




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 9 May 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Ambulance Service, Kirwan Station

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.36 pm): Since being elected in 2015 I have given a commitment to my constituents and staff of the local ambulance station at Kirwan to ensure they get a new station. Kirwan station is where I remain as an honorary officer, albeit I had to cancel my last shift in March with the threat of Cyclone Debbie looming off the coast of Townsville. I am now overdue for my next volunteer shift, but I look forward to that. In my 27 years as a paramedic with the Queensland Ambulance Service I had the opportunity to relieve as acting officer in charge in many stations in the northern region, including Kirwan in 2014, so I believe that I can speak with a degree of authority in that I know the station and staff quite well.

I have been in regular contact with the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services making representations with regard to delivering funding for a new QAS station at Kirwan over the last two years. The minister, who has himself been to QAS Kirwan station on a number of occasions—in fact, his last visit was meeting the new QAS Indigenous cadets a few months ago—is also well informed that this facility is now 38 years old, being built as a subbranch of the then QATB in 1979. It housed two staff and I remember that, having worked there myself as a probationary ambulance officer in 1990 and for several occasions over the years. QAS Kirwan station now has over 40 full-time staff. The new modern fleet of ambulances barely fit under the roof of the plant room. In fact, it cannot house the new two-stretcher vehicles or four-wheel-drive ambulances. The previous LNP member promised to fix it—much like Riverway Drive—but he never delivered on that promise.

I know that we need to deliver the modern facilities for our front-line staff, and to that end I have been working with local QAS Assistant Commissioner Robbie Medlin, officer in charge of Kirwan station Linda Reedman and representatives from the Kirwan local ambulance committee. I committed to gaining support from the broader community for a new QAS station at Kirwan by launching a petition and I have been out at markets doorknocking and gaining support. I now table this nonconforming petition with 320 signatures from the local area which calls on the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services to include funding in the upcoming state budget for the 2017-18 period for a new ambulance station at Kirwan.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding Kirwan Ambulance Station [\[672\]](#).

I want to thank all who signed this petition—there are 320 of them—and gave support. On doorsteps in the Kirwan area people told me that they have used the QAS on occasion and have the highest respect for our local paramedics who do an outstanding job. They believe that they need a new station as well. I commend all our paramedics who, in my humble opinion, are ordinary people doing an extraordinary job.