

**Question on Notice  
No. 659  
Asked on 9 May 2006**

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for Emergency Services (MR PURCELL) -

QUESTION:

(1) Will he advise the work undertaken by the Rural Fire Brigades throughout Queensland and, in particular, of the contribution that has been made to the community by the Ripley Valley Rural Fire Brigade?

(2) Will he also provide information about the support provided to the Rural Fire Brigade in the electorate of Bundamba?

ANSWER:

I thank the member for her question, and congratulate her on her ongoing support for emergency services within her electorate.

The work of rural fire brigades (RFBs) falls into three particular areas, those being mitigation, community safety and response to wildfire.

Mitigation activities include the support for communities and landholders in carrying out hazard reduction burns to reduce overall fire hazards. In this regard, RFBs work closely with the local fire warden to ensure the best outcome for protecting the community from fire.

Community Safety is an increasing area of activity for RFBs and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) *Bushfire Prepared Communities* package is an excellent resource that is being used by brigades to educate individuals and communities on how to protect themselves, their property and their community from wildfire.

A major role of RFBs is the response to unplanned fire. RFBs in Queensland have been active for more than 50 years in providing this service to their communities and are a valuable resource in keeping Queensland communities safe.

The Ripley Valley RFB covers approximately 170 square kilometres and borders on the south east of Ipswich City. The brigade conducts community awareness activities, preparedness assessment for landowners within the community, risk assessments and familiarisation activities of the brigade area, assisting landowners with hazard reduction burns, operational training and responding to wildfires. So far this year, the brigade has donated a total of 1880 volunteer hours to date and donated 8441 volunteer hours last year.

Ripley Valley RFB has increased the fleet of two fire appliances to four. The brigade vehicle resources are now:

- 1 x Nissan Light Response Appliance
- 1 x Canter Medium Response Appliance
- 1 x Isuzu Medium Response Appliance
- 1 x Nissan Navara Command and Control Vehicle
- 2 x 540 litre Slip on units
- 1 x Trailer unit

The RFS provides financial assistance to all brigades via subsidies where the brigades are replacing existing vehicles or increasing their current fleet. The RFS also support the brigade by providing all personal protective equipment at no charge to the brigade and a 50% subsidy on equipment. The RFS has also recently increased subsidies for radios to 75% for the brigade.

The Beattie Labor Government introduced the Volunteer Support Package during the 2002-2003 financial year, providing \$18.9 million over four years for structured training, increased standards of support, and operational and protective equipment for the thousands of volunteers who selflessly devote their time to help Queenslanders in need.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and efforts of all Queenslanders who devote their time and energy to serving with the RFS.