

## TUESDAY, 29 JULY 2025

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### ESTIMATES—GOVERNANCE, ENERGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE— PREMIER AND CABINET; VETERANS

Mr Speaker (Hon. Pat Weir, Condamine)

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Jon Krause, Scenic Rim)

#### Committee Members

Mr MJ Crandon MP—Chair

Ms B Asif MP

Mr JT Barounis MP

Hon. SJ Miles MP

Hon. SM Fentiman MP

Hon. MAJ Scanlon MP

Mr LR McCallum MP

Mr BJ Mellish MP

Ms KJ Morton MP

Mr CG Whiting MP

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#### Members in Attendance

Dr CAC Rowan MP

Mr MC Berkman MP

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#### In Attendance

Hon. DF Crisafulli, Premier of Queensland and Minister for Veterans

Mr Richard Ferrett, Chief of Staff

Ms Catherine Morison, Advisor

#### Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Mr Damien Walker, Director-General

Ms Rebecca McGarrity, Acting Associate Director-General

#### Public Sector Commission

Mr David Mackie, Public Sector Commissioner

#### Queensland Audit Office

Ms Rachel Vagg, Auditor-General

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**The committee met at 9.00 am.**



**SPEAKER:** Good morning. I declare this hearing of estimates for the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee open.

I acknowledge the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people of this state and their elders past, present and emerging. I also acknowledge the former members of this parliament who

have participated in and nourished the democratic institutions of this state. Finally, I acknowledge the people of this state, whether they have been born here or have chosen to make this state their home, and whom we represent to make laws and conduct other business for the peace, welfare and good government of this state.

I am Pat Weir, the member for Condamine and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Under the provisions of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, I will preside over today's hearing.

The members of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee here this morning are: Mr Michael Crandon, chair and member for Coomera; Mr Chris Whiting, deputy chair and member for Bancroft; Ms Bisma Asif, member for Sandgate; Mr John Barounis, member for Maryborough; the Hon. Steven Miles, member for Murrumba, who is substituting for Mr Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba; and Ms Kendall Morton, member for Caloundra. The committee is joined by other members who have been granted leave to attend and ask questions at the hearing today.

I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at the Speaker's discretion or by order of the committee.

The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat.

Staff who are assisting our witnesses here today are permitted to use personal electronic devices in the chamber. I ask all present to ensure that phones and other electronic devices are switched to silent mode or turned off if not in use. I also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in this chamber.

The House has determined the program for the committee's estimates hearing. Today the committee will examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the portfolios of the Premier and Minister for Veterans and for the Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership.

I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the times specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, which is available throughout the chamber and on the committee's web page.

The first session will examine the proposed expenditure of the Premier and Cabinet portfolio area until 11 am. We will suspend proceedings for an intermission from 11 am to 11.15 am and then resume examination of the Premier and Cabinet portfolio area until 12.45 pm.

I remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. In respect of government owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Premier, the director-general, officials and departmental officers and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the Premier or director-general. Please remember to press your microphone on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

Honourable members, in yesterday's estimates hearing and after that hearing matters of privilege arose. In the hearing I was questioned about an exchange in the House on 2 April 2025. I was, and remain, without any knowledge of wrongdoing on my part; however, there were clear imputations against me in my role as Speaker of the House. The member for Morayfield must have known he was making serious imputations of wrongdoing against the Speaker. After the hearing the Leader of the Opposition issued a media release which also makes imputations against the Speaker and Deputy Speaker by implying that both are part of a 'fixed' or 'rigged' system.

I am advising all members that I will not tolerate imputations against the Speaker or Deputy Speaker when discharging the role of Speaker, whether in the House or in the estimates process. The member for Morayfield and the Leader of the Opposition now stand referred to the Ethics Committee in relation to the above two matters. It is not for me, but for the Ethics Committee, to determine their culpability.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of the Premier and Cabinet open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Premier, if you wish you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I want to start by thanking, on behalf of the parliament, yourself and the Deputy Speaker for chairing these proceedings for the next fortnight. I thank committee members, including visiting members; thank you for your time. To officials, the director-general and his team: thank you for the effort you have put into it. In the end, this a very important process. By doing this and preparing for this we have better government. I am very grateful for everyone's collective efforts.

This budget is about delivering for Queensland. It lays the foundation for the fresh start we promised. Most importantly, it honours our commitments; it delivers what we said we were going to do. Since we came to government we have been working hard to clean up the mess in areas like the youth crime crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, the health crisis and the housing crisis. Under the former government the regions were ignored. Victims were ignored. Queenslanders were ignored. Queenslanders have voted for a fresh start. The budget is about us listening and governing for Queenslanders. It shows our commitment to address those challenges we spoke about.

I will start with health and point to the record investment in health which will support our plan to deliver health services when you need them. The Hospital Rescue Plan will deliver: more than 2,600 new beds, including three new and 10 upgraded hospitals; 4,500 extra health workers, which will help us deliver world-class health services; and targeted investment in our Surgery Connect program, which is working. The Queensland Ambulance Service will aim to turn around the crisis and the challenges they face.

Structural reforms and long-term measures are also central to this budget. We are delivering cost-of-living relief to help take pressure off the household budget. We believe that cost-of-living relief should be responsible and recurrent. That gives certainty to people. One of the first things we did was lock in the LNP's permanent 50-cent fares, which are fully funded into the forwards. We announced a new \$100 Back to School Boost, which will make a small contribution to the cost of school essentials for primary schoolkids. In the budget we have funded Play On! vouchers. That is \$200 for kids in both winter and summer sports and it is funded into the forwards. Free kindy health checks will give our youngest Queenslanders the best possible start to their schooling.

We have axed not one, but two taxes. The GP tax would have been in full swing by now—our government axed it—and we removed stamp duty for first home owners who buy or build a new home. We want more Queenslanders to have a place to call home, so this budget funds our new Boost to Buy program and extends the first home owner grant, a nation-leading home ownership program. We have invested in the Residential Activation Fund, which is about unlocking more land supply, which leads to more houses. A major boost to homelessness and crisis accommodation will help vulnerable Queenslanders.

Generational infrastructure like the Wave, Faster Rail to the Gold Coast, the Barron River bridge, the Bribie Island bridge, the Mooloolah River Interchange and \$9 billion upgrades for the Bruce Highway will ensure Queensland stays connected.

The budget also will focus on making our communities safer. It will back police by giving them the vital equipment they need. These were pleas that were ignored. Paired with the Making Queensland Safer Laws, the investment will ensure that police have the resources they need to turn the tide on that crime crisis, particularly the youth crime crisis.

Just this morning I was with the Minister for Police and the acting commissioner as well as the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers Union to announce we have reached a deal for their enterprise bargaining negotiations. We promised action on youth crime and we promised to put victims first. We have already taken action to drive down crime by implementing our Adult Crime, Adult Time, delivering more support for our police and focusing on early intervention and rehabilitation.

Earlier today I announced that in the first six months of the year crime victim numbers have dropped, after a decade of neglect. The data shows we are heading in the right direction, but there is still a very long way to go. Every number represents a Queenslanders whose life has been torn apart. What we have done is we have bolstered the QPS data by adding in crimes like car theft, break-ins and, indeed, coercive control. This data will be updated monthly via the QPS website. It is transparent and it is up to date. Whilst there are many different data sources—like the ABS, the QPS, the Queensland Government Statistician's Office and the RoGS—some reports do not include crimes like property, car theft and break-ins, and we know that is impacting Queenslanders. Some of the data is

over 12 months old, so this is about transparency and bringing in another dataset. We took a calm and methodical approach to the budget, ensuring respect for taxpayers' money. We have laid the foundations for a fresh start. I look forward to answering questions from the committee.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the member for Bancroft for the first question.

**Mr WHITING:** I hand over to the Leader of the Opposition and member for Murrumba.

**Mr MILES:** Thank you. Before I begin, on behalf of the opposition I want to thank the Queensland public sector employees for their work and for preparing for estimates. It is an incredibly important role in the democratic system.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Hear, hear!

**Mr MILES:** My first question is to the director-general. Can you advise how many public servants worked on the budget and preparing for estimates within your portfolio and across government?

**Mr Walker:** I might need to get a bit more information on this. Certainly many officials have worked on the preparation of the budget—and I think estimates was also part of that question?

**Mr MILES:** Yes.

**Mr Walker:** We might do some quick work behind the scenes to get the numbers, but it is fair to say, as is always the case, that significant amounts of effort go into this exercise. We will come back in due course with the precise number, if that is okay, Premier?

**Mr MILES:** I appreciate that, Director-General.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We can absolutely get that information by the end of the session, and I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

**Mr MILES:** That is great. My purpose is to acknowledge how many people are involved and to thank them for their efforts, so thank you for getting that for me. My second question is to the Premier. Premier, in respect of the budget, do you acknowledge that this is a line in the sand, and will you accept responsibility for the decisions that you have made and the outcomes from now on?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The budget has had to address a number of challenges, and I have spoken about those challenges. We also spoke in the lead-up to the election about some of those metrics that drive me, and I will start with health. The surgery waiting list got to 66,623; that is a lot of Queenslanders on a waiting list for a surgery. That had more than doubled in the decade. Not only did I accept accountability for what would happen following the change of government and the success or otherwise that would flow during the course of this term, I told Queenslanders that we would stabilise that waiting list by Christmas this year. We have done a little better than that. That list has fallen by several thousand Queenslanders—and I can furnish the House with exactly the latest data—and there have been over 10,000 Queenslanders who have got surgery in that time. That matters to them.

I said that during the course of this term we would get ambulance ramping under 30 per cent. Ambulance ramping started at 15 per cent under the former government and it got to over 45 per cent, which was the highest figure ever recorded in an Australian state or territory. We are starting to see the signs of that heading in the right direction, but we have to get it to 30 per cent. That is a massive turnaround.

I spoke about victim numbers and fewer victims. Today we have bolstered that with another metric to hold us accountable, because in the end a number of the existing victim sets are quite delayed in their reporting. That is completely understandable—that is not a criticism of the former government; that is how a reporting process works—but I thought there was another way that we could see it in real time. What that does is it enables Queenslanders to hold me accountable, not just at this estimates process—and this is an important process—but you are dealing with 5½ million Queenslanders who can go and see in real time what is happening with that data, and that is important.

We have added a couple of metrics that have not been calculated before—I talk about break and enters and stolen cars as well as coercive control, a new offence—so we have put that in that data. Absolutely, we will be held accountable for that number. I said earlier today that the fall in real terms—that is what we promised; we said we could get a fall in real terms, and it is a bit better than that for the first six months—is coming off such a high base. In some crime categories it has been more than double-digit rises per annum for a decade, so a reduction of 5.7 per cent is just the start. We have to be held accountable for that.

Likewise, we have set targets around housing. We have spoken about what it looks like to help cost of living, which is why we have made that decision around some of the structural changes, including to the most vulnerable when it comes to their electricity bills. Driving down those structural changes is

really important. Accountability matters. This process matters to me. I want estimates to be a place where we can scrutinise the budget.

I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for the first question to the director-general, by the way—thank you. It is important that it is acknowledged across the board how much work goes into this, and the Leader of the Opposition would know that as well as anyone. It is important. The answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question is: absolutely, accountability matters to me across the board.

**Mr MILES:** Thank you, Premier. That was a six-minute answer to a yes-or-no question. Moving on, you mentioned in your answer that the estimates process matters, and I refer to page 1 of the SDS regarding that process. Yesterday it was revealed that you had made promises to reform the estimates process, including increased time, an opposition or crossbench member chairing and limiting of Dixers. Have you broken your promise to reform the estimates process that you used to claim was broken?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We delivered exactly what we said we were going to do, and I spoke about the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker being the chair. I will not go into comments that were made yesterday—they will be referred to another place—but I will make this point. I have always had the view that when somebody assumes the role of the Speaker that person understands and accepts the gravitas of that position. I had very similar views with Speakers in the past, including the last Speaker of the last parliament. I take a very different view to others in that regard, and I think that is a massive change, and I will tell you why. I sat in the chair the current Leader of the Opposition is in, and I remember what happened when estimates was chaired by a government MP and it was wrong—it was wrong. There was nonsense every time about filibustering and, 'Who is that question to?' and, 'I'm sorry,' and breaking the flow. It was a farce—it was an absolute farce—and I made a call at that time that it should be chaired impartially and we have done that. That is the first tick on the journey.

The member asked about more time. There is an extra day and, by my calculations, there are an extra four hours. Considering we are in a budgetary process, if you do the maths on that I imagine that is somewhere north of five per cent of extra questioning. I look forward to the opportunity to field questions, and that is the way it should be. I say to the government members of the committee: what a great opportunity for you to ask questions about your electorate. That is important.

The answer to the Leader of the Opposition's question is: some might see it as a strange concept, but we are doing what we said we were going to do. This process will be repaired by not having the nonsensical scenes that we saw year after year. The fact that it is being chaired by the Speaker will give you that indication.

**Mr MILES:** I have to say, it is good to hear there will not be nonsense and filibustering. Premier, you mentioned math with regard to time. Your answer to a question on notice stated that there would be 70 hours and 15 minutes of questioning allocated, but you have removed the 70/30 split to non-government members. This year's estimates will allow for 35 hours and seven minutes of questioning from non-government members. Last year, non-government members had 46 hours and 22 minutes, a full 11 hours more. Do you concede that non-government members will have less time than last year to ask questions?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I sat in that chair for four years and I saw what happened for four years. I am sure there are people here who were here for 10 years and saw what happened for 10 years. I look forward to the opportunity to answer the honourable member's questions. I am here, I am accessible, and likewise I look forward to answering the government members' questions as well. They are all very proud advocates for their respective areas. I do believe that everyone should have an opportunity to probe and test and ask questions, and I point the Leader of the Opposition to the reforms that we have undertaken and why they are important. I am very happy to answer many budgetary questions that relate to the importance of that. The parliament is an important opportunity for the member to do that. The fact that, as I said, we have added another day and we have added some hours, and we are giving the Leader of the Opposition the ability to probe and test, makes for a better democracy.

**Mr MILES:** My question was whether 46 is more or less than 35 and the Premier could not answer that, but I will move on. My next question is to the director-general. I refer to page 1 of the SDS and the government's objective to drive down the cost of living. On 17 October 2024, when asked about cost-of-living relief the then opposition leader would provide Queenslanders if he became Premier, he said, 'We believe there needs to be those interim measures and that looks like rebates.' Director-General, how much does a couple with one child earning a combined \$80,000 a year receive in energy rebates from this budget?

**Mr Walker:** I am just getting information on that now, member for Murrumbidgee. The question was specifically about energy.

**Mr MILES:** And a household earning a combined income of \$80,000.

**Mr Walker:** What I might do, if that is okay, is talk about some of the measures that are certainly outlined in the 2025-26 budget concessions which total some \$8.493 billion. Targeted cost-of-living measures: permanent 50-cent public transport fares, free kindy health checks, \$100 Back to School Boost, \$200 Play On! vouchers, indexed electricity rebates for vulnerable families—and I will come back to that in a moment—removed GP payroll tax, and the Supercharged Solar for Renters. There have also been announcements by the government with regard to the nation-leading first home buyers' package which saw the abolishing of stamp duty on new builds for first home buyers, the extended boost to first-home owner grants and the new Boost to Buy shared equity schemes. With regards to the specifics on the energy rebate, I might need a little bit of assistance from my colleagues. Premier, this might be one where I need to seek the specific information so that I do not mislead the member and return prior to the end of this session, if that is okay with you.

**Mr MILES:** That would be good.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Are you happy with that, Premier?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Yes.

**Mr MILES:** Director-General, before the election, the Premier said energy rebates were needed so Queenslanders could keep their heads above water. How much did power prices increase for Queensland families without a controlled load in South-East Queensland after the budget?

**Mr Walker:** Given some of that content is specifically in that energy portfolio, there is certainly an opportunity later today with the Treasurer and Minister for Energy and also his lead official, the Under Treasurer, to provide a bit more detail. The member would be aware of this: electricity prices in South-East Queensland are set by retailers. Following recent decisions from the Australian Energy Regulators and the Queensland Competition Authority, electricity prices in both South-East Queensland and regionally are expected to see small increases from 1 July 2025. The Queensland government is delivering targeted energy bill relief from the 2025-26 budget for those who need it most. More than 600,000 seniors, pensioners, veterans and concession card holders will get an increased \$386 as part of the Queensland electricity rebate from 1 July. Targeted rebates will also reduce energy bills for thousands of Queenslanders in rented accommodation through the \$26.3 million Supercharged Solar for Renters program and the \$18 million community housing energy upgrade program. Regional Queensland customers will benefit from the Queensland government's \$600 million annual subsidy to keep regional Queensland prices comparable to those in South-East Queensland. Structural improvements and prudent government spending will also provide long-term cost-of-living relief, and this includes the \$1.6 billion Electricity Maintenance Guarantee which will support our publicly owned energy generation assets to deliver affordable, reliable energy for Queenslanders.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Murrumbidgee, these specific questions may be better for the Treasurer, but it is up to you.

**Mr MILES:** I understand, Mr Speaker. I am surprised that the DG did not have that number available. The DG has, though, just mentioned the Energy Maintenance Guarantee. Has the department modelled how much families will save on their energy bills as a result of the Energy Maintenance Guarantee, and can you table that advice?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker. As per your direction before with respect to these matters being canvassed by the Minister for Energy, perhaps these questions should be directed to the session later on today.

**Mr MILES:** Speaker, I am aware it is common for the Director-General of DPC to be aware of how much energy prices are increasing and to provide briefings to the Premier about modelling on key policies, but if that is not available, I am happy to move on.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Director-General, you have heard the question. If you feel that you are confident to answer that question, you can provide an answer to it.

**Mr MILES:** If the DG has not done that modelling, I am happy to move on. Premier, I refer to an earlier estimates session of this committee where we learnt that 13 members of parliament had declared they had used their parliamentary accommodation for private or family use. Were you one of those 13 members?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, have you properly declared all personal use of the parliamentary accommodation by both you and your family?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** To the best of my knowledge, absolutely is the answer to that. The member knows I am not one to discuss family matters, but the answer to the member's question is, yes, to the best of my knowledge, absolutely.

**Mr MILES:** I am happy to take that answer on face value. Director-General, I refer to page 9 of the SDS. Can you advise how many Department of the Premier and Cabinet SES or above public servants have been sacked or had their contracts terminated since the Crisafulli LNP government took office?

**Mr Walker:** Just a point of clarification, was that specific to DPC, member for Murrumbidgee?

**Mr MILES:** Correct.

**Mr Walker:** As part of a broader change in the structure of DPC that I undertook upon my arrival, we moved a number of things around within the department to ensure the department was well positioned to support the government of the day. That brought about some change in two SES officer positions. Those positions have now been filled via acting arrangements at this point in time. The broader changes were around bringing together two disparate media units within the department proper as one that now reports to the associate director-general. There were two parts of the broader veterans portfolio that were consolidated to ensure a joined-up veterans affairs group within the department. I also sought to have the deputy director-general of Corporate Services report directly to the director-general. They were the changes that were made that impacted two SES officials.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will now go to government members for their questions.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, Queenslanders will now have a clear and measurable indicator of the numbers of victims of crime in this state. Are you able to go into the history of how we have reached this point and what this means for Queenslanders going forward?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is important, and I know it is important to your community on the Sunshine Coast as well. This is something that I have had a lot of feedback about and there is a lot of work to do. In the end, it is about making sure there are multiple datasets to be able to drive accountability. I made the point before, but the ability for Queenslanders to get information that many governments do not share creates a point of accountability—for them to hold me accountable and for me to hold the ministers accountable. That is important. To have that data and to have the QPS sharing, releasing and reporting on that data is a good step in the right direction. Thank you very much for the question.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, based on the information you have provided today, it appears the number of victims in Queensland is beginning to turn around, as you mentioned earlier. Are you able to provide some more details regarding this and perhaps the reasons as to how this has occurred?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member would know how important it is to deal with crime, particularly youth crime. As a member who represents the Gold Coast, you will have seen the pressures. I acknowledge what the growth of the northern corridor has meant for your electorate and the pressures that has put on policing. I see the way you have advocated for resources over a long period of time and I thank you for that.

In the end, it is about making sure that we target the drivers of crime at all levels. When it comes to youth crime—which is a big focus—I have a relentless focus on break and enters, stolen cars and robberies. They are the three datasets that, overwhelming, are dominated by young criminals. Likewise, we will be sharing data on coercive control and assaults right across the board so we can target that and see ways we can work to turn that around.

It is about early intervention to turn kids around and give them hope; it is about rehabilitation when kids leave detention to stop that reoffending rate, which has reached 94 per cent—that is a figure we will be watching carefully to see if we can drive that down; and then it is about making sure you have stronger laws at the other end. If you put that together, that creates an environment where you have more chance of dealing with the attrition rate of police. I cannot stress how important that is. If the churn of police were to continue as we have seen particularly in the last four or five years, our ability to turn things around and drive down those numbers just would not be there. This is why today we have announced that we have come to an agreement with the Queensland Police Union and the commissioned officers union about a deal that values and respects police. That is important in driving down victim numbers.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, last week you joined us in Maryborough to host a workshop to address the antisocial behaviour that has developed in our city. This behaviour is a major concern for my

electorate. How is the Crisafulli government's first budget putting victims first and listening to Queenslanders who want to see safety restored where they live?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Thank you for the way you have advocated for your community. I have seen some images which I never thought I would see in a small and beautiful community like Maryborough. I can understand why this has impacted your community so much. I want to acknowledge a few things. The first is to your business community who are living and breathing it in the CBD. I have spoken to the small business minister, who I am mindful will give as much support as he can—likewise the police minister—around resourcing. Those small businesses that you represent and the staff who work for them deserve the support and the change that you are driving. That is important.

You mentioned the forum the other day—I acknowledge the deputy director-general for your role in helping to bring some of the state agencies to the table. We will create, through that regional leadership network, a point of accountability so that all of the state agencies with a role in dealing with antisocial behaviour can have a level of visibility around what we are trying to achieve. Obviously it is police but it is also Housing, Health and some of the non-government agencies that work in that space. Tying it together, it is your business community who have a front-row seat. That is why it was great to have the chamber there. I know that you are working with your businesses in a massive way.

I listened to some of the stories and I was taken aback by what has transpired. A business owner told me that it is a regular, almost daily, occurrence to have to clean filth from the front of her store; a hairdresser had a pair of scissors held up to her for trying to confront some of this antisocial behaviour. Defecation and public drunkenness are things no community wants to see. These are small regional cities—proud regional cities. It has rocked your city to the core, member. I know how hard you have fought and I am glad that you have raised it today. The budget is investing in it. I make the point: we cannot have a situation where there are not consequences. There have to be consequences for the drivers of that crime. It showed how much it meant to your community. I thank you for convening that forum and bringing it to my attention.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, I know this budget has a big focus on supporting our police. How will residents in Maryborough benefit from the police resources and facilities upgrades that are funded in this budget?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I might address how it relates to your electorate but also make some comments that are statewide. Firstly in terms of Maryborough, a commitment of \$7 million has been made to upgrade your police facility. I am mindful of how important that is. Separately, I know the Attorney has worked with you around the courthouse as well. That is an important part of the justice space and I want to thank you for raising it and her for working with you on that.

In terms of the budget more broadly, visible policing matters—things like the expansion to create a proper dedicated flying squad that has the resources to go in and drive change. That is locked in for the long term. That gives the ability for young officers to apply for a permanent position; they know it is there long term. They can go in and they can deal with those kinds of issues. The permanency of Jack's Law, the funding and the law change to remove the sunset clause and the certainty that gives will make a massive difference. It gives police the ability to interact with the community and obviously weapons front and centre. That interaction is positive. It is public. It is visible. It is about making sure that police have the ability to interact and drive down crime.

Police recruits are important and we are optimistic about the pipeline for police recruits, but the retention is as big a challenge and is as important to us. When you think that in the last four years the actual net increase in the Queensland Police Service has been less than 200, that just shows that burn, that attrition. We have to turn that around. That is why we have spoken about retention payments split over a couple of financial years. We are doing everything we can to show the community how serious we are about dealing with crime but also to show police how fair dinkum we are about giving them the resources they need.

