

~~At Sunday's unveiling it was Bill Kitson, the curator of the Queensland Museum of Lands, Mapping and Surveying, who spoke to the crowd, sharing the proud history of Queensland surveyors. He spoke of the contribution of surveyors to our state like Oxley, Burnett and Gregory. But I should declare my interest in this debate. I am the son of a surveyor. My father did his cadetship with the department of main roads and went on to work for the former Caboolture shire council for more than 30 years. Growing up as the son of a surveyor was a unique experience. While on holidays, we would be driving through western Queensland with my parents and four siblings when the Toyota Tarago would pull over to the side of the road without warning. The next half hour would be spent looking for a surveyor's reference tree. Trips to the park would often be accompanied by a search for a permanent survey mark. I also learnt to appreciate the value of surveyors by carrying the surveyor's staff as my father mapped out local tennis courts, cricket ovals, athletic tracks and even the local aerodrome.~~

~~The permanent survey mark project establishes a link between our history and our future. Each of these permanent survey marks will record the latitude and longitude of the mark, allowing the calibration of global positioning systems. Motorists, bushwalkers and boaties will be able to check their GPS systems and make sure they are spot on in the use of this new technology. Being located at historical locations around Queensland, the survey marks will provide a strong link between our pioneering past and the technology of the 21st century. People using their GPS, a technology built upon centuries of data collected by surveyors, will be reminded of the history of our state over the last 150 years. This is an innovative project to provide a legacy for generations to come, ensuring that they understand the pioneers of Queensland and the role in mapping out Queensland that they played. It may also help young Queenslanders to realise the value of the surveying and spatial sciences professions. Whether building a road, mapping national parks, a house block or a football field, surveyors and spatial science professionals provide an opportunity to map out a strong career for the future.~~

019 ~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): Order! The time for the matters of public interest debate has expired.~~

TRADE MEASUREMENT LEGISLATION REPEAL BILL

First Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to repeal the Trade Measurement Act 1990 and the Trade Measurement Administration Act 1990 and to make particular consequential amendments to other legislation. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill.

Tabled paper: Trade Measurement Legislation Repeal Bill, explanatory notes.

Second Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.29 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The bill repeals two acts administered by my department, the Trade Measurement Act 1990 and the Trade Measurement Administration Act 1990, to facilitate a national system of trade measurement as agreed by the Council of Australian Governments—COAG. The bill also includes various transitional provisions to ensure that there are no gaps in administration during the changeover to the Commonwealth.

While the subject matter of this bill may seem dry, the transfer of the administration of trade measurement to the Commonwealth is a significant milestone in Queensland's history. Trade measurement is the use of standard forms of measurement as the basis for the price in a transaction. It is well documented that trade measurement has been central to commerce throughout human history. This will always be the case, as almost all products from the farm gate to the kitchen plate are sold by measurement in one form or another.

The ability to weigh or measure to an ever-increasing accuracy has not only been crucial to trade and commerce but has also made possible the greatest scientific discoveries and engineering achievements. This appreciation of the importance of standards of weights and measures goes back thousands of years, with the earliest known uniform systems of weights and measures evidenced among ancient societies of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia.

In modern times, trade measurement's contribution to the economy should not be underestimated. Its economic value in Australia, that is the value of goods sold by reference to measurement, is estimated at \$400 billion per year. Trade measurement is also an important component of consumer protection. Seventy-five per cent of trade measurement transactions are between businesses and 25 per cent between business and consumers. Fair market practice in the sale of goods by reference to measurement is an essential component of a competitive market.

However, standards seldom come about by agreement between individuals and government has found it necessary to enact legislation to lay down the standards and the units which must be used. Over the past 150 years, that is since Queensland became a self-governing colony, Queensland trade measurement officers have gone about their work of ensuring the accuracy of measurement equipment and maintaining testing standards. A key role of trade measurement inspectors is visiting traders across the state to check their measuring instruments and ensure they are not marketing short measure products. For example, Queensland officers check products and measuring instruments at grocery stores, processing and packing plants, warehouses, produce agents, fuel depots and service stations. The administration of trade measurement includes highly technical areas of responsibility. Over time, our inspectors have adopted highly specialised skills in developing standards and test procedures for the wide range of measuring instruments, methods of production and supply across industry sectors.

For example, the correct supply of a bulk fuel by an oil depot may depend on both its temperature and accurately metered volume of supply. Fuel measurement standards have been developed under trade measurement law for this purpose. Bulk grain is now sold by both the measurement of quality and quantity. The trade measurement authorities have recently developed standards for testing the protein content of grain, which is a significant indicator of market value. The work of trade measurement inspectors often goes unseen but, as I have indicated earlier, it is a vital ingredient of a well-functioning market. It enables business to compete on a level playing field and consumers to be confident they are getting what they pay for.

I want to place on record the government's recognition of the high standard of work and commitment by the staff of the trade measurement branch of fair trading operations in the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation. For many years, the Queensland office has been regarded as the leader in the national field of trade measurement. I would like to especially mention the dedication, expertise and management of the chief inspector, Malcolm Bartlett, who has given almost 40 years of service to Queensland trade measurement.

This bill is in response to the identification by COAG in 2006 of trade measurement as a cross-jurisdictional hot spot impeding economic activity and requiring regulatory reform. Currently, each state and territory administers similar trade measurement law to provide a national legal framework to ensure that weights and measures used in trade are accurate. Following a major national review confirming significant problems with the current administrative arrangements, on 13 April 2007 COAG agreed to establish a national system of trade measurement to be fully funded and administered by the Commonwealth. No referral of power by the states is necessary, as there is a head of power under the Commonwealth constitution to make law in respect of weights and measures.

