

Question on Notice
No. 1451
Asked on Wednesday 7 October 2009

MR MALONE asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (MR ROBERTS) -

QUESTION:

Does the Minister agree with the LHMU that an additional 500 paramedics will need to be recruited over the next two years and if so, will the Minister recruit 250 additional paramedics in each of the next two years?

ANSWER:

The Bligh Government is committed to the provision of a well funded and well equipped Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

The Government has backed this commitment with a record budget in 2009-2010 for the Queensland Ambulance Service.

When it comes to delivering for the QAS, the Government has a proud record: we have recruited, trained and placed highly-trained paramedics at the frontline; we have given them the support and equipment they need to deliver high-class pre-hospital emergency services to Queenslanders right across the state.

In fact, we have been responsible for the biggest increase in paramedic numbers in the QAS' recent history as we address the growing demand for ambulance services.

Since 2003, the Government has delivered a total of 1058 new positions. We delivered 505 of those positions in just two years.

The Bligh Government remains committed to supporting the QAS, by funding new paramedic positions, support personnel and improving working conditions through new facilities, vehicles and equipment.

This financial year, the Government provided the QAS with a record operating budget of \$494.6 million, an increase on last year's budget of \$38.9 million or 8.5 percent.

The budget includes \$19.3 million to commence or complete work on two new ambulance stations, at Ashgrove/The Gap and Springfield and 18 replacement, or redeveloped QAS facilities; \$1.9 million to complete work on the Palm Island replacement ambulance station; \$20.9 million for 150 new ambulance vehicles; and \$6.7 million for continued improvement in operational and communication and information technology equipment across the State.

There is also \$3.4 million for strategic land purchases, including the acquisition of land at Ashgrove/The Gap: \$2.7 million for the QAS Operational Strategic Information Management Initiative; \$3.8 million for minor capital works and \$2.6 million for other information systems development.

The continued record funding of the Queensland Ambulance Service clearly reinforces the Government's commitment to the provision of ambulance services to the Queensland community.

In the 2009-2010 Budget, the Government funded an additional 50 ambulance officer positions. Decisions about future increases are a matter for the Budget process.