



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**

**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND  
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**



**Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (3.01 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee Report No. 31, 56th Parliament—*Inquiry into the Wynnum and Mermaid Waters ambulance station projects* tabled on 27 November 2019.

The men and women of the Queensland Ambulance Service play a critical role in the state's world-class public health system. They provide lifesaving emergency first aid care and patient retrieval services to the people of Queensland around the clock every day. This point is no more poignant than right now in the face of responding to the global pandemic coronavirus.

It is a service that I am very proud to have served with. I spent 25 years as a critical care paramedic and now remain in the service as an honorary officer at Kirwan station. It is great to see the work done by the health committee in carrying out the roles and functions of portfolio committees to scrutinise public works. Our committee examined the procurement processes of the Queensland Ambulance Service's construction of two new stations, being Wynnum and Mermaid Waters ambulance stations.

As the member for Thuringowa, I am working on supporting the QAS in the northern regions as they go through the process of constructing a new ambulance station at Kirwan, a station which I was able to lobby for and, ironically, it was one of my last roles as the acting OIC leading up to the 2015 state election. Given my background, I believe I can speak with a degree of authority on the knowledge and integral role our QAS paramedics have within the community. During our inquiry, we saw the examination of those two stations being constructed. With the one in Wynnum, we saw the way the QAS worked with the community and the role that the local ambulance committee had in delivering modern facilities that were purpose-built for increased staffing as demands for services increase in our growing ageing populations, wherever we may live in Queensland.

As we know, the QAS operates that statewide service with Queensland Health and is accountable for the delivery of pre-hospital response services. The QAS delivers those services in 296 response locations throughout 15 LASNs and is closely aligned with the Queensland Hospital and Health Services. Last year the QAS responded to over one million calls for service. The 4,500 staff deserve the best modern facilities, and that is what they received through the building of Wynnum and Mermaid Waters stations.

During our inquiry the committee considered whether the stations were fit for purpose and whether the government's investment for those stations—which totalled just over \$7.3 million—represents value for money. We also considered the community, economic and environmental impacts

and the procurement process for the works. I am very pleased to report that those two ambulance stations were well managed by the QAS on all fronts. These are excellent stations, they represent good value for money, they serve their local communities and they will continue to do so well into the future.

I fully appreciate the hard work our staff put into ensuring their stations serve their communities to a high standard day after day. I saw nothing but positive outcomes throughout this inquiry, including the procurement process involved in building these stations. Of special note, I want to thank Michael Day, the OIC of Wynnum Ambulance Station. He was so welcoming and is very proud of his station and staff. He holds dear his close working relationship with his local ambulance committee, who had a major input into making this new station more a home than a workplace. When you finish a bad job you return to your station, and the warmth and surrounding that emanated from this OIC and his station would make any paramedic proud to work out of that Wynnum QAS station and serve their community so well.

I also know how proud the local member, Joan Pease, is of this station. She sits on our committee. I only hope the Kirwan station follows this model in a similar vein once finished. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank those individuals who made written submissions. I wholeheartedly thank the staff of the Queensland Ambulance Service, my fellow committee members and the secretariat for assisting with this inquiry.