




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Yellow Ribbon Day

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.06 am): This morning I am very proud to be wearing a yellow ribbon, which is part of a big statewide ‘thank you’ for our 36,000 rural firefighters. We have had some of their yellow trucks parked outside parliament this morning in a very visible salute to their tremendous work, and I know some of them are in the gallery today. I want to acknowledge volunteers from Delaneys Creek and Brookfield fire brigades and the RFBAQ president, Mr Ian Pike, and general manager, Justin Choveaux. To them and to all of our volunteers, I want to stress that, as a former rural firefighter in Victoria, I understand the tremendous sacrifice and pride that is involved in keeping communities safe. Brigade members spend countless hours away from families and friends, volunteering their time to put the needs of their community first.

Yellow Ribbon Day holds a special significance for all firefighters this year as the 2018 bushfire season is testing the strength and resolve of all of our firefighters—full-time, part-time and volunteer—with over 3,000 vegetation fires in Queensland in the past 60 days. To everyone on the state’s fire front line, we say thank you. Our Rural Fire Service volunteers are much more than just firefighters. They provide assistance during a range of emergencies, protect communities against storms and cyclones and respond to incidents like traffic accidents. They are often leaders and mentors and form the backbone of their communities. They work with landowners to carry out fire mitigation activities and participate in regional training exercises to ensure people are ready to respond when disaster strikes. They are focused on protecting rural Queensland, which represents 93 per cent of the state’s land area—yet another reason why it is so important for us to acknowledge their hard work.

I know the wonderful work undertaken by rural firefighters not only firsthand through my role as minister but also in my role as the member for Barron River. I want to acknowledge the rural fire brigades in my area—Koah, Kuranda and Speewah. I want to thank the businesses that let volunteer firefighters leave their jobs when they are required to perform their critical work of protecting communities.

Yellow Ribbon Day—an initiative of the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland—is about ensuring that everyone recognises the commitment, professionalism and contributions made by volunteers in their communities. If people know a volunteer, or if they are a volunteer, or if they value the commitment made by rural fire brigades, I ask them to wear a yellow ribbon with pride just like I and other members of parliament in here today wear as a visible show of support for those who wear their yellow uniforms and ride in their yellow fire trucks.