

VOLUNTEERING

Statement

HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan) [6.55 pm]: I will have to defer my planned member's statement about the cannabis survey until tomorrow; it was very interesting but too long. I want to link in to what was said earlier in the chamber. Members here may not know it, but I used to be a surf lifesaver at City Beach in the days when we put on a harness and swam out into maybe shark-infested waters to haul people back to safety. It was an honour and privilege to be part of that group of volunteers. Volunteers are the backbone of our society and we ought to be thankful for them. Fire and emergency volunteers, State Emergency Service volunteers and others devote their time, effort and money and risk their lives to save people. I refer also to the voluntary ambulance drivers in the wheatbelt and the farmers who gather together to get a crop off a field when someone is in dire straits. We are lucky and blessed to have people in our society who are prepared to drop what they are doing to help others, at risk to their own lives, and who have served even when their own homes have been destroyed by fire. This is a blessing, a power and a strength of our society. I give a vote of thanks from the crossbench, I am sure, but on behalf of all of us, I give sincere thanks to all those who have volunteered their time, efforts, money and, indeed, their lives.