

Question on Notice

No. 1590

asked on Wednesday, 28 October 2009

MRS SULLIVAN ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY AND MINISTER FOR TRADE (MR ROBERTSON)—

QUESTION:

With the onset of summer, what bushfire management improvements have been implemented on Bribie Island to protect residents from bushfires?

ANSWER:

Public land on Bribie Island is managed by the Department of Environment and Resource Management (for Unallocated State Land), Forestry Plantations Queensland, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and the Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils.

Fire management on the Island is coordinated through the Bribie Island Interagency Fire Management Group, which comprises representatives from the above agencies and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS). This group meets three times a year to plan and coordinate fire management activities on the Island. On 26 November 2009, the group met to conclude the preparedness for the coming fire season.

In relation to bushfire management improvements on Unallocated State Land (USL) on Bribie Island, the department has worked collaboratively to improve the maintenance, upgrade and implementation of the fire access trails and the integration of all responsible agencies so that there is a cooperative response to wildfires.

The department has upgraded, maintained and implemented fire access trails across all of the department's USL land. This has included the construction of new fire access trails around Armitage Street and the industrial estate, Ford Street, around the RSL Retirement Home and the upgrading of access trails around Bongaree and Woorim.

Under portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, QPWS manages the Bribie Island National Park and Buckley's Hole Conservation Park, parts of which adjoin residential areas on Bribie Island. However, I can advise that a range of activities are undertaken to manage fire in these areas, including fire management planning, delivery of prescribed burns, wildfire response and development and maintenance of an extensive network of access tracks and firebreaks.

Earlier this year QPWS substantially widened a number of firebreaks around residential areas under the \$900,000 QPWS Strategic Fire Management Program (note this figure includes some Federal Bushfire Mitigation Fund money), including key firebreaks along McMahon's Road, Protea Drive and Sand Haul Road.

QPWS generally maintains the grassed firebreaks around residential areas that it is responsible for two to three times annually, and has recently completed slashing of these firebreaks.

QPWS also carried out a further two planned burns on sections of Bribie Island National Park earlier this year. These burns are part of an ongoing planned burn program outlined in the approved Fire Management Strategy for the national park, and are aimed at reducing fuel loads in critical areas to help protect life and property and conserving biodiversity in the fire-adapted vegetation communities on the Island. Further prescribed burns were planned for this year; however these had to be postponed due to the particularly hot and dry conditions on the Island over winter.