I know right now in your community there are two elements: there is a youth crime element that you have been speaking a lot about but there is also that antisocial behaviour, that in-your-face antisocial behaviour. We are cognisant of the need to deal with both of them.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, this morning you announced that we have reached agreement with the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers Union. Can you outline what this agreement means to Queensland Police and Queenslanders?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It means that police have the certainty to know they will have the pay, the conditions and the resources to do their job, and that is what we said. I do have to acknowledge both



the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers Union—Shane and Kerry respectively—for the way they have negotiated and dealt with the police minister, myself and the commissioner to be able to come to an agreement on that EBA. That is important. It is important that we do that. The QPU was good enough before the election and subsequently to enable me to go and address some of their delegates. During the course of that I made the commitment to them that one of the things we would do was retention payments. The reason is that I had a lot of police say to me that it is great that we're attracting people from interstate and other people to join. That was great, but those on the front line were really suffering. They had weaker laws, they had escalating crime and they said, 'We need that good faith to be able to hang in there.' That was one of the things we committed to; we said we would be focusing on retention payments. That is why that is part of the agreement as are some of the incentives for police to go to rural or regional areas. That is important. We want to make sure that particularly those young constables coming in start on a wage that gives them the certainty to be able to move, set up shop and serve.

When it comes to the commissioned officers, it is about a fair reflection for some roles like chief inspector. It is about making sure that they continue to have the certainty, and the commissioner announced that 100-day review. Part of that is about making sure we focus heavily on the front line. That means your commissioned officers need to be focused and driven and you need to make sure they are given all those resources. Both are important. I hope it shows we are willing to work in good faith when it comes to enterprise bargaining.

I do have every confidence that we will be able to continue to do that across the Public Service, giving them the things we said we were going to do before the election, which is certainty and security of tenure and then make sure we give them the resources to do their job as well as fair pay and conditions.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the member for Bancroft.

**Mr WHITING:** I will go to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr MILES:** I would like to return to the two public servants you acknowledged sacking in the earlier set of questions. I understand that after you sacked them they were marched from the building without the opportunity to say goodbye or to thank their staff. Is there a reason they were treated that way and were you instructed to sack them?

**Mr Walker:** In terms of the question was I instructed, absolutely not. In terms of the process, there is never a good way to farewell staff. We followed a traditional arrangement where staff were provided a level of support. By 'escorted', someone from HR took them to their cars, but that was the extent of the way in which we farewelled them on that day. It was a decision of mine.

**Mr MILES:** It sounds like 'farewell' might be generous.

**Mr Walker:** Well—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Murrumbidgee, next question, please.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, I refer to your own statement to the Legislative Assembly on 11 December where you stated the government will treat the Public Service with respect. Does it concern you to hear how those public servants were sacked and treated?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I will make a couple of comments about the Public Service and why the Public Service is important to us as a government in what we are trying to achieve. I want a Public Service that is free from political interference. I want a Public Service that is led by someone who is truly independent. I want public servants to feel like they are part of the turnaround in the things this state needs. That is why I am a big believer in a few things. One is to make sure that there is that security in their employment. That is very important and we have delivered that across-the-board. I contrast that with some of the ridiculous scare campaigns that I saw before the election, none of which have ever been corrected but that is okay.

I want a Public Service where professional development is a big feature—that is something we are doing—and I want a pipeline where young people can come through and aspire to have a fulfilling career. One of the things this budget does is fund 100 graduate programs, which is auspicious through DPC but they will be across a range of different areas. My vision is for that first cohort—nothing would please me more—to go through and one day become a director-general or maybe even head of the Public Service. That would be an amazing achievement. That is why I am really keen on that and I want that to be front and centre.

I have seen some of the attacks on the Public Service since the change of government and I do not think that does either the confidence of the Public Service or the credibility of the opposition any favours. You asked about one of the first actions I took. One of the first actions I took was to change the head of the Public Service. The reason I did that is that I do not believe that the Public Service should be led by someone who is partisan. I do not believe that the pathway to become the highest ranked director-general in the state should be through a political movement. I do not think a state secretary of a political movement, someone who has been an MP and is no longer an MP after some self-confessions—I just do not think that is the right tone. That is why I wanted someone to lead the Public Service who was beyond reproach. If you want an example of the difference in approach, I would have thought an opposition at the start of a term would have acknowledged that. I did see someone from a different political flavouring acknowledge it but it was a former member for parliament. It was the former member for Sandgate, in fact, who acknowledged the appointment of someone who has worked with both sides very well including with the member himself. That is what I want from the Public Service.

When an agreement reaches the end—I am sure the member would be familiar that there are never easy ways on that, but I want Queenslanders to see the way that we have treated the Public Service. We have made sure that the Public Service is a place where people can give advice free from some of the things that I have seen in the past. I have read the Coaldrake review a couple of times. It is no good when you have that kind of culture. That does not work. I say to ministers all the time, ‘Go to the departments. Go and talk to the Public Service. Ask them about ways we can improve that relationship. Ask them about ways we can deliver better together.’ I do think that if we continue to do that process we will have a better culture in the Public Service.

**Mr MILES:** Thanks, Premier. I noted your comments there regarding political links of directors-general. Do you stand by your commitment that directors-general in your LNP government have absolutely zero links and absolutely zero memberships of political parties?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The Leader of the Opposition has attempted to besmirch, I think, five directors-general now. I think it is up to five. I can assure the honourable member with hand on heart—I have looked at the CVs—that I am very confident that none of them were ever an MP who got chased out of the building by Peter Beattie. I am very confident of that.

**Mr MILES:** So zero links?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I will keep answering.

**Mr MILES:** Or keep not answering.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am very confident none of them have ever been the state secretary of a political movement—I am pretty confident about that—and I think the member will acknowledge that this skill set, across the board, of the directors-general is very good. If I can just make another observation—and later on today the Treasurer will get an opportunity to be part of the budget process—the last under treasurer was a former chief of staff to the former treasurer. I will just let others mull over that.

I look at the quality of people in the Queensland Public Service—I am not just talking about those who are senior—and I am very confident that, overwhelmingly, there is a good group of people who are willing to provide the kind of leadership and the fearless and frank advice, and that is what I want. I know the member has attempted to furnish some of these allegations. No doubt there will be further questions. I just make the observation that we are creating a world-class Public Service led by someone who is beyond political reproach.

**Mr MILES:** So zero links. My next question is also to the Premier, and hopefully you can find a way to provide a yes-or-no answer. Do you have a list of public servants that you want sacked or removed?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I will give a yes-or-no answer, but I do have to be afforded a little bit more time after that. The answer is: of course I do not have a list, but now let me give the honourable member a little bit of feedback. I have read the Coaldrake review—a culture of ministerial staff roaming through the Public Service like little generals. I recall when this government came to office and a former minister—still a member of parliament—was shopping around a list from the unions and then was doing the bidding of the unions around the cabinet table. If the member is asking me about my view about the Public Service, my view is that the people in the Public Service are good people and I think they are doing a good job, and I think Queenslanders are starting to see that. The turnaround we are getting is proof of that.

I am going to mention a program about which you would say, ‘On face value, how is that linked with the Public Service?’ The Surgery Connect project, which is us working with the private sector to

drive down the surgery waiting list, has two elements as to why it can only work because of the Public Service. The first is the ability to bolster the front line and continue to add frontline people in that space. That is giving them the confidence and not having that feeling that they are not making a dent in it. That helps. In terms of the Surgery Connect program, the back of house is done by a team in the Department of Health. I went and met that team, and I want to talk about their sense of pride about what was happening. They were celebrating the biggest month ever in terms of reduction of the elective surgery waiting list. That is a Public Service that feels empowered.

I cannot speak for the Leader of the Opposition and whether or not he knew about Mark Bailey's secret list—the member for Miller's list—that they furnished around. I am not aware; only the member can answer that. The member is asking me about my view about the Public Service. I want them to know that they can do their job and I expect them to be treated with respect and decency.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the director-general. The Premier has referred multiple times to a new victim-of-crime dataset announced today. Was DPC involved in the preparation of this data?

**Mr Walker:** DPC have been involved in the work that has been led by QPS, and not exclusively—a number of departments have been involved in the work—but DPC certainly did play a role in this most recent announcement of the government's.

**Mr MILES:** Director-General, victims of 'other theft' includes stealing from homes or properties, shop stealing, entering or stealing from a vehicle and all other forms of stealing. That could be mums or dads running small businesses or Queenslanders who have had their belongings stolen from their home, car or work. Did DPC advise the Premier that these victims of crime should not be considered victims?

**Mr Walker:** So the question is: did DPC officials specifically advise—

**Mr MILES:** Did you advise that these crimes should be excluded from the victim data?

**Mr Walker:** I would need to refer back to our briefs, but that is not my recollection, but I would need to have a look at the briefs.

**Mr MILES:** If you could refer back to your briefs and in doing so also advise the committee what the actual number of victims would be if you had used the ABS methodology, that would be most useful.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, would I be able to assist the Leader of the Opposition on that?

**Mr MILES:** If you could answer the actual question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Absolutely.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Okay.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The figure the member talks about which is 'other theft' is a really large cohort and that number—that data point—is still there, and that can continue to be refined. The complication with 'other theft' is that 'other theft' could relate to, for example, if somebody went and stole a road sign or witch's hats. That would count as 'other theft' and it would be difficult to suggest that the witch's hat is a victim of crime.

Just to give the member confidence, if 'other theft' had been included in the metric, the crime rate would have fallen further. The fall in 'other theft' was about 6½ per cent—I think it was about 6.4 per cent—so with the reduction in 'other theft' it would have looked more favourable on the government if that was included in those metrics. In the spirit of openness and transparency, it had to be about victim numbers and using those metrics. If there are parts of 'other theft' that do relate directly to a victim, that may be something that could be included, and I said that at the press conference this morning. Just to give the member confidence—and it is a very fair question—that cohort actually fell by a larger proportion than the other 12 metrics.

**Mr MILES:** Mr Speaker, I table the transcript from a radio interview the Premier gave with 4BC where he referred to the ABS victim-of-crime data. Premier, you said at the time—

And the reason ... I like these figures is because they are consistent right across the country and the state ...

Premier, if you liked the ABS figures so much then, why will you not release the same figures so Queenslanders can truly compare and track the number of victims against your promise?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The answer is: they will be released, and they should be. The only reason for the QPS data is as an additional tool—so not to replace it but an additional tool. It gives us an insight earlier on in the journey as to what is happening on the ground. The ABS data in some cases, in some parts, can relate to figures that are 18 months out of date because it takes that reporting process. There are a number of figures that should still be there. RoGS is important, the QPS figures—there is also the

other one which I outlined at the start. They are all important, as is the ABS, and the ABS figures are something that we should continue—

**Mr MILES:** You could have provided comparable data in a shorter period, surely.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Murrumbidgee, do you have a supplementary question?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member's question is in good faith, Mr Speaker, and I should answer it and I am. The ABS data remains an important tool. The complication with the ABS data is: if we were to rely on that, it would not be until September 2027—so 12 months before an election—that Queenslanders would get to see a comparison of two years, year on year, of our time in office. I just do not think that alone—that absolutely should be a metric that we look at—

**Mr MILES:** Could you not have released more regular data using the same methodology?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We are.

**Mr MILES:** Why change the methodology?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** This is victims. These relate to victim numbers.

**Mr MILES:** It is not all the victims, though.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Murrumbidgee, please.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** If the honourable member believes that other elements of 'other theft' should be included—I think the answer to the member is: absolutely, we should look at that. It is just that, as it is presented at the moment, there are crimes in there that do not relate to a victim. I think if that would have been portrayed as victims, the honourable member quite rightly would have said, 'You are counting a street sign as a victim of crime.' But he is right: if there are other categories in there, they should be included. There are things that have been included for the first time, which are the really important ones of break and enter and stolen cars. They are the ones, along with robbery, that I have spoken about for so long, ad nauseam, because they are the three categories that are dominated by youth criminals—well over 50 per cent. That is why it is important they are added. We have also added coercive control to that list. All of those are not ABS data. That is important. Those 12 categories categorically all relate to a victim.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will now go to government members for question.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, more on victims of crime: many in my community see that early intervention and a bigger focus on rehabilitation are just as important as stronger laws and consequences for actions in reducing crime and victim numbers. Are you able to expand on what the government is doing in that space?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have spoken a lot about both of those elements. Firstly, member, I should acknowledge the work that you have done over a long period of time with Esuarve. I know how much that means to you. I think Joe is a fine citizen and I think his team are equally great people, and I would like you to convey to them how much we value what they are doing. We really look forward to continuing to work with them. They do a mighty job.

We have spoken about turning kids around before a lifetime of crime and we have also spoken about what that looks like. There is \$50 million that has been set aside in the forwards to do what is called Regional Reset. The member for Currumbin, the minister, as well as the member for Lockyer and I, made the first of those announcements which relate to the Ipswich-Darling Downs region with Kokoda. It was really good to go up there and see the facility and what they are doing. I spoke to some young people who were participants in the program and have turned their life around on the back of it. It was really fulfilling. I met two sets of parents who had stories that really moved me. One was a father whose young son is now a mentor for Kokoda. He said to me they were at a sliding doors moment of him going off the rails and never being pulled back. He was into drugs, he was starting to hang around with some really bad kids and that program turned him around. Likewise, a young woman who is now in cadets wants to have a career in defence. I asked them why that program was so important and they said the ability for family support engagement. I think that is what has been missing in the past. There are a number of elements of that program that I think can work.

That is one. There will be announcements across the eight other regions, as there will be with Staying on Track, which I spoke about before, which is the engagement of young people when they leave detention. At the moment there are just not those services for young people when they leave.

Then we wonder why the majority of them reoffend and are back there doing it again. They do not have the support structure put around them.

There needs to be consequences for actions for people who do the wrong thing, and I think your question answered that, and those consequences have to be strong. Equally, you have to give people support when they make mistakes and try to put in place safeguards to stop it. That is why I am genuinely bullish about victim numbers, because I do believe what we have seen is just the start of what can happen. The real success of this will come in the years to come, when that pipeline starts getting turned off as we turn kids around. There are a number of elements that can head towards that, but I should finish by thanking you for your interest in early intervention.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, you have mentioned the Regional Reset program. I know that this is a new program introduced by the Crisafulli government. Could you give us an update on what progress has been made to get started on this program and what investment will be made in the community that I represent?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The first of those contracts has been awarded and you will see action there this year. The minister is currently in the process of awarding the others, and there obviously will be one on the Sunshine Coast. It is fit and proper that there is. There remains an issue on the Sunshine Coast we have to deal with. We have to drive down victim numbers, and that is important. Why the program is so critical is that children will find their way to these programs. It might be via police interaction, it might be from school, it could be a youth worker who stumbles over them or in some cases it will be their parents. That is what is most exciting: that wraparound for them. But they will be different. Every region will have a different program and it is important that it is tailored there. There will be some regions where there needs to be a greater cultural engagement. There will be other regions where there will be a certain cohort that might need a different approach. That is why we are allowing those bids to be made. There are going to be nine of them. If you couple this with some of the youth justice schools and, at the other end of the spectrum, Circuit Breaker Sentencing, we are putting everything into this, including in your community.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, I know you have mentioned a couple of these things. Queenslanders have given the government a clear mandate to take action on youth crime and hold offenders to account. Are you able to give an update on the Crisafulli government's reforms funded in this budget and any early signs of change, please?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have spoken about some of the early indicators. Today we have shown those fresh figures for victim numbers through the Queensland police, but I have spoken about some of those early indicators. One of those early indicators was serious repeat offenders. That is a measure that has been used for some time, but it is an indicator of those really hardcore repeat offenders.

In many cases, they are committing a really large portion of the crime and, at the very least, they are leading astray others. It is important that we deal with those. To give you an indication, I think the average daily amount, in the six months between December and May, went from 464 to 383, so you are dealing with a cohort somewhere in the order of 400. That is small in number but big on impact. That is why focusing on that as a figure to work on and drive down is important to us. If we can continue to see progress in that regard, we will see that flow through to victim numbers.

As I always said, ultimately the number I have to be held accountable to is victim numbers. That is key. There are markers and signals along the way that we have to look at, because if that number starts rising what we will see is that there will be a lag and we could have victim numbers starting to go up. We have to keep as much of an eagle eye on that as the victim numbers. It is about focus. It is about making sure that the police know that we have their back in doing that. It is about making sure that the courts have laws that are fit for purpose. As I have said, we have made a couple of changes through Making Queensland Safer Laws, through Adult Crime, Adult Time, and we will continue to make changes. My commitment to Queenslanders is that every change we make will strengthen rather than weaken the law. Every change we make will do that.

We cannot walk away from early intervention. We cannot walk away from the schools that provide that structure. I have seen them. There is one on the coast in the electorate of Southport, Men of Business. Nothing pleased me more than for them to be one of the first cabs off the rank to expand. I have seen what they have done with the older secondary students, so starting with grade 7 gives us more chance to turn kids around.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, you have just mentioned Men of Business. They are an amazing crew that have been around for more than a decade doing wonderful work. You talked about crime prevention

schools. Could you elaborate on that? What is the budget for those programs? Could you give us an overall view of those schools?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Men of Business is the first. We have committed to four new and expanded schools. The expanded one is Men of Business on the Gold Coast. It is a really significant step forward. I have made multiple visits there and I have never left not feeling empowered. I still remember my first visit. The bit that really hit me was to find out that many of the young men in that program had never sat down and had a meal as a family unit before going there. They do that. They also take turns preparing and serving meals. I think that is a really symbolic gesture of belonging and being part of something. I was really taken aback by that.

I have met many of the staff. They have a great program. They have everything from people who are youth workers through to teachers. There are people formerly involved in the sporting scene, musicians and graphic designers. They put together a program that is tailored to the individual. The success rate in getting them work is huge. You know that. That is a great barometer of success. There are business owners who take apprentices and trainees through that school.

The other four will be in Townsville, Rockhampton and Ipswich. Again, the model of what that looks like will be determined, but I think Men of Business is a good starting point for that. These are another step on the journey. We have also committed to two of the youth justice schools that are, again, a little more intensive. It is just different steps along the way. Those schools are a great way of stopping kids before they really run off the rails and they give them love and compassion as much as discipline and structure. I can tell you: it has certainly been a roaring success on the coast.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will go to the member for Murrumbidgee.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the director-general. The Queensland government has embarked on a rebrand of the Coat of Arms, wordmarks and corporate identity, and DPC is identified as the custodian of this work. I table the government's new style guide. How many staff are assigned to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's corporate identity team to lead the change from maroon to blue and how much taxpayer funds has been allocated?

**Mr Walker:** In terms of staff, I am not sure that it would be a significant amount of staff at all. This was a rebranding exercise primarily led internally as part of people's day jobs. The change in colour, the palette change itself, was at no cost. In terms of the work that was done internally, consistent with other rebranding efforts that traditionally happen within a government—and the member would be aware of different branding changes that have occurred over the past 10 years. This is consistent with that. It was ostensibly led out of the existing marketing and comms people who sit within the DPC.

**Mr MILES:** Further to that work, departments have been provided with guidelines that do not allow staff to include acknowledgements of country on their signature blocks. I table an extract from the internal corporate communications home page. Director-General, will you revoke this directive to ensure Queensland public servants of all cultural backgrounds can include acknowledgements in their signature blocks?

**Mr Walker:** Perhaps I will give a bit of context on this most recent communication with regard to the rebranding. There has certainly been no requirement that acknowledgements be removed from signature blocks. On 8 May, the DPC released the *Delivering for Queensland* wordmark style guide for use by all Queensland government agencies to the heads of communication by email and uploaded to the government intranet Marketing Matters. On 19 May, the DPC released whole-of-government *Delivering for Queensland* templates including the PowerPoint, Word and signature block templates to be used across government.

To ensure consistency of application, departments were advised that the signature block is to be used in its entirety by all departments and additional design elements such as internal branding were not to be incorporated. I think that is what the member was referring to with regard to the instruction that was uploaded to the intranet. This includes internal branding such as signature block graphics to promote government activity like advertising campaigns for, I think, the most recent Destination 2045 that was released or programs like Australian of the Year awards or strategy releases like a portfolio- or industry-led plan. That was the intention so that *Delivering for Queensland* took prominence. No advice has been provided by the DPC that acknowledgement of country statements are to be removed from signature blocks.

**Mr MILES:** Director-General, I understand that some agencies have interpreted it that way. Would you take steps to ensure they are advised that staff are permitted to include acknowledgements of country?

**Mr Walker:** We have already commenced that. In fact, on 11 July the heads of communication traditional meeting took place in which questions of that nature were tabled, and DPC again confirmed that it had not instructed the removal of acknowledgement of country from signature blocks. If there is more to be done in that regard, I am happy to do so.

**Mr MILES:** Director-General, I appreciate that. Premier, I refer to page 1 of the SDS and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's objective to deliver an accountable and effective government. Premier, on how many occasions have you utilised a QGAir or QGAir contracted aircraft for travel since your government was sworn in until today? Could you list the dates you undertook the flights, the itinerary, the itemised cost per trip and the combined total cost to the taxpayer for these flights, please?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** If the member wants specific information on QGAir, there is the opportunity to ask questions during the police estimates hearings. I can furnish the member with some details about that. I am sure I can get some of that information to the member. I can definitely come back to him on that.

**Mr MILES:** Are you taking that on notice or will that be later in the session?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I will get it by the end of the session.

**Mr MILES:** I thank the Premier for committing to provide that information. Would you be willing to commit to a more transparent publication of this information moving forward?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I commit to making sure that I am as transparent as the former government in this regard. I know there are rules around it. I also have some personal rules around it. I do not believe that you should ever have two jets flying in tandem to the same location. I think that is a waste of taxpayers' money. I would make it very clear to my cabinet that having two ministers on two jets that are landing at the same time is not a very good use of taxpayers' money, even if one of the ministers is the Premier. I would not be doing that. Likewise, I am not certain that taking an 18-minute flight to deliver a birthday cake is a good use of taxpayers' dollars.

If you are asking me whether or not I believe it is important to make sure we get to all of Queensland, that is something that I firmly believe in. I believe what makes the state of Queensland so special is how decentralised we are. I get a lift every time I see how much people love where they live and the things they do there. The reason we have been successful in coming up with solutions to deal with the youth crime, health, housing and cost-of-living crises that were left to fester is that we have listened to Queenslanders where they live.

**Mr MILES:** I think the Premier has answered the question. He has moved a fair way away from it. We have been pretty tolerant.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I was going to make an observation to the Leader of the Opposition. I was in the Torres Strait just last week, where there is so much opportunity. I want the residents of the Torres Strait to feel that their government believes in them and values them, as it does the people in Longreach and Mount Isa. That is why it is important.

If the member is asking me about the guidelines, they are there and they are published. That is the way it should be. Guidelines are only as good as the people who administer them and the standard that is set. You will never get two planes flying into one location while I am the Premier.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the director-general, and it is in reference to page 9 of the SDS and staffing. Does the announced cap on non-frontline senior executive roles apply to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet?

**Mr Walker:** The answer is yes.

**Mr MILES:** In answer to an estimates question on notice you said that there was no upgrade to the deputy director-general position but the title did change from 'assistant director-general' to 'deputy director-general'. Was the change in title made before or after applicants were shortlisted or interviewed or was it made during the appointment process? Can you assure the committee that there was no change to the classification level?

**Mr Walker:** I referenced before some changes that I made on commencing the director-general role with DPC with regard to structure. One of those changes was the bringing together of two media functions that sat across two divisions within the department. As part of that, the role reports to the

associate director-general. I sought to make a change to better reflect that reporting arrangement, so the title was changed to 'deputy director-general'. There was no change to the SES level itself. That was all done prior to the approach to market. It is worth noting the role was advertised through a recruiter. It was an open market process and a panel appointment.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the Public Sector Commissioner. It was announced that Tim Arvier was appointed to a strategic communications role. Is the Public Sector Commission satisfied with the independence of the recruitment selection process in selecting Mr Arvier as the most qualified candidate?

**Mr Mackie:** Yes. DPC sought PSC's advice because the director-general of DPC was on the panel as the chair and also as the accountable officer at the end of the day. The delegation for approval came to me. I reviewed the process: an external provider actually did the recruitment, the panel was set up correctly and conflict-of-interest declarations were made accordingly. Yes, I was satisfied the process was robust.

**Mr MILES:** My question is to the Premier. Did you or anyone in your office have any discussions with Mr Arvier about the role before they applied or at any stage during the recruitment process?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I think that is now the sixth public servant the Leader of the Opposition has attacked. The member has just asked the relevant person about the recruitment process. I think the Public Sector Commissioner is the appropriate person to talk about the process.

