

Question on Notice
No. 607
Asked on 21 June 2022

MR T WATTS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)

QUESTION:

With reference to QFES benchmark response times to structure fires—

Will the Minister advise (a) in detail, the science behind the 14 minute benchmark and how it was decided on, (b) why a benchmark for response times to structure fires of 14 minutes is nearly double that of Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) at 7.7 minutes and (c) what is the average response time in Toowoomba when a ‘call back crew’ is forced to attend an incident?

ANSWER:

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) has advised that QFES (and predecessors to QFES) has a long-established benchmark of responding to structure fires in A-D levy district boundaries within 14 minutes in 90% of cases – a benchmark that QFES has consistently outperformed for many years, both statewide and in Toowoomba.

I am advised by QFES that this benchmark has been in place since 1999, following a recommendation of the 1996 *Queensland Fire Service Review* and subsequent planning and analysis.

QFES advises that the “response times” indicator is not a nationally comparable measure. This is confirmed by the Commonwealth Government’s Productivity Commission in the annual Report on Government Services, that the indicator is “*not comparable across jurisdictions*”.

Additionally, QFES advises that a key effectiveness measure for national comparison is “*confinement of structure fires to room/object of origin*”. This is also confirmed by the Commonwealth Government’s Productivity Commission in the annual Report on Government Services, that the data for this indicator is comparable across jurisdictions subject to caveats.

I am advised that using this comparable indicator Queensland leads the nation, with 82.5% of structure fires confined to the room/object of origin. This is 3.6 percentage points higher than Victoria, according to data published by the Commonwealth for 2020-21.

I am further advised by QFES that there is no data recorded of instances in Toowoomba where a call back crew has been asked to be the first responding crew, while in transition of being called back to the station.