

Question on Notice
No. 31
Asked on 4 February 2020

MRS S WILSON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON C CRAWFORD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the issue of P3 Masks for Rural Fire Services in my electorate—

Will the Minister advise (a) why there has been a delay in supplying these life-saving masks to volunteer firefighters and by when will the masks be issued, and (b) outline the training, storage and cleaning requirements for Rural Fire Services?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

The safety of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) volunteers and paid workforce is of paramount importance to the Palaszczuk Government.

All Rural Fire Service Volunteers are provided with P2 masks that meet Australian Standards and are provided to all rural fire brigades across Australia.

- (a) I am advised by QFES that a negative pressure masks program is underway and QFES has adopted a risk-based approach for the phased roll-out of P3 masks to the regions, over a five-year period commencing 2019-20. This is a significant undertaking and a P3 Mask project plan has been produced up to 2021.

The programmed roll-out for 2019-20 has been delayed by the significant and protracted bushfires in Queensland and subsequent support to New South Wales and Victoria. In many cases, Rural Fire Brigades have advised QFES they are not available until operational demands are moderate.

- (b) QFES is committed to ensuring that training, safety and maintenance matters for the masks are addressed before the deployment of P3 masks.

I am advised the training component consists of a program to outline the correct use, care and maintenance of the mask, and the associated Carbon Monoxide detection unit that is required to be used in conjunction with the mask.

Further, QFES is required to audit the relevant Rural Fire Brigade facility to ensure that an appropriate storage location and cleaning facilities are available to support the deployment of masks.

QFES advises that there is complexity in reconciling these requirements as there are infrastructure variations in Rural Fire Brigade facilities and the improvement

works required vary based on council requirements for disposal of sanitising solution and available space within the facility.