Question on Notice
No. 561
Asked on 17 April 2008

MR RICKUSS asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to Queensland Health arrangements on the Torres Strait Islands - Saibai, Boigu, Mabuiag, Badu, Horn, Murray, Darnley (Erub), Yorke (Masig), Coconut (Poruma), Bamaga, Thursday, Dauan, Stephen, Warraber and Yam - prior to 1 February 2008—

(1) Did the arrangements include (a) vehicles that were appropriate to the terrain, (b) training for the vehicle and equipment fitted to it and in survival techniques, (c) a lock-up garage at each accommodation for the vehicle and other minor equipment and (d) separate storage facilities for personal items for each accommodation?

(2) Will he detail individually any instances in which those standards were not met?

(3) If the department did not meet these requirements prior to February 2008, when were these requirements met or when will they meet these requirements?

ANSWER:

Queensland Health acknowledges that there has been considerable variation in the supply of vehicles on the outer islands of the Torres Strait. A full audit of vehicles, maintenance and garaging on the outer islands is currently being undertaken.

Staff will be required to have a Queensland Driver's Licence and will be provided with any necessary training for a four-wheel drive in the island environment.

The decision has been taken to provide all islands with a QFleet dual-cab utility vehicle for personnel, patient and supplies transport. These will be provided to islands without access to such a vehicle as soon as arrangements can be made with QFleet. Dual-cab vehicles will be purchased when existing vehicles are due for replacement.

Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has provided some islands with decommissioned ambulances with stretchers for patient transport. Agreements are in place between QAS and the previous island councils to maintain ambulances on some islands. Queensland Health will be working with the councils and QAS to ensure that these vehicles are utilised in conjunction with the clinics and are appropriately equipped. Further provision of vehicles by QAS will be carried out in consultation with the regional council to reach the most appropriate solution for each island.

Queensland Health will continue to consult with the nurses and QNU to ensure that all islands have appropriate vehicles.