



Speech By  
**Hon. Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Weather Events, Recovery Assistance**

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.07 am): I have highlighted previously how Queensland is often at the mercy of extreme weather events. That has certainly been highlighted recently, and I must congratulate our hardworking staff and volunteers who have been helping out either on the fire front line or by assisting communities hit by superstorms. This week I have been thanking our volunteers from the State Emergency Service and Rural Fire Service taking part in clean-up and recovery efforts in the South Burnett region. Over one 24-hour period alone the SES received almost 500 calls for assistance, including with fallen trees, leaking roofs and other structural damage, with Gympie, the Fraser Coast and the South Burnett the hardest hit areas. In some cases they were actually working through the rain to help people out.

This week I have been highlighting the terrific efforts of firefighters, who have responded to more than 3,300 vegetation fires around the state since 15 August—an average of more than 40 every day. It is not just in the field where QFES staff and volunteers are shining. They are combining hard work with software to help make Queensland a safer place. QFES has developed world-class technology to help it accurately predict the path of destructive vegetation fires, potentially saving lives and property. Specially trained personnel were operating the SABRE system, which I am proud to say is a fire prediction system developed by QFES here in Queensland. We are the only fire agency in the country using this advanced software, which is used for more complex, larger scale fires. In fact, it was successfully implemented recently to provide information during a bushfire in Central Queensland which threatened the safety of eight adults and three children.

QFES's Predictive Services Unit worked with partner agencies to map the possible fire path, which was overlaid on satellite imagery. As there was no active fire suppression due to the inaccessible terrain, SABRE was able to determine with a high degree of accuracy the spread of the fire. QFES is also using a second system called Phoenix, which is integral with SABRE for predicting the spread of fires. The programs will determine where fire mitigation activities can be best targeted and where resources can be strategically placed ahead of days with an elevated fire danger. This helps keep our firefighters and our communities safe and provides timely and accurate information to better inform operational decisions.

It seems like every day we are witnessing the skill and dedication of our staff and volunteers helping Queenslanders when they need it most. The Palaszczuk government understands just how vital it is that our entire state has the highly skilled fire and emergency services teams required to respond swiftly and effectively if disaster strikes. That is why we delivered a record budget this year. This government is committed to ensuring QFES continues to meet the growing demand for its services and continues to deliver world-class services to Queenslanders.