




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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ADJOURNMENT

Glass House Mountains Rural Fire Brigade

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.24 pm): All Queenslanders have been reminded in recent weeks not only of the threat of fire but also of the amazing courage, dedication and service of our QFRS auxiliary and rural fire brigades. They are simply brilliant. When you reflect on the fact that the rural fireys are volunteers, we fellow Queenslanders are humbled. What may not be widely known is that 2019 is the 70th year of rural fire brigades operating in this state and that the No. 1 brigade, the first brigade constituted, was, in fact, the Glass House Mountains brigade. It pipped the Lagoon Pocket, Byfield, Kandanga, Thangool and Gordon Brook brigades established later in the same year, 1949. Twenty-seven members attended the first meeting at the United Fruitgrowers' Co-op Association in late 1948 before the brigade was registered on 29 June 1949. Exactly 70 years later we celebrated at the current Glass House Mountain brigade sheds.

Like many brigades, membership waned through the years until the horrific fires of September and November 1994. The November fires started in Cove Road. They cut the Bruce Highway. They spread through Caboolture and on to Bribie Island and saw 330,000 hectares burnt, 23 houses lost, 3,000 people evacuated and nine volunteer firefighters injured. There was a letter to the editor not long after those fires from one of the neighbouring brigades that sounds early familiar and contemporary—

Last week is certainly one which will remain in everyone's mind for years to come. The stress of being involved with such a huge operation has left us all exhausted.

The devastation wreaked on the landscape, particularly in the Glass House and Beerburrum area, is hard to believe. It is amazing that so few homes were lost. I realise that must be cold comfort to those who lost everything and they have our heartfelt sympathy. Fires such as we experienced last week are virtually impossible to stop but with hard work a lot can be saved.

There are many lessons to be learnt and the most important one is not to be complacent. Prevention and preparation before the bushfire season is so important and it is not too late now to attend to the clearing of rubbish and gutters, check hoses and pumps and remove stored fuel, gas bottles and firewood.

Don't think the danger has passed!

Not surprisingly, following those fires a subsequent meeting saw 30 locals, predominantly farmers, come along and the brigade reinvigorated. Two existing members, Dave Gower and Charlie Pike, were at that meeting 25 years ago. I want to acknowledge first officer Anthony Rook, the other officers, Charlie, Steve, Aiden, Michael and Dave and members Jarod, Richard, Andrew, Corey, Mathias, Alana, Todd, Kirsty, David, Matt, Robert, Tim, Gary, Linda, Alex, Gavin, Peter, Kev and Leanne and Tamara. Keep up the great work!