

Justin Choveaux
General Manager
Rural Fire Brigades Association
Queensland Inc.
101A Mary Street
GYMPIE 4570

Dear Mr Choveaux,

Thank you for your letters to the Labor Party and to the Minister regarding your claims on the various parties in the lead-up to the election. As the Premier is travelling across the state leading the election campaign, I am replying on behalf of the government.

First, please pass on to your members the Palaszczuk Government's thanks and appreciation for the great work your members do in helping to keep their local communities safe. Our respect for your work is what underpins our policies and approach to Rural Fire Brigades.

That is why the Palaszczuk Government has worked hard over the past three years to restore the important frontline services cut by the Newman-Nicholls LNP. We have delivered record funding and support for our Queensland emergency services volunteers and we will continue to do so.

There is nothing more important to the Palaszczuk Labor Government than the safety of all Queenslanders and this is proven through the following actions:

- Replaced 60 RFS vehicles across Queensland this financial year with a further increase in vehicles in 2018 and 2019 through our Accelerated Rural Fire Fleet Program
- Invested more than \$19 million to build new Auxiliary Fire and Rescue stations in regional towns and communities
- Created the Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum, a platform for a broad range of representatives from government and not-for-profit organisations to come together to discuss issues and events affecting the volunteer sector
- Initiated the Volunteerism Strategy to examine proposals for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' implementation of a sustainable and representative volunteer model



- Formally established the Volunteer Capability and Coordination Branch responsible for ensuring QFES has a robust and sustainable volunteer model and for the development of strategies to ensure volunteers and volunteering are at the core of QFES's business planning
- Restored the \$292,000 *Fight Fire Fascination* educational program, cut by the LNP despite it teaching at risk children and young people to respect fire and develop fire safety skills
- Reinstated the life-saving *If It's Flooded Forget It* education program.

Furthermore, our commitments for a second term include:

- **Continue our record investment in the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service budget;**
- **Continue our vehicle and capital works program outlined above; and**
- **Continue our commitment to the Emergency Volunteers Advisory Forum established by Minister Ryan this year to provide a voice and real consultation to discuss such issues as:**
 - **the legal status of Rural Fire Brigade Volunteers;**
 - **a Volunteer Respect Act in Queensland;**
 - **Malone Review implementation; and**
 - **an MOU for the Rural Fire Brigades**

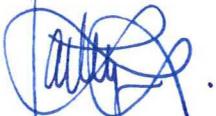
Our record to date and these commitments are in stark contrast to the Newman-Nicholls Government's policies that undermined public confidence in our hardworking emergency services and had a severe impact on their work. The LNP record shows that they recklessly cut key programs that had assisted our dedicated volunteers.

The result was our volunteers were asked to do more with less, making the valuable but unpaid work they do for their communities much more difficult. On top of this, the LNP slashed essential education programs that informed Queenslanders about how to keep themselves safe.

There is nothing more important to the Palaszczuk Government than the safety of the people of Queensland. It is central to every decision we make, every piece of legislation we introduce and every policy we pledge.

Only Labor can be trusted to ensure Queensland has the resources and frontline services needed for a secure future.

Yours sincerely,



JACKIE TRAD MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
Minister for Transport and
Minister for Infrastructure and Planning