From 1 July 2010, the Australian government will assume responsibility from the states and territories for all trade measurement, including enforcement. The Commonwealth has already enacted law adopting the state legislation and enabling Commonwealth enforcement to begin on that date. All Australian jurisdictions, including Queensland, have signed a COAG National Partnership Agreement including agreed time lines to implement the transition of trade measurement to the Commonwealth. This bill progresses the government's commitment to implement its part of the national agreement on reforming the administrative arrangements. Not only will the bill repeal the Queensland trade measurement law on 1 July 2010 to coincide with the date when Commonwealth enforcement begins but it will also facilitate a smooth transition, avoiding gaps in enforcement and adverse impacts on stakeholders relying on trade measurement services. For example, transitional provisions will enable the finalisation of court proceedings instituted by the state of Queensland for offences committed that are still on foot at the time of the changeover to Commonwealth enforcement.

The bill also enables the transfer of information to the Commonwealth prior to the changeover date about trade measurement licensees and regulated traders. This allows the Commonwealth time to establish registers, staff appointments, infrastructure and work schedules and will avoid adverse impacts on stakeholders and trade measurement employees. The move to central administration of trade measurement is designed to deliver benefits sought by businesses, consumers and government. It will reduce compliance costs and provide efficiency gains for business while maintaining existing standards of service and levels of consumer protection.

It is important to note that the transfer of administration of trade measurement will not result in a reduction in trade measurement services to Queensland. The national agreement includes states and territories maintaining continuity of service and existing service standards during the transition period. The Commonwealth has given a commitment to maintain the same level and standard of service under

the new national regime as existed immediately prior to the changeover. This will be closely monitored to ensure the Commonwealth meets the commitment.

However, the transfer will have a positive financial impact on the state of Queensland. Under the COAG agreement, the Commonwealth will fully fund its ongoing administration and the states and territories will not be asked to make a financial contribution for the costs of the transition. Arrangements are being made in the transition process to ensure that trade measurement staff are not disadvantaged as a result of the changeover. All staff have been offered employment by the Commonwealth with the intention that they will undertake very similar roles in similar Brisbane and regional locations to where they are presently based with similar salary scales.

In submitting this bill to the House to progress the government's commitment to COAG to transfer responsibility for the administration of trade measurement, the government pays tribute to the importance of the last 150 years of service by trade measurement officers to this state. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Elmes, adjourned.

020

~~SUSTAINABLE PLANNING BILL~~

~~Second Reading~~

~~Resumed from 3 September (see p. 2182), on motion of Mr Hinchliffe~~

~~That the bill be now read a second time.~~

~~Mr ELMES (Noosa—LNP) (12.40 pm): I rise to make a relatively short conclusion to a speech I started 10 days ago on the Sustainable Planning Bill before the House. Queensland perhaps more than any other state is the place where people choose to live based largely on the grounds of lifestyle. Lower salaries for comparable work is a great indicator of the value that members of our community place on lifestyle, not income. Perhaps it is the key measure of this value.~~

~~Lifestyle is greatly impacted by development decisions. Under this bill decisions are made by the minister or a bureaucrat in George Street who are totally insulated from the things that matter to the people in those communities about whom these life-changing decisions are being made and are blissfully unaware of their needs and aspirations. The balance is tipped far too far towards development, with scant regard for the communities to say how it will be for them. Accordingly, I call on the government to take three progressive steps to meet the aspirations of local communities. These are, firstly, to include an authority for local governments to prohibit development; secondly, to extend the periods of public consultation; and, thirdly, to delete the deemed approvals provisions. Indeed, in an ideal world communities would be able to see the effect of public consultation on the instrument before it is finally decided.~~

~~This two-stage process which I am advocating for all public consultation is already present in the redistribution process for electoral boundaries. It is a good, open, transparent process and it gives the public some confidence that their voice is actually heard and not just listened to. Such a process would redress the angst felt by communities that they are mostly regarded as a necessary evil, only to be courted and valued in the period immediately preceding an election and at no other time.~~

~~I am disappointed, given the title of the bill, that there is not even an attempt in the bill to address some form of mandatory environmental information when considering development applications. That the bill is silent about this sends a strong message that the environment really does not matter to this government. I hope green groups are keenly aware of the adage 'By their actions shall ye know them', and that they take umbrage at the approach being taken here. This is an approach that need not rest in the too-hard basket. Some of the government agencies consulted during the DA process could easily define the sort of environmental information essential to facilitate their consideration. It is a fact that it is not defined and that is a real worry.~~

~~Finally, developers are still able to refuse to supply information requested by councils. Section 278(1) (b) and (c) should simply be deleted. That it remains is a key example of how far this minister and this government will go to tip the balance in favour of this mad scramble for development at any cost. This scramble appears to extend to the increased discretion given to the Planning and Environment Court to excuse noncompliance and to allow for major amendments to development conditions. The umpire needs to be independent and fair and justice needs to be done and to be seen to be done.~~

~~Overall this bill does not meet the needs of my community, my electorate or the people whom I represent in this place. It will accelerate the rapid reduction in the quality of their environment and their lifestyle. While I understand and appreciate the fact that the opposition is supporting this bill before the parliament today, in many ways I condemn it as an opportunity lost.~~

~~Mr HOBBS (Warrego—LNP) (12.42 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak on the Sustainable Planning Bill. I know that there are many members wishing to speak in this debate. I commend the~~