

Question on Notice

No. 1514

Asked on 2 December 2022

MS S BOLTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)

QUESTION:

With reference to the government announcement of the creation of Marine Rescue Queensland—

Will the Minister advise what additional operational non-capital funding increase can Coastguards expect this and future financial years, including to cover volunteers' uniforms and memberships?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to a single integrated state-wide marine rescue service which will be called Marine Rescue Queensland (MRQ).

MRQ, when established, will have an on-going baseline budget of approximately \$27 million for frontline support, resources, vessels and equipment. The Queensland Government made this commitment on 26 October 2022, following the release of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Independent Review. This is one of the largest funding commitments by a State Government for volunteer marine rescue services in Australia in recent times.

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland (VMRAQ) units will be invited to transition to MRQ and, in turn, will become MRQ volunteers funded with \$27 million a year.

For the 2022-23 State Budget, the Palaszczuk Government announced an additional \$8 million to marine rescue services to support operational capability and accelerate the replacement of rescue vessels.

As outlined in the response to the Member's Question on Notice (No. 845), the expenditure in this uplift includes an increase in funding support provided through Service Agreements with AVCGA and VMRAQ, which will exceed \$4.4 million this financial year.

The uplift provides an increase of indexation to account for the increasing costs of service delivery and, for the second year running, to target local needs, a direct relief support grant that will provide each Coast Guard Flotilla and Volunteer Marine Rescue Squadron up to \$10,000.

Both VMRAQ and AVCGA have discretion to distribute funds to individual VMRAQ Squadrons or AVCGA Flotillas, within the overall funding allocated, which may include uniform or membership cost subsidy.

I am advised by QFES that the current annual Service Agreements with the existing marine rescue organisations that support service delivery will remain in place up to, and through, the transition period to MRQ where the service will then be hosted by Queensland Police Service.