

Question on Notice
No. 1370
Asked on 16 October 2018

DR M ROBINSON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON C CRAWFORD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the State Government's decision to prematurely end mining on North Stradbroke Island, resulting in Volunteer Marine Rescue-Dunwich suffering a funding cut from generous Sibelco support—

Will the Minister advise how the government specifically intends to fund their shortfall, so that Straddie boaties and others can continue to be safe on the water?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question. I would like to recognise the selflessness, professionalism, dedication and commitment of all volunteers who provide essential services to ensure the safety of Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government supports the independent Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ) through a service agreement administered by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES). In 2018-19, the Queensland Government will provide \$1,592,395 to VMRAQ with the management and distribution of these funds being determined by VMRAQ itself and its 26 member squadrons.

I am advised the Stradbroke Island VMR squadron provides 24-hour marine rescue capability to the island's community and its visitors year-round, including aiding the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) with transferring patients between North Stradbroke Island and the mainland. I am further advised the squadron is currently building a new replacement 10-metre vessel that will enable it to continue providing this critical medical assistance to QAS. The vessel is on track to be in service by the end of 2018.

On 26 July 2018, I announced that I had asked the QFES Commissioner to review the operations of the state's marine rescue organisations. Further to this, on 31 July 2018, I announced that Mr Campbell Darby DSC AM would lead this review.

The purpose of the review is to firstly identify the key issues impacting the delivery of a comprehensive and effective volunteer based maritime search and rescue capability, and secondly, to develop options and recommend strategies for government to address where applicable. I am advised Mr Darby has already met with the Stradbroke Island VMR squadron as part of the review engagement process. The ongoing funding of VMR will be determined at the conclusion of Mr Darby's review and I look forward to considering any recommended strategies suggested by Mr Darby.