

EMERGENCY SERVICES — BUSHFIRES

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services) [2.06 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house of the amazing efforts of the career, volunteer and Department of Parks and Wildlife firefighters, and the response of farmers, who have faced difficult circumstances lately. Recently, numerous bushfires occurred across the goldfields and south east coastal regions, down in the south west and closer to Perth in Bullsbrook and Edgewater. Emergency services have worked tirelessly together on the ground and in the air, and did an incredible job protecting lives and saving property. They worked in very hot conditions—over 40 degrees in some areas—and with dry thunderstorms causing unpredictable winds. I am sure that everyone in this house will join me in thanking each and every one of these people, many of whom travelled long distances across the state and put their lives on hold to help the local communities involved.

Of course, it is not just those on the front line. Everyone involved in these fires was integral, whether they had a small or large role. Incidents such as these require an extensive and dedicated team, not only on site but also behind the scenes, and we must extend our gratitude to all concerned, including emergency responders' families and the employers of our volunteers. Significant bushfire incidents require a multiagency response, and the efforts of all involved must be acknowledged. I travelled to Esperance on 2 March to thank the volunteers and agencies, both federal and state, for working together in this hour of need.

A number of these bushfires occurred over the Labour Day long weekend, and I would like to thank visitors to the respective areas for their understanding and for abiding with the closure of numerous national parks and camping sites. Finally, I wish to express my thanks to the community and residents for heeding the advice of public warning alerts and implementing their bushfire survival plans or remaining vigilant to ensure their own safety during this terrible time. Being prepared and having a bushfire survival plan in place is vital. Again, thank you to everyone involved in these bushfires.