

Question on Notice No. 591, Thursday, 20 May 2004

Dr CLARK asked the Minister for Emergency Services (Mr Cummins) -

With reference to the Queensland Rescue Helicopters which perform a critical role in the delivery of health services in far north Queensland –

Will he provide details of the work carried out by these rescue services this year?

Mr CUMMINS:

Aeromedical and air rescue helicopter services to far north Queensland is provided primarily by the Queensland Government Helicopter Rescue Service (Queensland Rescue) based at Cairns Airport.

Queensland Rescue operates a twin engine, Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) Bell 412 helicopter from the Cairns Air Base on a 24 hour/seven days a week basis.

Queensland Rescue's service to far north Queensland is backed up by Queensland Rescue's Townsville Air Base.

For the period 1 July 2003 to 31 March 2004, Queensland Rescue's Cairns based helicopter has undertaken 210 operational flights . These missions included 166 aeromedical flights, 34 Search and Rescue flights, 2 flights to support Counter Disaster operations, 4 flights to support Queensland Fire and Rescue Service operations and 4 flights to support Queensland Police Service operations.

In addition to operational flights, Queensland Rescue also undertakes considerable training flights and test flights to ensure the serviceability of the helicopters after maintenance. For the period 1 July 2003 to 31 March 2004, Queensland Rescue had undertaken 59 training flights to ensure that the skills of Queensland Rescue's pilots and crew were maintained at optimum levels. In addition, 9 flights were undertaken to check maintenance and a further 7 flights were undertaken on miscellaneous tasks.