**Mr MILES:** I think it is appropriate to ask if you played any role.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You know how the process was undertaken. You have two independent public servants here and you can ask them.

**Mr MILES:** So are you saying no?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** If I may, there are two independent public servants here who will be able to tell you how the process unfolded, and that is the fit and proper way.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the Premier. It has been reported that Scott Morrison was at 1 William Street waiting for a meeting and that your government would not disclose the substance of that meeting. Have you offered, or are you considering offering, Scott Morrison a job or board appointment under your government?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have had three meetings with former prime ministers: one was with Mr Morrison and two were with Mr Rudd. I have not offered either of them a job. I will make this observation: I have the view that if a former prime minister wants to meet with me the least I can do is afford them that courtesy. If I may—

**Mr MILES:** Thanks for answering the question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, I do not get asked questions in question time, so I value this opportunity to answer questions. If I might continue—

**Mr MILES:** You do go on a bit.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier can finish answering because we are moving on to government questions after this answer. Do you have anything more to add, Premier?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I enjoyed meeting both of them, and I thanked them both for their contribution to their country. Both of them have different political views, but I welcomed the opportunity to meet them. In the spirit of openness and transparency, Mr Rudd had twice as many meetings.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, I understand this budget funds the government's Hospital Rescue Plan. Can you expand on what part of the plan is funded and how it will deliver what Queenslanders need?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Firstly, in this financial year the funding allocation is \$33.1 billion. That is the largest ever investment in health in this state. The capital expenditure is a really big contribution—in the order of \$18½ billion over the next five years.

Those numbers are not the numbers that Queenslanders are truly focused on. They want to know about the outcomes. I have every faith in Queensland Health to be able to drive those outcomes, starting with, firstly, as part of the expansion, the 2,600 additional beds. I think they are absolutely vital, but it is about people. It is the people who go there and need the service. It is about the people who work to deliver the services. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who works in the health system—the doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, wardies, groundsmen, electricians and all the others. We are grateful for the work that they do.



We have spoken about the three new hospitals and the way the plan will deliver, in my mind, those world-class facilities, the 10 expansions and the other pieces of the health jigsaw puzzle—extra CT capacity, extra MRI capacity, including in facilities that during the election campaign Queenslanders were told we were not going to continue with. In fact, we have strengthened them and we have put resources into them. Nothing makes me more pleased about that. In the end, it is about people—the people who work there and the people who get cared for there. I am pleased with the level of contribution that our health staff make and I am grateful for it.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, continuing on with the Hospital Rescue Plan, residents of my electorate will benefit from a new hospital funded through this budget. Can you tell us how the Crisafulli LNP government's first budget will deliver vital health infrastructure for Queenslanders?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** In one sentence, it delivers what you have campaigned for for a long time and what we said needed to occur—that is, a genuinely large, effective and well-resourced facility for your growing community. You will recall that prior to the change of government the hospital at Coomera was going to be 400 beds. I know how critical you were of that. In fact, I think you and I had a press conference in this room about that. We said at the time that that was never going to be sufficient. It was not going to deliver the capacity that was needed. That will now be a 600-bed hospital. That is a 50 per cent uplift. I suspect in the years ahead that facility will continue to grow; it has to. I look at the growth in suburbs like Coomera, Pimpama, Jacobs Well and Ormeau—all of that northern corridor—and the need for extra beds in that corridor is immense. You campaigned very hard for that. Nothing delights me more than to see that.

Obviously, across the state there will be a raft of large contributions. The Treasurer will be here next and he will talk about what the facility in Toowoomba means to his community. It is about having it in one location. We have spoken about Bundaberg and having one strong, well-resourced hospital and then working with Hervey Bay and Maryborough—I see the member for Maryborough; we did not forget you, John. I think about how you can have new facilities and then upgrade existing facilities. That is important. Member, I would suggest to you that in the case of the northern Gold Coast those 600 beds will be a real shot in the arm when they come on line, but more will be needed in the years ahead.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, over the last decade elective surgery waitlists doubled. How does this budget prioritise getting Queenslanders the surgery they need sooner and stabilising the elective surgery waitlist?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I mentioned in my introduction the fall in the elective surgery waitlist and how that has been contributed to. Let me unpack what Surgery Connect means. We have spoken about a \$100 million investment in that. That is a significant amount. It is also the way that it is being delivered. I spoke about the public servants I met. That certainty of money enables the pipeline to be there and for us to drive value for our taxpayers.

By having that long-term certainty and not short-term or short bursts of funding here and there, we can engage with the private sector to drive down their surgery costs. That is something the health minister is focusing on and working on with his director-general. It is something I am taking an active interest in, I can assure you. We have to see more surgeries done for that quantum of money. Having that pipeline enables them to plan properly and use the surplus capacity they have. In parallel with that, we must strengthen the public health system. If we can do that, the public health system can provide more elective surgeries and we can use Surgery Connect to start driving down that number. That is important.

I will give you an indication of what that looks like. I said earlier and in my press conference that over 10,000 accessed it. It is in fact 12,300. We have had the biggest drop in the surgery waitlist over a six-month period in over a decade. That is making a difference. That is satisfying. I have met Queenslanders who have had cataract surgery or hip operations. The minister and I met a young man the other day who had had a hip operation. It is about getting in for a colonoscopy, which could be life-saving. The others are life-changing. I think the term 'elective surgery' often understates how important it is. They are not things that are nice to have; they are life-changing and life-saving, and it is important that we do more of them.

**Dr ROWAN:** Premier, openness and transparency are very important to Queenslanders. I know they are important to you and to me as a specialist physician and a former president of the AMA. How does this state budget deliver greater accountability through targeted health investment and the introduction of real-time health data?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It delivers what we said we were going to do. I thank you for your contribution to medicine over a long period of time. I know that you are very passionate about it, so thank you very much. We delivered our 100-day commitment to real-time health data. That is one of the tools we are using to drive accountability and determine where the resources need to go. That is important on a couple of fronts. It helps people know where to refer people. Obviously, that is a big issue. It is also about accountability—for the minister to look at a dashboard and get real-time data about what is happening. That is key.

We have reinstated the monthly ramping data, which is important. The more data the better. I like quarterly data because it does give a window that allows you to see those trends and you can compare the quarter with the year before. It is not just about the previous quarter, because you will have quarters where the flu impacts, for example, are higher during winter months, but it enables you to compare it with the quarter before. With monthly data you will get spikes, but it is there as another driver and another point of accountability. Ultimately, year on year it is about driving that ambulance ramping data down.

In terms of numbers, there is over \$1 billion over four years for additional funding for the Ambulance Service, which is important. There is \$581 million over two years to stabilise bed capacity. There is \$55 million over two years to improve patient flow and reduce ramping. All of those things are targeted at how we can free up resources for people to do their jobs. The two figures I always look at are the quarterly ambulance ramping and the surgery waitlist data.

The other important figure is the 24-hour stays in EDs. You would know that when a patient spends longer than a day in an emergency department there is a direct correlation with their recovery rate being slower, being more prolonged and in some cases not occurring. We have to get people out of an ED into care. That is also a big driver for us. That is another statistic the minister is focused on and driving. I look forward to him sharing some of that information as well.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** My question is to the Premier. Mental health is something that touches many Queenslanders of all ages, and many suffer in silence without proper support at any stage in their lives. Can the Premier expand on what actions the government is taking to expand mental health care?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Member, thank you for the question. I know how much this means to you. I would not have met you if it were not for your journey in this space. I thank you very much on behalf of your family for what you have done.

There are a couple of things. Firstly, we have a mental health levy in the state. I want to make sure that that is driving the kinds of outcomes we need to see. There are not many Queenslanders who have not been touched in some way by mental health directly because of family connections and what we have seen in the workplace. It is important that we do all we can to help that.

One of the big focuses, member, that we have—and I know how much this particularly means to you—is on youth mental health. We have promised what we refer to as step-up step-down facilities. The first of those will be in Rockhampton. We saw a big gap geographically and that is important. There is a massive gap. A step-up step-down facility is a facility that can help someone who is leaving hospital after treatment to get back home. Likewise, for someone who is suffering at home, it might be that the facility prevents them having to go to hospital. There is a really good opportunity with that. As I said, the first one will be in Rockhampton. We will have an announcement about where the second one will be. We continue to work on that, but that is the first one.

The next focus is on the perinatal mental health beds that are happening in Townsville and the investment there. Again—and this is a common theme—Mr Speaker, you will recall that this was another one of those scare campaigns. The problem with scare campaigns is that they are all well and good when you win elections, but when you lose elections and they fall flat then you have an issue with credibility. That is another one where people are seeing that investment there, and that is genuinely a really important one.

There are further projects in the mental health space at Redland Hospital and in Cairns. There is also some other work going on separately in Rockhampton. Then obviously in the greater south-east there is a lot of work being done in this space.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank those people who work for non-government agencies and, indeed, the private sector. Without them we would not be able to do what we do. I talk about organisations like Headspace, for example, but there are many others. There are many others that assist with our veterans as well. I think we should all be very grateful for that.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will go to the member for Bancroft.

**Mr WHITING:** I will hand over to the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Murrumba.

**Mr MILES:** My next set of questions is for the Public Sector Commissioner. Commissioner, with reference to the public sector workforce report, did you provide a draft of the State of the Sector Report to the Premier or his office prior to the budget being handed down and were any changes requested by the Premier's office?

**Mr Mackie:** Yes, naturally I did provide a copy of the draft report before we published it. There was no real request on that. I think the Premier's office just wanted to make sure it was going to be comparable with former reports so it was comparing apples with apples. The State of the Sector Report, as you would know, first came into being in 2024. Prior to that it was called a different name—the Queensland public sector workforce profile. It did not have as much data in it, so we are trying to grow and evolve this report. This is the second iteration of the State of the Sector Report. They were just very keen to make sure it could be measured against the former State of the Sector Report.

The only other query around it, I believe, was that in opposition the Premier had spoken about biannual reporting. I am taking that into consideration at the moment about what are the best time periods. If you remember, member, when it was the workforce profile report, March and September were the two reporting periods. That has some anomalies on the basis that they are seasonally different around particularly teachers and nurses. Under consideration at the moment are the options for the best reporting period for biannual reporting.

**Mr MILES:** When do you expect to be able to return to biannual reporting?

**Mr Mackie:** Again, it will depend upon what timeframes I recommend to government around the best reporting periods that compare apples with apples. We have just done this large one. Again, it depends on when I land it. If we went back to March and September—obviously the next one is March.

**Mr MILES:** When in opposition the now Premier committed to make your role more independent. Can you please advise what changes have been made to increase your independence including any changes to approval processes?

**Mr Mackie:** Yes. Under the then opposition, the 100-day commitment going into government was to make the Public Sector Commission more independent. In I believe it was November last year there was an amendment to the Public Sector Act which changed the appointment of my role. Previously, my role, similar to other senior executive or chief executive contracts, had a termination without reason clause in it and it would still have to go through Governor in Council. That has been removed. For this role now—and any future person who takes this role—the termination provisions through Governor in Council only relate to misconduct, incompetence or physical or mental incapacity. Some might think I am not out of the woods yet on that basis!

For anyone who does this role in the future or now, the Public Sector Commissioner's focus is to try to develop a highly capable public sector for Queenslanders that is based on integrity. I now have the ability to actually do that now, in terms of fulfilling the obligations and statutory responsibilities under the act, and to shape that without (a) interference or (b) fear of reprisal through a contract that could be terminated without cause because that clause has now been removed. I think that is a very good thing for Queenslanders going forward and for whoever holds this role.

**Mr MILES:** There have been no other changes beyond that. Is that correct?

**Mr Mackie:** That is correct, yes.

**Mr MILES:** I ask the member for Sandgate to ask some questions.

**Ms ASIF:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, Brittany Higgins recently spoke out against your government's decision to scrap important respect at work laws. Have you or any member of your government reached out to arrange a meeting with Brittany Higgins?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I want to address a couple of things about that legislation and why it is important that we do consult and take time to do that. It was rushed. Whilst the member was not in the parliament for that—and I want to congratulate her on her election and her first estimates process—it was universally regarded that it was rushed. I saw commentary on that, and I will use schools as a classic example. I saw Islamic schools and Christian schools standing side by side saying that, saying that that formula was not right. I saw some of the commentary around the unintended consequences around weapons. All that happened because it was designed and rushed to fit into a media cycle and a political cycle rather than a proper tangible cycle.

We are happy to speak and to listen to people across the board. I am always happy to take onboard views from wherever they come including yours and including Ms Higgins as well. I am very

happy to get that feedback. I have spoken to a number of people. I have even spoken to Mr Kadri about it from the Islamic schooling sector. I have spoken with many people in the Christian schooling sector. There were elements of that as a result of it being rushed. The short answer—

**Ms ASIF:** My question was specifically around Brittany Higgins.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am very happy to take feedback from whoever would like to give it, and we should.

**Ms ASIF:** I am just going to take that as a no—no-one from your government or yourself have arranged a meeting, but I will move on.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Well, no.

**Dr ROWAN:** Mr Speaker, point of order: that is verballing the Premier with that commentary and I would ask you to consider that.

**Mr WHITING:** If he answered the question, it would be much easier.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Bancroft, I do not need your assistance. Member for Sandgate, if you have a question—

**Ms ASIF:** I will move on.

**Mr SPEAKER:**—ask the question. You do not need any other commentary with the question. Do you have another question?

**Ms ASIF:** My question is to the Public Sector Commissioner. Commissioner, I refer to page 21 of the Service Delivery Statements with reference to the Special Commissioner, Equity and Diversity. This role is responsible for supporting measures such as reducing the gender pay gap, increasing women in leadership and increasing equity and diversity in recruitment selections. Is there currently a role titled Special Commissioner, Equity and Diversity? If not, who made the decision to axe this role?

**Mr Mackie:** Yes, I believe that originally Dr Linda Colley was appointed in October 2021. That was off the back of the Peter Bridgman report, which reviewed Queensland's public sector employment framework, and also the amendments to the Public Service Act and the Public Sector Act where equity and diversity was brought in as a major factor that should permeate public sector operations. I acknowledge Dr Colley for the work she did, particularly in areas such as pay gender equity, equality, reproductive leave, equity and diversity audits et cetera. Her appointment was for three years, so it was a limited-time contract for that role. I think initially it was to bring awareness, education and understanding across the sector about what that meant in terms of equity and diversity and certainly with things like the selection and recruitment practice as well.

Since that time, her contract fell due. It expired during the caretaker period in October 2024, just before the election. In line with caretaker conventions, it was extended for three months, as others were for anyone else who fell into that, so her contract expired in January. We put it in incoming government briefing notes to the incoming government about what positions fell into caretaker mode and what were extended under the conventions. Following that, briefs went up in November, I believe it was, to the Premier's office around those ones, and a response came back about determining whether or not a new contract would be entered into or otherwise.

To answer your other question about where that work now sits, it has been absorbed back into the Public Sector Commission. The focus under the Public Sector Act around equity and diversity does not lie with a single person. It is the obligation of all chief executives of all agencies across the public sector. Again, I acknowledge Linda for that work. It will continue through the public sector. We do not have a special commissioner. It has been absorbed into our everyday business and it is the obligation of every chief executive.

If it is okay, I would like to take the opportunity in this role to talk about some of the really good trending positions, data and statistics that are coming out of equity and diversity for Queensland at the moment. I say that because I think it is a good thing for the current public sector to hear.

**Mr MILES:** We would be happy for you to table that, Commissioner. We are running out of time before the break and I know that the member for Sandgate has one small follow-up question for you.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Are you happy to table that, Premier?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No, I think the commissioner has answered the member's question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Do you have another question, member for Sandgate?

**Ms ASIF:** I do have another question as a follow-up. I think from the answer that was given it has been made clear that a brief was handed to the government about that role finishing up and a decision was made. Premier, what signal do you think it sends women that your government does not value equity and does not see a role for that commissioner?

**Mr CRANDON:** Mr Speaker, point of order: the commissioner is now being verballed by the member for Sandgate. That is not what the commissioner said in any way, shape or form—

**Ms ASIF:** With due respect, I am not verbalising the commissioner.

**Mr CRANDON:**—and to put that suggestion forward—Mr Speaker, I would ask you to rule on that.

**Mr WHITING:** You never take this approach to me and my questions.

**Ms ASIF:** The commissioner stated that a brief was—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Just a moment while I take a little bit of advice.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, I am happy to take the question in the interests of allowing the committee to continue, if you wish. I will leave that in your hands.

**Ms ASIF:** Thank you, Premier.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You are welcome. Firstly, I want to talk about the role and then talk about the importance of diversity in the Public Service. The role was only funded for three years, so that is the first thing. The initial recommendation from the report was in fact for a five-year appointment, but the role was only funded—both the person and the funding—for three years. In fact, that role finished before the election. The former government had not made a decision on it, so it was continued after the election for a six-month period, if my memory serves me correctly. That is the first thing. Again, that was the former parliament; I just make that observation.

With regard to the next step, there is a massive opportunity for the Public Service to genuinely be an employer that looks to get people into work to make a contribution and to make sure that the workforce of the Public Service reflects a modern Queensland. The Public Sector Commissioner spoke about some of the work that he is doing to make it a business-as-usual approach. I am sure some of that work was framed up during that three-year period that was not funded beyond. Some of that work would have been done. I want to make an observation about some of the things I have done.

I have met with the Public Sector Governance Council, which has external agencies on it. One of those things is talking about what a modern Public Service can look like. I have met with the senior leadership team quite a bit. I want to see ways that the modern Public Service can attract and retain people from a vast array of backgrounds including culture, gender and disability. We have to do that. I want to see us use the status and gravitas that comes with working for the Public Service to do that. As part of the 100 graduate programs we are doing, I want to see more people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, more people from multicultural backgrounds and absolutely more people living with a disability. That is one of the things I have asked the director-general about. That is a great platform to make sure we send the message about how important it is. Across the board we are very passionate about making sure we do that.

I want to clear something up. I believe I said it was a six-month extension. It was a three-month extension, not six months. As I said, the position was not funded beyond.

It is important that for the Public Service as a whole everybody understands the importance. We are better as an organisation if we reflect what a modern Queensland looks like, and that is something I am very passionate about making sure we do.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I have a few questions, Premier, specifically about your involvement in the ban on gender-affirming care for young people in Queensland's public health system. You would be aware that the relevant directive was issued by the director-general of Queensland Health, Dr Rosengren, and that happened five days after your diary records a meeting with him about portfolio matters. Premier, did you discuss the proposed ban during that meeting?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, I will just make you aware that this session expires in three minutes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Let me give the member an answer. Member, let me seek information on that. I want to make this observation: I was absolutely aware of what had occurred because of the issues that had been raised in the Far North. I am mindful about some of those. Some of those allegations were really troubling, which is why the government took the decision that we did to take that action and, indeed, make sure there was an independent review of the process.

I am mindful that we might share different views on that approach, but I will say this: the minister has not sought to make this an issue about anything other than the care of kids. Our public commentary reflects that and I was very strong on that. It is obviously a really difficult issue for young people and people who might be under care, and that is why we took the decision about young people who are under care, and that is why we took the decision about the future stages of that. It was done with one thing in mind: the safety of kids. All of our public commentary reflects that as well.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Mr Speaker, may I ask a follow-up question, please?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Yes, member for Maiwar.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I am still waiting for any clarity on whether or not you discussed that proposed ban during the meeting. Further to that, did Dr Rosengren show you a draft or a copy of the directive before it was released and did you provide any direction or input in relation to its contents?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I cannot say to the member whether we discussed that or not because I cannot recall. I will say this to the member, just so the member is under no illusions about my role in that: that was a decision taken by cabinet so, ultimately, I accept that decision. Whether or not I discussed that with the director-general, I am not certain—I genuinely am not—but that does not change the fact that the decision, ultimately, was one by cabinet and therefore I accept the decision. I accept the decision and I accept the reasons for the decision. I reflected on some of the allegations, particularly in the Far North, and they led us to a very firm view that we had to take a course of action, but we did it—

**Mr BERKMAN:** Premier, can I ask one quick question—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Member, if I might: we did it in a way that reflected the seriousness of what was presented to us and the difficulty for families who were confronted with that decision, and our private and public commentary reflected that. That is a matter on the record.

**Mr BERKMAN:** But I would ask, Premier: why did that decision not take account of last year's independent expert review?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, the time is now 11 o'clock. The committee will take a short break and the hearing will resume at 11.15.

**Proceedings suspended from 11.00 am to 11.15 am.**



**Mr SPEAKER:** Welcome back, Premier and officials. The committee will resume its examination of the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of Premier and cabinet until 12.45 pm. We are up to government members so I go to the member for Caloundra.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, the Sunshine Coast region is rapidly expanding so it is critical that we invest in infrastructure to cater for growth. Nowhere is this more critical than Caloundra where locals are constantly stuck in gridlocked traffic. Can you tell me what the budget delivers for our expanding region?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You are right: the Sunshine Coast is rapidly growing and those growth pains are being felt in Caloundra. That is something I have certainly picked up through your advocacy. I would have to say that there is a level of interaction and engagement from your chamber, from businesses, from sporting clubs. Overwhelmingly, every time I have come into your area I get that feedback around traffic pressures over and over again. That is why we announced the Caloundra congestion-busting plan, which is those five critical projects that you campaigned for, and I do want to acknowledge your advocacy. It has been a long time since the Sunshine Coast has had that credible, long-term plan to deal with that.

Many of those pressures centre around Caloundra. In the times that we have gone and spoken with council and, more broadly, across the region, you can see the need for some of those upgrades. When you think that over 30,000 vehicles use that corridor daily, that is absolutely vital so we have to look at all of those projects, including those connection roads and the overpasses—all of those long-term visions. Ultimately, that has to be delivered in order to protect the lifestyle of the people you represent. Many people have either moved to Caloundra or called the place home because of that lifestyle, and that lifestyle is under threat because of the inability to get around and that is why we have to make sure there is a coordinated plan, and there is.

I want to thank you for the way you have put this front and centre on the agenda. I also acknowledge the work of the Deputy Premier, who is not only a neighbouring seat holder but also responsible for infrastructure, and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who is also from the Sunshine Coast. You are well serviced in that area and you understand what needs to be done. There

is an element of working with council and there is an element of working with the development community, but ultimately we have to deliver that Caloundra congestion-busting plan. The best time to have started on that was a decade ago. The second best time is today, so let's get cracking.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, during the election you promised action on the Bruce Highway and I am very pleased to see funding in this budget to progress with key upgrades for the people of Maryborough. Can you please tell us more about what is in the budget for the Bruce Highway?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Member, if I can start more generally speaking about the Bruce Highway and then I want to speak about the projects that relate to your electorate and why they are so important. More generally, one of the most important things that we have achieved in coming to government is restoring the 80-20 funding split. I want to acknowledge a couple of things. I want to acknowledge the way that the community has rallied behind that, including the *Courier-Mail* in their advocacy in their campaign. I also acknowledge the members of our team, particularly the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who put the spotlight on that project. By doing that, we made it a big issue as part of the federal campaign and we got both sides of politics to commit to that, and that is worth everything for this state.

We as a state would not be able to do the things that we need to do on a 50-50 funding arrangement. Restoring the 80-20 funding to what is a national highway—but it is also a road that has claimed more than 40 lives in the last 12 months and that puts it at the pointy end across the country of the need for action—is something that is so very, very important. We have to, firstly, celebrate that because that is something we were told was not possible. In fact, there were those who questioned our bona fides during the campaign when we spoke about 80-20 funding for projects like Walker Street. I said, 'That's what we're costing,' and we were criticised for that and it turns out we did the right thing.

I want to thank the federal government for the way they are working with us in the planning and delivery. I also want to acknowledge the fact that we have re-established a Bruce Highway Advisory Council. That uses people who understand that road and how important it is, and it removes politics from it. It makes sure that people are pushing the case to improve that highway all the way. It is life and death for the people of regional Queensland; they are at the mercy of accidents, of Mother Nature, of roads breaking down. It really is a terrible road and we finally have a plan to do something about it over the next decade.

There are two projects that I know you are very keen to talk about. One is the Tiaro Bypass, which is \$336 million. It is a nine-kilometre, four-lane bypass to improve flood immunity, with two grade separated interchanges, so there are a lot of things in the planning.

