



Amanda Rishworth MP

Member for Kingston

Willunga Fire Speech

House of Representatives Hansard Script – 19 March 2008 Time – 9:40am

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (9.39 am)—As most people are aware, there has been a significant heatwave in South Australia. A heatwave sees an increase in the threat of bushfire and last week there was a significant bushfire in the seat of Kingston. It started burning on Thursday at Willunga Hill and headed towards the Adelaide Hills.

The total area burnt was 118 hectares, and more than 200 fire-fighters were involved in fighting this significant fire. Many of these were CFS crews, all volunteers who put aside their day jobs to fight this fire. It was threatening life and was also threatening property. However, the good work of the CFS ensured that it came under control by midnight of the night it started. I want to pay tribute to all the CFS crews involved, particularly those in my electorate at Sellicks Beach, Willunga, Aldinga Beach, Range/Hope Forest, Blewitt Springs, McLaren Vale, McLaren Flat, Seaford, Morphett Vale and Happy Valley. Nine fire-fighters were injured, and that shows just how significant this fire was, and how much these fire-fighters put their lives on the line. I would also like to acknowledge that one house was destroyed near Range Road, and the community has really banded together to ensure that the people affected get support and encouragement, both morally and financially, to make sure they are okay into the future.

There were many other resources involved: the SES, St John's Ambulance, the SA Ambulance Service, the Salvation Army and Forestry SA. I want to pay particular tribute to the Salvation Army, who made lunches and dinners and ensured that all the fire-fighters and volunteers were fed. The local police also were involved in making sure that road blocks were set up properly. This is an example of many people in a community coming together when it is needed to ensure that the proper resources are there and that we are able to respond to such an event quickly. I am very proud of all the people who were involved in fighting this fire. It was disappointing to hear that the fire may have been deliberately lit. I think that type of action is deplorable. However, the community did band together and I am very proud of the people of Kingston for coming together and making sure that this did not cause any more damage than it otherwise might have.