




Speech by
Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Thursday, 2 August 2012

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.05 pm): Last Saturday I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to spend a shift with the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service in Rockhampton. For me it was a fabulous learning opportunity and one that I would highly recommend to the other members of this House. I must acknowledge the role of the minister in facilitating the opportunity and I appreciate it. Too often politicians can be distracted by the ebb and flow of pure politics, the events of this chamber and/or the insatiable media cycle. The truth is that our focus should always be on the quality of the services that the government is expected to deliver to Queenslanders and these sorts of opportunities certainly help ground politicians such as me.

I was hosted by two absolutely fabulous blokes, station officers Noel King and Bruce Ogle, and they provided me with a very comprehensive orientation of all facets of the station's operations and responsibilities. These men and their crew were completely open and transparent and answered all questions in a very professional and practical manner. This is what the community would expect from such a dedicated, tight-knit and, frankly, determined bunch of people. As members would probably have picked up, I could not have been more impressed by the people who I met. They really reminded me of some of the better military units that I have served with—a great work ethic, strong but measured leadership, complemented by great wit and humour. These qualities all reflect most favourably on the culture and capacity within the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.

Some particular highlights included participating in a minor traffic accident call-out. I was very disappointed to be in a single-storey fire station with no pole, but maybe next time. I also attended a toxic spill out in the middle of the highway, which again was pretty interesting inasmuch as no-one knew exactly what it was. I observed competency training for junior officers preparing for the next level of certification. I observed and participated in the training for recovery of road accident victims where they had been trapped within the vehicle. This was, I hate to say it, a lot of fun. Should anyone want the roof taken off their car while they are in it and not be injured, I reckon I could have a go at that. Finally, by pure accident, I watched the crew intervene in what I would only describe as a spontaneous road rage event well before the Queensland Police Service or other services arrived.

Frankly, I want to say that this was a great thing for me. I encourage all other members to avail themselves of similar opportunities. I want to thank the minister, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and particularly the crew who put up with me for a full shift.