The one I really want to talk about, member, and the one I have been with you for on a couple of occasions—we were there a couple of weeks ago—is the Walker Street intersection. Every time I stand on that intersection, the amount of people who go past and beep is incredible. You know what a big deal it is. It is very dangerous, as you know, and it is majorly time-consuming getting out of that intersection. To have works underway for the safety upgrades around it and have the planning for that Walker Street interchange is a massive win for your community. It only happened because of your advocacy. You really did put it on the agenda and made it a big issue. I think it will be a great thing for your community to see what happens there. We are in the design phase at the moment and getting ideas about what will work, and ultimately we have to make sure there is a project that is fitting of a growing community and a dangerous intersection.

**Ms MORTON:** Thanks to the Crisafulli government, residents on the Sunshine Coast will finally be able to catch public transport all the way to the Sunshine Coast Airport. Premier, could you tell us more about what is in this budget for public transport on the Sunshine Coast?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is a plan that makes sure we deliver what we promised and more in that there will be that connectivity all the way to the airport. It is important that residents get that level of infrastructure and investment. There has not been that on the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast has not had the level of investment that is needed, and this is why this is so important. Work is underway. It is essential that, as part of that, there are multiple stages of that project. We speak about the importance of Beerwah to Caloundra and then beyond. We have put money in the budget to accelerate the planning for stages 2 and 3. I know how much that means to your electorate, member.

The main thing I wanted to say is what was unfolding before would have consigned Caloundra to being a car park. You spoke very loudly about that. The way you advocated for that was a defining moment for your community. It is a sliding doors moment for your community. If that project had stopped at Caloundra, it would have been diabolical for Caloundra. If that was the case, the needle would never have moved on the traffic pressures that we are working to fix, after such an underinvestment, because

you would have had such a concentration of additional vehicles at that pinch point and it would have destroyed what makes your region so very special. The decision to make sure that project is expanded, and then with a metro service to go all the way, does create that opportunity for people to properly use public transport, and that is really important. It is important because, while we invest in that, that will make sure in the long term we can have that mix of people being able to drive—that is such an important part of the lifestyle for people in your part of the coast—and a public transport offering particularly, all the way through to Brissie.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, for years the people of the northern Gold Coast have been calling for a number of upgrades to the M1. Could you expand on what transport infrastructure is funded in this budget for residents of the Coomera electorate?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member would be aware that there has been a level of interest. I have seen one or two petitions in my time in this House from the northern Gold Coast. Member, I want to thank you very much for that. I want to make a couple of observations. I had the opportunity to speak about this in the Future Gold Coast series the other day. There are a few things we are talking about. The first is that no discussion is complete without talking about those exits that have reached breaking point. I talk about particularly 45 and 54, which are the two front and centre, but I know you have spoken a lot about the others, including 49, and what that all looks like long term. However, there are real pinch points. If we do not get those exits working, we will not be able to have a proper functioning motorway. At the moment it has reached that point.

The second is to work out how we can deliver future stages of the Coomera Connector free from what we have seen in the past where we have had productivity driven down, costs driven up, the project has been constricted in what it could have been, the exit and entry points have not been designed properly—there are a number of pinch points. We have to work out how to deliver future stages of the Coomera Connector and, ultimately, how we can improve the connectivity to create it as a truly second motorway, not just an important link road. That is the next thing.

Then there is the east-west connection. That is something I know you are very passionate about, as is particularly the member for Theodore. If we can get east-west connections, we then reduce the number of people coming to those exits and those intersections and using them as a domestic road. If you go back to some of the visionary documents that were discussed many generations ago, there was always that talk about the east-west connectivity. They are all important parts of the jigsaw puzzle, as is the faster rail, to make sure we can encourage people to take public transport, but we have to get that right. You have advocated for a long period of time, your residents have spoken over a long period of time, and there is now a plan to effect that and to deliver those upgrades.

**Mr CRANDON:** Carrying on with some of those issues, Premier, works are underway on the new rail maintenance facility at Ormeau. That has been a very important project for the people of the northern Gold Coast. Can you expand on what is in the budget for this project and how it will support jobs on the Gold Coast, particularly the northern Gold Coast?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I know it is important to you, member. I am mindful that the manufacturing minister and you went and had a look around there and spoke to the people involved. Construction is underway. ADCO is doing that at the moment, which is good. There are 100 local jobs during construction, which is great. The thing that is most exciting is the 140 ongoing jobs. That is not only another great point of opportunity; it also provides the ability for people to work where they live, and it is vital that that involves training young people, which it does.

I make the observation to the member: increasingly, as that part of the coast is expanding, it is vital that there are opportunities for people to live and work where they play. That helps long-term with the infrastructure. Above that, it is also vital that we as a state are proud to be able to make things as well. That is an important facility and one that I know you support. If you couple that with the opportunity for marine jobs in the precincts and with all of the roadworks and the hospital, it will be a massive employer. There is really a golden opportunity for not just your electorate of the Coomera but the northern part of the coast. It is a real land of opportunity.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will do one more. Member for Caloundra.

**Ms MORTON:** My question if you Premier. I cannot remember the last time a government axed two taxes but this budget delivers just that. We heard from local GPs like Jen and Nic from Saltwater Medical in Caloundra. Can you tell us more about this government's commitment to respecting taxpayers' money and keeping pressure off the household budget?



**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I remember meeting Jen, Nic and their staff with you the first time. They spoke about what the impact of the patients' tax would be on their business. They were raw, honest and open about that. Again, I am mindful that Saltwater Medical is a really important part of the electorate of Caloundra. They are constituents of the member for Kawana so he was there as well. I listened to what the impact would be. I could not understand why in the middle of a health crisis any government would want to make it more difficult for someone to provide private GP services that stop people from going on to EDs. I could not understand that. It did not make any sense to me. We were glad to work with the Australian Medical Association and to partner with them but really, it was local practices like Saltwater that, in my mind, crystallised how important that was. The tax would have come in from 1 July. I make the observation: there would have been businesses that would not have been profitable to the point that they would have closed up shop. The worst thing is, there was an element of retrospectivity because they had built their businesses around a model that allowed people to come in and use the back of house to be able to service clients. The member for Coomera is nodding because he had one in his electorate who he took the fight up for as well. That would have cruelled that business, as well as the retrospective clawback—I forgot about that. It was across the state we dealt with it. That is why we took that position to the election and we were able to honour that.

The member mentioned two taxes. The member is right. We also got rid of stamp duty for any first home buyer looking to buy or build a first new home. That is massive. Home ownership is so important for the aspirations of a generation of Queenslanders who have given up on owning a home. I want them to believe again. I want them to believe it is possible. I want this state to be a place where people can raise a family if they choose and to be able to stay where they want to live. There are a number of elements. I will talk a lot about supply of housing in the months ahead but it is also just that dream of home ownership. The Treasurer will have a major announcement today about how successful the level of intake has been of our Boost to Buy program and, again, if we can help a young person get into the market—you should not have to have rich parents to be able to own a home in Queensland. People who are willing to go to work should be able to own a home in their state. We are putting in place changes to make that work.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will go to non-government members. I go to the member for Murrumbidgee.

**Mr MILES:** My question is to the Director-General. In recent weeks we have seen emergency departments reach breaking point and cancel surgeries. The health minister said this was because the flu came out of the blue and Queensland Health was not expecting it—despite experts warning of a horror flu season. Was DPC aware of those warnings? Did the Premier ask you to ensure Queensland Health was prepared and what steps did you or DPC take to ensure Queensland Health was prepared?

**Mr Walker:** As you know, the DPC keeps a reasonable eye on the operations of the broader Public Service with our rather targeted numbers it is fair to say. We certainly are in regular contact with Health and are aware of some of the challenges, particularly in the middle of the winter season. We are broadly aware of what they are doing but equally, this is a health matter and the director-general and the Minister for Health are responsible for the operations of the health system. We certainly keep a broad eye on it but this is a matter that is probably best directed to the director-general and the minister at their estimates hearing.

**Mr MILES:** The DPC oversees government advertising campaigns; is that correct?

**Mr Walker:** Yes.

**Mr MILES:** Can you outline what government advertising campaigns there have been to promote flu vaccination and how that compares to the funding provided to the advertising for the Hospital Rescue Plan campaign?

**Mr Walker:** I do not have that material to hand. I can certainly talk about the broader campaigns.

**Mr MILES:** It is just those two I am interested in.

**Mr Walker:** Remind me again. It was the—

**Mr MILES:** Flu vaccination and the Hospital Rescue Plan.

**Mr Walker:** I might need to grab some additional information on the flu vaccinations. Perhaps I will speak first to the Hospital Rescue Plan. The goal of that campaign was to raise awareness of projects and initiatives being delivered by the government to give Queenslanders better access to health services when they need them. DPC led the production for the campaign and Queensland Health was responsible for research and media placement. The campaign was endorsed by the Government Advertising and Communication Committee and in accordance with the Queensland Government Advertising and Marketing Communication Code of Conduct. The plan was released to the marketplace more broadly on 23 April 2025 and supported by paid social media and a search campaign directing

people to visit the campaign website. A wider paid media campaign launched on 6 May 2025 and ran until 28 June 2025.

**Mr MILES:** Is there a dollar amount for that campaign?

**Mr Walker:** The campaign cost \$1.67 million excluding GST. In terms of your question around flu vaccine, I do not have that material at hand. We will seek to get that material. I am advised that Queensland Health led the flu vaccine awareness program. We will try to get some further information or alternatively, as I mentioned a little earlier, this might be a matter best put to the director-general of Queensland Health or the health minister himself.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Are you taking that question on notice, or will you wait for the health department?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Yes, Mr Speaker. Obviously that direct question can be put to the health minister.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, this line of questioning is directed at what efforts the government made to prepare for the flu season and to encourage Queenslanders to get vaccinated. My question to you is: have you had your flu vaccination this year and do you think every Queenslanders who can should get vaccinated?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Obviously it is vital that Queenslanders take medical advice, and that they do all they can to do that. I want to make a couple of points. The member asked a question to the director-general about the advertising component. The health minister has also done a lot of media about the need to do that. It is absolutely vital that we do.

I will assure the member of a couple of things. The health system is under immense pressure, but I do not think that is something that has just emerged in the last nine months, and I think the member knows full well what I am talking about. The health system is under immense pressure because there has been an underinvestment over a long period and that has led to the inability of the system to deal with shocks.

The member spoke about surgery cancellations because of that flu spike. I can provide the member with cancellations dating back. In the event the member spoke about, there might have been a couple of dozen—and maybe I can get the exact figures. Here is just a little snapshot for the member. Between 4 July and 10 July 2022 there were 222 surgeries cancelled on the Gold Coast. Between 1 January 2023 and 1 November 2023 there were 605 cancellations on the Gold Coast, 392 in Cairns in the 10 months to the start of 2023, 215 in Central Queensland in the first 10 months of 2023, 1,017 in Metro South—

**Mr MILES:** Point of order: I think everyone will agree we have been very tolerant of the Premier waffling on, but I think it is time to stop him from winding down the clock, so I would like to move on to my next question, please.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Ask the next question, then.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, you indicated earlier that you personally intervened to support the police minister in finalising the police EBA. We welcome the steps that you have made to recognise our police. Can you outline for me what role you played in those negotiations?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It was the role that someone would play when they believe in supporting public servants, and that is to make sure we can explain to both the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers Union that we respect them and we value them and we want more of them to join and more of them to stay. That is why it was important that the negotiations reflected the things we said we were going to do. A big part of that is making sure we honour the public sector wage case, and that is what we have done across the board. It is important that that is set—three, 2½, 2½—across the board.

We have also said that there were commitments made prior to the election that we wanted to honour, and one of those was around that retention payment. I had discussions with Mr Prior personally on that, about what was the best way to structure that. My view and the view of the minister was that doing that all up-front would not have given maximum value, so we worked with Mr Prior to structure that. The first of those payments will occur at the start of next year—half of that—and then 12 months later will be the next round. I hope that does a couple of things. One is to reflect what we said we were going to do. It is also another incentive for officers to stay as we continue to fix up the pressures because of what has occurred in the last 10 years.

There are two things that we can do for police which ultimately will change the dynamics in policing. One is those stronger laws—and I talk about the way they deal with domestic and family violence and youth crime—and the second is resources. I will be mindful that for several years police

have asked about the Taser 10s and they were not rolled out. That is life-changing. We have spoken about road spikes. We have spoken about RBTs that work. We have spoken about body worn cameras. All of that is part of what we have taken and offered to the police because we value them and we respect them. That is why it is so vital.

**Mr MILES:** Thanks, Premier. I was interested in what contribution you made in those negotiations because Ellie and Lachy both asked me to ask you: when will you give nurses and midwives the nation-leading pay and conditions you promised? My question is: why haven't you intervened in those negotiations in the same way you did for police? Is it because nurses and midwives are worth less to you?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, I would ask you to withdraw that question.

**Mr MILES:** I can reword it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Ask the question again.

**Mr MILES:** I think the Premier understands my question. Why has he not intervened in the same way?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order: Mr Speaker, I think you have ruled, but my point of order was that there was a clear imputation and leading aspect to that question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I have dealt with that. I call the Premier.

**Mr MILES:** I have withdrawn that.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, has the honourable member withdrawn that?

**Mr MILES:** Yes, I withdraw.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, I have and will continue to deal with anyone whose interest is making sure we have the best Public Service in the country. I can say right across the board that I have enjoyed my discussions with Sarah Beaman from the QNMU and I have enjoyed my discussions with Cresta from the QUT. I had a big involvement working with Cresta when we struck the education deal with the Commonwealth—again, another thing we were told could not be done but was. It was the best deal in the country, by the way. I enjoyed working with the unions on that. There is only one union I will not work for or work with and that is the union that the former government, under the leadership of the former premier, allowed back into Queensland and to meet with the ministers, and there will be a lot more said about that in the months and years ahead.

I want nurses and midwives to know that we understand the pressure they are under, so we are doing two things. The first is that more help is on the way. Another 4½ thousand clinicians are going to be added this year to try to deal with those pressures of that underinvestment. Better resources are coming in the form of beds and upgraded hospitals. In terms of the deal, we have offered what we said we would before the election: nation-leading pay and conditions. There are a few things involved in that. Obviously, there is the public sector wage case. That is there for all unions. We have also offered things like an uplift in the last year to make sure we maintain that, and that was something we committed directly to the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union that is not available for other unions. That, for example, was not part of the deal with the Queensland Police Service. What we promised them was a retention payment, so we honoured the things we said we would do.

My door remains open and I believe that there will be agreements reached. We are genuinely negotiating in good faith, and that conciliation process is an important step in that. I do have faith that we will come to agreement with those three unions and indeed the others. We also have doctors, fires and then the broader Public Service. I want the member to see the way we have conducted ourselves and that confirms a couple of things. One is that we believe there is a role for unions—and it is an important role—and we will always give them a seat and we will treat them with respect. The second is that I want the Public Service to understand they are valued and respected and we will find a good way to make sure we can honour the things we said we would do and give the security and the stability, the pay and the conditions, and the resources. Then we can deal with the four things we said over and above that we need to deal with: health crisis, youth crime crisis, cost of living and housing—bang—over and over.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will have one more question from non-government members before we go back.

**Mr MILES:** I hope for our nurses and midwives that is the case. Premier, returning to the discussion we had earlier about crime and victim numbers, do you stand by your commitment to resign if victim numbers do not fall below your self-imposed target of 289,657 including all of the crimes in the ABS dataset, not your new measure; and do you accept that these 151,000 victims of theft are also now victims of your political ambition?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker: it relates to the fact that there were actually two questions. It is a double-barrelled question in relation to how that was asked. I submit to you that the member should rephrase the question as asked.

**Mr SPEAKER:** There was a clear imputation, so I will ask that that question be asked again without any imputations, please.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, do you stand by your commitment to resign if victim numbers do not fall below your self-imposed target of 289,657 including all of the crimes in the ABS dataset, not your new measure?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I need to pull up something that the member said because it is not accurate. The member talks about the 'other theft' component. The 'other theft' component is an important one, and that is why it is there and Queenslanders can see it. If they click on the link they will see that the fall has, in fact, been greater than the fall in those 12 categories I spoke about. Had we included it, the 5.7 per cent would have been a larger figure. It would have reflected more beneficially on the government.

The data has crimes in it that are not a crime against a person and, therefore, we would have been criticised—whether or not they would be justifiable—for counting a wall or a set of witch's hats as a victim of crime.

**Mr MILES:** But you did not have that concern about the ABS data when you pointed to it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, you have asked a question. We are getting a response.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am trying to furnish the member with a fulsome response. That is why that data was presented today, but the main reason is it is more information more quickly. With regard to the other things like the ABS, they remain really important documents for us and the RoGS are really important. It is just that the information has a large lag in it and I have to be very direct with the member: if we had not given up-to-date information, the member would justifiably say that we are not giving Queenslanders the chance to mark us, so we have given independent data more fulsomely, more quickly and more of it than ever before and the reason why is so that I am able to drive the change that is needed and Queenslanders can hold me accountable. So all of those datasets are still there. They still remain there and we can see it and we can drive them down, and I would love your help in supporting the things we are taking forward and not seeing some of the shenanigans that we have seen before. Through you, Mr Speaker, I just want to talk about how important that is.

There are things in the ABS data that are not there that we want to make sure is reflected—things like stalking, coercive control, driving causing death. They are important things, and that is why this metric is an important one. The biggest reason why it is important is it is the most up to date we have, it is independent and it focuses solely on victims. To the member's point, we will absolutely have those other data points—they are absolutely pivotal—but the lag in them means that, in real terms, it would be 12 months before the election when Queenslanders would get the first chance to see back-to-back years about the effectiveness of our laws and I would have been criticised for that. That is why I said to Queenslanders, 'Victim numbers matter to me. There'll be a series of datasets and we can work together to drive down victim numbers.' The overarching comment that I want Queenslanders to know is that I am not satisfied where they are at the moment, albeit they are heading in the right direction.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will go to government members.

**Dr ROWAN:** Premier, the Crisafulli state government promised to deliver targeted, responsible and long-term cost-of-living relief. Can you tell the committee and expand upon what is in this state budget to take some pressure off Queenslanders' household budgets?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** There is a number of initiatives and, most importantly, they are funded and funded in the long term, and that is important because it gives people the knowledge that they are there and it is not about short-termism; it is about a long-term approach. Equally it is important that we work on the underlying costs and the underlying pressures that are causing prices to rise at levels that Queenslanders cannot afford. I often use that 19.9 per cent figure, but the reason why it is so important that we have an energy mix that is affordable, reliable and sustainable is that without it you just will not

be able to drive down your underlying costs. A 19.9 per cent increase in a calendar year is just not acceptable. If you do not deal with those spikes, it just will not work long term.

One of the structural changes we have made is on those vulnerable households, and there are many hundreds of thousands of them. That indexation is a very small assistance, but it ensures that over time at least that subsidy can keep pace with growth and that can somehow give that confidence to the vulnerable that we do understand the pressures that they are under. There are a number of things. I spoke before about the \$100 Back to School Boost. That is just a small amount to help provide a bit of cover for things like, for example, books, but I reckon most importantly it forms a connection between the parent and student and the school, and that really is a great way of making sure that kids do go to school and that that first interaction is a positive one that can really set them up on their journey. Then there are the \$200 Play On! vouchers. Again, there were a number of flaws in the former system. If you go back, it has been in existence a long time—over a decade in fact—but never before have we seen this quantum and never before have we seen the way it is strategic across two seasons. There is a greater focus on rural and regional kids and kids with a disability. That is all important.

With regard to 50-cent fares, there was no money in the forwards but we have done that. We have locked that in. It is an important tool in making sure that people can afford to get around, and we are proud to have funded the things that were not funded. Across the board we have free health care—more of it more often. It is important that we do that because Queenslanders are feeling the pinch and they are feeling the pinch because all of those underlying costs were allowed to spiral out of control, and I want to see us focus on those things that impact people around their kitchen tables. In terms of electricity and water, the ongoing costs of insurance and all of the things that really hurt people, we have to work on ways to help drive that down.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, I also understand there are some new and expanded programs that you have just touched on to provide financial support for families with kids across Queensland. Can you tell us more about these initiatives please?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** There are a number of them and I have spoken about those two programs aimed at young families, but I also want to talk about the kindy health checks. We believe that when rolled out—and we are starting that process in Townsville—it can be a real win in getting young people some medical assistance that they need before they start school. As a former teacher, I am sure you understand the importance of that. If a child cannot hear, their ability to engage and behave in a classroom is well and truly not there and it puts more pressure on them. Ultimately—and at the risk of making things sound more dramatic—that increases their chance of falling through the cracks and then living a lifetime of not being productive members of society. These health checks—everything from speech to sight to hearing—are really important ways of making sure that early on we as a state can play a role in helping get the care that kids need.

If you look at a number of the pressure points in dealing with youth crime, a lot of the kids involved in that have had major health challenges before their journey begins. Being able to try to provide assistance in that is really important. Again, it is another connection between education facility and family, and that is important. It really is about making sure that there is that connection and these things are a way to help people turn their lives around.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, since you came to government you have made a number of important initiatives permanent and funded them across the forwards. Can the Premier please expand on how this budget delivers certainty and stability for Queenslanders?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is an important question and it is one that ultimately goes to the heart of the entirety of these hearings. I do not believe there is a department where you will not have a minister have to tell a story about a program that was not funded beyond the life of the last budget—in many cases were not funded during the budget we were in. I am talking about things like the critical support for people suffering homelessness which was not even funded past March, yet the minister had to do that—had to find a way to make sure we put a roof over the heads of those who are vulnerable. I just think that is cruel.

During the election campaign we heard about the so-called end to the homelessness support. We have locked in a 20 per cent funding uplift. The irony that that money was not even funded for the motel rooms for the vulnerable who did not have a home to go to because of an underinvestment in social housing for 10 years is not lost on anyone. I will mention a couple of others for the member: a \$461 million black hole in child safety and no money beyond the forwards for 50-cent fares or for Play On! vouchers or for any form of assistance for people to take their kids to sport.

The Mater Hospital Springfield stage 2 had no operational budget. That was a hospital without workers, in something reminiscent of *Yes Minister*. We had the tourism division, and in the forwards of the tourism division it went from \$160.8 million to \$7.6 million. I know exactly why that was done—that is what is called trickery in accounting—but I am not quite sure how anyone could justifiably even attempt to pull that off. There were a hell of a lot of unfunded positions in the Early Childhood Regulatory Authority, and right now that would send a shiver up the spine of all Queenslanders, but it was across the board. What the first budget of this government has done is put a few scare campaigns to bed, that is for sure. It has also exposed the deception of what had happened before an election. I am pleased that we have been able to provide some stability long-term. There are a number of Public Service jobs that there was no money for beyond the budget we were in, and we have made sure we have given that confidence and that stability.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, part of the government's approach to address the cost of living is to pursue long-term structural budget reforms. Can you expand upon how the Crisafulli government's first budget honours our promises to Queenslanders and lays the foundation for fiscal repair?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am mindful of the member's interest in all things finance and his pedigree and career involved in it. Member, I will just make a couple of observations. The first is that we are funding what we said we were going to do, particularly in the big four crises that we spoke of, but across the board we are doing the things that we said we would do.

When the member talks about some of those underlying things that we are driving change in, one that I want to speak about—and the Treasurer may touch on this later—is the re-establishment of the Productivity Commission. The abolition of it and the Orwellian nature in which it was communicated is never lost on me. That is an important body to make sure we have a lens in doing better, in making sure we have respect for people's money. The re-establishment of that is a big deal, and its first order of business is to review the building industry, which is vital. We are increasingly seeing why that is important.

What we are learning about the CFMEU should send shivers up the spine of every Queenslander: the cover-ups, the misogyny, the bullying, the changes in legislation that enabled them to flourish. There was a protection racket that was run for the CFMEU, and they do not have a place in a modern Queensland. I do not see other unions conducting themselves like the CFMEU. There will be, in my mind, a great opportunity, as part of the commission of inquiry, to get to the bottom of the business model they conducted, which drove down productivity and made work sites less safe by their thuggish behaviour. There will be a great opportunity to deal with that.

