




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Resources

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.56 am): Since the Palaszczuk government was elected in 2015, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services have made significant achievements. Right now, we still have people on the ground in Townsville and north-west Queensland dealing with floods. At the same time, we are also dealing with a large wildfire on the New South Wales border.

I am pleased to advise that by 2020 QFES will have made the largest investment in its fleet in 20 years. Having inherited no plan from the LNP to replace or repair the fleet, this is a significant achievement. During its previous term, the Palaszczuk government delivered 153 new appliances. In this term, 118 appliances have already been delivered, with another 111 appliances to be delivered by the end of 2018-19 at a cost of nearly \$40 million.

QFES and the PSBA have made major investments in QFES stations, facilities and complexes, with a \$75 million injection in 2016-17 and 2017-18. Projects include the Howard Combined Police and Fire Station, the Rockhampton Fire and Rescue Station and Communications Centre, the Childers Fire and Rescue Station, the Bundamba Fire and Rescue Station, the Bundaberg Fire and Rescue Station and the Roma Fire and Rescue Station.

QFES has allocated an extra \$50 million to transform its digital, technology and information environment, including the Phoenix bushfire simulation program and the QFES developed predictive software, SABRE, that helped save countless lives and property in our recent, unprecedented fires. QFES has also developed and delivered several key initiatives since 2015, including 13 recruitment courses with 243 firefighter graduates. A 14th recruitment course started last month, with another 32 recruits, and we have three more courses planned for this year.

We have introduced legislation that provides paid and volunteer firefighters with access to compensation should a firefighter contract one of the 12 specified work related cancers. We have successfully negotiated a modern auxiliary firefighters award, which provides auxiliary firefighters with better conditions and wages. We have introduced new smoke alarm legislation to ensure our households are the safest in the country.

The Palaszczuk government also approved funding of \$3 million over 10 years for a comprehensive consumer protection campaign. We deployed people and equipment to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, including 817 QFES staff and volunteers, fire trucks, helicopters and flood boats. We initiated the Blue Water Review, and we released that review last month. We launched the Volunteerism Strategy to meet the needs of the changing volunteer workforce. This strategy will support the 40,000 volunteers across the Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service and Technical Rescue as well as scientific and peer support officers who dedicate countless hours to ensure Queensland communities are safe. We provided fuel and maintenance for the Rural Fire Service, and

we should not underestimate the importance of that. Fuel and maintenance for our rural fireys means that they do not need to conduct local fundraising anymore to try to put diesel in their trucks to attend fires.

Perhaps most importantly, the Palaszczuk government is on track to fulfil its election commitment to provide 100 more front-line firefighters and 12 extra fire communications officers over four years.