




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2015

ADJOURNMENT

SES Week

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (10.44 pm): I rise to talk about the SES in Townsville, Thuringowa and the broader area. On a perfect Sunday, 18 October, I joined Townsville MP, Scott Stewart, at the beautiful Strand Park to recognise and congratulate over 100 SES volunteers who had travelled from all around the region to mark SES Week and to acknowledge their work with some awards.

It was significant that this year's SES Week marks 40 years of this outstanding organisation having been around and assisting Queensland. For 40 years, when quite often, particularly in times when communities are challenged—which in North Queensland means cyclones and floods through to now drought and the associated increased fire risk—the community has seen these champions doing what can only be described as an extraordinary role in our communities. In fact, just tonight Somerset SES respond to 30 tasks following a super cell causing significant damage in the Fernvale area. But on that Sunday we had the opportunity to say thank you.

SES volunteers are often referred to as 'orange angels'. In my 25 years as a flight paramedic I have had many interactions, often working side by side in situations from searches to rural and remote roads where there has been an accident. So it was indeed a proud moment to thank several local SES members, acknowledge their great work and assist in presenting several long service and meritorious awards with so many familiar faces whom I have had the pleasure of working with over the years.

In Townsville and Thuringowa, we have 120 active members, who on that Sunday, under the guiding eye of Mr Daryl Camp, the Townsville SES Regional Manager, joined other SES units and put on a display of equipment, skills and training for the Townsville community. They were joined by State Emergency Service units from Magnetic Island, Burdekin, Charters Towers, Ingham and in fact a unit from Greenvale, where just a handful of SES volunteers travelled hours to come down. They are a great example of representing and looking after their local community.

One fellow that deserves special acknowledgement is Mr Stanley Parsons. This near-80-year-old has been, and remains, an active member of the Townsville State Emergency Service unit for 40 years. It was great that we were able to give Mr Parsons a special meritorious award for his dedication and commitment to the Townsville community for 40 years. I congratulate all of the SES members throughout Queensland, but particularly in the northern region, for their outstanding commitment to protecting and being there for all Queenslanders for 40 years. Well done all.