



Constitution of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016

Submission to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly

Queensland Teachers' Union
Authorised by Graham Moloney – General Secretary
21 Graham Street, Milton Qld 4064
PO Box 1750, Milton BC QLD 4064
P (07) 3512 9000
F (07) 3520 9050
E qtu@qtu.asn.au

The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the inquiry into the Queensland Parliamentary Committee system.

Established in 1889, the QTU is the voice of more than 43,000 teachers in the Queensland Government's primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, senior colleges, TAFE colleges and other educational facilities.

History of the Parliamentary Committees

Parliamentary Committees originally evolved from those in the British Parliament starting in the 16th century. They were established to perform functions or investigate matters which were either too complex or too technical for the normal routine of parliamentary business.

May 1860 - May 1863: Queensland parliament established 23 committees in order to establish a stable, functioning colony and assist the fledgling parliament.

July 1902 – committees focussed on the internal workings of the Parliament. Parliament established only seven committees.

1988 and 1989 - Establishment of the Public Accounts Committee and Public Works Committee. – Scrutiny of the executive began.

1990 –Inclusion of several new committees that had oversight of the government departments and associated public bodies reinvigorated the committee system, some as a direct result of the Fitzgerald Inquiry ¹

1992 – Upon Parliamentary Committee for Electoral and Administrative Review (PCEAR) recommendations, Parliament established eight scrutiny and oversight committees.

Since 2011, the Parliament has adopted a system of portfolio committees. In Queensland, most parliamentary committees are established permanently by legislation, usually the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001.

Purpose of the Bill

The objectives of the Bill are to:

- statutorily recognise the 'core matters' of the parliamentary committee system in the Constitution of Queensland 2001 (the Constitution); and
- provide that the Parliament's portfolio committees are able to initiate inquiries within their area of responsibility on their own motion.

¹ Subordinate Legislation Committee, Public Works Committee, Public Accounts Committee, Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee, Parliamentary Committee for Electoral and Administrative Review (PCEAR) and the Travelsafe Select Committee.

The recommendations that arose from the Committee of the Legislative Assembly (Report No. 17 *Review of the Parliamentary Committee System*, 25 February 2016) have been implemented in this Bill.

Why does the QTU support the Bill?

The QTU believes that the Parliamentary Committee process is a very important one. Testament to this belief is the extensive list of Submissions lodged by the QTU to the relevant committees on various issues that are of importance to its members and Queensland people in general².

The QTU believes that the accountability provided by the Parliamentary Committee system is important to the Queensland public and unions. Because Queensland has a unicameral parliament, the absence of an Upper House increases the importance of committees in assisting the Parliament to effectively hold the Government to account on behalf of the Queensland people.

By providing a forum for discussion and investigation into issues of public importance, committees gives members of the voting public an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of such matters and have input. Policy and administration functions of Government are made more open and accountable by the existence of Committees.

In summary the QTU believes that the intentions of the Constitution of Queensland and other legislation Amendment Bill should be realised. The QTU would like the 'core matters' of the parliamentary committee system in the Constitution to be statutorily recognised, and Parliament's portfolio committees to be able to initiate inquiries within their area of responsibility, on their own motion.

As indicated in the *Review of the Parliamentary Committee System*, the QTU agrees that the passing of the Bill will not only emphasise the importance of the committee system but "place a psychological political impediment on altering them without just cause".

² See list of QTU Submissions in Appendix 1 at the end of this Submission.

Appendix 1

List of QTU submissions referred to Queensland Parliamentary Committees

Education and Innovation Committee

Queensland Teachers' Union of Employees submission to Education and Innovation Committee:
Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 / Bevis, Dan. Sept 2012

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/EIC/2012/ELAB/submissions/Sub004-QTU.pdf>

Submission to parliamentary inquiry into assessment methods for senior maths, chemistry and physics 2013 / Moloney, Graham. 15 Apr 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/EIC/2013/QldAssessment/submissions/026.pdf>

Submission to the Queensland Parliament Education and Innovation Committee inquiry into the TAFE Queensland Bill 2013. 26 Apr 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/EIC/2013/TAFEQld/submissions/003.pdf>

Submission to Inquiry into the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 / Graham Moloney. 14 May 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/EIC/2013/ELAB2013/Submissions/002.pdf>

Education (Strengthening Discipline in State Schools) Amendment Bill 2013: QTU submission to the Education and Innovation Committee. Sept 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/EIC/2013/ESDiSS/Submissions/021.pdf>

