

Our Ref: (DES/02/0237-1712)  
Min Ref: (E/03/02242)

Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
[TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to the petition received by the House on 4 June 2003 from Mrs Marion Rick of Mission Beach, concerning the introduction of the Queensland Government's Community Ambulance Cover.

The levy is not a fee for ambulance services, but is a broad based means of raising essential funding for a service used by the whole community. Whilst some people will be required to pay the levy more than once, this is generally where they have multiple properties or business operations with a separate electricity supply. These arrangements are put in place for a variety of reasons, including commercial or taxation benefits, or personal and family circumstances. It is not possible to provide exemptions that cater for every individual personal or business situation.

On that basis, the ambulance levy will be applied to both residential and business accounts. If the levy was restricted to residential accounts or principal places of residence, it would significantly reduce the base from which funds are drawn and the levy would have to be much higher.

Community Ambulance Cover on business electricity accounts may qualify for a tax deduction, and I encourage business operators to speak with a tax advisor or the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) about their eligibility in this regard. The ATO can be contacted on telephone number 13 2866.

The State Government has worked hard to develop the most equitable system possible.

After 1 July 2003, all Queensland residents will be covered for ambulance services anywhere in Australia regardless of their circumstances. The QAS will be provided with an adequate and predictable funding base through the introduction of Community Ambulance Cover.

Yours sincerely

**HON GORDON NUTTALL MP**

Acting Minister for Emergency Services

Acting Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland