



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**


**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2024

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Bushfire Preparedness; Pitt, Hon. C**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.30 am): August marks the start of bushfire season in Queensland. The Bureau of Meteorology is forecasting that Queensland can expect above average temperatures until at least November, with average or slightly above average rainfall. Like their colleagues in the Queensland Fire Department, particularly the Rural Fire Service Queensland—and I acknowledge that today is Yellow Ribbon Day—the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service’s planning and preparedness for the fire season ahead is well advanced and the Miles government proudly has their back.

To support the QPWS in addressing current and future challenges, our government’s 2024-25 budget includes \$39.2 million in new funding for fire management activities. This includes an additional 39 personnel, \$21.1 million in operating funding and \$18.1 million in capital funding. This historic investment, the largest ever for fire management for the QPWS, will significantly enhance the department’s capacity to expand the planned burn program and increase bushfire response capability. The funding will provide additional resources, including light and medium firefighting appliances, heavy plant and other equipment. It also invests in the department’s road and fire-line network, strengthening our firefighting capabilities and ensuring the safety of our rangers, neighbours and the broader community. This investment will deliver long-term community benefits and provide a positive legacy for many years.

Central to the QPWS’s bushfire preparedness is planned burning, which is the primary tool used by our rangers to mitigate the risk and severity of adverse bushfire conditions. Since 1 July this year, the QPWS has completed 44 planned burns, totalling almost 33,780 hectares. This builds on the 453 planned burns and other mitigation activities, totalling over 524,450 hectares, which the department completed in the 2023-24 financial year. Those burns employ a combination of on-ground and aerial ignition techniques to effectively meet the burn objectives. This integrated approach enhances control over the fire’s spread and intensity, ensuring efficient coverage of large and hard-to-reach areas, and supports the achievement of targeted mitigation, ecological and safety outcomes for our rangers and assisting partners and stakeholders.

Our QPWS rangers are uniquely equipped to manage the second largest planned burn program in Australia, which is a responsibility that they take very seriously. To support the delivery of this program, given its scale and complexity, the department prioritises the development and training of its staff to ensure they possess the necessary skills and expertise to execute the program effectively and safely. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service currently has over 700 fire trained staff. I want to acknowledge the efforts of our Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers, who work year round to implement hazard mitigation measures across the state. Their dedication, combined with our critical partnerships with the Queensland Fire Department, First Nations peoples, local communities,

neighbours and stakeholders ensures that our fire management is undertaken collaboratively and is tailored to the challenges that each area presents. With the largest investment in fire management in the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's history and a highly trained workforce, the department and its rangers are well prepared to face this bushfire season.

Mr Speaker, I have spoken to you about your announcement today, but on the record I want to acknowledge that political service is public service and there is truly no greater honour and privilege than serving the Queensland public. The only honour more important than that is serving your family. I acknowledge and thank you for your service in this place and to your community. Most importantly, I acknowledge that you have been a friend to many and I thank you for your friendship to me.