

Question on Notice No. 857, Thursday 22 April 2004

Mrs E CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Emergency Services (Mr Cummins) -

With reference to significant revenue from the Government's ambulance levy which was to be allocated, as stated by the Premier, the Treasurer and the Emergency Services Minister, to improve the Queensland Ambulance Service across Queensland-

- (1) Why are minimum staffing levels for day shift at the Gladstone Ambulance Station being reduced from three officers to two officers?
- (2) Will the new roster mean staff will have significantly less weekends at home with their families?
- (3) How many officers have left the service in the past 12 months?

Mr CUMMINS:

As a result of the Enterprise Partnership Agreement (EPA) 2002-2005, a roster reform process is being undertaken by the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) to abolish the 14-hour night shift, and to better align resources against the demonstrated demand for service.

The proposed new roster for the Gladstone Ambulance Station, developed by negotiation with staff, will have a two officer crew commence at 0800 hours, and a second two officer crew commencing at 0900 hours, giving a total of four staff, not two or three.

This change in roster will represent an enhancement to the current staffing by having a total of four staff to cover the day shift, providing additional coverage for the Gladstone Ambulance Station.

This additional staffing will provide a two officer response to all cases, instead of a single officer response, therefore, increasing the safety of our staff through good work practices.

Further, when the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) is on duty, there will be an additional staff member from 0800 hours.

The amount of weekends worked by staff at the Gladstone Ambulance Station will not alter under the proposed new roster. Currently, Gladstone staff have three clear weekends off in nine weeks. The proposed new roster has four clear weekends off in 12 weeks.

Two permanent staff have left the Gladstone Ambulance Station in the past twelve months, with one still working as a casual paramedic at the Rockhampton Ambulance Station.

An additional student paramedic officer commenced duties on 06 September 2004 as part of the first group of the extra 100 paramedics who will be trained this financial year in Queensland.

\$35.9 million has been committed to recruit the additional 240 paramedics across Queensland over the next three years, making a total of 350 additional paramedics employed throughout Queensland in four years.

The Beattie Government is committed to enhancing services in the Gladstone area and I look forward joining with the Member at the official opening of the new Boyne Island Ambulance Station on 21 September 2004.