

Question on Notice

No. 332

Asked on Wednesday, 7 March 2007

MS DARLING MP asked the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services Queensland, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth (**MR PITT**) -

Will he advise what the Queensland Government is doing to support volunteers?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government endeavours to support volunteers to build strong, healthy and inclusive communities and to recognise their enormous social and economic contribution to the state. Volunteers are a diverse and vibrant group who provide an essential contribution to the lives of all Queenslanders.

At least 150 000 volunteers are supported within Government agencies. This includes approximately 50 000 emergency services volunteers and 13 150 police volunteers.

Through the *Strengthening Volunteering* initiatives the government has:

- Provided triennial funding of \$226 000 to Volunteering Queensland, the peak body for volunteering in Queensland.
- Provided funding to Volunteering Queensland of \$245 000 to enhance the volunteering database Volbase, to enable online access for volunteering referrals and information on a statewide basis.
- Provided an additional \$250 000 to Volunteering Queensland in 2006 to build the capacity of the regional Volunteer Resource Centres.

The Government recognises and celebrates the contribution of volunteers through a number of awards:

- The Queensland Young Volunteer Awards which will be presented during National Youth Week 2007 in recognition of the significant contribution that many young Queenslanders make to our communities.
- The Premiers' Awards for Queensland Seniors which recognise the significant contribution of older Queenslanders.
- The Premiers' Queensland Multicultural Awards which rewards those who assist new migrants, address racism and support multiculturalism in the community.

In 2006, the Government made significant election commitments that support volunteers directly:

- \$2.3 million over four years to pilot a volunteer seniors and grandparents reading to children program in 15 locations across the State;
- \$52 million funding package over five years to boost equipment and training for emergency services volunteers; and
- \$10 million over four years to marine volunteers through a new beach and marine safety program.

This will benefit and support the work of the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland in the Sandgate electorate.

Volunteers make a significant contribution to this state and I take this opportunity to thank every Queensland volunteer for their continuing enthusiasm and commitment to our communities.