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2003-04



Budget Highlights

Department of Emergency Services



Department of Emergency Services

Message from the Minister

I am proud to announce another record Emergency Services budget for 2003-04 to provide enhanced service delivery throughout Queensland.



The 2003-04 Budget for the Emergency Services Portfolio continues the commitment of the Beattie Government to achieving safer and more supportive communities through the provision of world-class emergency and counter disaster services.

The provision of these essential services – with a focus on preventing or minimising the impact of emergencies and disasters, as well as response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters – make a vital contribution to the safety and wellbeing of every community in Queensland.

The 2003-04 Budget of \$607.6 million represents an increase in funding of 8.77% on the 2002-03 Budget and brings to \$172.8 million the additional funding allocated to the emergency services portfolio by the Labor Government since 1998-99.

The focus of this budget is to implement the recently announced Community Ambulance Cover and to provide a boost to the Queensland Ambulance Service in terms of 110 additional ambulance officers, new vehicles, and upgraded equipment and infrastructure to ensure the Service continues to maintain a high quality service.

There has been a priority placed on strengthening operational capability within my Department through the prioritisation of funds to enable further training for chemical biological, radiological, incendiary and explosive incidents and specialist rescue training for all our emergency services, in partnership with Queensland Health and Queensland Police.

Once again emphasis has been given to the Department's duty of care obligations to volunteers through the implementation of the second year of the DES Volunteer Support Package announced in the 2002-03 Budget as well as a further \$1.0 million for safety equipment and training for State Emergency Service, Surf Life Saving Queensland and Volunteer Marine Rescue groups. Initiatives to be progressed this year will ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all our volunteers.

The Department also continues its strong commitment to improving services to Indigenous communities and individuals with the second year of the DES Indigenous Service Delivery Enhancement Package announced in the 2002-03 Budget.

This is a budget that continues the Government's commitment to front line service delivery across the State and which will further strengthen our partnership with the local communities.



The Honourable Mike Reynolds AM MP

Minister for Emergency Services

Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland

Queensland Ambulance Service

The 2003-04 Budget for the QAS totals \$276.2 million and includes additional funding of \$6.27 million to enhance service delivery in an environment of an ageing and growing population. Funding includes an additional \$2.72 million to employ an additional 110 officers (25 fully qualified officers and 85 student paramedics) and \$3.55 million in capital for four new or replacement stations and seven new vehicles.

From 1 July 2003, Community Ambulance Cover will replace the QAS Subscription Scheme and provide all Queensland residents with ambulance cover anywhere in Australia. A public education campaign will coincide with the introduction of the new Community Ambulance Cover system to remind doctors and patients of their responsibilities and ensure ambulance services are used appropriately.

Emergency Helicopter Services

Additional funding has been allocated to essential emergency helicopter services including:

- \$5.6 million to complete an \$8 million funding program to replace the AS350BA Squirrel helicopter to strengthen the Queensland Rescue fleet, thus enhancing its backup aircraft rescue capacity and its night flying capability; and
- \$0.09 million additional funding to address increased operating costs being experienced by Community Helicopter Providers based at Mackay, Rockhampton, Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast.

Volunteer Support Package

An additional \$1 million has been provided to further support volunteers and volunteer organisations, including:

- \$0.8 million for the State Emergency Service (SES) to provide 15 new flood boats, road accident rescue equipment, rescue trailers, communications and other equipment;
- \$0.15 million to Surf Life Saving Queensland for priority equipment procurement projects; and
- \$0.05 million for the development and implementation of Volunteer Marine Rescue Training Infrastructure.

Funding is also provided for the continued commitment to support and improve the safety of volunteers through the second year of the DES *Volunteer Support Package* which will:

- continue to address key issues arising from the Linton Coronial Inquiry and the implications for volunteers;
- continue the Fleet Modernisation Program to ensure that all rural vehicles in service are less than 20 years old by the end of 2005 (exemptions to this policy will be provided to vehicles which have a current road worthy certificate);
- provide wet/cold weather protective clothing to benefit 2,105 SES volunteers State-wide, an additional 100 safety-at-heights equipment kits and replacement of vertical rescue equipment, road accident rescue equipment and tarpaulins for storm damage recovery;
- the employment of an additional two permanent Rural Fire Service District Training Officers;
- continue the provision of additional communications equipment and infrastructure; and
- improve workplace health and safety for volunteers.

