



**KIRTON POINT EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTRE
3 April 2008**

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders) (15:32): I rise to put on the record a letter I have today hand-delivered to the parliamentary office of the Minister for Emergency Services asking her to urgently reverse the decision to collocate emergency services with education services at Kirton Point in Port Lincoln. I believe it will endanger the lives of children and will be regretted into the future should it be implemented. My letter states:

As the local member, I earnestly appeal for common sense to prevail and request that your department urgently reconsider the proposal to build the new emergency services centre at Kirton Point. I am gravely concerned that the proposed site will compound problems in an area that is already a congested traffic hazard and that will be made much worse if there is an emergency services facility located there as well. I believe there is a window of opportunity that needs to be seized because the lease on an alternative site located at the current SES site is due for renewal in a matter of weeks and the land that incorporates it has also become available.

As you are aware, it is proposed that the new combined services centre will be located alongside the education hub at Kirton Point and along the route that is the main access to the Marina residential and fishing area. For your information I enclose a map of the city of Port Lincoln to highlight where this is in relation to the rest of the town and the hinterland where I understand approximately 70 per cent of the callouts occur.

While the location of the proposed new site is considered roughly 'central' within the town, this creates problems in emergency situations. MFS, SES and CFS personnel will have to pass at least one school, possibly two, cross a railway line or pass over a bridge to even get to this location. Once assembled they will then have to go to the emergency which, if it isn't close by will mean having to traverse the same set of hurdles in reverse to leave the area. The potential difficulties and delays that will be encountered if an emergency occurs around 8:30 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. on a school day as children, parents and buses are leaving the school, kindergarten or child-care centre could be crucial. Already there have been accidents on the Stevenson Street school crossing.

Another congestion problem that needs to be considered by your department in relation to the proposed site will be compounding traffic problems caused by the Education Department locating Port Lincoln's new child-minding centre and out of school hours care at the Kirton Point education precinct on Stevenson Street. In addition there is a proposal for a new Lutheran School to be located on one exit road and possibly a new Interdenominational School on a major road into town.

The freight railway line and Stevenson Street, the major road to the wharf precinct, dissect Kirton Point from the rest of the city. Stevenson Street passes between the school and kindergarten and the proposed emergency services site. This route is used by the fishing industry to access the wharf from factories on Proper Bay. The area is also extensively used by various fishing industries [going] to and from the Marina.

Nearby roads and the railway, bring approximately 40% of the state's grain into the silos at the wharf ready for export during harvest time. Fertilizer is trucked from the wharf to the Pivot depot nearby with trucks later collecting fertilizer for delivery to farms. The mining industry is investigating a huge expansion in this same area, increasing potential congestion with trains and [more] trucks.

The corner where the proposed emergency services centre is to be located is on the major route, Stevenson Street, for the swelling numbers of families living in the marina area—all accessing the city precinct

and using its facilities. Tourism alone is increasing quickly with cruise ships now coming into the marina and soon to the wharf. The new Port Lincoln Hotel is bringing in more and more visitors and Virgin Airlines are looking at bringing in flights from Sydney and Melbourne.

If there was an emergency at the airport or anywhere on the northern side of Port Lincoln, the service vehicles would have to negotiate their way right across the centre of the city which would be a nightmare. We are already experiencing traffic jams on the Lincoln Highway at peak times in the mornings and evenings.

I also bring to your attention potential noise issues that don't appear to have been considered in the selection of the site. Not only will there be sirens going at all hours of the day and night through residential areas unsettling school children, there is the need to clean and maintain equipment. For example, chain saws have to be cleaned and serviced after every use in readiness for the next call out which are quite frequent during winter storms.

Finally there is the communication issue. The emergency services rely on good communication and Kirton Point is recognised as a poor site for an HF radio.

Time expired.

The rest of the letter that was sent, but time did not allow, read:

The Police Station found noise interference was too high and placed their radio facilities on the SES site which is on a hill west of the city. Similarly emergency services would need their towers placed elsewhere. Adding to communication woes, because this site is located in an older area of town, I understand there is some doubt about existing telephone wiring being adequate. Emergency services will require numerous land lines during emergencies and new ones would, I understand, have to be laid at considerable expense.

However there are good and viable alternative sites still available within this busy and growing city that should be considered.

The MFS would easily fit on the CFS owned land known locally as the 'railway triangle' central to the city and within a short distance to all the schools, the wharf, the marina, the factories and the new hotel as well as all residential areas. It has access roads available on three sides.

The site that had been proposed for a new interdenominational school (which for a variety of reasons will not now be used), that incorporates the current SES headquarters is now available. I understand that the lease for the SES site is due, within weeks, for renewal. Volunteer services work well together and could co-locate on the site that would incorporate the land previously set aside for the school and already incorporate the SES.

The site is already used for all the emergency services communication towers and the Police HF radio antennas that are expected to remain there. It has a panoramic view over the town giving it a visual perspective and also making it a very pleasant location. It has access in all directions without having to always pass schools, bridges or railway lines or negotiate through the city. There is room for expansion and could already be used as a regional training centre for the emergency services using the existing SES buildings and extensive grounds. I understand that training is currently undertaken in Adelaide at great expense and difficulty for regional volunteers. The Regional Command Centre which is renting expensive offices in the city centre could also relocate to the interdenominational school land which is large, central and with excellent vehicle, power and communication access.

The city of Port Lincoln is growing and I am expecting that it will more than double in size within my lifetime. Unfortunately with the recent growth in the city, forward planning has struggled to stay abreast. There is however a window of opportunity for the future of the emergency services centre that I believe must not be missed.

I have no doubt at all that new facilities are needed but believe there are sites and opportunities as suggested that make much more sense for the long term, than the one currently proposed.

Your urgent reconsideration of the Kirton Point decision with a view to possibly using the railway triangle (or available railway land opposite) and the former interdenominational school owned land that incorporates the

existing leased SES site and all communication towers will be sincerely appreciated. I would also appreciate the opportunity of discussing these options with you personally.

EMERGENCY SERVICES, PORT LINCOLN
9 July 2002

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is directed to the Minister for Emergency Services. Can the minister advise when the new combined emergency services building in Port Lincoln, to accommodate the metropolitan and country fire services, will be built? The current facilities in Port Lincoln are substandard. Planning for the new combined premises that has been undertaken over the past several years appears to have stalled.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Emergency Services): The member for Flinders raises an issue that has involved serious difficulties for the incoming government: that is, the capital program for emergency services. What we saw from the previous government was the announcement of a capital program that was entirely a fraud. The reason it was entirely a fraud was that the former minister for emergency services knew that the money he was allocating for the capital program was instead being spent on recurrent expenditure in the Country Fire Service.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: If you didn't know it, you are even sillier than I thought, mate.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The Auditor-General will have something to say about that in due course.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Mawson.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The truth that we discovered is that some \$8 million (possibly more than that) which should have been spent on the capital program to date has instead been spent on recurrent expenditure in the Country Fire Service budget. We faced up to our responsibilities when we got there, and the responsibility we had was to attempt to fix that. What we have done is increase funding for emergency services from \$141 million a year to \$156 million, and that is something already signed off by the Liberal members on the Economic and Finance Committee. But we cannot entirely overcome the difficulties of the past. You cannot just simply make an \$8 million or \$9 million hole in your capital program go away overnight. What we have to do is face up to the fraud of the previous government. We have to address those issues. We do recognise that, not only in the electorate of the member for Flinders but in other places around the state, there is a backlog and a need for work. In fact, we have made significant commitment to fixing the hole. We cannot, overnight, fix problems that took three years to develop, but we will get there.