



Speech by

Hon. Neil Roberts

MEMBER FOR NUDGEЕ

Hansard Thursday, 12 February 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Ambulance Service

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (10.06 am): The Productivity Commission's latest report on government services demonstrates that the Bligh government's focus on front-line service delivery in the Queensland Ambulance Service is getting results. The report showed that in 2007-08 the Queensland Ambulance Service responded to 50 per cent of all life-threatening calls within 8.3 minutes. That is the best result in the country. That is more than one minute less than the national average of 9.55 minutes and 1.5 minutes less than the New South Wales time of 9.9 minutes. In 90 per cent of code 1 cases, the Queensland Ambulance Service was on the scene within 16.7 minutes—well below the national average of 18.75 minutes and New South Wales time of 19.9 minutes. The report also shows Queensland ambulance officer to population ratio was 52.4 officers per 100,000 people, the second highest ratio in the nation. What is the national average? 41.1 officers per 100,000; Queensland 52.4 officers per 100,000.

Honourable members would also be aware that just over 12 months ago the Premier and I gave a commitment that we would get the Queensland Ambulance Service back to basics. We promised fewer people at the head office and more people on the front line, and we are delivering on that commitment. The proportion of front-line staff has increased by 3.4 per cent from 77.6 per cent in 2006-07 to 81 per cent in 2007-08. This shows a significant structural shift that has taken place from the bureaucracy to the front line.

The report also shows that the QAS staff attrition rate of 4.2 per cent is the second lowest in Australia and well below the national average of 4.9 per cent, dispelling National Party claims that people are leaving the service in droves. The QAS also scored the highest satisfaction rate in Australia, with 99 per cent of code 1 and code 2 patient surveys being very satisfied or satisfied with the service they received—an increase on last year, which was 98 per cent. The Productivity Commission report highlights the great work that our ambulance officers and those who support them are doing in the community every single day of the year. Last year the QAS completed more than 860,000 responses, a rate of one every 35 seconds. The Bligh government congratulates the staff and volunteers who work with and support the QAS and will continue to support the organisation as it strives to further enhance the service it provides to the Queensland community.