[Submission to] Education (Strengthening Discipline in State Schools) Amendment Bill 2013 / Kate Ruttiman. 13 Sept 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/EIC/2013/ESDiSS/Submissions/017.pdf>

Joint QTU/IEUA-QNT submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into the Education (Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013 / QTU & Independent Education Union of Australia. Queensland and Northern Territory Branch. November 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/EIC/2013/QCAA/submissions/005.pdf>

Submission to the Queensland Parliament Education and Innovation Committee inquiry into the TAFE Queensland (Dual Sector Entities) Amendment Bill 2014 from the Queensland Teachers' Union. Mar 2014

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/EIC/2014/TAFE2014/submissions/001.pdf>

Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee

Submission of the Queensland Teachers' Union of Employees: Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. October 2015

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/ETISBC/2015/JobsQld/submissions/007.pdf>

Submission to the Education, Small Business and Tourism Committee: Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015. Jan 2016
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/ETISBC/2015/Further%20Education%20and%20Training/submissions/002.pdf>

Finance and Administration Committee

[Submission to] Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 / Thalia Edmonds. 23 May 2012
http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2012/IndustRelAndOtherLegsAmendAct2012/submissions/No2_QTU.pdf

Submission to Workers' Compensation Inquiry / Jeff Backen. 3 Aug 2012
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2012/OpQldWorkersComp/submissions/048-QldTchrsUnion.pdf>

[Submission to] Public Service and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 / Thalia Edmonds. 6 Aug 2012.
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2012/PublicServiceAmend/submissions/03-QldTeachersUnion.pdf>

Submission to the Finance and Administration Committee: Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 / Jeff Backen. Feb 2014
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/FAC/2014/WrkHlthSftyAmndBll2014/Submissions/012.pdf>

Industrial Relations (Restoring Fairness) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015: submission to the Finance and Administration Committee. May 2015
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2015/B3-IndustRelationsOLAB/submissions/919.pdf>

Work Health and Safety and other Legislation Amendments Bill 2015 [submission]. June 2015
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/FAC/2015/B4-WorkHealthSafetyOLAB/submissions/025.pdf>

Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015: submission to the Finance and Administration Committee. Jul 2015
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/FAC/2015/B5-Holidays%20andOLAB/submissions/017.pdf>

Law, Justice and Safety Committee (formerly the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee)

Queensland Teachers' Union submission to the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee: freedom of information Queensland: discussion paper no. 1 / Jeff Backen. 7 Apr 2000
<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/LJSC/1999/FOI/submissions/144-QldTeachersUnionofEmployees.pdf>

Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Queensland Teachers' Union of Employees submission to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 / Daniel Bevis. 2012

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LACSC/2012/HOLAB/Submissions/006-QueenslandTeachersUnionOfEmployees.pdf>

Submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee of the Parliament concerning Industrial Relations (Transparency and Accountability of Industrial Organisations) and Other Acts Amendment Bill (2013). 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/LACSC/2013/IndustrialRelations/submissions/014.pdf>

[Submission to] Industrial Relations (Transparency & Accountability of Industrial Organisations) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2013 [supplementary submission] / Graham Moloney. 21 May 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LACSC/2013/IndustrialRelations/Submissions/014a.pdf>

Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation No. 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013: submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. Oct 2013

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LACSC/2013/IRFairWork2013/Submissions/019.pdf>

Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015: submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. Jun 2015

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LACSC/2015/03-QTAMARepeal15/Submissions/035.pdf>

Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015: further written submissions to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. Jun 2015

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LACSC/2015/03-QTAMARepeal15/03-que1-22Jun2015.pdf>

Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee

Queensland Teachers' Union Submission to the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee: freedom of information Queensland: discussion paper no. 1 / Jeff Backen. 7 Apr 2000

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/LJSC/1999/FOI/Submissions/144-QldTeachersUnionofEmployees.pdf>

Select Committee of Inquiry into Education

Submission on S.E.M.P. and the proposed parliamentary select committee of inquiry into education / QTU. 1978

Submission on social education, professional rights of teachers, literacy and numeracy of the Select Committee of Inquiry into education / QTU. Jul 1978

Parliamentary Select Committee of Inquiry into Education: supplementary submission / QTU – Brisbane. Oct 1978

Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

Submission to the Queensland Parliament Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee Inquiry into the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Bill 2014 from the Queensland Teachers' Union / John McCollow. 2014

http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/Committees/THLGC/2014/INQ-QTAMA/Submissions/001_QTU.pdf