

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 454**  
**Asked on 15 April 2008**

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

**QUESTION:**

With reference to the Emergency Management Queensland Helicopter Rescue Service which provides a dedicated service to safeguarding the welfare of Queenslanders, their property and visitors to the State, 24 hours a day, seven days a week –

Will he advise how many tasks the Helicopter Rescue Service has undertaken in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 to date?

**ANSWER:**

The Queensland Government emergency helicopter service, known as Emergency Management Queensland Helicopter Rescue, is dedicated to looking after Queenslanders 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In times of disaster or emergency, the crews at the bases located in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns are available at short notice to provide assistance.

- For the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007, a total of 2170 operational flights were undertaken.
- For the period 1 July 2007 to 31 March 2008, a total of 1581 operational flights were undertaken.

The replacement of the existing fleet of Bell helicopters with the Agusta Westland 139 helicopters will significantly enhance the aeromedical and air rescue capacity in Queensland. The first Agusta Westland became operational on 22 December 2007. The crews of the second helicopter are currently undergoing familiarisation and training prior to it becoming operational. Acceptance testing of the third helicopter is expected to be completed by the end of next month.

It is a major commitment by the Queensland Government to community safety and represents a \$48.3million investment. The new Agusta Westland helicopters have a greater range, an increased payload, improved fuel economy and improved transit times for patient retrievals as a result of their faster speed. The new helicopters also have significantly enhanced safety features, including a traffic collision avoidance system and an auto-hover capability which is a major asset during rescue operations such as winching over water.

Emergency Management Queensland Helicopter Rescue has an impressive reputation and the Government's investment in the new aircraft will enhance the ability of the crews to continue to deliver its world-class aeromedical and air rescue helicopter services to the community.