

FIREFIGHTING — TRUCKS AND APPLIANCES

1121. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's \$125 million investment in modern firefighting appliances to help combat the threat of bushfires across this state. Can the minister update the house on how this investment will not only support our emergency service volunteers but also create long-term sustainable jobs for Western Australia?

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

I thank the member for Murray–Wellington for that question and her support for volunteers in her community, particularly in that recent complex and difficult Nambeelup fire in which one of the volunteers was quite seriously injured. I thank the member for Murray–Wellington for that support.

As today is a great day for manufacturing, as indicated by the Premier, last Thursday was also a great day for manufacturing in Western Australia, with \$125 million worth of fire appliances that will be built here in Western Australia. It was a brilliant day for Western Australian manufacturing and jobs in WA. There will be \$75 million worth of four-four vehicles—that is, 4 000-litre four-wheel drives. It is one of the biggest vehicles in the fleet of firefighting appliances across Western Australia. They have come about from a demand by volunteers and other associations for more water on the fireground, so there is less need to continuously refill. They are big vehicles—big four-wheel drives—that are appropriate for fighting big fires in rural and regional WA. A significant number of those appliances will be manufactured in Malaga and Collie. They will have cab chassis that are appropriate for the environments in which they operate. Significant work has been done by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services to reach out to the volunteers about the issue of trucks. The member for Murray–Wellington knows all about this. The issue of trucks is a very hot one, if I can pardon the pun, amongst firefighters in Western Australia. It is about having the appropriate vehicles for the appropriate environment in which they operate. A significant amount of work has been done with the volunteers to come up with the right cab chassis and the right appliances for those environments. Very shortly, four different types of cab chassis will be trialled in the field by volunteers, including in Esperance, to work out the right combination of equipment on the back of those four-fours and the cab chassis to be able to deliver the appropriate firefighting appliance in a safe manner in that particular environment. Last Thursday was a very significant day. A significant amount of work has been done by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services to acquire those four-fours.

In addition, \$50 million worth of ultralight appliances will be built in Malaga and Collie. In the past, volunteers have referred to them as fast attack vehicles, which are the LandCruisers we see around. On top of the announcement of \$125 million for fire appliances, a contract was released on the same day for up to 300 one-by-four appliances—1 000-litre four-wheel drive appliances—for volunteers to see whether they want those vehicles in the environment in which they operate across regional Western Australia. They, too, will be manufactured either wholly in Collie or in Malaga and Collie. That is a total of \$170 million worth of appliances that we will be getting out there over the next 10 to 13 years to keep our volunteers and our firefighters safe in Western Australia, in appliances manufactured here in WA.