

Question on Notice
No. 2101
Asked on 1 December 2011

MS NELSON-CARR MP, asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (MR ROBERTS) -

QUESTION:

Will the Minister inform the House of the input made to the community by the recent recipients of the Queensland Hero Citations in the Townsville area?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question.

The Queensland Flood and Cyclone Citations recognise the contribution of Queensland Emergency Service officers, volunteers and staff to the community during the state wide flooding and cyclone events over the summer of 2010-11.

Following the summer of disasters, 169 Queensland Flood and Cyclone Citations were awarded to State Emergency Services (SES) Volunteers and Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) staff from the Townsville area.

Prior to Tropical Cyclone (TC) Yasi crossing the coast line, SES volunteers assisted in the evacuation of vulnerable residents in one of the largest mass evacuations in recent history. Volunteers also assisted the community to prepare their homes and coordinated the filling of more than 50,000 sandbags throughout the region.

In the days following TC Yasi, with the assistance of their counterparts from across Queensland and interstate, SES volunteers completed 2,857 requests for assistance from the community. These include 1,066 calls for repairs to damaged buildings and 1,417 calls for the removal of vegetation and trees.

Without the efforts of these remarkable volunteers, it would have taken far longer to clear streets and roads and more damage would have been done to houses impacted by TC Yasi and the rains that followed.

I was pleased to see 158 Flood Citations awarded to these SES volunteers.

The remaining 11 Queensland Flood and Cyclone Citations were awarded to staff from EMQ Northern Region for their efforts in preparing and responding to the events of last summer. Staff were deployed across the state to provide assistance to Local and District Disaster Management Groups and to manage the logistics of deploying large numbers of SES volunteers.

In addition to the Citations for TC Yasi, 83 SES volunteers from Northern Region had earlier been deployed to assist the communities affected by the devastating floods in Grantham and Theodore. The volunteers assisted in clearing debris and cleaning mud from houses as well as the grim task of searching for those who perished.

The work undertaken by the recipients of these awards was truly remarkable and epitomises the spirit of all Queenslanders that were directly or indirectly impacted by the events of last summer.

I thank all of our hardworking Emergency Services staff and volunteers from the Townsville area as they prepare for the current season and for their continued efforts to keep our communities safe.