The other thing the budget funds is Queensland Government Consulting. That will do two things. One, it is a great gateway to whether or not a consultancy is needed in the first place, and there are indirect savings there. Second, the upskilled capacity of the Public Service to provide that level of input is really important. There is always going to be third-party engagement with consultancies—there will always be times when you need a level of expertise to come in—but this is a body that can upskill the Public Service. When we are using external consultants, it can also be a level, as part of that contract, to upskill Queensland Government Consulting. Long-term, that leads to a place where people want to work and it is also cost effective. There are a number of structural things we are doing. That is just two of them.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, this budget includes funding for local Sunshine Coast organisations like Gateway Care and the Nambour Everyday Foundation community supermarket. Could you expand on what this funding will provide and how it will assist vulnerable Queenslanders with the cost of living?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have been to both of those organisations. I know that you are particularly interested in Gateway Care. The money is going to enable them to expand and provide more services for more Queenslanders. I have had a look at their operation. I have gone in there and I have spoken to some of the people who have used them for their groceries and just as a source of connection for the community. They do an excellent job and this contribution will enable their viability. Without it, their long-term viability may have been in doubt. You should be very proud of your advocacy in doing that. There are a whole heap of people who just need a hand up at an important time, and Gateway Care does that.

The other one you mentioned is the Everyday Foundation in Nambour—again, a low-cost supermarket as well as meal program. They do over 20,000 free meals a year. Another election commitment we worked on with the member for Nicklin is them moving into a new premises. It is a really golden opportunity to expand their offering but also to re-energise a part of the CBD in Nambour

that really needs a lift. It is a beautiful old building and they have really big plans for it. That activation can really help.

I know the work of the member for Nicklin. He is very passionate about making sure Nambour can have that CBD—that sense of safety and vibrancy about it. This is as much about urban renewal and activation as it is about compassion and assistance. They are a really good organisation and I was very grateful to the Everyday Foundation for how much time they gave us the other day when we were there. We went to their existing premises, which is small but does a mighty job, and then we went to a new place. I am really looking forward to going back. My office stands to go back for their opening and see all of the things they can achieve in the years ahead.

**Mr MILES:** Premier, you and your now ministers campaigned alongside Dinesh Palipana and John Connolly for a new spinal unit at the PA Hospital, but since coming to government you have abandoned that project. How do you justify this broken promise to Dinesh and John?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** That is not the case. I can let the member know that I caught up with Dinesh only a week ago and I know the deputy has spoken with John. Our commitment to addressing the issues at that unit, which were allowed to get to the state they were over a decade, remains front and centre and will continue to. Equally—and I am sure the health minister can furnish you with more details—we are also keen on making sure we have access to services in regional areas so that we can reduce the demand on people of having to travel across the state. So it is both: we are bolstering regional services and we are also improving the unit. It is important that we do. I am mindful of some of the history of it and I know, having spoken to Dinesh about it, what that was like, and we are committed to doing that and we will continue to do that. I can only say to the member that that is not the case and I have spoken personally with him about it.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the director-general. This budget delays the delivery of the Queensland Cancer Centre by at least three years. Did DPC provide modelling or advice to the Premier about how many Queenslanders will be diagnosed with cancer and how many would die during that three-year delay of the Queensland Cancer Centre?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Director-General, I know it is a health-specific question, but are you able to furnish a response?

**Mr Walker:** I am not aware of any specific modelling that the DPC undertook with regard to potential future cancer for Queensland patients. Certainly we are involved in conversations within the CBRC where we advise government around the broader prioritisation of the capital program.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is to the Premier. Again I refer to page 1 of the SDS. The health minister recently announced a new funding mechanism linking emergency department funding to KPIs, which your deputy leader labelled as concerning. Premier, do you think your government should be penalising our busiest emergency departments, the ones that need funding the most?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Firstly, I want to quickly touch on the last point from the member. There were significant delays to the former health plan and they were not funded properly and they were not scoped. When we did bring in an independent expert, the member trashed his reputation on the floor of parliament and still has not responded. Let us just be clear about that.

Regarding the emergency departments, have a look at the funding to the health and hospital networks. Every one of them has increased. We are saying that there is more money to assist those who are doing more work. I understand there is a level of frustration because the budget did not give the narrative that the election campaign tried to set up from those opposite. I get that. But it is a good budget and it has been universally applauded by third parties. Politically, that might not work for you but it works for Queenslanders because we are delivering for them.

Let us go through the health budget. Never before has a figure reached the quantum that it has: \$33.1 billion. The increase in health funding this year was over 10 per cent. The reason for that is, if we are going to deal with the health crisis, we have to front end the funding. We have to. We do not have enough health professionals. There has not been enough proper planning on infrastructure. It was a diabolical mess and the staff were the collateral damage as were the patients so we had to front end the funding. Part of that involved making sure that the health and hospital networks benefited to a big tune. That is why, if he looks at the funding, the member will see that every health and hospital network has had an increase—every single one of them. That means they can do more elective surgeries and they can do more in EDs. We are saying there is also additional money that we can use to encourage

more work across the board, including in Surgery Connect. If we get that right, we can see a reduction in the two KPIs I set.

Again, going back to my point before, I was very definitive in number and in time. On the first one, elective surgery, we are well on our way to success. On ambulance ramping, we are seeing it start to turn the corner but there is a long way to go. We set targets on both of them. The fact is that we have provided a record health budget and also a record at the front end. For the nurses, the doctors, the allied health professionals and everyone who works in the system there is certainty around their jobs and we are bringing in more support. That is how we will turn around the health crisis that has been 10 years in the making across four health ministers.

**Mr MILES:** My next question Nicole has asked me to ask: why are you afraid of giving women full autonomy over their bodies? My question is: do you think a 12-year-old girl and her mum should be forced to appear in court to receive a termination-of-pregnancy procedure recommended by Queensland Health professionals?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Speaker: I ask whether that question needs to be rephrased to be in order with portfolio responsibilities and, particularly, as they relate to the budget. I ask the member to outline how this question specifically relates to the budget and that consideration be given as to whether it should be rephrased given some of the content contained within it.

**Mr WHITING:** Point of order: can the member be specific about how this does not relate to efficiency and effectiveness?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Regardless, I am happy to take the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will ask that the question be rephrased. It is up to the member to ask questions but he is reading out somebody else's question.

**Mr MILES:** My question is to the Premier. This relates to a health procedure that Queensland Health would deliver and I understand will now deliver because of the court findings. Do you think it is appropriate that a 12-year-old girl and her mother were forced to appear in court to receive a termination-of-pregnancy procedure that was supported and recommended by Queensland Health professionals?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The matter that the member talks about relates to Gillick competence. That is the first thing that we have to say. It does give me an opportunity to speak more broadly about the issue of termination of pregnancy. During the election campaign we all witnessed what I think was the most untrue, underhanded, deliberately misleading and, quite frankly, disgraceful campaign. Queenslanders lived through it. There are always personal ramifications in those kinds of campaigns. In the end, Queenslanders voted for change and the commitment that I made many times was honoured. I have never heard the Leader of the Opposition say, 'Well, it turns out what we said before the election was either not true or we got it wrong.' I have never heard any reflection on it whatsoever.

We took a position to the people of Queensland. I was asked whether or not I would be able to deliver that, I said we would and we did. We can play back those comments and see how they have aged. We can also play back the comments on election night, by the way. They have not aged real well either. In general, I make the point that the member has asked a question about something that was furnished during the election campaign and I fulfilled exactly what I said we were going to do—exactly what I said we were going to do.

**Mr MILES:** My next question is for the Auditor-General. Ms Vagg, your forward work program will examine major projects each year including transport infrastructure and Cross River Rail. The government recently released a cost estimate for Cross River Rail that included 25 years of maintenance. I table the news article. Will all of your auditing of major infrastructure and public-private partnership projects include maintenance costs in this way?

**Ms Vagg:** Our *Major projects* report gives a status on those projects each year and, where appropriate, we will include forward estimates of costs.

**Mr MILES:** Will you recommend the public release of maintenance costs for other infrastructure projects to be reported in the same way, for example, the Bruce Highway, heavy rail part of the way to the Sunshine Coast, the Brisbane arena or the new Victoria Park stadium?

**Ms Vagg:** Where costs are material, we do include them in the *Major projects* report. We encourage transparency where it is appropriate with arrangements with the state.



**Mr MILES:** In relation to the Brisbane arena project, it is understood that land at the Goprint site and the home of the current Gabba at Woolloongabba will be provided to the private sector for development. Should the value of that land provided to the private sector be included in the cost of the project to ensure transparency for Queenslanders and how should an evaluation be determined?

**Ms Vagg:** In terms of the work that we do, we audit actual expenses as they occur and then the reporting under accounting standards in financial statements. Where appropriate, the costs are included. From a transparency perspective we will audit those financial statements. In terms of what is included in estimates of costs, we will often assess those as part of the *Major projects* report and compare them to actual costs. We do look at costs that are included in those estimates. That includes contributed assets and other costs.

**Mr MILES:** So the accounting standards would require the value of that land to be included in the value of the project?

**Ms Vagg:** In certain circumstances they do. It depends on who controls the project and who controls that particular asset. If it is controlled by the state and it is an expenditure of the state, it would be included in the financial statements of that particular entity.

**Mr MILES:** How would the value of that land be determined normally?

**Ms Vagg:** It is usually determined based on market value. That is one of the fair-value principles of accounting standards. It can be compared to recent market transactions and other sources of information.

**Mr MILES:** Auditor-General, thank you for your fulsome answers. My next question is to the director-general. I refer to page 1 of the SDS and DPC's objective to deliver an accountable and effective government. I table an article from the *Australian* which revealed the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has spent \$650,000 for four tranches of taxpayer-funded polling and market research. Director-General, how many tranches of market research and concept testing has the department ordered since December 2024, broken down by topic and cost?

**Mr Walker:** I am just grabbing that material now. I will make a couple of contextual comments. One of the things that DPC is seeking to do, which has resulted in some of those structural changes I referred to earlier, is have greater coordination of media and comms government-wide. DPC is certainly playing a greater role with regard to campaigns under that broader comms banner. There have been a number of campaigns since the new government took office. Your question was about which ones; is that right?

**Mr MILES:** What were the topics and what was the cost of each topic?

**Mr Walker:** You made reference also to an article in the *Australian*; is that right?

**Mr MILES:** Correct. I have tabled that article.

**Mr Walker:** I think it is worth drawing out two things. There are the actual campaigns—and I will get to those in a moment—and then there is the market research component, which is longstanding custom and practice with regard to the campaigns themselves. Two things are contracted: the market research piece and the campaign proper. The Leader of the Opposition knows that I am not a marketing expert, but there are others within the department who are.

Market research does two things, essentially: it takes some base data to help inform the subsequent evaluation of the campaign proper to ensure it does indeed reach the KPIs set out for the campaign; and it helps to ensure the campaign itself is successful. It often takes the form of a focus group, particularly for a couple of concepts that have been identified for the campaign. They are tested and further shaped as part of the campaign which is being developed more broadly. I draw that out to make sure that people are aware that this is standard market research which has occurred over a long period of time ahead of most campaigns.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will have one more non-government question before we go to the government members.

**Mr MILES:** My question is to the Premier. In 2021 you told a Gold Coast magazine—

... people will learn from me that if I say something, it's not because a pollster has told me to say it, it's not because a focus group has told me you need to talk more about this or that, it's because I truly believe in my value set.

I table that article. In answer to an estimates question on notice you have revealed that the testing was informing communication campaigns. Which campaigns did the testing inform, and will you commit to releasing the research, as I did?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I refer to the director-general's answer, which was very fulsome. I do hope the member listened to it, because in the process the member will see exactly what this is. It is not polling, as the member—I would be doing a disservice if I said 'alleged'. I should not say that. To be clear: we are not talking about the ongoing polling of political sentiment about leaders. That is not what it is about. I have been up-front about that. My views are as strong on this side of the election as they were on the other. The director-general's answer very much sums up what it is and explains the elements of the campaign and the things that it drives. It is important that I point to that answer because it is a very fair and independent answer.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, my community has been calling for action on the Pumicestone Passage for a very long time. Can you outline what the funding for Pumicestone Passage will deliver for the people of Caloundra?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It will deliver an infrastructure solution to what is a major risk for the community. Above all, I hope it will deliver peace of mind that the government cares and is actively working to try to deliver a solution to something that is really causing great angst. You will recall that when you and I were inspecting the passage people were coming up and speaking to us about their genuine interest and concerns.

I do want to single out your advocacy for it, and I am mindful that this is not a problem that has just emerged since you have been elected the member. The spotlight on the passage and the advocacy for it has certainly changed, and those who failed to represent the area are no longer making excuses. You have taken up the fight really strongly and the Deputy Premier has led the discussions.

The contribution of \$20 million plus GST is to find urgent solutions to fix those areas of breakthrough. People are concerned about the risks in areas that they have never seen before. Your community is desperately concerned if that were coupled with a storm surge or a potential weather event. I want your community to know that we have listened to your advocacy and to them and that we are tackling this head-on. We are doing everything we can to try to make sure we provide protection, and we will continue to look at short-, medium- and long-term solutions.

That move has been criticised, by the way. There have been those who have criticised, firstly, your advocacy and, secondly, the Deputy Premier's response. I am not one of them. I applaud both of you—you for taking up the fight and the Deputy Premier for funding the solutions to have a crack at fixing what is causing great angst in your community. I thank you for taking up the fight.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Premier, I want to get to the bottom of the future of train manufacturing in my community. It is one of the major industries. This is a crucial program for the residents of Maryborough. Premier, can you please tell me what is in the budget for this program and for my community?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am grateful you have raised this. I know you have addressed a number of issues relevant to your electorate. This one is massively relevant to your electorate, but it is pretty important for Queensland as well. There are two elements to this: supporting the work to make sure that we do what we can to maintain a presence in your great city to keep services running; and having new opportunities when it comes to manufacturing trains.

I acknowledge the way that you have taken up the fight in this regard. I am mindful of how important it is for your electorate, especially the several hundred jobs. This is one project that underpins the confidence and the identity of your community. At the Wide Bay event the other night we met another person in manufacturing whose business is linked to the project. I think that is important. No conversation is complete without saying, yes, there are many jobs that rely directly on it but there is also the flow-on effect throughout the town. That facility is really important to all of the small and family businesses in the town and the people who work there. It is about their identity. I want your community to know that we are funding this for the long term. We do have a long-term vision for this manufacturing project. By doing that, we can give certainty to people that they should be investing in your community. If we couple that with dealing with law and order and some of the antisocial issues we are seeing, we can make sure that your beautiful city can live up to its great expectations. When the eyes of the world are on your city in 2032, we will be able to hit the bullseye.

**Mr CRANDON:** We saw a number of scare campaigns run ahead of the budget including one around support for homelessness services. Can you talk about how this budget proves our commitment to supporting vulnerable Queenslanders?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Very much so, and I will give it with the direct figure of \$208.9 million over four years. What that does is locks in a 20 per cent funding uplift for those people who are providing specialist homelessness services. I have had the opportunity to speak directly to a number of them. I was on the Gold Coast with Minister O'Connor and we spoke to a great provider in the youth space. I

was in Mackay with the member for Mackay speaking about a large provider in that space. I spoke to them about what this means. Again, it is about the certainty that they can recruit people and provide services.

I think that is one of the things that has been missing. Short termism and a collective view of government that you respond to a crisis, fund something and then move on does not enable long-term solutions. If you want to get value for money and if you want to show respect for people's money you have to fund long-term solutions so that people can gear their services and the people who provide them around that.

We spoke a lot about social and community housing during the election campaign. We said that by 2044 we want to add 53,500 community and social homes. There are a couple of things. Firstly, we are going to make sure that every cent from the Housing Investment Fund is used to develop new supply. I contrast that with what we saw with a multibillion dollar fund that was not able to build a single dwelling that a Queenslander could live in over the course of three years. If ever you need a glaring example of poor planning and execution and a lack of ministerial accountability, that is it.

That is changing. There are many hundreds that are now coming online or are in the process of coming online. It is important we do that. In addition, there is \$380.1 million over five years for crisis accommodation, frontline housing and homelessness services. I want people who work in the sector to know that we value and respect what they do. They help the most vulnerable at the most difficult of times. I hope they help people on a pathway to living full and productive lives now and into the future.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, a project I campaigned hard for is the new TAFE centre of excellence in Caloundra. Could you tell us more about how the Crisafulli government's first budget is delivering a plan for Queensland's future by skilling Queenslanders for the jobs of tomorrow?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member has asked specifically about Caloundra, but, with the indulgence of the committee, I would like to talk a little more across the board. I know how much you love your community, member, but there are four TAFE facilities that we are funding.

Let me make a couple of points. Over the next four years the budget commits \$201.1 million to build those new TAFE facilities. During the election campaign there was a campaign waged that we would not be funding TAFE. Do you remember that?

**Mr CRANDON:** Sure do.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It did not age well. We are not only bolstering TAFE but also building new ones. I can only keep reminding those opposite about it because it is important to show Queenslanders that when we say something we do follow through.

The Caloundra TAFE centre of excellence focuses on construction. We know how important that is. You live in a very desirable part of the world, but it needs a lot of infrastructure. It is important we train the pipeline of people coming through to deliver the skills and jobs to cater for that region. It is going to be an exciting facility for your part of the world as will the ones in Central Queensland and more broadly across the state.

TAFE gives people the opportunity to be able to get skills, go to work, be productive and build a great life. We want people to know that we value all elements of training, including tertiary study which is also important. The ability for someone to get an apprenticeship or to go to TAFE is something we should value and respect. We are determined to make sure that we secure the future of TAFE. These new facilities are proof across a range of areas—agriculture, construction and mining.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, the Gold Coast Regional Delivery Plan outlines a range of critical upgrades to our local schools. That is in addition to the \$815 million commitment for new schools. Could you expand on what is in the budget for school facilities in our Gold Coast communities?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Across the state there is \$814.8 million for new schools. That is part of over \$1 billion for the capital component of education. There are two elements I want to focus on. The first is the fairer funding deal that we secured with the Commonwealth government. That will see a massive investment in education into the future. We were able to extract a very good deal from the Commonwealth, and we genuinely enjoyed the way those negotiations unfolded. We believe we secured a great deal for Queensland—a deal that was not possible previously.

The one I want to speak about, because it does relate specifically to your electorate, is our commitment to deliver six new special schools. One of those will be in Coomera. I know there is a massive demand for it in your community. I understand that there are people who share different views

around special schools. I could not be more categorical about how important I believe they are in education in terms of offering parents choice. We are all in on this.

We have said that we are going to build six new special schools. I went with the minister the other day and saw the work that the educators are doing on the front line and how they are turning young lives around and providing an environment that can support people who have difficulties with learning. We should be proud of that. We should be proud of giving parents choice. That is what it is about.

Parents need to choose where to send their kids, but it is difficult to choose if there are not facilities to offer that choice. There was no pipeline for special schools prior to the election and we have implemented one and properly funded it. I want Queensland parents to know that in the years ahead we will continue to do it and do more of it. I cannot wait to see it unfold in your electorate, member for Coomera. It will be a great opportunity for the people of Coomera and the broader Gold Coast.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I go to questions from non-government members, I point out that we will do questions on notice at the end of the hearing. This session will conclude at 12.45 pm.

**Mr MILES:** I have two more questions for the Auditor-General. With reference to page 77 of Budget Paper 2, it says—

The abovementioned QAO report identified that expenditure on contractors and consultants represented more than 30 per cent of total construction costs.

Is it correct that the *State entities 2024* report only provides a breakdown of the share in classes of total contractor spend?

**Ms Vagg:** Are you talking about the breakdown by classification?

**Mr MILES:** Correct.

**Ms Vagg:** That is representative of the actual costs recorded within government accounts.

**Mr MILES:** Is it incorrect, then, that more than 30 per cent of construction costs are contractors and consultants?

**Ms Vagg:** Sorry, can you clarify the question?

**Mr MILES:** Perhaps we could provide Budget Paper 2 to the Auditor-General. Given we have three remaining minutes, I might write to you, Auditor-General, with this question and allow you a chance to provide a fulsome response.

**Ms Vagg:** I am happy to take the question on notice.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, I am happy to assure the member we can get that by the end of the session so we do not have to take it on notice.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Are you happy with that?

**Mr MILES:** Very good, thank you. The member for Sandgate can have the last four minutes.

**Ms ASIF:** Director-General, I table an article in relation to managerial training provided after staff departed a ministerial office. How much money has been spent on managerial lessons and how many lessons did the minister attend?

**Mr Walker:** Member for Sandgate, you made reference to a minister; is that right?

**Ms ASIF:** Yes, with reference to the article which has been tabled.

**Mr Walker:** I might need to wait upon the article. I have not seen it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Could we get a copy to the director-general, please?

**Ms ASIF:** While we wait for that, do you have a figure on how much has been spent on termination payments for ministerial staff?

**Mr Walker:** If you do not mind, member, I will just have a quick look at the article you mentioned. There are a couple of things here. Firstly, what I can talk to is ministerial staff training more broadly. Particularly with an incoming government, there is induction training that takes place. There have been significant sessions held with approximately 230 ministers, assistant ministers and office staff since November 2024. Training sessions included an integrity agency panel discussion with the CCC and a session with the Integrity Commissioner. Ministerial staff have undertaken workplace behaviour training. Induction training will continue as necessary, particularly as you get a turnover of staff. That has certainly been a focus with an incoming government and those ministerial officers which include

ministers, assistant ministers, their chiefs of staff, and staff more broadly. I think the second part to your question related—

**Ms ASIF:** I have a point of clarification, and I am happy for you to take that on notice and get it back to us by the end of the session. It is about how much has been spent on termination payments of ministerial staff employed under the Crisafulli government.

**Mr Walker:** I can deal with that one now, member, if you like. There have been 29 movements within ministerial offices—that is resignations and terminations—since 1 November through 30 June. That represents approximately 11 per cent of the ministerial budgeted FTE. Having done this role in South Australia recently I can say that this is an expected number, particularly with the storming and forming of a new government and even an opposition. The seven terminations in amongst the 29 resignations and terminations totalled a cost of \$48,187 in notice and termination benefits in line with the contracts.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Do you have another quick one, member for Sandgate?

**Ms ASIF:** I am okay. Thank you.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You have run out of questions. Are we done?

**Mr WHITING:** No. We have more questions. How many days have you got?

**Mr MILES:** We have more questions but none that we can do in 30 seconds.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Two minutes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You had one job.

**Mr CRANDON:** I am happy to ask a question.

**Mr MILES:** No. I have more questions. Director-General, I refer to page 1 of the SDS and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's objective to deliver an accountable and effective government. Director-General, did the decision to leverage Queensland Investment Corporation's infrastructure expertise to deliver CopperString go to cabinet and, if so, when?

**Mr SPEAKER:** You have one minute to respond, Director-General.

**Mr Walker:** Leader of the Opposition, I will need to take some guidance on that from my officials. I am not aware of the timing and precisely what the nature of that advice was.

**Mr MILES:** You can probably get back to me on that. Do you recall on what date you were briefed that QIC would be engaged to help deliver CopperString?

**Mr Walker:** No, I do not.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Would you be able to take that on notice because the time has expired?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We can get some information.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You are happy to take that on advice. We have now reached the end of the time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the Premier and cabinet area of responsibility.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The committee will now examine the veterans area of responsibility. Bart Mellish, member for Aspley, is now substituting for Mr Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Premier, you have five minutes to address this area of your portfolio.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, before I do, I thank the staff—the likes of the Auditor-General, the Public Sector Commissioner and the Office of the Governor. Those who are not involved in this session may wish to go and continue their day. Thank you, everybody. I am very grateful. Thank you all for your time. It is very much appreciated.

Mr Speaker, I am very proud to serve not only as Premier but also as Minister for Veterans in the government. The budget includes \$19 million over four years to honour and support Queensland veterans and their families. Veterans and their families play a really important role in Queensland's history, and they have an important role in the future. We should acknowledge that. It is one of the reasons we have expanded our definition of 'veterans' to include our current service men and women.

Queensland is home to 163,000 veterans, and we thank them for what they do. It is the largest population of veterans in the nation. Despite this statistic, we are currently the only jurisdiction without a dedicated veterans strategy. This budget will change that, and I am very proud of that. The amount of \$9 million is allocated to support veterans including the development of a Queensland veterans and

veterans' family strategy. The strategy will identify emerging needs of our veteran community. Importantly, it will guide our implementation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

This funding will also support veterans and their families with legal, employment, homelessness and education initiatives. Annual funding of \$300,000 will go to Oasis Townsville to give the long-term certainty the organisation needs. They play an important role in veteran employment. It is something that our local Townsville MPs have all advocated for, and I thank them all for it. I also want to thank the assistant minister, who herself is a Townsville MP, Janelle Poole, who has worked well with former brigadier Caligari on this.

Earlier in the year I announced an \$800,000 commitment to support veterans and first responders through the 4 Aussie Heroes foundation. The funding will help deliver a purpose-built facility in the Scenic Rim. The local member, Jon Krause, has championed this cause, and I want to thank him today on behalf of his community. The state-of-the-art centre will become home to the foundation's 'Triumph over Trauma' programs. They support former first responders and members of the Australian Defence Force. It is another way of the many that we are standing by our veterans—and they stood for us.

An \$8 million investment in this budget will provide funding to honour our veterans. This allocation will continue to fund commemorative initiatives, events and memorials. It includes things like the Anzac Day march in Brisbane, the annual Anzac Day dawn service and student service, and the Nurses Memorial Candlelight Vigil—all very important events. They provide an opportunity for our community to reflect on and acknowledge the service, the sacrifice and the dedication of those men and women.

We have also increased funding to the Queensland Veterans' Council. An additional \$7.4 million will help maintain Anzac Square in Brisbane and the Memorial Galleries. Anzac Square is home to Queensland's primary war memorial and Shrine of Remembrance. It is also the site of Australia's oldest eternal flame, and we should be really proud of that.

A new grant funding program honouring our veterans has also been established in this budget. A total of \$6 million will provide grants for projects that honour and commemorate the service and sacrifice of veterans and raise awareness of their contributions. Schools, TAFEs, universities, sporting clubs or historical societies will be eligible to apply for funding.

I am also proud to have established the Premier's Veterans' Fund. This \$2 million fund will support special projects, services and events that enhance the wellbeing of veterans and their families. It will fill an important gap in funding for our veterans. The fund will provide discretionary financial support for initiatives which may not meet the eligibility or scope requirements of other government programs, so it is tailored to meet the gap in the market that we see.

Since I have been the Minister for Veterans I have had many opportunities to engage with our service men and women. Only a few weeks ago at a VP80 event in parliament with the Leader of the House we were able to honour five World War II veterans, which was a very special moment. Their stories were, quite frankly, remarkable and their commitment to service was unmatched. We really were in awe to be in their presence. VP80 also provides an excellent opportunity for Townsville. They are going to have an incredible celebration and we are contributing to that. Our veterans gave everything and we should be very, very proud of them. I welcome questions from the committee.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will go to non-government members. I call the member for Aspley for the first question.

**Mr MELLISH:** Premier, Toowong Private Hospital, a vital facility that treated around 3,000 mental health and veteran patients annually, has been forced to close after nearly 50 years of service due to funding shortfalls blamed on health insurers. What role do you believe the state government should play in addressing this gap, particularly for veterans who relied on these specialised trauma recovery programs?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Thank you, member; that is a very good question. The answer is that we need to continue to bolster the public offering that we have and we have to have a laser-like focus on veterans. You are right: there are shortfalls in the private sector which are deeply troubling. That is something we need to work on with the federal government and private providers. As a state, we need to continue to bolster mental health support and we have to have a laser-like focus on veterans and support the entities I have spoken about here as well. I do thank the member for raising it.

**Mr MELLISH:** Premier, what additional resourcing is being provided to the public system to absorb displaced patients, and are you confident that public hospitals can provide equivalent care to what veterans received at Toowong?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We must continue to bolster it. I did speak earlier about what we are doing in the mental health space. I am happy to furnish the member with that. It is a massive loss and it is something the veteran community has raised. We do have to make sure that we work wherever we can with the federal government to try to find a way to make those private providers incentivised to do it. Yes, as a state we also need to do more.

**Mr MELLISH:** Given that response, Premier, have you raised this matter with the federal minister for veterans' affairs and health ministers, and are you advocating for any changes to ensure that the mental health services veterans depend upon remain financially viable?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We will continue to raise it. It is important that we make sure we reflect on the report into veteran suicide. I have offered the federal government to use us, through our Veterans' Council, as a blueprint to roll that model out across the state. Obviously we would love more support with that so we can go across more areas. We do see an opportunity with that and I have written personally to the veterans' minister about it.

**Mr MELLISH:** Just to clarify, Premier: you have not raised this with the federal minister for veterans' affairs?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have directly written to the veterans' minister about the need to do more following that. That report, as you would know—you have read it, I am sure—was sobering. My offer to work with the Commonwealth is very strong.

**Mr MELLISH:** How many veterans previously treated at Toowong have been successfully transitioned to other services and how is continuity of care being ensured, particularly for those with complex trauma needs?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** We can definitely get the health minister to furnish the member with the answer to that question. It is a good question.

**Mr MELLISH:** Since taking on the veterans' portfolio how many meetings have you personally held with ex-service organisations or veterans' support groups in Queensland?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My diary is public, but I can tell you that as recently as Saturday a week ago, so less than 10 days ago, I had the great opportunity to meet in Townsville on Saturday afternoon with Oasis and thank them for what they do. I will continue to do it. My diary is public. I can announce to the House that I will also be attending VP80 in Townsville. I am hopeful that will be a great event for the city.

**Mr MELLISH:** Premier, have you met with organisations such as RSL Queensland, Mates4Mates, Legacy or Soldier On in relation to the major funding and service delivery concerns that some of these organisations have?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have met with many of the RSLs and many providers. When we did our community heroes, one of our legends was in fact a third party NGO that does great things for defence. I will continue to meet with them. I think very highly of them. We have properly resourced it accordingly.

**Mr MELLISH:** Premier, will you commit to publishing a forward schedule of upcoming veterans' roundtables or consultations across Queensland, starting with regions like Townsville, Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast, as you move towards a veterans' strategy which you spoke about earlier?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** One of the things I wanted to do was make sure we expanded that. The member will see the number of regions we are going to. I want people to come and make a contribution, and I did not want it just to be in Brisbane. You will see the breadth of locations we are going to—north, south and indeed west.

**Mr MELLISH:** Premier, in relation to implementing the recommendations of the September 2024 Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, has the governmental allocated funding to implement those recommendations which fall under state responsibility?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Across multiple agencies there is money that will be used, of course, to do that. At a state level, as I said, I have written federally because I do believe there is an opportunity for the Commonwealth to partner with us. That is very important. We will continue to do that. We have taken on board those responses. We have seen what we can do as a state. We are very happy to work collaboratively with them.

**Mr MELLISH:** Specifically, how much funding has been allocated this year and over the forward estimates to implement those recommendations?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Member, as I mentioned, it is across the board. It is housing; it is health. There are a number of agencies. You could obviously ask every one of them individually about the different elements. I can tell you what we are doing. We are coordinating a strategy, working with the Veteran's Council and driving opportunities.

**Mr MELLISH:** Director-General, which Queensland departments are responsible for those recommendations?

**Mr Walker:** There are a number of recommendations, many of which sit with the federal government itself. A number of them do indeed have an interface with the state government. I do not have at hand which departments, particularly with the machinery-of-government changes and precisely where they sit. It is fair to say that a key department will be the Department of Health. The Department of Health will play a major role. Our role is to coordinate across those agencies with regard to the recommendations themselves. As the Premier mentioned, health plays a significant role. Some other departments will also have a role to play there.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Aspley, you probably have time for one more question before I go to government members.

**Mr MELLISH:** Director-General, has a time line or implementation plan been developed for each recommendation? Will you table that plan, given that the recommendations came out in September 2024?

**Mr Walker:** I do not have the time line at hand for the recommendations. As you would imagine, some of these are particularly complex. They do not just relate to the state government. They indeed relate to our working relationship with the federal government, of which the federal government is the primary party here. There is still work occurring between the state government and the federal government with regard to those recommendations. I think much of that work needs to conclude before we would have a precise time line for the elements that the state government is indeed responsible for. We will continue to work in good faith with the federal government with regard to those recommendations that do have a state interface.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will go to government members for questions.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** In reference to page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements, can the Premier explain why the Office for Veterans has been brought into the Department of the Premier and Cabinet?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is for a couple of reasons. One is what the honourable member for Aspley asked about—that is, the coordinating role—but there is another thing, which is the symbolism of how important service is. I hope by attaching that to the Premier's department it sends a message about how grateful we are for the service of our service men and women. I think that is important. We have to acknowledge the challenges that come after someone has served but also the opportunities. People who have served their country have an amazing skill set. I talk about areas like logistics, where they can play such an amazing role as productive members of society. I have spoken to many of those different organisations and businesses which have employed former veterans. Even those veterans who are challenged from their service are amazing employees because they have a great skill set and a discipline that enables them to be great contributing members of society.

Member for Maryborough, I am mindful of how important the military history is to your city. I have been to a couple of facilities with you in that regard and I have seen how much blood, sweat and tears your volunteers have put into that so I have to acknowledge that. Across the board, it is important that we do that and that we play a role. There are two documents for me that provide us the best opportunity from Canberra: one is the report into veteran suicide and the other is the defence white paper. There are some really big economic opportunities that can come with that, as well as some great social opportunities that come with the first. I want to use the attachment of veterans to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to say thank you to our service men and women and to drive good outcomes for them in the years to come.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, you mentioned funding for the Queensland Veterans' Council before. Can you expand on how the Crisafulli government is working with the Queensland Veterans' Council more fully?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is a \$7.4 million boost over five years, with \$1.8 million per year to the Queensland Veterans' Council for the maintenance and management of things like Anzac Square and Memorial Galleries. That brings the total funding for the Veterans' Council to \$12.6 million over five years. I want those people who serve on the Veterans' Council to feel empowered to drive change for



their veterans. I really do. I want to be able to show that they have resources into the future and that we have every chance of being able to engage them to deliver great precincts and great energy around events and defence opportunities. This funding gives that certainty and that uplift, and I think it will deliver a long-term benefit.

**Dr ROWAN:** Thank you, Premier, for your leadership of the veterans portfolio. Premier, can you elaborate further on how the Crisafulli government's first budget supports initiatives that benefit veterans and their families with the creation of a new Premier's Veterans' Fund?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Member, thanks for your service. The Premier's Veterans' Fund is a new initiative and it is about helping veterans and their families. One of the points of difference in our strategy and why I think it will be successful—and, as I mentioned, Queensland does not have one so that is a missing piece of the puzzle. I do want the usual economic opportunities to come through it, but I also think there is a really great play to listen to the families of veterans on how we as a community can do better for them. If we get that right, that strategy can drive economic and social opportunities for them.

The Premier's Veterans' Fund is about financial support for those initiatives that might otherwise fall through the cracks—those projects, services and events. It is the things that can shine a light on those who have served and for that to be acknowledged publicly. It is a very public-facing fund to deliver that recognition. In many ways, that might be a very small way that we as a community can show that their service matters and how important that is.

It has been amazing to go around the state. I was in Calliope with the member for Callide just the other day, and when I went to the memorial in that beautiful community I saw how proud they were of its history and their vision to take it to the next level. They are things that I have seen replicated across the state. I think this is a really good fund to shine a light on that and to develop those projects, services and events that can make a difference.

**Ms MORTON:** Premier, in reference to page 2 of the Service Delivery Statements, how is the Crisafulli government supporting key commemorative events and memorials which honour veterans across Queensland?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The member asks about page 2 of the SDS, so let's unpack what that looks like for commemorative events. The first is the headline, which is \$8 million for events and memorials to honour veterans across Queensland. I spoke before about that smaller fund for the ones that fall through the cracks. This is the bigger ones, and I will give you a list: the Anzac Day march in Brisbane, the Anzac Day dawn service, the students service in Anzac Square and the Anzac Nurses Memorial candlelight vigil.

I make the observation that across the state we have RSLs that do such an amazing job, and when you go to those events you see what it means to those communities. This Anzac Day I was able to do the dawn service in Townsville, I got back to do the parade in Brisbane and I was able to then go to a memorial service at the bowls club in Paradise Point in my electorate. The one thing in common across the board is that sense of calm reflection and acknowledgement. It is important that we have a fund for those commemorative initiatives.

You do not understand how large the service community in the broader south-east is until you see that Anzac Day march in Brisbane. Across the three service arms of Army, Navy and Air Force, you see the quantum of those service men and women and the impact they make. You get a sense of it and the gravity of how large it is. I was fortunate enough this year to be able to join the Governor, who honours them not only with her presence but also by standing for the duration of it, which is a mighty achievement, while the rest of us are seated. To see the quantum of that march and how long it is shows you the impact that veterans and their families make in our communities.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will have one more question before we go to the questions on notice.

**Mr CRANDON:** Premier, this is on behalf of the electorates of Theodore, Bonney, Coomera and, may I say, Broadwater on the northern Gold Coast. I note the SDS on page 9 mentions a new cenotaph at Maudsland and an upgrade to the Upper Coomera cenotaph. Can you give some more details about how the Crisafulli government's first budget is supporting veterans and local veterans initiatives like that? May I also put on the record that we are in fact hosting Northern Gold Coast RSL members here in October. I am looking forward to that and I am sure you are, too.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I sure am, member. I am mindful of time and the need for us to go back and furnish the committee with a few things. In general, member, there is \$500,000 for two projects on the Gold Coast. You are right: you and the member for Theodore have pushed really hard for them. The new Maudsland Cenotaph is one that I have spoken to the member about on numerous occasions. He

sees that as a really great opportunity for that community. There is a very strong service element in the northern Gold Coast of which you are well and truly aware. There are a number of people who have either served from the northern Gold Coast or who have retired into the northern Gold Coast, and these are fitting and proper. We are also enhancing the Upper Coomera Cenotaph and there is a bit of work that needs to occur there. Across the board, it is vital that in regards to the question you raise, which is SDS page 9, there is \$8 million total investment in honouring our veterans. That includes initiatives, events and memorials. I do want to thank the member very much for his advocacy.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier. There were eight questions taken on notice. Can you provide what you can now, please?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Let me race through them. One is on DPC staff at estimates. I did thank the opposition leader for the question, but I will again. To support the Premier and director-general, there are 24 dedicated staff both in the chamber and in providing support from across the Cabinet Office, Governance and Engagement, and from the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. I do want to take this opportunity to thank them all, including those in their absence who have left. Thank you very much.

Question 2 regarding the energy rebates that existed, the electricity rebate of \$386.34 per year is available to eligible concession card holders being Queensland Seniors Card, Services Australia or Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card, Services Australia Health Care Card and Department of Veterans' Affairs Veteran Gold Card. Asylum seeker status residents will need to provide their ImmiCard details for that rebate. This includes holders of a Low Income Health Care Card and Ex-Carer Allowance. This means that more than 600,000 seniors, pensioners, veterans and concession card holders will get an increased \$386 Queensland Electricity Rebate from 1 July.

The Queensland concession framework also includes the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme which pays up to \$720 once every two years to Queensland householders who experience problems paying their electricity or reticulated natural gas bills as a result of an unforeseen emergency or a short-term financial crisis that has occurred within the past 12 months, as a one-off emergency assistance to help with those energy bills.

The next question was on the energy price modelling and this is one that I would have liked myself, but Queensland Treasury does a range of modelling on energy. That is considered by government and ultimately then the electricity prices are set by the retailers. To be clear, the idea of an Energy Maintenance Guarantee is something we took to the election because, having seen 19.9 per cent rise in power prices when one of the major power generators was offline for such a large period of time—I was looking for the member for Springwood—we had to invest. We wanted to guarantee an investment in that to make sure that we can keep that base load power for the state.

Then there was the question around the QGAir. I want the committee to know that I fly regularly both commercial and Queensland Government Air Wing. The details on my travel are outlined in my ministerial diaries. They are publicly available. The reporting on the use of the Queensland Government Air Wing and ministerial travel is detailed on the open data portal. In the open data portal, the member can search QG ministerial travel. That reporting arrangement has been in place since 2014-15. For the benefit of the committee I have travelled to a number of locations via air and road, as well as those in South-East Queensland. Here are a few: Cairns, Mossman, Ingham, Halifax, Cardwell, Townsville, Mackay, Yeppoon, Rockhampton, Sarina, Gladstone, Quilpie, Jundah, Thargomindah, Longreach, Mount Isa, Royston, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Horn Island, Thursday Island, Saibai Island, Mer Island, and there are many others as well as those in the South-East.

Then there was the question to the Auditor-General. The QAO report titled *State entities 2024* includes an analysis of expenditure on consultants and contractors. Figure 5L represents the proportion of total expenditure on consultants and contractors by categories. Around 30 per cent of total expenditure on consultants and contractors was in the construction sector. The figure is not stating that 30 per cent of total construction costs related to consultants and contractors.

I do hope I have furnished the committee with the relevant details required. I do thank the members for their time. I thank the opposition and the government members for the questions. I note your strong interests more broadly in the state as well as your individual electorates. Thank you very much for that.

Mr Speaker, thank you for the first of what will be a couple of gruelling weeks. I am very grateful. To all of the staff, thank you very much for your time.

**Mr WHITING:** There was a question on CopperString.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You are in luck. The bloke responsible for it is here in half an hour.

**Mr WHITING:** That is a non-answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. We have reached the end of time allocated for consideration of proposed expenditure for the areas of responsibility administered by the Premier and Minister for Veterans. The committee has resolved that answers to questions on notice must be provided to the committee secretariat by 5 pm on Friday, 1 August 2025. There were none taken on notice, so there are none outstanding. Thank you, Premier, officials and departmental officers for your attendance. The committee will now adjourn until 2 pm when we will examine the estimates portfolio areas for the Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership.

**Proceedings suspended from 1.15 pm to 2.00 pm.**

## **ESTIMATES—GOVERNANCE, ENERGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE— TREASURY; ENERGY; HOME OWNERSHIP**

### **In Attendance**

Hon. DC Janetzki, Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership

Mr Matt Tapsall, Chief of Staff

#### **Queensland Treasury**

Mr Paul Williams, Under Treasurer (Office of the Under Treasurer)

Mr Drew Ellem, Strategic Policy

#### **CS Energy Limited**

Mr Brian Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer

#### **Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (Powerlink)**

Prof. Paul Simshauser AM, Chief Executive



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Good afternoon. We will now resume proceedings. For the benefit of those who have just joined us, I am Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim and Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Under the provisions of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, I will preside over this afternoon's hearing. The members of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee here this afternoon are: Mr Michael Crandon, chair and member for Coomera; Mr Chris Whiting, deputy chair and member for Bancroft; Ms Bisma Asif, member for Sandgate; Mr John Barounis, member for Maryborough; the Hon. Shannon Fentiman, member for Waterford, who is substituting for Mr Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba; and Ms Kendall Morton, member for Caloundra. The committee is joined by other members who have been granted leave to attend and ask questions at the hearing today.

I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at the Deputy Speaker's discretion or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat. Staff who are assisting our witnesses here today are permitted to use their personal electronic devices in the chamber. I ask all present to ensure phones and other electronic devices are switched to silent mode or turned off when not in use. That includes members at the table. I also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in this chamber.

The committee will examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the Treasury portfolio until 4.30 pm before examining the portfolio area of home ownership from 4.30 pm until 5 pm. The committee will then adjourn for a break until 5.30 pm, when the committee will resume to examine the energy portfolio area until the end of the hearing at 7 pm.

I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the time specified for that area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage. I also remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. In respect of government owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being effectively spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Treasurer, Under Treasurer, officials, departmental officers and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisers to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the Treasurer or Under Treasurer. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of the Treasury open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Treasurer, if you wish, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to say a few words before the committee today. The Crisafulli government's first budget is delivering the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for last October. It is a budget that honours our election commitments and it is grounded in the principle of respecting taxpayers' money. It lays the foundation for budget repair to clean up a decade of fiscal vandalism whilst saving the jobs and services that were not budgeted for. Despite inheriting ballooning debt, declining coal royalties and the biggest redistribution of GST revenue in Australian history away from our state, our budget includes no new or increased taxes because it is beyond time we restored taxation and regulatory certainty and stability.

Debt will be lower under the Crisafulli government than it would have been under the former Labor government and deficits will be reduced to \$1.1 billion in 2028-29. We are delivering for Queensland: more frontline workers, more schools, more police beats, more homes and more hospitals and hospital beds. We are providing targeted cost-of-living relief for those who need it most.

Queenslanders voted for health services when they need them. We are investing a record \$29.4 billion in health care in 2025-26 and \$18.5 billion for the Hospital Rescue Plan—the biggest investment in health infrastructure in Queensland's history. It will be invested in new and expanded hospitals, 2,600 additional beds and more than 4½ thousand extra health workers in 2025-26.

Some \$347.7 million has been committed to the Making Queensland Safer Laws. We are bolstering the front line with 1,600 new police recruits across the term and we have committed to stopping the scourge of domestic violence and to better support victims.

We are delivering one million new homes by 2044, giving more Queenslanders a place to call home. The first \$1 billion of the cornerstone \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund will be allocated by 30 June 2026. There will be 2,000 new social and community homes a year by 2028—four times the rate of the former government—as we strive to meet a target of 53½ thousand new social homes by 2044. Our nation-leading \$165 million Boost to Buy scheme is reducing the deposit gap for aspiring home owners. We have extended the boosted first home owner grant to \$30,000 for 12 months and we have abolished stamp duty for first home buyers purchasing a new home.

We are delivering the single largest investment into public schools in the state's history and providing 550 more teacher aides and support teachers. We have provided targeted, timely, responsible and recurrent cost-of-living support for those who need it. Our \$100 Back to School Boost, starting from 1 January for every primary school student in Queensland, will help parents prepare their children for the school year. We have provided long-term funding for the \$200 PlayOn! sports voucher program. We are increasing the Electricity Maintenance Guarantee, from \$1.4 billion to \$1.6 billion, to properly maintain our generation assets and to put downward pressure on power bills. We have locked in the Crisafulli government's permanent 50-cent fares. We are restoring indexation to the electricity rebate scheme for vulnerable households, providing an uplift in support that more than 600,000 Queensland households will receive. We are investing \$37½ million for free health checks for kids in kindy; \$26.3 million for our Supercharged Solar for Renters program to reduce power bills for renters; and in 2025-26, Queensland state owned energy businesses will invest over \$5 billion across the energy supply chain, with further investments to be made as part of the five-year Energy Roadmap, which will be released at the end of the year.

After years of false starts, this government finally has a plan for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are seizing the opportunity to build the generational infrastructure Queensland needs for the future. We are investing \$41.7 billion on transport, roads and fixing the Bruce Highway.

We promised a calm and methodical approach to the budget, we said that we would save the jobs and services that were not budgeted for by our predecessors, we said that we would restore respect for taxpayers' money and we said that we would begin the work of long-term budget repair. We are doing all of those things and we are delivering for Queensland.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Treasurer, for your opening statement. We will now move to members' questions. I will turn to the non-government side first.

**Mr WHITING:** I would like to go to the member for Waterford and shadow treasurer.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, I want to start today with a bit of an apology. I know at your last event you preferred to get the questions sent through beforehand via text. Obviously we were not able to do that today, but we are just going to roll with it, so are you ready?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you have a question, member for Waterford?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, my first question is to you. With reference to page 14 of BP2, which states cost-of-living pressures will remain a concern for Queensland households, can the Treasurer advise if there were any options for consideration undertaken on providing universal energy rebates?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Households remain under pressure. They remain under pressure across-the-board: mortgages, groceries, fuel and power bills. Households remain under pressure and we know it. This government has been very determined to address those short-term cost-of-living pressures and also address long-term, structural cost-of-living pressures through the right investments into those areas that can put that downward pressure on cost of living over the long term.

The honourable member who has asked the question would know from sitting around the CBRC table for the last year or two of the former government that the last Labor government budget that was handed down spent a great deal of time talking about temporary cost-of-living measures which would be wound back—all of that sort of language. When we went into formulating this budget we were very determined to deliver recurrent and responsible, targeted and timely cost-of-living support. We did that through a number of mechanisms. Firstly, we focused on some short-term cost-of-living relief. We invested \$188 million into the budget for a Back to School Boost and \$100 for primary school aged children to help families get their kids back to school with those early cost-of-living pressures in the start of a school year. We made Play On! vouchers permanent. It would have ended under the former government at the end of June. Their FairPlay vouchers—the Play On! vouchers—would have ended at the end of June. It was not recurrent. They were not serious about it.

With respect to power bills, we were very focused on the need to help those who are most vulnerable and at risk in our community. There are 600,000 households that received the energy rebate and we lifted that energy rebate. It is a small amount, but we wanted to send a message to those households that unlike the former government, we will not be freezing that indexation again. For as long as the Crisafulli government is in office we will be continuing to index those payments for those who are most vulnerable because we are focused on the short term to support those at-risk and vulnerable households—600,000 and there are 2.1 million households in the state—to help those households in the short term. When you couple that with the \$100 Back to School Boost, the Play On! vouchers and then the long-term investments that we are making into the structural cost-of-living relief that we need, which I will spend more time on talking about during the afternoon and evening—one of them, the electricity maintenance guarantee to invest into those long-term structural relief concerns—we have a comprehensive, short-term and long-term cost-of-living package.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Sorry to interrupt. Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is on relevance. Thank you, Treasurer, for all of that, but the question was: were there any options for consideration on providing universal energy rebates? I appreciate all of that context.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I hear your point of order on relevance. I have been listening carefully to the Treasurer and consider that he has been relevant to the considerations around long-term energy rebates. Treasurer, could you continue, please?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The focus for us over the short term was supporting those vulnerable and at-risk households—those 600,000 households—by lifting the freezing of the indexation that the former government had applied and making sure we supported those households that need it most and committing to not freezing that indexation again and then also investing into the long-term investments that are necessary to put downward pressure on power prices over the long term. That is what we have done and I would contrast that with the former government. Littered throughout BP2 of the former government's last budget when the honourable member sat around the CBRC table were all those measures that they took which were all temporary, to be unwound. That was the language in their budget. What we are delivering is across-the-board. Whether it is the Crisafulli government's permanent funding of the 50-cent fares, whether it is the Back to School Boost, whether it is the Play On! vouchers, we are committed to cost-of-living relief that is recurrent and responsible, targeted and timely.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have a question now for the Under Treasurer. What modelling, if any, was done on the impact on Queensland households in deciding not to continue with universal energy rebates?

**Mr Williams:** Treasury will regularly undertake modelling for all sorts of different circumstances to do with budget considerations. Generally speaking, those are part of the process that we apply during and while we are considering various options to decide what the formal budget outcomes are going to be. Scenarios and outcomes change right up to the final decisions. Essentially, I would reference section 1.5 of the Cabinet Handbook, which states that cabinet documents are very diverse in form and

may broadly be defined as documents that, if disclosed, would reveal any consideration or deliberation of cabinet, or otherwise prejudice the confidentiality of cabinet considerations, deliberations or operations. On the basis of that, I am very limited in what I can say around the modelling that was done given it was a proposal or it could have been a proposal that was put before executive government.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I do understand that that kind of modelling would have formed part of CBRC deliberations. I return to the Treasurer. On 12 March 2024 at the *Courier-Mail* cost-of-living debate the now Premier said universal energy rebates needed to be in the budget, saying, 'It's got to be.' He stated—

The reason it has to be is because the increase in power prices is out of control.

The Premier also said energy rebates were needed so that Queenslanders could 'keep their heads above water'. Was it Treasury's position that Queensland power prices had, in fact, decreased and Queenslanders were no longer struggling with the cost of living?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I think the context of the Premier's remarks must be placed on the record. Those comments related to a period of time when, because of the failings of the former Labor government, power bills had increased 19.9 per cent. There was a range of reasons for that in respect of our generators that had not been properly maintained and were offline. The context of those remarks had seen the most extraordinary increase in power bills in Queensland and Queenslanders should not have had to pay for the failings of that former Labor government. They did, but the reason behind those failings was the former Labor government had not properly maintained their assets. We had that 19.9 per cent increase in power bills. That was more than three times the national average because of the former Labor government's failings.

The question of cost-of-living relief—absolutely, and I have already made clear that the budget was about ensuring that those most in need, most vulnerable and most at risk were supported. While that vulnerable household support was lifted, we make the investments that will mean that over the long term generators are properly maintained and that the delivery of affordable, reliable and sustainable power for Queenslanders is properly invested into.

That, ultimately, is the reason behind our investments into the long term and our support of those who are most vulnerable in the short term, but, again, Queenslanders paid a very heavy price for the former government's failings over a decade. We are taking a calm and methodical approach to the budget that targets timely, recurrent and responsible cost-of-living support, investing into the jobs and services that would have otherwise ended under the former government and then ensuring we lay the foundations for budget repair, which is what the budget did. It balanced those competing challenges, and that is why the first budget was warmly supported.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** The Australian Energy Regulator recommended an increase in the default market offer of 3.7 per cent in Queensland. Did that factor at all in your consideration in removing universal energy rebates?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes. With regard to the AER, DMO and the QCA determinations of 3.8 per cent or 3.7 per cent, when factoring in to any budget any cost-of-living measures it is important that analysis is undertaken in terms of the consideration of those power bill increases as determined through the QCA, AER and DMO determinations. There was the need for us to make sure that we balanced targeted and timely recurrent and responsible cost-of-living support for those who needed it most. That was a 3.8 per cent increase in the vulnerable households energy rebate. That was a 3.8 per cent increase in that number for those vulnerable households—that is, 600,000 of them out of 2.1 million households around the state. We were very cognisant of the need to get that balance, and those determinations will always be carefully considered in determining any cost-of-living support because, as I have said, households remain under pressure.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, Gavin Dufty, the national director of energy at St Vincent de Paul, has called on governments to build up complementary measures to support people as prices continue to rise; otherwise, he says, people will be left behind as the energy market transitions. I am happy to table Mr Dufty's comments published in an ABC article. Treasurer, do you agree with Mr Dufty that that is governments' role?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can I ask: I think the committee would need to give leave so I can—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** No, you do not.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you substituting today, member for Waterford? If so, it is accepted as tabled, but we might ask for it to be taken over to the Treasurer and the other people at the table.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am sorry, but can I ask the honourable member where the remarks from Mr Dufty are?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Yes. He has called on governments in that article to build up complementary measures to support people as prices continue to rise; otherwise, he says, people will be left behind as the energy market transitions. Do you agree with him that that is governments' role?

**Mr JANETZKI:** There is certainly a role. If you look right across the budget—in terms of the comments of Mr Dufty, the St Vincent de Paul CEO, this is where the budget process is so vital. Some \$82 billion worth of the total budget is spent in social services departments. From top to bottom of government, there is a responsibility. When I look across this budget I see investment such as the 20 per cent homelessness specialist uplift worth \$209 million, \$365 million for housing services and \$5.6 billion into social and community housing so we get that permanent baseline funding at the end of the forwards at \$500 million so we can build the 2,000 homes per year. I see those kinds of investments.

That \$82 billion into social services and into health and community safety is absolutely important. The honourable member is correct in that it is necessary for government across the board—every ministerial portfolio—to be considering the investments that are being made to deliver more and better services for vulnerable Queenslanders and at-risk Queenslanders. This budget has invested heavily into those areas—into those social services—and will continue to do so because, at the end of the day, that is the fundamental job of a state government. It is to ensure that Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are met. That is the state government's job. Across the board, this budget is investing into those right areas to support those who are vulnerable and at risk.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** When considering whether to scrap universal energy rebates, did Treasury consider data from the Australian Energy Regulator about the number of families who have reported they are unable to pay their bills, because the latest data shows a huge increase in families unable to pay their power bills?

**Mr JANETZKI:** We do see a large number of households under pressure, and we know that. It is obvious right across the board. I am absolutely determined as Treasurer that we get that balance right in all of the investments that we need. Some 600,000 vulnerable households access that energy rebate, which went from \$372 to \$386, and that will not be frozen again under this government. It is important that those at risk in vulnerable households get that support, and that is what the budget was targeting. The best thing we can do over the long term is to invest into those energy generation assets to put the maximum downward pressure on power prices. That is the kind of investment we are doing.

In respect of the Electricity Maintenance Guarantee, we lifted that in the budget process from \$1.4 billion to \$1.6 billion—an additional \$200 million—to make sure that investment is getting to our generators to be making the necessary investments to keep those generators producing affordable, reliable and sustainable electricity. We must continue to make those investments and we will always consider through the process what is obvious on the ground, and we have done that. Whether it is the \$82 billion worth of social services investment into social services departments across government, we will continue to make those investments as we need them. In particular, we will always consider very carefully the cost of electricity and all those other inputs, because we have seen what the former government left in terms of that 19.9 per cent—more than three times the national average—power bill increase. That is the long-term legacy of the former government. We want to make sure we are making the right investments into the right areas to put maximum downward pressure on the cost of living.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Waterford, we are going to go to government members' questions now. I call the member for Coomera.

**Mr CRANDON:** Will the Treasurer provide the committee with an update on Queensland's fiscal position and how that position differs from that inherited from the former government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the member for Coomera for the question. The 2025-26 budget is the start of a pathway towards continuing budget improvement. It lays the foundation for budget repair; to repair a decade of fiscal vandalism while saving the jobs and services that were not budgeted for by our predecessors. At MYFER the operating deficit in 2027-28 was projected to reach \$9.2 billion. Now the deficit is forecast to be \$4.3 billion in that same year and fall to \$1.1 billion in 2028-29. Across our budget we have projected a four-year average expense growth of 2.2 per cent, lower than revenue growth of 3.4 per cent. In contrast, Labor averaged 6.6 per cent over the nine years in office, but left behind a legacy of unfunded jobs and services. It leaves a significant challenge behind to be resolved. That is why in 2025-26 the deficit will be \$8.6 billion as we front end investment into jobs and services that would have otherwise been lost under the former government. This deficit is driven by a sharp drop



in forecast revenues and the duty to deliver the jobs and services Queenslanders need and were promised.

Across the next four years we will collect as much in coal royalties as Labor did in two years. They promised progressive coal royalties would fund all their unfunded promises, but the revenue our predecessors claimed to have banked is gone and the unprecedented reduction of \$2.3 billion in Queensland's share of GST revenue has punched a significant hole into revenue forecasts. Despite these challenges, we are delivering the services and infrastructure Queensland needs and we are repairing the fiscal damage we inherited. Because of our careful management of expenses, our budget projects less debt and smaller operating deficits than Labor, but with more to show for it. The expected improvement in the net operating position and a more credibly-sized capital program translates into lower projected non-financial public sector borrowings.

Under Labor debt would have reached \$217.8 billion in 2027-28 and was on a trajectory to balloon further in 2028-29. But now at the end of the forward estimates debt is projected to reach \$205.7 billion in 2028-29. Because of this, our interest costs will be \$2.3 billion lower than what they would have been under Labor. That is more money to be paid to our frontline workers rather than our lenders. The capital program, with a refreshed focus on uplifting productivity and on-time and on-budget delivery, is expected to total \$116.8 billion over the four years to 2028-29. That is a record capital program that is delivering projects across the state, including projects that Labor promised but would have never delivered.

This budget shows long-term debt trajectory is slowing and the deficits that we inherited from the former government lessening over the forward estimates as revenues improve and expenses are carefully managed as we promised. This is a budget with no new or increased taxes because it is beyond time that we restored taxation and regulatory certainty and stability. While our fiscal position is stabilising, the serious challenges we face will not be overcome in a single budget. It will take time and more than one term of government, but we have laid the foundation of a pathway to surplus and continuing budget improvement.

**Ms MORTON:** Will the Treasurer update the committee on actions taken to improve the management of Queensland's budget and how those actions differ from approaches of previous governments?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for the question. As I outlined in the previous question, member for Caloundra, our government has handed down a budget that lays the foundation for a pathway to surplus and one that has tangibly improved our budget bottom line. This has not been an easy task, but we were always up for the challenge. We were left with significant challenges by the former government. Their legacy of underfunding essential jobs and services ran deep, but we have taken a range of key actions in this budget that put us on the pathway to budget repair. With these refreshed principles we will now seek to stabilise the non-financial public sector debt-to-revenue ratio and general government sector net debt-to-revenue ratio at sustainable levels in the medium term.

This approach contrasts with Labor who placed their sole focus on net debt. This was an attempt to mask their fiscal record and to mask their attempts to load government owned corporations with debt so it did not appear on the balance sheet. NFPS debt is a far more appropriate measure, concentrating on what debt the state needs to service, and closely aligns with credit rating agency measures of debt burden. By targeting an NFPS debt we can ensure we are getting a whole-of-government view of Queensland's position. We have also, in a Queensland first, introduced productivity as a standalone fiscal principle. This new principle targets improvements across both the public and private sectors. Productivity is high on the agenda for the Crisafulli government. Whether it is on work sites or for small businesses, we are leading the national debate on this issue and we will do whatever we can to support national efforts to deliver improvements in living standards through productivity.

Another important measure that we are taking in this budget is more responsible expense management. Across their term in office, the former government averaged 6.6 per cent expense growth every year and in the three years to 2023-24 expenses grew at 11.6 per cent on average per annum. Cynically, Labor had, in fact, in their last budget, predicted expenses to go backwards from 2024-25 to 2025-26. Our budget charts a responsible pathway to improving expenditure, with average growth of 2.2 per cent across the forward period. This is lower than average revenue growth of 3.4 per cent, aligning with fiscal principles and placing us on a solid pathway to budget improvement. An important measure we have taken in this budget is to cap the number of non-frontline senior executives across the Public Service at current levels. This measure will save an estimated \$18.4 million across the forwards. It is an important measure because it demonstrates the government's focus on measured

expense management. While this budget has been full of challenges, our government has worked diligently to identify sensible and responsible measures to improve the budget position, laying the foundation for future budget repair and that is exactly what we have done.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Will the Treasurer advise of the improvement in non-financial public sector debt under the new government and will the Treasurer inform the committee of the importance of using non-financial public sector debt as a metric as opposed to general government sector net debt?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Our government's commitment prior to the election was clear: debt will be lower under the LNP than what it would have been under Labor. I am sure the member for Maryborough is pleased to hear it. I am delighted to say that we are delivering on this commitment. I can advise the committee that NFPS borrowings as at 30 June 2026 are forecast to be \$147.8 billion. That is \$8.4 billion lower than Labor was predicting. By 2027-28, Labor's last year of forward estimates, NFPS debt will be \$190.4 billion, \$27½ billion lower than what Labor would have delivered. To achieve this our government has taken sensible measures to improve our debt position. First, our government's responsible approach to budget improvement that I have previously outlined has been a strong contributor. Significantly improved operating positions, driven by better expense management and improving revenues, have reduced NFPS debt significantly. Our government has also been able to improve the debt position through a rigorous assessment of our state's capital program.

Labor left behind a capital program in disarray and those numbers spoke for themselves: Pioneer-Burdekin went from \$7 billion to \$12 billion to \$36.8 billion; Borumba went from \$14 billion to \$18 billion; CopperString went from \$1.8 billion to \$5 billion to \$6.2 billion to \$9 billion, with a total project cost now at \$13.9 billion; Cross River Rail went from \$5.4 billion to \$17 billion. The blowouts and project overruns were numerous.

Since coming to government, we have undertaken a careful review of capacity and deliverability. Because of that, we have been able to make significant enhancements that are reducing debt and, in turn, reducing interest costs for Queenslanders. We are also taking advantage of the Debt Retirement Fund by using it for its established purpose. Annual repayments from investment returns, including through a \$3 billion transfer from surplus to defined benefit scheme assets, will lead to debt reduction of \$4.8 billion by 30 June 2029.

Member for Maryborough, you also asked about the importance of using NFPS debt as a metric as opposed to net debt. While it may seem obscure to some, it is rather important. Put simply, NFPS debt is a broader and more substantial view of the government's debt holdings. It includes things like government owned corporations. It is the measure that credit agencies scrutinise most closely. On the other hand, general government sector net debt excludes those significant bodies. It does not represent the true amount of borrowing that our state must pay back. It will not surprise the member for Maryborough to learn which metric the former Labor government was focused on.

We want to be honest and up-front with the people of Queensland about the true state of debt. That is what showing respect for Queensland taxpayers' money looks like. With our new fiscal principle placing the spotlight on this measure, we will be targeting genuine budget improvement. Our commitment was clear and remains clear: debt will be lower under the LNP than it would have been under Labor. We will continue to deliver that commitment year after year, budget after budget.

**Mr CRANDON:** Treasurer, will you outline the objectives of the newly established Queensland Government Consulting Services and how the approach of the government towards the engagement of consultants and contractors differs from previous approaches?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have said it before and I will say it again: the long-term driver of our productivity is our people—their skills, their hard work and their creativity. Our Public Service should be empowered and respected. Our government is committed to delivering a world-class public service in Queensland, not just over the next four years but over the years to come. That commitment was reflected in our first budget.

The freshly established Queensland Government Consulting Services will continue our work of rebuilding the capability of the Public Service and equipping it with the tools to competently address a range of complex challenges that we currently face. An initial investment of \$15 million over two years to set up QGCS will forge the path to boost our capacity to plan, design and prepare for the critical programs, services and infrastructure that Queensland needs now and into the future. Queensland Government Consulting Services sits as a new business unit within Queensland Treasury Corporation, and I am confident it will not only strengthen the Public Service but also improve its capability to deliver.

Labor oversaw exponential billion dollar spending growth on consultants and contractors, despite promising to trim billions from the existing spend. As the Queensland Audit Office reported, spending on external consultants and contractors increased from approximately \$2.1 billion in 2021 to \$3.7 billion in 2023-24, a compound annual growth rate of 20 per cent. At that rate, total spending on contractors and consultants would have reached \$4.5 billion in 2024-25. Based on analysis of spending to March 2025 and pro-rataed for the full year, the estimated consultant and contractor spend is \$4 billion.

The concerns about the hollowing out or overreliance on consultants and contractors, as first described in the Coaldrake review, has resulted in a cumulative loss of expertise, capability and experience in the Public Service. At the heart of Queensland Government Consulting Services will be its ability to offer quality consulting advice for government departments. This ensures taxpayers' money is respected, because for too long taxpayers have seen the growth in the trajectory of consultant and contractor costs here in Queensland. Services will include project, program and policy evaluation; strategic and operational planning; contract negotiation and procurement; the production of business cases; and financial modelling. Today, I can share with the committee that over 100 applications have been received for the role of managing director of Queensland Government Consulting Services. This process has been run independently through the Queensland Treasury Corporation to identify the best person to lead this important new function of government.

In 2025-26, our Public Service will grow to 277,352. It is our responsibility as a government to ensure the entirety of our Public Service is empowered, Queensland taxpayers are being respected and, importantly, we are flattening the trajectory of the spend on consultants and contractors. That is part of the change Queenslanders voted for last year.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will now move to non-government questions.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, I want to quickly wrap up where we were at around the decision to scrap universal energy rebates. We have heard the Premier promise them, there was no modelling done, you do believe there is a role for government and you are determined to do something. Is the decision not to continue universal energy rebates for Queensland householders a broken promise?

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order: there is a clear imputation in that question. I would ask that the member rephrase that question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I would really like to know what you think the imputation is, because there is no imputation in that question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Moggill, thank you for your point of order. Member for Waterford, if you are able to put the question—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** There is no imputation, Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In my view, there has been.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** What do you believe the imputation is?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In fact, there are a couple of points of order that could have been raised, but in terms of there being an imputation that there was a broken promise—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** No, I have asked if it was a broken promise. That is a question that I am putting to the Treasurer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You are also seeking opinion from the Treasurer.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** All right, if that is an opinion and the Treasurer is not happy to take it—

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am happy to answer the question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I thought that may be the case, Treasurer, so I will give you the call.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The truth is that the honourable member asked a question that she knows the answer to. The former government—and she sat around their CBRC table—never intended for those energy rebates to be continuing. Look at the budget papers. The budget papers for their last budget were clear. The 2024-25 budget was clear. They were temporary. They would be unwound. The former premier and member for Murrumba and the former health minister and now shadow treasurer know that. The task was always for us to make sure we targeted our cost-of-living support where it was needed—with our most vulnerable—and that has been our focus. I look back at the former government's last budget. They spent more money advertising their rebates on the back of the budget papers than they put in the forwards for the same rebates. That is the fact. That is a matter of record.

Our challenge in the budget was to be very clear about supporting those people who need it most, and that is what the budget has delivered. \$281 million has been invested in the budget for those

energy rebates to the most vulnerable households. That rebate is lifted from \$372 to \$386. We have unfrozen the indexation, which the former government had frozen, to make sure that those energy rebates for vulnerable households would not be frozen again, as under the former government. We have made those decisions. That will be unfrozen for so long as the Crisafulli government is in power, because it is important that we send that message.

Over the long term, as we see investments into our generators—and I have talked about the \$1.6 billion investment into the Electricity Maintenance Guarantee—that will put downward pressure on power prices through the proper maintenance of our generators. Those investments will be made. We will continue to invest across the length and breadth of government to support those who are vulnerable and at risk.

I have talked a lot over time about those long-term cost-of-living structural supports. That is why we need to get on top of the crime crisis: to put downward pressure on insurance premiums. There is \$347 million for the Making Queensland Safer Laws in the budget and \$5.2 billion for the community safety component. We need to invest more in mitigation and resilience in flood-prone areas to make sure that we are putting downward pressure—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: relevance. The Treasurer has taken five minutes to answer that question, or not answer it as the case may be. I am happy to move on.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It is relevance.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you have another question?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have plenty.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think the Treasurer may have answered that one. We will go to your next question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Or not answered it. My question is to the Under Treasurer. I refer to the government's fees freeze ending on 1 July. What was the basis for the government's decision to scrap the freeze and increase fees and charges by 3.4 per cent?

**Mr Williams:** Are you asking me to comment on a government decision?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I am asking what the basis was for the decision to scrap the freeze and increase fees by 3.4 per cent.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I suggest that that matter would be more appropriately addressed to executive government rather than the Under Treasurer. It points to a policy decision, in my view.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I will rephrase the question. Was any advice provided by Treasury about the decision to scrap the freeze and increase fees by 3.4 per cent? What advice was given about that particular figure of 3.4 per cent?

**Mr Williams:** I will refer back to my previous advice, if I could. Informing policy of executive government is a matter of cabinet-in-confidence. I am limited as to what I can say in relation to that.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Under Treasurer. Am I correct that Brisbane's annual CPI for the December quarter was 1.8 and the national rate was 2.4? Is that correct, Under Treasurer?

**Mr Williams:** Sorry, could you repeat the question, please?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Brisbane's annual CPI for the December quarter was 1.8 and the national rate was 2.4.

**Mr Williams:** What was the date that you mentioned there?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I am asking about Brisbane's annual CPI for the December quarter.

**Mr Williams:** Yes, that may well be right. I have updated numbers in front of me.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** What numbers do you have in front of you, Under Treasurer?

**Mr Williams:** The Brisbane CPI growth rate for March 2024 to March 2025, as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, was 2.7 per cent.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you. Treasurer, given that your Under Treasurer has told us his CPI figure is 2.8—it was 1.8 at the December quarter and the national rate was 2.4—where does 3.4 per cent come from? Why are you slugging Queenslanders more than you need to with the fee increases?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The government indexation rate of 3.4 per cent has been applied across the forwards. Obviously it is a factor of many things. The inflation rate, as the Under Treasurer has detailed, was 2.7 for the March quarter. Across the forwards, the budget has forecast inflation to range between two and three per cent and the government indexation rate to be 3.4 per cent.

I think the subtext of the honourable member's question is that it was zero per cent last year. The truth is that for the first half of the Palaszczuk Labor government it was frozen at 3.4 per cent. Even a couple of years ago it was higher than 3.4 per cent. The truth is that these factors are always carefully balanced. We have already heard this afternoon that the former government spent more on advertising their various cost-of-living measures in the budget papers than what they actually put into the forwards for them.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Point of order: relevance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was very clear to ask, 'Why did you decide on 3.4 per cent?'

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have been listening to the Treasurer and consider he is addressing the issues, but I would ask the Treasurer to ensure he remains relevant to the question and does not stray into other territory.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you. The reasoning behind government indexation rates and the levels at which they are set is always a measure of a variety of functions such as wages and CPI. Those measures are carefully considered. Again, I would note that the former Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments had a GIR similar to 3.4 per cent. Last year's zero per cent was, like so much of the former Labor government's cost-of-living relief, simply a mirage.

