



Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**


**MEMBER FOR THEODORE**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2018

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

### **Theodore Electorate, Rural Fire Brigades**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (2.09 pm): I rise to talk about the truly amazing rural fire brigade volunteers in the Theodore electorate. These volunteers give so much of their free time to train on a regular basis, learning and honing new skills to become more professional in bushfire management. The Theodore electorate is truly blessed with two proactive brigades, the Coomera Valley Rural Fire Brigade and the Guanaba Rural Fire Brigade. They are both amazing units. These two professional organisations with members with many decades of experience in dealing with bushfires have recently hosted two very successful open days which were greatly supported by our local community.

The Coomera Valley Rural Fire Brigade hosted its open day on 14 June at Siganto Park, Upper Coomera, with many local residents and community groups participating and showing their support. I thank First Officer Paul and his great team of dedicated volunteers. His commitment and dedication to our community is certainly unparalleled. Only last week the Guanaba Rural Fire Brigade hosted its open day. As with the Coomera Valley brigade's open day, it was greatly supported by our local community. These events take an enormous amount of time to organise. I give a big shout-out to Brendan, who we fondly call Red, for his hard work and dedication on the day in setting up this wonderful event. I also thank First Officer Chris. He has an absolutely great team behind him. I thank him for his dedication and efforts for our community.

Our local rural fire brigade volunteers are not just a group of volunteers; they are professional bush firefighters. They rely on each other. Strong bonds are formed between members. Members have approached me to express their concerns about the possible amalgamation of rural fire brigades on the Gold Coast. These suggested amalgamations are the result of urban units' boundary maps being redrawn because of population growth in the regions. I ask the minister to proceed with caution on this matter. The Gold Coast region has many active and very professional rural fire units with many years of experience. In times of natural disaster we call on these members and their many units to help. It is our fear that if we amalgamate multiple brigades we will lose the experience of volunteers and reduce the amount of brigades and resources that we can utilise in times of crisis.