

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Report No. 42 on the

Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

INTRODUCTION

On 28 November 2023, the Hon. Mark Ryan MP, as the then Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, introduced the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 (the Bill) into the Queensland Parliament.

The Bill was referred to the Community Support and Services Committee (the Committee) for inquiry with a report due on 15 March 2024.

On 15 March 2024, the Committee tabled Report No. 42 in relation to the Bill.

The Queensland Government response to the Committee's recommendations in Report No. 42 is provided below.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 be passed.

- Queensland Government response:

The Queensland Government thanks the Committee for its consideration of the Bill and acknowledges the Committee's recommendation that the Bill be passed.

Recommendation 2

The Committee encourages the Queensland Police Service's Reform Implementation Taskforce to undertake public education and information sessions to effectively engage and inform State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland volunteers as part of the implementation of the emergency service and disaster management reforms.

- Queensland Government response:

Supported.

The Police and Emergency Services Reform, Reform Implementation Taskforce (the RIT) is committed to the ongoing engagement of State Emergency Service (SES) and marine rescue volunteers, as well as local communities, to ensure the successful implementation of the emergency service and disaster management reforms.

Engagement completed to date

Since May 2023, the RIT has delivered more than 280 engagement activities with SES and marine rescue volunteers and staff transitioning to SES and Marine Rescue Queensland (MRQ) under the Queensland Police Service (QPS).

In addition, the RIT has adopted best practice change management methods with nominated representatives from SES, Marine Rescue Volunteer Queensland and Australian Volunteer Coast Guard units across the State providing local insights and expertise as well as localised information and change support for members.

In summary, the engagement and information sessions undertaken to date include:

- More than 100 marine rescue unit visits, meeting attendances, online question and answer forums and other engagements with marine rescue volunteers. In addition, the program has established a MRQ Implementation Working Group to assist with planning and delivery and supporting volunteers throughout the transition process. The group has met 18 times to date.
- More than 180 engagements with SES volunteers and staff transitioning to QPS including face to face visits, townhall type gatherings (face to face and online) and online question and answer sessions. Online sessions have been recorded and are available on the SES ForGov site.

Information packs and engagement materials have also been provided to units to share with members and their interested community. Volunteers and interested community members are also encouraged to visit the SES and MRQ ForGov sites and subscribe to a regular e-newsletter update (which can be accessed via the ForGov sites).

Ongoing engagement and community education

As we lead up to the transition over the next few months, the RIT is committed to increase engagement and education opportunities for volunteers and deliver additional targeted community campaigns.

For MRQ, as a newly established entity and community marine service, an extensive public awareness campaign is planned for relevant coastal locations and with boating enthusiasts to ensure communities are aware of MRQ, who to contact in times of emergencies, and how to stay safe when out on the water. Volunteers will continue to be engaged via collaborative face to face information sessions, online public information sessions, transition workshops and other direct communications.

For SES, a planned engagement schedule will continue to include face to face unit visits, online sessions and information packages. In addition, a roadshow of planned visits to all seven regions across the state will commence during April and continue through May 2024. The aim is to ensure direct engagement with SES staff and volunteers within each SES unit.

The QPS is committed to ensuring a clear vision for volunteers within SES and MRQ under the QPS and has engaged Volunteering Queensland, a not-for-profit organisation that supports and advocates for volunteers, to develop a dedicated Volunteerism Strategy. The strategy aims to guide the way volunteers will be engaged and recruited across SES and MRQ under the QPS.

An internal QPS education program is also planned to ensure SES and MRQ are welcome and are supported by the QPS to continue to deliver their important community safety roles.

The government's focus is on providing the best support to our frontline volunteers who do so much to keep their fellow Queenslanders safe. The reforms to our emergency services are designed to provide SES and MRQ units with more equipment, more training and more support under the QPS.

Queensland Legislative Assembly

Number: 5724T 712



30 APR 2024

Tabled ☐

By Leave ☐

MP: Hon Ryan

Clerk's Signature: [Signature]