

FIREFIGHTING RESOURCES — LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS SCHEME

656. Ms M.M. QUIRK to the Minister for Emergency Services:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the emergency services levy has gone up over 80 per cent during the term of this government, does the minister believe that it is time the amount given to the local government grants scheme was also increased?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

If we are talking about protective equipment generally for volunteer bush fire fighters, whom I assume the member is referring to in particular—they are the ones funded through local government; everyone else such as volunteer fire and rescue is funded directly through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services—they are the responsibility of local government. The reality is that, as I have said in this place before, some local governments do a very good job of supporting their volunteer bush fire brigades and some local governments do an appalling job. If we find out that they are being neglected through the role of their local government, we will certainly intervene and ensure that firefighters are given the absolute protection they need to do the job they volunteer to do.