




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Capital Works Projects

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.34 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that Fire and Emergency Services personnel have all the resources they need to continue their high standard of service to the Queensland community. Our emergency services are rightfully recognised as world leading, and I am determined to ensure that we remain at the forefront with management practices and skills. It was this government that allocated record funding of \$675 million for QFES in 2017-18, including budgeted staffing for 3,280 full-time-equivalent personnel. On top of this, we are investing \$29.5 million over the next four years to boost Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. This equates to an additional 100 firefighters and 12 fire communication officers statewide.

QFES has completed or currently has underway 26 Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service capital works projects this financial year. These works range from station refurbishments through to brand-new fire and rescue stations, including those already opened at Bundamba, Gordonvale and Bundaberg. Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for opening Gordonvale, as I know that is in your electorate and you championed that when you were in cabinet. This work is funded under QFES's capital works program, totalling nearly \$55 million for 2017-18 alone, with eight projects worth \$28 million delivered under the Palaszczuk government's Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program. The worth of these capital works to Queensland communities cannot be measured in financial terms. These projects are vitally important.

Last Thursday I had the pleasure of opening the new \$7.8 million QFES station in Bundaberg. The station is co-located with the new \$5 million Queensland Ambulance Service facility at a brand-new complex which will allow for combined training exercises. The new Bundaberg facility is world-class and can host multi-agency training for crews from the fire and rescue service, the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service and the Queensland Ambulance Service. Having these state-of-the-art facilities means that the QFES workforce and other emergency services can respond to emergencies confidently and safely. The community can feel at ease knowing that their local emergency services are well equipped and ready to respond. The training amenities this complex provides will assist Bundaberg area personnel as well as those from Gayndah, Kingaroy, Hervey Bay and Maryborough.

Next week our government will open stations in Mackay and Proserpine when the Palaszczuk government governs from the region. The focus of next week will be on growing jobs, strengthening front-line services and diversifying the local economy. The facilities being built will equip our firefighters, both in urban and rural settings, with everything required for a modern fire and rescue response. It does not stop there. Last week I visited new station builds at Childers and Howard, with those stations coming on line in the second half of this year. This commitment and the improvement of QFES facilities will ensure that the Queensland public is well protected into the future.