




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.00 am): The Palaszczuk government is determined to ensure that QFES personnel have every resource available to continue their world renowned work. This morning I was joined by QFES deputy commissioner Mike Wassing to announce that \$15 million of the budget commitment will be invested in providing enhanced communication capabilities to South-East Queensland State Emergency Service groups. I want to acknowledge Anneke and Benay from the SES, who are in the gallery today. It is great to see the colour orange in the Queensland parliamentary gallery.

Seventy-nine SES groups from the border with New South Wales to Toowoomba and north to Gympie will transition to radios on the government wireless network, or GWN, over the next two years. They will fall in line with firefighters, police and paramedics who are currently using the GWN. The GWN is a secure digital communication network that allows multiple agencies to operate on a single channel. This substantial investment means the SES will be able to fully integrate with other agencies during incidents, ensuring our fire and emergency services are operating from a single communication network. Streamlining interagency communication is essential for the State Emergency Service, as groups are often tasked to assist other agencies. Placing emergency services on a single channel will further assist with communication and coordination of resources and give responders greater visibility of an event. GWN radios also include important safety measures such as duress alarms and GPS tracking.

I would like to salute the 5,600 men and women who make up Queensland's State Emergency Service, who volunteer to ensure the safety of their local communities right across our state. Be it floods, cyclones or fires, volunteers help ensure that communities are well informed, safe and well looked after. They are ordinary people who produce the extraordinary in times of crisis, stepping up when we need them the most. We ask a lot of our SES groups in times of need, so it is only right that the Palaszczuk government provides the support they need to keep Queenslanders safe. I look forward to meeting as many SES groups as I can. I want to say to the members of this House, particularly those in the south-east corner where the GWN will be rolled out, that now is a very good time as a member of parliament to go out and acquaint yourself with your local SES, have a cup of tea with them and talk about the outstanding work they do.