



07 Dec 2018

Gladstone Observer, Gladstone QLD

Section: General News • Article Type: News Item • Audience : 3,301 • Page: 6
Printed size: 116.00cm² • Region: QLD • Market: Australia • ASR: AUD 106 • words: 218
Item ID: 1047688159

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Letter to Premier urges army support for fires

PREMIER Anastacia Palaszczuk has been asked by federal members to make a request for army support to fight the region's bushfires.

A letter to the Premier's office signed by Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry, Federal Member for Flynn Ken O'Dowd and Federal

Member for Dawson George Christensen said local authorities had sent the "consistent message" that Australian Defence Force support was required in fire-containment efforts, with personnel on standby since early last week.

"Minister for Defence, the Hon. Christopher Pyne has ad-

vised that 300 soldiers from 8 Brigade (Brisbane) and 75 soldiers from 3 Brigade (Townsville) have been on 12 hours' notice to move, should a request be received," the letter said. "Further to this, 30 soldiers from Brisbane have been on four hours' notice to move should they have been request-

ed to support Queensland SES efforts."

The letter said availability of personnel was confirmed by Prime Minister Scott Morrison to Ms Palaszczuk and the Department of Defence, with the Commonwealth unable to deploy help without Queensland Government approval.

"The Commonwealth stands ready to deploy these ADF assets to aid in the recovery process upon receipt of your request," the letter said.

"We are urging you to listen to local authorities and facilitate the use of ADF assets to facilitate the recovery from these devastating fires."