




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Queensland Government Air

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.31 am): I will be addressing a topic which is of particular interest to the member for Thuringowa. Mr Speaker, you are probably not aware, but the member for Thuringowa used to be a paramedic!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr RYAN: Everyone is surprised by that, but he was! He was also a paramedic with QGAir. Today I want to acknowledge the outstanding team at QGAir. The Queensland government rescue helicopter fleet has actually set a global record: surpassing 30,000 operational flight hours. As a result of this dedicated service for Queensland, I am told that QGAir is regarded as a global leader and has the highest time of any emergency medical services helicopter operation in the world. This is a monumental achievement. Not only has QGAir become the first emergency medical services helicopter operation in Australia to surpass 30,000 operational flight hours, but QGAir was also the first emergency medical services helicopter provider in Australia, and it is publicly operated. That is very important; it is run by public servants for the people of Queensland.

QGAir's fleet of five helicopters is based across Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville and provides more than 3,000 flight hours per annum and an average of 2,000 patient rescues and transfers each year. Operating within the Aviation Capability Group of the Queensland Police Service, QGAir's fleet serves as a vital asset in frontline aeromedical, search and rescue, law enforcement and government capabilities throughout Queensland. Here is just one example of what QGAir does. During the 2023 Cairns floods, QGAir was responsible for carrying out aeromedical transfers in Cooktown in addition to search and welfare checks at several properties, ensuring the safety of Queenslanders affected by those severe floods.

The Miles government will continue to invest in this world-class capability and I note that three QGAir helicopters are due for replacement in the next three years. I am very pleased to announce to the House today that scoping work is now underway for those three new replacement helicopters. The significance of what our rescue helicopter fleet has achieved cannot be underestimated. There are so many people who are alive today who would not be if not for the lifesaving missions these aircraft and their crews undertake and every member of the rescue helicopter team contributes. Whether it is the pilots, the medics, the paramedics, the engineers, the aircraft crew, the support staff—they all play their part in keeping these lifesaving operations in the air.

On behalf of all Queenslanders, I want to thank every one of those team members for their efforts. They do what they do because they want to help others. They are true servants of the public, true servants of their fellow Queenslanders and we all salute them.