



Speech By
Hon. David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bushfire and Disaster Preparedness; Gladstone, Deaths

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (2.10 pm): Queensland is no stranger to natural disasters. We face more than any other state. As summer approaches, Queenslanders are once again witnessing the vital work of our firefighters. Hot and dry weather over the last few weeks created the perfect conditions for bushfires to ignite and spread quickly. The Queensland Fire Department has responded to about 2,700 vegetation fires since the start of September. There are still around 50 active vegetation fires burning right now across the state. We are closely watching several fires in places like Doughboy west of Bundaberg, which continue to burn over large areas.

Ahead of this fire season, we embarked on the largest program of pre-planned burns in our state's history. Almost 1,000 hazard reduction burns were completed across the state. By getting in early and doing preventive burns, we give ourselves the best chance to mitigate the risk of bushfires. There will always be a risk, which is why we have to keep playing our part.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to extend my condolences to the family and loved ones of those who tragically lost their lives in a house fire in Gladstone this morning. We do not yet know the full circumstances, but it is indeed a huge tragedy. On behalf of the House, we express our sympathies to the family, the neighbours and the first responders on what is truly a deeply, deeply moving tragedy. I know how committed our Fire and Emergency Services volunteers are and how quickly they worked on that property.

While Queenslanders are continuing to battle bushfires across the state, a hot and potentially wet summer is again approaching. The Bureau of Meteorology anticipates we are at risk of severe storms, cyclones and significant rain systems right through until April. Of course, last year's wet season brought devastating floods. A tropical cyclone in South-East Queensland, record rains in North Queensland and flooding over an area the size of Victoria in the west reminded us of the need to prepare. That is why last week we launched the Get Ready Queensland campaign. I take disasters very seriously and I know Queenslanders do the same. Whether it is flood or fire, it is critical to do the preparations around your home and have a plan in place ahead of a disaster. We said we would be with Queenslanders for the long haul as they recover, and our government is proud to deliver this support. I encourage all Queenslanders to be prepared and, most importantly, to look after one another.