



Speech By  
**Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2016

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Firefighters**

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (2.56 pm): While representing the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services recently I watched 23 urban firefighter recruits of the 97/2016 recruit course join the ranks of the QFES after graduating at a ceremony at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy in that wonderful electorate of Lytton, represented by the hardworking member, Joan Pease. The recruits will take up positions in Brisbane, Bundaberg, Townsville, Innisfail and the Tablelands in Far North Queensland.

Queensland communities rely on our firefighters to keep them safe and to see them through times of distress and disaster. The graduating recruits have embarked on a career that will at times be challenging as they take on the vital role of safeguarding the lives of Queenslanders. There is no doubt that each recruit will rise to this challenge and make an invaluable contribution in their communities.

During the ceremony we heard from QFES Acting Commissioner Mark Roche, who said that the new urban firefighters had undergone a rigorous recruitment and training process in readiness for their new roles. The department's recruit firefighter selection program is uncompromising, and Queensland communities can be assured that only the best people for the job are appointed. The recruits' successful completion of the intensive 78-day course sees them leave the academy well equipped with the necessary skills to respond to a range of emergencies including firefighting, road crash and technical rescue, and hazardous material management. As well as constant on-the-job training, urban firefighters continue formal studies in firefighting and emergency operations for 2½ years after graduation, further building their skills and enhancing the department's service delivery for Queensland. These graduates take the total number of QFES recruit firefighters appointed since February 2015 to 133, with 36 of those appointed this year. Clearly, this shows the support this Palaszczuk Labor government is providing to restore front-line public servants.

Conversely, the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls, wants to 'right size' the Public Service. The last time those opposite did this we know the result—14,000 Queenslanders lost their jobs. No wonder people in the Public Service are concerned if an LNP government is ever returned. Morale is only now lifting to a standard of comfortableness and reasonableness to ensure they do their jobs appropriately, whether it be the police, firefighters, ambulance officers, teachers, health workers and so on. It is important that morale is maintained and it will only be maintained by a government that cares for them like the Labor Palaszczuk government.