

YOUTH IN EMERGENCY SERVICES PROGRAM

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services) [2.03 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house about the Youth in Emergency Services program—YES—which is providing fantastic opportunities for young people across the state. The program is being led by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and delivered in partnership with local emergency service volunteers. The program provides young people with learning experiences that they would not ordinarily be exposed to, including an increased understanding of local hazards; training to improve emergency preparedness; and pathways for local emergency service volunteering and career opportunities.

During my recent visit to the state's north west, I met the YES participants in Port Hedland where they showcased the skills they have learned with the Marine Rescue Port Hedland volunteers. I was impressed by their enthusiasm and professionalism when using the radio direction finder on board the marine rescue's vessel *Iron Pride*, their knot-tying skills and use of other marine safety equipment. The YES participants range in age from 12 to 15 years and come from diverse backgrounds. They are supported by a network of local volunteers and community members from the volunteer bush fire brigade, the State Emergency Service WA, Marine Rescue WA, the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the WA Police Force, who dedicate their time to delivering emergency service skills and training.

Western Australia has more than 26 000 emergency service volunteers. Volunteers, of course, are such an important part of building a safer and more resilient Western Australia. It is our hope that the YES participants will use their new skills in the future to serve their communities. Participants will also have foundational skills if they go on to join their local emergency service. Members, I would like to acknowledge everyone involved in this fantastic program, including local communities, emergency service volunteers, emergency management agencies, and the young people themselves.

I hope to see the YES program expanded to the Kimberley in the near future.