

FIREFIGHTING — GRADUATING RECRUITS

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services) [2.10 pm]: On behalf of the member for West Swan, I acknowledge the year 6 “boomers” from Riverlands Montessori School, who I think are still in the chamber or might have just left. There they are there. Hi! How are you? Good.

I also acknowledge the birthday of the member for Collie–Preston, otherwise known as “Grumpy Grandpa” from Collie.

The SPEAKER: Settle!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I take this opportunity to inform the house that the Western Australian community will be served by 23 new firefighters who graduated from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services training school 83 on 15 November 2019. Our newest firefighters range from 23 years old to 41 years old. One in five of our newest recruits are female and another one in five are volunteers. I am proud that this year a record 230 women applied to be a firefighter. Our new firefighters include a former jockey, who I saw at the major fire in Belmont yesterday—he was really thrown into it—structural and civil engineers; a teacher; a WA police detective; an occupational therapist; a lifeguard; an accountant; a fitness trainer; tradespeople; and small business owners. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services latest recruitment campaign successfully targeted the misconceptions around what it takes to be a firefighter, and it supported and encouraged more women than ever before to apply.

The fires in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia have seen firefighters give everything they can to help communities, save lives and stand as a line of defence between rural New South Wales and greater Sydney. It is a timely reminder that emergency services personnel, both career and volunteer, risk their lives and safety to protect our community. I am sure all members in this house will join me in acknowledging our firefighters. It is a noble profession. I also want to thank the family and friends of all the fire and emergency services personnel who support our emergency services career and volunteer members, as they take time away from their families to selflessly give to others.

In closing, the first bushfire season for our graduating career fire and rescue service firefighters is forecast to be a demanding one, so it is important that everyone be reminded to do their bit to prepare themselves for bushfires. People should ensure they have a five-minute fire chat and develop a bushfire plan that they can put into action. This helps our firefighters to concentrate on putting the fire out. We all need to take responsibility and do our bit for our own preparedness. A prepared community is a safer community.