




Speech By
Hon. Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

National Volunteer Week

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.03 am): This week we celebrate National Volunteer Week. If it were not for our dedicated volunteers, Queensland would not be where it is today. In Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, thousands of men and women who volunteer have saved lives and communities during natural disasters, year in and year out. Their dedication never ceases to amaze me as they selflessly work to help their communities during bushfires, chemical spills, land searches, rescues, floods and cyclones. During Cyclone Marcia, I saw firsthand the tireless effort put in by emergency service volunteers. Without them, my electorate of Rockhampton would not have recovered as quickly.

They are testimony to the Queensland spirit, sacrificing time with their family and friends to help those in need and making a real difference to our communities. We must also pay respect during National Volunteer Week to the families of these volunteers. They know that at any moment their loved ones could be called out to assist in a crisis, and this family support and understanding during these times is a priceless commodity.

To highlight how important our volunteers are, I can say that in 2015 our rural fire brigades attended more than 6,300 incidents and conducted 2,600 permitted burns and close to 400 community education activities. State Emergency Service volunteers completed a massive 340,000 volunteer hours during the first nine months of this financial year. They do wonderful work, as do the stalwart volunteers of Coast Guard and Volunteer Marine Rescue squadrons up and down our coast on our waterways, as we witnessed as recently as yesterday.

I take the opportunity to thank all QFES volunteers who, through their ongoing commitment and dedication, deliver exceptional service and support to their communities. I also commend the men and women in our community who volunteer to support our police, whether in a local Crime Stoppers committee or as a volunteer in policing with victims of crime or justice groups. During National Volunteer Week, I pay tribute to all volunteers for their commitment to make all Queenslanders safe.