

Question on Notice
No. 378
Asked on 9 March 2006

MR FENLON asked the Minister for Emergency Services (MR PURCELL) -

QUESTION:

With reference to staff and resources of the Queensland Ambulance Service -
How is the organisation placed to meet the current and future challenges it will face in continuing to provide Queenslanders with a world-class ambulance service?

ANSWER:

I thank the member for the question and congratulate him on his support for emergency services within his electorate.

The Beattie Government has made a significant commitment to ensuring that Queenslanders live in safe and secure communities. This includes a number of important service delivery initiatives in the 2005-06 Budget which will contribute to the ongoing provision of world-class ambulance services in Queensland.

A record capital expenditure of \$110.4 million in the current budget reflects this Government's commitment to ensuring Queenslanders live in safe and secure communities.

Over three years, \$20 million will fund the enhancement of the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy in Brisbane. This facility will be developed into a national and international centre of excellence for emergency management training and community safety.

This Government will continue to strengthen ambulance operational service delivery in Queensland through:

- Providing an additional 70 paramedics in the 2006-07 financial year to address growth in demand, maintain emergency response times and improve services to rural, isolated and remote communities.
- Training 20 paramedics each year for three years, in conjunction with Queensland Health, to expand their role so they may assist remote area nurses and rural doctors with ongoing patient care.
- Funding Queensland Ambulance Service capital investments totaling \$49 million, including:
 - 15 replacement ambulance stations, five new stations and one new field office (commenced or completed in the 2005–06 financial year);
 - \$7.9 million for replacement ambulance vehicles;
 - \$7 million for the continued implementation of the Strategic Information Management Initiative – Automated Data System including the electronic ambulance report form, to help reduce paperwork to be completed by paramedics and to improve response times; and
 - \$2.7 million for continued enhancements to operational communications systems and upgrading of operational equipment across the State.

- \$2.9 million on an Emergency Services Computer Aided Dispatch system to improve support for the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.
- Ongoing joint emergency services training and exercises to further enhance operational readiness, management and response to a broad range of rescue situations and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Incendiary and Explosive incidents.
- \$2.4 million to commence or complete joint emergency services facilities at Highfields, Roma and Palm Island in the 2005–06 financial year.
- \$0.3 million (\$0.9 million over four years) for whole-of-Government Mental Health Crisis Intervention Teams.
- \$0.5 million (second year of \$1.3 million over three years) in ongoing support for the cardiopulmonary resuscitation program – CPR for Life.
- \$0.8 million (fourth year of \$2.1 million package) for the Department's Indigenous Australian Service Delivery Enhancement Package, including:
 - Construction of joint emergency services facilities at Palm Island, Cherbourg and Doomadgee; and
 - Continuing the development of bridging programs for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to grow the number of student ambulance officers.
- Continuing to implement management practices that promote ethical conduct, equity, cultural diversity and workplace health and safety. This includes the Supportive Leadership Program and the Command and Control Course for senior officers in the Queensland Ambulance Service.