



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 4 December 2020

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Coronavirus, Update; Queensland Ambulance Service**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): As the Premier stated, we have had two new cases overnight of COVID-19, both acquired overseas and both detected in hotel quarantine. This brings Queensland's active cases to 10, with 3,309 tests conducted in the last 24 hours. I have also received a briefing this morning from the Acting Chief Health Officer in relation to New South Wales. I have been advised that there are no other positive cases at this stage—that is certainly welcome news—that extensive testing is going on and that there is an extensive response by the New South Wales government. The genomic sequencing is ongoing. We are expecting to see some results of that in the next 24 hours. That will tell us whether the positive case has come out of hotel quarantine or was likely acquired in the community. That is a particular area of interest for all governments, so we will be watching closely the results of that. We are very pleased that over the last 24 hours, despite the extensive level of testing, there have been no further positive cases.

Can I talk about our wonderful ambulance services. Demand for ambulance services continues to grow, and our record health investment will continue to support the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queenslanders they help each and every day. The budget provides the Queensland Ambulance Service with \$933.9 million in operating expenses, an increase of 5.4 per cent from the 2019-20 budget. The budget also provides \$55.8 million for capital expenses. The good news about that is: that will pay for 135 new and replacement ambulance vehicles, and \$18.1 million for new and replacement ambulance stations.

Our record budget also means that 109 new ambulance officers will be joining the QAS in locations across the state. There are also mental health clinicians for Queensland Ambulance Service operations centres. Then there is the new and replacement stations, including completion of facilities at Munruben, Yarrabilba, Drayton, Kirwan, Mareeba and Girraween, and planning for new ambulance stations at Ripley, Caloundra South and Ormeau. We are investing in more despatchers and better technology for Queensland Ambulance Service operations centres so that when a call comes in on 000, 90 per cent of the time that call will be answered within 10 seconds.

Our record budget means that for those suffering a cardiac arrest their chances of survival are increased because of the mechanical chest compression devices being rolled out to critical care paramedics who respond to these cases. It means that when you are experiencing a mental health crisis there will be senior mental health clinicians working hand in hand with despatchers and paramedics to get you the most appropriate specialised care. I met some of those experts very recently when I visited Kedron. It means that ambulances responding to emergencies are getting there quickly, because this government continues to invest in technology to support emergency response and dynamic deployment despatch activities. It means that when a paramedic responds to a call it is more likely their vehicle will have a power assisted stretcher to lift patients safely and to reduce the physical strain on our paramedics. Throughout this challenging year, the Queensland Ambulance Service has supported Queenslanders. In this budget we are proud to support them.