

**Question on Notice
No. 611
Asked on Tuesday, 10 May 2005**

MS REILLY asked the Minister for Emergency Services (MR CUMMINS) -

QUESTION:

How is the introduction of roster reform benefiting Queensland?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question and for the strong support she has shown not only towards the Queensland Ambulance Service, but all sections of Emergency Services within her electorate.

I wish to assure the Member that the Beattie Government is fully committed to the ongoing process of Roster Reform, ensuring our world class paramedics are not burdened by fatigue whilst they make lifesaving clinical decisions.

Roster Reform is about two things – occupational health and well being of our operational staff, and meeting demand profiles – both of which will effectively ensure we deliver the best service possible. Many stations have adopted the new rosters with early indications showing significant improvements in response times of up to 10 percent.

Roster Reform is supported by a large body of international evidence, it is clear that shifts of greater than 10-hours duration no longer meet the needs of our modern day ambulance service. As demand in our busier ambulance stations grows, it is simply too much to ask our highly professional paramedics to work such long shifts.

This Government has provided \$35.9 million for 240 additional paramedics over a three year period. These additional paramedics will allow for the progressive phasing out of the longer shifts, starting with the busiest ambulance stations.

The process of roster reform will benefit the public of Queensland by ensuring paramedic resources are aligned with community needs and that our paramedics are rostered when and where our communities need them. The success of this initiative is already being reflected with significant improvement in ambulance response times, particularly in those areas, which have progressed roster reform to date.

As the Member would no doubt agree, Queensland paramedics do a magnificent job protecting the lives of Queenslanders every day and it is important that the Government provides them with the best possible resources to do their job.