

Question on Notice
No. 834
Asked on Thursday, 26 May 2005

MR LAWLOR asked the Minister for Emergency Services (MR CUMMINS) -

QUESTION:

How is Roster Reform benefiting the people in the electorate of Southport?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his Question and for the strong support he has shown not only towards the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), but all sections of Emergency Services within his electorate.

This Government realises that the safety of our hard working paramedics is paramount. That is why we have commenced a comprehensive program of roster reform.

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 to the people of Queensland.

With an increase of almost 5000 code one emergencies this financial year, that means our paramedics are working harder than ever, because of our growing population and increasing demand for services.

The process of roster reform will benefit the public of Queensland, including Southport, 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.

The process of roster reform in the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is an ongoing one, to which this Government and the Miscellaneous Workers Union, is fully committed. Ultimately, shifts of greater than 10-hours duration will be removed from all ambulance stations.

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.

The Southport Ambulance Station has received an additional eight paramedics, which has resulted in an additional day shift and afternoon crew to be rostered seven days a week. Bordering the Southport Ambulance Station, the Nerang, Helensvale, Runaway Bay and Coral Gardens Ambulance Stations will all receive the following additional staff as a result of Roster Reform.

The Nerang, Helensvale, Runaway Bay and Coral Gardens Ambulance Stations all respond to cases, which complement the demographic response matrix of the Southport precinct.

The Beattie Governments 2005 -06 Budget will deliver an additional 70 ambulance officers as part of a program of 240 ambulance officer over three years. In addition, this will include the commencement of a new ambulance station for Nerang and the completion of the Springwood Ambulance Station.