



Speech By  
**Hon. Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Resources**

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.39 am): I have good news for the members from Toowoomba. Ahead of next week's Governing from the Regions program in Toowoomba I would like to highlight the work that this government is doing to ensure that our fire and rescue capacity keeps pace with the growing needs of the south-west region.

Let me start with our commitment of almost \$11 million for Charlton, near Toowoomba. As part of a new South Western Region Fire and Emergency Services Complex, \$7 million has been allocated for a new regional headquarters and fire communications centre and \$3.6 million for a new fire and rescue station at Charlton. This will be an additional 24-hour fire station to complement the existing stations that are already out there. The new regional headquarters and fire and rescue station are expected to be completed by mid-2020, with the fire communications centre in the early stages of planning already.

Work is being done this year to complete the upgrade of the Dirranbandi auxiliary station and the refurbishment of the Charleville area office. Last week I had the pleasure of opening the state air operations hangar at the Toowoomba airport. We are basing six operational aircraft at Toowoomba up until December this year which can be deployed at a moment's notice anywhere across the southern part of Queensland and even into New South Wales. While I am on my feet, I want to acknowledge the hard work of the Rural Fire Service and our Fire and Rescue Service, who have combatted nearly 2,500 wildfires in Queensland in the last couple of months. There is no sign of things ending anytime soon.

We are giving the region the firefighters they need to work in these new and upgraded facilities. Five of the first 25 allocated under our four-year commitment are being allocated to Toowoomba, and more of those will follow as Charlton gets closer to opening so it is flush with the staff that it needs. It is essential that our front-line personnel have the resources they need to respond efficiently and effectively when an incident occurs. Improvements to QFES facilities and equipment across the state, combined with a boost in firefighter numbers, ultimately lead to safer Queensland communities. I will be opening even more facilities and handing over more appliances in the south-west in the coming weeks, so watch this space.