this area and I really applaud them for their work.

Conversely, the members opposite seek to denigrate the fine work that is undertaken by these dedicated men and women. Despite the clear evidence to the contrary, the opposition has sought to undermine the outstanding work of the Queensland Ambulance Service for blatant political purposes. Despite what the opposition says, the QAS enjoys an enviable reputation in the Queensland community, and deservedly so. The QAS delivers an outstanding service to the community 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Yes, those people work very hard.

Also, conversely, the QAS has one of the best support systems for emergency service workers in the world. The Priority One program exists to support the staff and it is available 24 hours a day for all staff and their families. It is not just me or the government members saying that. An independent survey undertaken nationally across all ambulance services has confirmed that the Queensland Ambulance Service receives a 97 per cent satisfactory rating from the people who know best—the patients of the service. Any organisation in the public or private sector that achieves that sort of rating from their consumers deserves our congratulations, not the sort of treatment that is dished out by the opposition.

Other members of this House would be aware that for the fifth consecutive year the work of ambulance officers has been voted the most trusted profession in the Australian community. This sort of recognition comes only from ambulance officers consistently providing high-quality ambulance services and prehospital care to patients and other members of the community.

We have heard from other members about the wonderful achievements and advances occurring in the QAS. I am extremely grateful that such a professional service is just a 000 phone call away. I can tell members that I have used the Ambulance Service on a number of occasions in order to be taken to hospital and to be transported from one hospital to another owing to illnesses that I have suffered. I can tell members that I have nothing but great appreciation for the time that the service provided on those occasions. I know that the local ambulance committee in my electorate also feels the same way about the work done by the Ambulance Service in my area.

I note that community support for the QAS continues to grow with the number of local ambulance service committees, volunteers and first responders increasing every year and record attendances at this year's state local ambulance committee conference, which was held in Roma. In fact, across the state the QAS enjoys the invaluable support of 183 local Ambulance Service committees.

Our Ambulance Service continues to meet or exceed the expectations of the patients and the other members of the community. As we have heard, the QAS is delivering world-class services in an environment of a rapidly growing and ageing population and with significant increases in demand for services. The Beattie government is committed to providing the QAS with the resources that it needs to maintain that service. This year's record \$404.4 million budget is proof of that fact. I support the amendments moved by the minister.