

Question on Notice
No. 1171
Asked on 10 October 2023

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the new solar-powered digital fire danger signs—

Will the Minister advise (a) who is responsible for the physical installation of the new digital signs, (b) what section within QFES is co-ordinating the installation of the signs, (c) if the Rural Fire Service, local Rural Fire Brigades and local QFES staff been consulted in relation to the placement of the new signs and (d) why existing signs have been removed before the new signs are in place, leaving areas without signage?

ANSWER:

With the introduction of the new nationally consistent Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS), it was critical that Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) removed fire danger rating signs (FDR) which were incorrect and a risk to community safety.

The new electronic FDR signage is a significant improvement on the previous system and will enhance safety and understanding by providing automatic updates on a daily basis, delivering accurate and timely advice to the community, without the need to manually adjust the signs.

The FDR signs are only one avenue for the community to be informed. The primary point of information for members of the public to check the fire danger rating for their area at any time is the QFES or Bureau of Meteorology websites. Further, during periods of heightened fire danger, QFES issues key safety and preparation information to the community via social media, the QFES website and local radio.

To oversee the implementation of the new AFDRS and installation of the electronic fire danger rating signs, QFES established the AFDRS Implementation Team within the Rural Fire Service (RFS), led by a Superintendent.

I am advised by QFES that the site selection criteria for the new electronic signs sought to achieve the highest impact and benefit for the whole community. I am advised by QFES that the AFDRS Implementation Team worked with RFS personnel in each QFES region to determine the locations for the new signs including, identifying sites of high traffic flow or significant bushfire risk. The installation of signs also needed to meet transport regulations and road safety principles (noting that these regulations and principles may have changed since the installation of the previous signs and also that some previous signs may have been installed without the appropriate approvals).

The new fire danger rating signs are being installed by an external contractor, following a procurement process undertaken by QFES. The installation of roadside signage requires

detailed planning, including risk assessments, to ensure the safety of road users, as well as consultation with other State Government departments and Local Government.