

**Question on Notice
No. 406
Asked on 24 March 2011**

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service —

- (1) What was the total expenditure on overtime paid to full-time urban fire officers for each region for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 to date (reported separately by region and for each year)?
- (2) How much overtime was paid to full-time urban fire officers outside their allocated region within each of the aforementioned financial years?
- (3) How much total overtime was paid to full-time urban fire officers attending jobs for which rural and ancillary fire officers were also available in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 to date (reported separately by region and for each year)?

ANSWER:

The Bligh government has a proud history of supporting our emergency services workers, ensuring they have a healthy and safe working environment.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) provides vital emergency services to the community 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These services are provided in an integrated and coordinated manner by permanent full-time staff, permanent part-time staff (most of whom are employed as auxiliary staff) and volunteers.

Where the response to a major or protracted emergency incident requires additional hours, days, weeks, or months to deliver the planned outcome, all staff (permanent full-time or permanent part-time) and volunteers work additional time as necessary. Overtime may also be necessary to cover absences due to illness and shift over-runs.

- (1) The total expenditure on overtime paid to full-time urban fire officers in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 to date by region is as follows:

Actual Overtime Expenditure by QFRS	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31 Mar 2011
Region	\$M	\$M	\$M
Northern	0.9	0.8	1.5
Central	0.6	0.7	1.4
South Western	0.3	0.4	0.6
North Coast	0.9	1.0	1.1
Brisbane	3.0	2.1	4.4
South Eastern	1.6	1.8	2.1
Far Northern	0.4	0.5	1.0
Rural Operations	0.1	0.2	0.2
State Office	4.0	4.4	3.7

The Member should note the above QFRS State Office category includes overtime to cover the release and backfilling for all operational, live fire, technical rescue and hazardous materials training undertaken for staff and delivered with full cost recovery to commercial customers at the School of Fire and Rescue Services Training at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy, Lytton.

It also includes overtime for the Fight Fire Fascination (FFF) and Roads, Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) programs and for training that was associated with the implementation of the Emergency Services Computer Aided Dispatch system (ESCAD) and the QFRS Operations Management System (OMS).

Actual Overtime Expenditure by QFRS State Office	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 to 31 Mar 2011
Activity	\$M	\$M	\$M
Recruit and Firefighter Training at QCESA	2.1	1.6	1.4
Technical Rescue Training at QCESA	0.3	0.5	0.6
Commercial Training & Consultancy ¹	0.2	0.3	0.1
Recruitment Activities	0.1	0.1	0.1
Roads, Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP)	0.1	0.1	0.1
Fight Fire Fascination (FFF)	0.1	0.2	0.1
MJEX Exercise Mercury 2008	0.1		
Pacific Adventurer Oil Spill Clean-up ²	0.3		
2009 Bushfires NDRRA Event ³		1.0	
Samoan Tsunami and		0.2	

Sumatran Earthquake ⁴			
State Operations Coordination Centre ³		0.1	
Qld Flooding, TCs Tasha, Anthony and Yasi ³			0.4
NZ Earthquake Response ⁴			0.4
Other Inter-Region, Inter-State and Overseas Deployments ¹	0.2	0.1	0.2
Other	0.5	0.2	0.3

Notes:

1. Overtime expenses incurred in delivering commercial activities are recovered in full from customers. Partial or total overtime expense incurred in providing responses to other deployments is recovered from third parties.
2. Overtime expense incurred in providing the oil-spill cleanup services was recovered by the State.
3. Overtime expenses incurred in providing counter disaster responses at NDRRA declared events is recovered under the NDRRA scheme.
4. Overtime expenses incurred in responding to overseas disasters are recovered from Emergency Management Australia.

It should also be noted that the major Queensland Bushfire events in September-October 2009, the Queensland Flooding and Tropical Cyclones Tasha and Anthony events in November 2010 – February 2011, Tropical Cyclone Yasi in February 2011, and the recent Monsoonal Flooding event in February 2011, have contributed significantly to the overtime expenses incurred in 2009-10 and 2010-11 to date. All the above have been declared as eligible for Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) funding and costs have or will be recovered from NDRRA funding.

All of these major disaster events have required significant contributions from the permanent full-time, permanent part-time and volunteer staff that together deliver QFRS services to the community.

(2) & (3) The Department of Community Safety financial and payroll systems do not record information on overtime expenditure to a level that enables QFRS to provide the information sought.

When the decision is made to allocate resources to respond to an incident, QFRS responds the most appropriate resource in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures.