

~~A key element of the new legislative approach will be the introduction of an assessment and ratings process. Regulatory authorities will be required to assess services against the quality rating system and against seven quality areas, the details of which will be prescribed in the national regulations. The regulatory authorities will be responsible for the majority of the assessments and ratings process which each service is required to participate in.~~

~~The only part of the assessment and ratings process which will not be conducted by the regulatory authorities will be where a service aspires to the highest rating—the excellent rating. In this case, the provider must make application to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, which will be responsible for assessing and rating a service as excellent. The introduction of a transparent ratings system will give parents access to information about the quality of services so they can make more informed choices about the services their children attend.~~

~~Some concerns have been expressed about potential cost impacts that the national law may have on services and families. In 2009 and 2010 Queensland negotiated some flexibility to ensure that the right balance was achieved in the national law between increased quality and affordability for parents, including delaying staff to child ratio improvements until 2016, allowing existing services to continue to use staff rest break and rest pause arrangements until 2020, and allowing services licensed prior to 2011 to continue to use a ratio of one to five for children aged 15 to 35 months until 2018. The bulk of the cost impact to Queensland services is anticipated to occur in 2014 and 2016, when early childhood teachers will be required in all long day care and kindergarten services and when improved educator to child ratios commence.~~

~~The bill also retains certain provisions from the current regulatory framework, for instance, provisions to allow the Department of Education and Training to continue to share information with the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian to ensure the utmost is done to protect the safety of Queensland children. I commend the bill to the House.~~

### **First Reading**

~~**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (12.13 pm): 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.~~

~~**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms van Litsenburg): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Industry, Education, Training and Industrial Relations Committee.~~

## **PROTECTING PRIMARY PRODUCTION AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Introduction and Referral to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee**

**Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies) (12.14 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966, the Agricultural Standards Act 1994, the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Plant Protection Act 1989, the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994 and the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936, for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Protecting Primary Production Amendment Bill.

*Tabled paper:* Protecting Primary Production Amendment Bill, explanatory notes.

This bill will amend six acts within my portfolio jurisdiction as Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies. These amendments are all suitable for an omnibus or miscellaneous amendment bill as addressing them in the one bill represents a better use of parliamentary time than having the individual acts amended separately. These amendments will ensure the effective administration and operation of the respective acts and implement the outcomes of legislative reviews and national proposed arrangements.

The amendments to the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966 will give effect to a previous government decision in response to the Webbe-Weller review of government bodies to abolish the redundant Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Board and to transfer the relevant functions from the board to the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, where they will in future be administered by Biosecurity Queensland.

The amendments to the Agricultural Standards Act 1994 will address a gap identified in the act provisions which, in line with other jurisdictions, implement the national ruminant feed ban. This prohibits the feeding of restricted animal material to ruminants to prevent the spread of transmissible diseases such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease. The amendments are necessary to ensure inspectors have adequate entry powers for the routine testing of stock feed.

The amendments to the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 are very straightforward. They will simply replace the current act requirement for separate strategies with a single state pest management strategy for plants and animals.

The single amendment to the Plant Protection Act 1989 will clarify that land and vehicle owners and persons engaged by landowners to work on the land are obliged to notify an inspector within 24 hours of a notifiable pest once they are aware or ought reasonably to have been aware of the existence of the pest.

The amendments to the Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994 give effect to the government's response to a review of the act, the report of which was tabled in parliament last September. This is the act under which QRAA operates. Section 45 of the act contains a review clause that was activated in 2009 when I commissioned a review to be undertaken. There was active participation in the review by QRAA and appropriate stakeholder consultation. Although the review raised no issues about QRAA's performance, the review considered other issues such as the scope of the act and its adequacy in terms of QRAA's functions, powers, governance and administration.

Overall, the review did not identify any significant deficiencies in the act. The recommendations from the review primarily seek to enhance QRAA's operational efficiency by facilitating the administration of interstate schemes by QRAA, streamlining the appointment of and delegation of powers by the QRAA chief executive officer and clarifying the requirements for future review of the act. In regard to the last mentioned item, the intention is that this important act will be reviewed at least once every 10 years.

The amendments to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936 are interim amendments, pending a full review and rewrite of the act which is proposed over the next 12 to 18 months. There are two principal matters being addressed by the present amendments to this act.

018 Firstly, amendments are being made to meet a commitment by Queensland to legislate for participation in the National Recognition of Veterinary Registration scheme, or NRVR as it is usually called. The agreement of all states and territories to participate in the national registration scheme was achieved via the Primary Industries Ministerial Council. The other jurisdictions are all progressing—and, in Victoria's case, have enacted—the necessary facilitating legislation.

The NRVR scheme will allow Queensland-resident veterinary surgeons with registration in this state to also practise 'as of right' interstate without having to go through a separate registration process in another state or territory, as the veterinary surgeon will be automatically 'deemed' to be registered in all other jurisdictions in Australia. That means that a veterinary surgeon residing and practising in the home jurisdiction will only have to pay the one registration fee for the home jurisdiction which will bestow practising rights in all other jurisdictions. This national system of registration also applies to the registration of veterinary specialists.

There will also be no need to formally apply for registration in each other jurisdiction, because once a veterinary surgeon registers in the home jurisdiction that registration will be automatically mirrored in each other jurisdiction, including any special conditions or limitations attached to that home registration. Furthermore, if a veterinary surgeon's registration is suspended or cancelled by the registration board in the home jurisdiction, that action will automatically affect the registration status in each other jurisdiction. That is because what is called 'deemed' registration exactly mirrors the original or home registration. In effect, the NRVR arrangements will facilitate national recognition of both veterinary competence and veterinary incompetence. This amendment will not only benefit veterinarians by allowing them to seamlessly practise nationally, but it will also benefit animal owners as tighter national registration of veterinarians will exist.

Secondly, the opportunity is to be taken to deal with another matter that will significantly improve the ability to contact veterinarians during a biosecurity emergency. It is proposed to add as a condition of registration of veterinary surgeons in Queensland that the registrant provide a range of contact details which will allow contact at all times, including outside normal working hours—for example, mobile phone numbers and email addresses—and that Biosecurity Queensland be authorised to access this information for use in biosecurity responses. At present, guaranteed and timely access to contact details for all registered veterinarians held by the Veterinary Surgeons Board is not possible as the act does not mandate the collection of a complete record of contact details, including for out of hours. Currently, the only guaranteed available information is a postal address, which is not suitable for providing urgent information to this key group of professionals. Although Biosecurity Queensland uses a range of measures to get important information out, including through the Australian Veterinary Association and the internet, there is no reliable source of contact information to ensure that all veterinarians can be reached in an appropriate time frame for critical biosecurity incidents.

Criticism has been levelled at Biosecurity Queensland for failing to quickly alert and inform veterinary surgeons during one of the Hendra virus episodes. This clearly demonstrates that the inability to access emergency contact details for veterinarians is a significant gap in the state's emergency response capability. The proposed amendments will provide the degree of certainty necessary for Biosecurity Queensland to be able to access information to enable effective communication about biosecurity incidents with veterinarians across the state.

However, access to the additional contact details required to be supplied to the registrar of the Veterinary Surgeons Board by veterinary surgeons will be strictly limited. Access will be available only to the department's chief executive officer for the express purposes specified in the act—that is to say, to distribute key information to facilitate management of biosecurity events. The additional contact details will not be displayed on any publicly accessible registry maintained by the board, nor will it be publicly accessible via any Biosecurity Queensland website.

The Agricultural Standards Act, the Plant Protection Act and the pest management parts of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act will in due course be incorporated into the new Biosecurity Bill, the exposure draft of which closed for public consultation on Friday, 2 September. These acts will then be repealed, along with several other existing biosecurity laws. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies) (12.25 pm): 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.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee.

## ~~DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION BILL~~

### ~~Introduction and Referral to the Community Affairs Committee~~



**Hon. KL STRUTHERS** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (12.25 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for protection of a person against violence committed or threatened by someone else if a relevant relationship exists between the persons, and to make amendments of the Criminal Code, the Evidence Act 1977, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Regulation 2000 for particular purposes, and to make minor or consequential amendments of this act and other legislation as stated in a schedule. I table the bill and explanatory notes and I nominate the Community Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Domestic and Family Violence Protection Bill.

*Tabled paper:* Domestic and Family Violence Protection Bill, explanatory notes.

I am very pleased to rise today to introduce into the House a bill which comprehensively strengthens and modernises Queensland's 20-year-old domestic and family violence laws. Every woman, man and child has the right to live free from violence and abuse. While it is recognised that anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence, the facts show it is most often committed by men against women and children. In 2009-10, the Queensland Police Service recorded 49,372 domestic and family violence occurrences, an increase of 11.5 per cent on the previous year, and laid 8,033 charges for breach of a domestic violence order. The courts received 22,754 applications for domestic violence orders, an increase of eight per cent on the previous year.

People, predominantly women and children, die as a result of domestic and family violence. They suffer significant physical and emotional trauma, work and educational opportunities are affected, lives are disrupted and many victims of this type of violence become homeless.

The new Domestic and Family Violence Protection Bill 2011, which reflects contemporary understanding of domestic violence, is now ready for parliament's consideration. We consulted extensively with the domestic and family violence sector and the broader community in developing these reforms. These people work hard to support victims of domestic violence. I commend their work and constructive input into this bill. I also commend the dedication of my Department of Communities staff in the development of this bill.