




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 17 September 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bushfires, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.04 am): We have experienced an unprecedented start to Queensland's bushfire season, with Queensland families, communities and businesses heavily impacted. The hot weather associated with bushfires is becoming more frequent and more intense and it is occurring a lot earlier. I want to commend the incredible efforts of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers. At the peak of the bushfires, there were more than 200 QPWS rangers deployed to the front line across the state alongside other emergency services personnel protecting property and our state's unique environmental and cultural areas. Some of them continued to respond to fire threats in protected areas even while their own homes were at risk. These men and women work year-round to prepare for bushfire season and then put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe.

Since January this year, the Department of Environment and Science has conducted 281 planned burns on protected area across Queensland covering almost 1.2 million hectares. This is a further increase on last year and the most hectares treated by planned burns in six years. Currently there are still a number of parks that are fully or partially closed and I urge anyone planning to visit a protected area to check park alerts on the department's website for the latest information before leaving home. The changing climate means that the important work of QPWS rangers will be even more critical as we head into this fire season, so I thank them for their bravery and commend their work to the House.