Indigenous Australian Service Delivery Enhancement Package

Funding provided as part of the second year of this package will:

- complete the Disaster Risk Management Guide for Indigenous Communities;
- continue the joint Rural Fire Service/State Emergency Service Indigenous train-the-trainer and associated mentoring programs;
- continue the rollout of ambulance field officers in Cape York and Torres Strait;
- continue the Young Persons Development Program trial at St Pauls, Coen and Warraber primary schools in partnership with Education Queensland;
- continue the implementation of the *Five Year Plan for Safer and Healthier Murri and I'lan Communities in North Queensland*;
- install UHF two-way repeaters and base units in targeted sites in the Torres Strait and Cape York;
- continue the provision of first aid kits and senior first aid training programs to Indigenous communities; and
- develop bridging programs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to help them qualify as student ambulance officers.

Capital Works

The Department of Emergency Services capital program (inclusive of the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service) will see \$77.7 million invested in new capital acquisitions in 2003-04. This represents a 52.8% increase on the 2002-03 Published Total Capital Acquisitions Budget.

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

\$37.5 million for 38 urban and 52 rural fire appliances in capital funding is provided for Queensland Fire and Rescue Service including:

- \$17.8 million to continue the seven year vehicle replacement and modernisation program that aims to reduce the average age of the urban fire fleet to 15 years by 2006 and upgrade the rural fire fleet so that no vehicle is older than 20 years by the end of 2005 (exemptions to this policy will be provided to vehicles which have a current road worthy certificate);
- \$12.4 million for building refurbishment, upgrade and replacement of 16 stations, the construction of a special operations facility in Brisbane to enhance coordination and response to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Incendiary, and Explosive (CBRIE) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) incidents and land purchase for future facilities; and
- \$7.4 million to enhance communication and operational equipment.

Queensland Ambulance Service

\$27.1 million in capital funding for the Queensland Ambulance Service including:

- \$11.8 million for 17 replacement ambulance stations and four new stations that will be commenced or completed in 2003-04;
- \$14.5 million to purchase 86 ambulances, upgrade communication equipment, trial electronic field data collection and upgrade operational equipment; and
- \$0.7 million for land purchases.

Department of Emergency Services and Joint Initiatives

- \$1.9 million for the development of the first Joint Emergency Services Complex in Queensland at Mackay North;
- \$3.03 million for plant and equipment and IT infrastructure information systems development; and
- \$1.5 million for the next stage of the combined DES/QPS Joint Computer Aided Dispatch/Communications feasibility study and business case development project.

Community Safety and Counter Terrorism

Funding has been allocated to enhance operational readiness, management and response to a broad range of rescue situations and chemical, biological radiological, incendiary and explosive (CBRIE) incidents, including:

- \$3.4 million to strengthen the State's counter terrorism response capability and ensure that the Queensland disaster management system can manage the community consequences of a high impact terrorist incident;
- Joint Emergency Services Training (JEST) courses coordinated by QFRS and offered to Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS), Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), Counter Disaster and Rescue Service (CDRS) and Queensland Health emergency responders; and
- Further development of technical rescue capability through the acquisition of additional specialist equipment for confined, trench, vertical and urban search and rescue.

The Department continues the enhancement and extension of a range of community education and awareness programs including Fire Education program (FireEd), Road Accident Awareness and Prevention Program (RAAP), CPR and First Aid Training and Awareness, Baby Capsule Hire, and the Drug

Awareness Program. The Department will also continue to promote broad community-based safety programs including Neighbourhood Watch/Community Safety Project and the Child Injury Prevention in partnership with Queensland Health, Queensland Police Service, and other State and community agencies.



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