

Question on Notice
No. 600
Thursday, 10 May 2005

MR LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Emergency Services (Mr Cummins) –

QUESTION:

With reference to my recent representation of him at the Kalbar Fire Station to present service recognition awards-

Will he explain the importance of these sorts of awards to Queenslanders and especially emergency service staff?

ANSWER:

I thank the member for the question and would like to congratulate him for the ongoing support for emergency services in his electorate.

Long Service awards are an important way to give recognition to the service and commitment made by our emergency services staff and volunteers. They not only relate to length of service but also refer to the diligence of individuals and quality of service provided over a long period of time. The Department of Emergency Services (DES) considers these types of awards to be an essential part of our reward and recognition systems. As such, they are one of the keys to maintaining high levels of commitment and morale.

Many of our emergency personnel and volunteers have careers that span more than 10 years service of helping protect the lives of Queenslanders.

The uniformed divisions of the DES have instituted Awards based on recognising 10 years of diligent service. These awards take the form of long service medals or badges, and their presentation is according to eligibility and suitability criteria that are set internally, and may include non-uniformed staff and volunteers such as Local Ambulance Committee (LAC) members and State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers.

Uniformed operational officers in each of the three operational divisions may be eligible for that National Medal for Service, which is a Commonwealth recognition of 15 years aggregated service in an eligible organisation. Eligibility and suitability criteria for this award, and other Commonwealth Awards are by way of individual application through the Registrar of National Medals in Canberra. The DES assists in processing these applications, however, but does not control the process.

The National Medal was established on 14 February 1975, as one of the original elements of the distinctive Australian system of honours and awards.

Our firefighters, paramedics and volunteers provide world-class emergency services, and awards for long and meritorious service are significant achievements of which the recipients can feel justifiably proud.