We are determined for our cost-of-living relief to be targeted, timely, responsible and recurrent. We want cost-of-living support that is recurrent, that people can bank on and that is not just a political tactic. It will be recurrent, responsible, targeted and timely. That is true cost-of-living support. That is what the Crisafulli government's first budget has delivered.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, as I am sure you are aware, Labor made the increase the lower out of inflation and wage growth at the time. It is correct to say, is it not, that yours is not the lower of inflation or wage growth?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I cannot speak to the methodology adopted by the former Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments, and I do not know whether zero per cent, as adopted last year, would meet the member for Waterford's measure or whether the first number of years where it was static at 3.4 per cent, if my memory serves me correctly, would. I am not quite sure of the honourable member's methodology for making that assertion.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** My question was about your decision.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have answered the question. This is always a measure of balance. The government indexation rate was prepared and considered and is now in the budget. As I have said, it was similar to and sometimes less than the former Palaszczuk and Miles Labor government's GIR rate, apart from last year.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Under Treasurer, how much more does Treasury forecast the government will raise from setting indexation at 3.4 per cent rather than at the rate of inflation?

**Mr Williams:** Our approach to forecasting essentially looks at a number of available data points. Obviously, the longer the forecast horizon the greater the risk that unanticipated events are actually going to impact those forecasts. I will highlight that those risks are mentioned in Budget Paper 2, both within the economic outlook and those emerging fiscal pressures. With respect to your question, I refer back to my earlier response. Although we do look at a number of different reforms, in terms of any modelling or analysis put before the executive government during the decision-making process I am very limited in what I can talk about.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I understand that, Under Treasurer, but surely Treasury must have forecast how much government will raise by setting the indexation rate at 3.4 per cent rather than the lower rate of inflation?

**Mr Williams:** I believe I have answered that question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Under Treasurer, what is the estimated total cost to the average motorist in Queensland considering the increase to driver's licences and car rego? I will table an article in the *Courier-Mail* today that outlines that a third of Queenslanders are delaying car maintenance because of cost-of-living pressures.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Mr Deputy Speaker, can I see a copy of that?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, of course. We will take that document as tabled and get it circulated to members and those on the other table as well.

**Mr Williams:** Would you please repeat the specific part that you would like me to address?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** What is the estimated total cost to the average motorist in Queensland considering the increase to driver's licences and car rego given that you have increased fees and charges by 3.4 per cent and scrapped the freeze on rego?

**Mr Williams:** Treasury's role in managing revenue and expenditure is essentially done at a fairly broad, line item level. We do not always go down to specifics. I will say that the temporary, 12-month, 20 per cent discount on motor vehicle registry fees ends on 15 September this year and then fees will return to the previous schedule, subject to indexation. The discount was a temporary, one-off relief measure that was actually not funded on an ongoing basis in the 2024-25 budget. The Queensland government continues to provide ongoing targeted vehicle registration concessions for eligible applicants, including for seniors and pension card holders.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, do you know the answer to the estimated total cost to the average motorist in Queensland?

**Mr JANETZKI:** What I do know, honourable member, is that the registration discount that the former government had applied was ending in September and the former government had put precisely zero dollars in the forwards for it. The subtext of the question is misleading in that the member for Waterford knows full well that the former government never intended to continue the discount and it would be Queenslanders who would ultimately pay for their deception.

For the honourable member's information, from 16 September this year the 12-month rego cost for a medium-sized four-cylinder car such as a Toyota Corolla will increase by approximately \$99, from \$338.75 to \$437.90. Other vehicle registration concessions will continue from 16 September. The registration costs on a four-cylinder vehicle for customers who receive a pension or seniors concession will increase by approximately \$57, from \$194.55 to approximately \$251.50. The pension and seniors concessional discounts do not apply to the traffic improvement fee. The total registration cost will be \$638.30, including CTP.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will move to questions from government members.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Will the Treasurer update the committee on the most recent distribution of GST from the federal government, and will he provide an outline of the contents of the Commonwealth Grants Commission's report that informed the distribution?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The 2025 GST methodology review handed down in March was a gut punch to the people of Queensland. While the national pie of GST revenue is getting bigger, Queenslanders will get a smaller slice. The Commonwealth Grants Commission, the CGC, recommended that every state and territory receive more GST revenue while Queensland, and only Queensland, receive less.

This year's federal budget confirms that the ACT will receive an extra \$67 million, Tasmania will receive an extra \$189 million, the Northern Territory will receive an extra \$285 million, South Australia will receive an extra \$400 million and Western Australia will receive an extra \$427 million. New South Wales will receive a \$1.4 billion boost. The biggest prize is reserved for Victoria—a \$4 billion increase in their GST revenue, a whopping 17 per cent more than last year.

It is not unusual for the annual GST distribution to have winners and losers, but this year it is winners and then there is Queensland. We will receive \$2.3 billion, or 12 per cent, less GST revenue this year, in the biggest single-year cut to a state's GST revenue in history. While half of this is due to high coal royalties between 2021-22 to 2023-24, the other half is due to the methodology and data decisions made by the CGC, decisions which Queensland strongly contests.

Almost every major decision made by CGC this year was detrimental to Queensland. For example, this year Queenslanders will pay over \$800 million for the policy failures and discretionary business stimulus programs of Victoria and New South Wales during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CGC continues to assess southern states as having limited to no ability to raise gas royalties, even though this is heavily influenced by their own policy decisions rather than a lack of resources. The CGC also continues to not appropriately account for the regional nature of Queensland. They effectively assume the cost of serving a resident in Ballarat, 115 kilometres from Melbourne, is the same as the cost of serving a resident in Weipa, which is 2,493 kilometres from Brisbane.

At the same time in our south-east, the CGC assesses Brisbane as needing only a small fraction of the public transport infrastructure of Sydney and Melbourne due to Brisbane's comparatively lower

population density without accounting for the key factors driving this such as the necessary constraints on development given the city was built on a flood plain. They also effectively assume Melbourne requires nearly twice as much funding for ferries as Brisbane, despite negligible ferry trips being recorded in Melbourne compared to annual patronage of over four million in Brisbane. This is just a small sample of the litany of factors driving this grossly unfair outcome.

Treasury has estimated the cumulative negative impact of the CGC's 2025 review is more than \$5 billion over the next three years. It was galling that Queensland's federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers, did not intervene to stop this unfair outcome, especially given Queensland was the only jurisdiction to face a cut to its GST in the face of a \$4.9 billion increase in the pool. This outcome was obviously a significant factor in this year's budget deficit, adding insult to injury given the unfunded services and projects left behind by the former government.

In addition to the significant shortcomings of the 2025 review, it is of course the sweetheart deal for Western Australia which continues to contribute to an unfair GST distribution outcome for Queensland and other states, and which must be reviewed.

**Mr CRANDON:** With that in mind, will the Treasurer update the committee on the strong advocacy he has undertaken on behalf of the Queensland government to ensure our state gets its fair share of GST, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches including historical advocacy by members?

**Mr JANETZKI:** As I outlined in the previous response to the last question, our government has been advocating strongly to the Commonwealth government to have our fair share of GST restored. I have written to Treasurer Jim Chalmers on a number of occasions urging him as a Queenslanders to resolve this issue and deliver the funding our state deserves and needs. I have also urged him to confirm that the federal government will quarantine its \$7.2 billion in Bruce Highway payments from GST calculations. If the federal government fails to do so, a further \$3 billion will be lost to the people of Queensland in future years. While this is not the first time that Queensland has had our GST distribution reduced, it is by far the largest reduction we have seen. That is not only in Queensland history but in the 25-year history of the GST.

Member for Coomera, you asked me about the historic advocacy of members. It is a question that I am glad to receive because it does allow me to highlight some potential hypocrisy of the opposition who have still yet to come out and fight for Queensland. Their idea of fighting for Queensland is petitioning for the colour of the budget book to be changed but they are silent when it comes to calling out their mates in Canberra. That hypocrisy is highlighted when you go and investigate *Hansard* from the past. On much smaller GST reductions their voice was much louder. For example, let us look to the advocacy of the member for Murrumbidgee.

In a speech to the House on 7 March 2018, he said that the then opposition leader, the member for Nanango, 'does not want to have to choose between Queensland and her bosses in Canberra'. He also said that an opposition leader cannot be unequivocal. They 'have to choose' and 'cannot have it both ways'. It is a strong statement, member for Coomera. This was at a time when Queensland was facing a potential reduction in GST revenue significantly less than the very real \$2.3 billion cut that we see to the 2025-26 revenue take.

I note the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Waterford were in Canberra last week. Unfortunately, I did not note any public statements or advocacy from either of them in relation to the greatest GST hit to a state from Canberra in history. The opposition leader was talking mugaccinos with Senator Mulholland but said nothing about how Queenslanders were being treated like mugs on GST. The member for Murrumbidgee is not the only one. The member for Woodridge, the former treasurer, said to the House on 10 October 2017—

This is a very simple test of the leadership of the Leader of the Opposition. Do they support this cut to Queensland or are they going to finally stand up for Queensland?

That is another strong statement, member for Coomera, from the member for Murrumbidgee's deputy. The member for Woodridge's office is, of course, next to the federal Treasurer, Jim Chalmers. What would it take if not a \$2.3 billion reduction to walk next door and tell him to restore Queensland's fair share? But there is more, member for Coomera.

The member for Waterford has been outspoken on reductions in federal funding to Queenslanders in the past as well. In a Facebook video on 16 February 2018 she called on the then opposition leader to 'put Queenslanders first' and 'not her mates in Canberra'. The member for Waterford and I might not agree on much but on this I unashamedly say that we agree. We are on a

unity ticket, member for Coomera. The deputy chair, the member for Bancroft, said in a speech on 6 March 2018, 'The biggest threat to confidence in our state is the threat of GST funding cuts by the federal government.' He said—

... to fight this great proposed GST rip-off being considered by the—  
federal—

government ... we need help from everyone in this parliament—but what have we heard from the Leader of the Opposition? Have we heard the Leader of the Opposition and others stand up for Queensland? Have we heard them condemn this mean and tricky proposed GST carve-up? The answer is no.

That was from the deputy chair, the member for Bancroft. They are strong words, member for Coomera.

What is clear is that, while the Crisafulli government is standing up for Queenslanders, those opposite are not. The opposition must explain to Queenslanders what has changed since that time that stops them now standing up for Queensland's interests. No matter who is in Queensland, the Crisafulli government will put Queenslanders first.

**Ms MORTON:** Will the Treasurer inform the committee of the actions the Queensland government will continue to take to fight for our share fair of GST, and are there any actions the Treasurer believes could be beneficial to support the government's fight that could be undertaken by members?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for Caloundra for the question. It is an important question. It is an important follow-on from the previous question because, unlike the opposition, our advocacy does not stop when it stops suiting us. We will always fight in the interests of Queenslanders first and foremost.

Thankfully there is an opportunity on the horizon for reform of not only our GST system but the system of horizontal fiscal equalisation more broadly. A federal Productivity Commission review is due later this year. The previous review, initiated by the Turnbull government, was unfortunately used as a smokescreen for WA's sweetheart deal. It is imperative that the next review is not used to simply lock in that deal or, even worse, to lock it in while removing the 'no worse off guarantee' top-up payments that make up a significant amount of Queensland's GST revenue. In collaboration with my state and territory colleagues through the Board of Treasurers, Queensland has contributed to a set of fair and balanced terms of reference that have been submitted to the federal Treasurer.

If we are to genuinely reform our system, it must be as part of an informed national debate, not one constrained by a predetermined outcome. This is not a fight Queensland can take on alone. That is why I am glad to be asked what actions members can take to support Queensland's fight. It starts by coming out publicly and members showing Queenslanders that they back our state. I was delighted that many members of the Crisafulli government have spoken up about the challenge this significant GST reduction poses to Queensland's bottom line. The same cannot be said of the opposition. Not a single member in their budget reply speech called out Jim Chalmers to reverse this reduction to Queensland—not one. That is why it is so disappointing to read through the transcripts of years gone by where members who sit on this committee today, who were senior ministers at the time—now shadow ministers—fought for Queensland when it was only useful to them. This government and Queenslanders will not tolerate their silence. They will not tolerate the opposition sitting back and failing to stand up for our interests.

It is time for the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Waterford to finally start publicly advocating to their colleagues in Canberra to ensure our state gets the fair share we deserve. Standing up for Queenslanders should not be a position of one side or another; it should be the position of all members in this House. They cannot hide from this reality any longer. They must come out today and call on their Canberra mates to restore our fair share. If they will not, they must explain to Queenslanders why not. What has changed since 2018? Why were they fighting for Queenslanders then but not now? That is the challenge for the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Woodridge and the member for Waterford: stay silent or fight for Queenslanders. What will they choose?

**Mr BAROUNIS:** My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer provide an update to the House on the government's nation-leading productivity agenda?

**Mr JANETZKI:** We know how important productivity improvement is to Queensland and our country. It is important that we continue to play our leading role in that at the national level and make sure we take every opportunity to put Queensland's case; for example, the re-establishment of the Productivity Commission here in Queensland, which those opposite voted against. We know that the first inquiry in relation to the building and construction sector is an important one for Queensland. We



have a record capex spend in the budget of \$118.8 billion. We know we have a lot of work to get done and we need productivity on worksites and job sites. That is what the first referral to the Productivity Commission is about, because there is a lot of work to do.

It is important that I remind those here of the significant mess left behind by the former Labor government when it came to productivity, because we have a significant agenda that we need to get done to kickstart productivity across the state. Under the former government, new lot approvals fell 29 per cent, investors were demonised and productivity on construction sites stagnated. We all know the numbers: potentially 2.7 or 2.8 days per week of productivity on worksites. That is not good enough. We inherited a skills shortage that has been a handbrake on productivity and the economy and applied significant pressure on industry and households, especially renters and prospective first home buyers.

We restored the Queensland Productivity Commission, as promised, to provide a source of independent advice to support our government's objective to drive down cost pressures and drive up productivity. As I mentioned, inexplicably Labor voted against the re-establishment of the Queensland Productivity Commission. It is like they nearly did not get the memo from the federal government, which said a key priority of their term in office this term is productivity. Productivity growth and regulatory reform very quickly dropped off the former government's agenda and it is clear they have no interest in it from opposition, either.

States and territories will play a key role when it comes to rebooting productivity across our country. I want to acknowledge the ambition of Treasurer Chalmers and the Prime Minister in putting this issue firmly on the national agenda, just like the Crisafulli government has here in Queensland. It is important because growth drives prosperity and lifts living standards.

Productivity growth is at its slowest rate in 60 years. The federal Productivity Commission has reported that if growth was boosted from its current level to the long-term average then workers would be \$14,000 per year better off by 2035. We know that here in Queensland, for instance, the final productivity commission report—as handed down before the former treasurer abolished the independent productivity commission in 2021—was a review into the regulatory environment here in Queensland. It highlighted the cost of regulation. There were 265,000 regulatory obligations on the statute books at the time of the last audit into regulatory obligations here in Queensland. That was a significant concern of theirs in their final productivity commission report.

The Crisafulli government is focused on reducing regulatory burden and costs, unlocking skills training and entrepreneurial opportunities, and ensuring we deliver infrastructure and essential services productivity. Since coming to government we have abolished two taxes, paused BPIC and commenced that inquiry. We have refocused the role of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner on red-tape reduction and dispute resolution. We have established a Local Government Red Tape Reduction Taskforce to find ways to streamline approvals and reduce barriers for council projects. We have delivered the Building Reg Reno to provide immediate relief for builders, tradies and subbies, with reforms such as scrapping unnecessary financial reporting requirements for 50,000 operators and fast-tracking the digitising of licensing and administrative processes, and we have invested \$201 million in two centres of excellence for TAFEs to build the jobs and skills that we need to build what needs to be built.

Productivity is not just an issue for economists to ponder; it is something that can genuinely make life for everyday Queenslanders better. That is why every department across the whole of the Crisafulli government is focused on driving improved productivity in Queensland.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will go to non-government members. I call the member for Waterford.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Under Treasurer, in relation to the police EBA and the new retention payment announced today, I note that this payment falls outside of the wages policy provisioned for in the budget. What additional funding has been provisioned in the budget or contingency provided to pay for this new retention payment?

**Mr Williams:** Queensland Treasury developed the budget having regard to a lot of economic and policy analyses across a wide range of domains and for a range of purposes. Obviously, forecasts consider a range of possible scenarios that evolve and change through the budget process as a result of discussions and decisions and developments in the macro economy and in the Queensland economy. Wages policy is, of course, an important variable considered during the budget formation. I will note that, within the budget, employee expenses are expected to be 4.9 per cent higher than 2024-25 estimated actual numbers. Employee expenses growth represents, in that number, both the combined increase in FTE and forecast wage rates. As mentioned in Budget Paper No. 2, employee

expenses are contained to an annual average rate of 3.5 per cent over the remaining three years of the budget forward estimates. Where actual outcomes deviate from assumptions, those variances will need to be built into MYFER and/or the next budget.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you. Under Treasurer, are you aware of any modelling undertaken on the budget accounting for the impact of additional costs outside of wages of this magnitude if those are extended to nurses, teachers and paramedics?

**Mr Williams:** I will go back to my earlier advice around policy formation and advising executive government. Where matters of cabinet-in-confidence are concerned, I am limited in what I can disclose and provide to the committee.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Just to be clear, there has been no modelling on the budget impact if those allowances outside the wages policy then flow on to nurses, teachers and paramedics?

**Mr CRANDON:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I do not believe that was the response given by Mr Williams a moment ago. It is being interpreted by—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** No, I am asking for clarification. That is why I am asking the question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Waterford. Thank you for your point of order, member for Coomera. I understand the point of order and why it was made. However, the question is in order. I did recognise that maybe the member for Waterford was assuming something about the Under Treasurer's response, but I am sure the Under Treasurer could clarify things.

**Mr Williams:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and thank you, honourable member. What I am saying is that advice is not able to be provided. As I said earlier, where actual outcomes deviate from assumptions, variances will need to be built into MYFER or the next budget.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Again, just so I am clear, the assumptions that you have made are that the EBA negotiations would be in compliance with the wages policy. The fact that we have had today an announcement of outcomes outside the wages policy will need to be built into MYFER, and if that flows onto all of those other professions I have mentioned, that will be a big expense in MYFER. Correct?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think that is actually a hypothetical question but—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It is about budgeting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think the Under Treasurer has actually answered that question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Okay, I am happy to move on.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Waterford.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I table a media article published by the ABC. This question is to the Under Treasurer. In that article—and we will make sure you get a copy—the then opposition leader, David Crisafulli, called the insurance industry the 'milking cow' of governments and called for a rethink of stamp duty that was 'robbing people blind'. The Queensland government is on track to earn more than \$2 billion a year from taxes on insurance products. My question is: have you provided any advice to the Treasurer or government about reducing or abolishing stamp duty on insurance premiums?

**Mr Williams:** If I could just have a bit of time to look at the article?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Sure.

**Mr Williams:** Could you repeat the question, please?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Have you provided any advice to the Treasurer or government about reducing or abolishing stamp duty on insurance products?

**Mr Williams:** Thank you very much for repeating it. It is along the lines of what I have been saying previously about providing advice and analysis during the course of the budget formulation process. Where those matters are cabinet-in-confidence, I am really limited about what I can say. I can talk to those insurance premiums and say that, as a key cost-of-living issue, insurance affordability is considered and a range of reasons have caused insurance premiums to increase, including the impact of natural disasters as well as more granular pricing of risks by insurers. The government is, I believe, delivering a range of programs to enhance resilience of properties and to help mitigate natural disaster risks.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Under Treasurer. I understand that if you have not provided advice you are absolutely entitled to give that evidence to the committee.

**Mr Williams:** Any advice that we provide is cabinet-in-confidence.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Yes, but if you have not provided advice. I am just making sure you understand that, if you have not provided advice, you can tell the committee that.

**Mr Williams:** Yes, I understand that. Thank you, Member.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** My next question is to the Treasurer. I table a *Canberra Times* article titled 'LNP piggybacks federal Labor policy to chew into costs'. Given the federal government—with a budget eight times the size of Queensland's—is saving \$4 billion on consultants over four years, how do you reconcile to claim nearly double that in savings?

**Mr JANETZKI:** If I recollect, the federal Treasurer said that they had in fact saved \$3 billion in the first year of their creation of the federal equivalent of Queensland Government Consulting Services. In his election costings which were delivered prior to the federal election earlier this year, if my memory serves me correctly he had planned for another \$3 billion in savings, in addition to additional savings that the federal Treasurer had outlined previously.

This is an important measure for Queensland. I noted in the budget speech the \$681 million flattening of the trajectory. What happened here in Queensland is on a couple of occasions the former treasurer, the member for Woodridge, said that they would not flatten trajectory but he would actually save \$3 billion—so reduce the spend—on consultants and contractors. That was back in 2020 and again in the budget in 2024. What actually happened there was not a reduction in the existing spending. It did not do that; it actually did the exact opposite. The spending on consultants and contractors went from \$2.1 billion to \$3.7 billion between financial years 2020-21 and 2023-24, a compound annual growth rate of 20 per cent. On that trajectory, we were headed towards a \$4½ billion spend on consultants and contractors.

I said in the budget that, with the work that had been done, the trajectory is forecast using the end of March numbers to have flattened towards \$4 billion in spending, but that is just the beginning of the work. The Queensland Government Consulting Services is established now as a part of QTC, as a standalone business unit there. It is important, obviously, to flatten the trajectory of exponential growth that the former government oversaw—and we are already seeing that flatten in this first nine months of the Crisafulli government—but it is even more important to build the capability of the Public Service. We need that high-performing Public Service, as the Coaldrake review said we did. There was an overreliance on consultants and the capacity of the Public Service had been hollowed out—all of those findings of Coaldrake that mean that QGCS is even more important.

Yes, the early trajectory flattening, as I talked about in the budget, is important. What is equally important is now building that capability that had been hollowed out of the Public Service through the overreliance on consultants and contractors, as Coaldrake said. That work now continues and is even more important as we deliver more and better services for more Queenslanders, no matter where they live.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** The federal government can show how it measures its savings by publishing an audit of all employment with all consultants, contractors, labour hire and outsource service providers by department. A short answer only is required: will you be doing the same, Treasurer?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The flattening of the trajectory is clear. It has already been detailed in the budget for the first year. Obviously, there is a lot of work to do. The measure will be the flattening of the trajectory and the building of the capability of the Queensland Public Service. That is the measure, and that is the measure we will be delivering on.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Given a significant proportion of contractors in government make up relief teachers, locum doctors and health staff, how many locum doctors will Queensland Government Consulting Services replace?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The challenge is to rebuild the capability in the Public Service. I have been very clear and open about the challenges that we face. I have announced that we will be investing \$15 million in the first two years in building up that capability in QTC. There is already a number of staff there working in relation to the standalone business unit that is now Queensland Government Consulting Services within QTC. That work will continue. That staffing-up will continue. The challenge that we have to deliver more and better services for Queenslanders is significant. We will continue to make those investments. I expect more investments will be made into QGCS in the years ahead—that is my expectation—but as we are starting out we are staffing up QGCS appropriately to deliver those services which I outlined earlier and to make sure we are flattening that trajectory as we promised.

I look back to the first piece of correspondence that was sent out to line agencies, simply asking them to think carefully about when and where they engage consultants into their work. That was an

important first step—to send a clear message—and we wanted to send that message early and clearly, particularly because the establishment of Queensland Government Consulting Services was an election promise. We wanted to send that message early, and it is pleasing to see line agencies responding in the way they have, delivering more and better services, and now as we staff up Queensland Government Consulting Services with the right skills, the right expertise and the right experience, I am looking forward to continuing flattening of the trajectory.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Under Treasurer, I draw your attention to table 2.2 on page 37 of BP2, in particular the updated service funding assumptions for underfunded legacy issues. It would appear that the \$23 billion budgeted for in MYFER for these projects has fallen substantially, by \$16.6 billion. That is quite an improvement, Under Treasurer. What changed in five months?

**Mr Williams:** The 2024-25 MYFER process did provide an updated assessment of the financial position of the state. It was completed in the weeks following the commencement of the new government. There was a relatively limited timeframe available to report under the uniform presentation framework, so a number of provisions were made from the initial assessment of underfunded frontline services across the forward estimates. As part of this exercise, there was an allocation of the estimated underfunding to various expense categories in the operating statement, but, as promised, post MYFER the new government undertook a more detailed and considered review of agency programs and carefully scrutinised requests for additional funding to ensure they align with priorities.

I note that agencies were not given a breakdown of those MYFER provisions and were required to justify any bids during the budget process with strong evidence and approved business cases. Agencies have allocated approved measures to their expense categories as they see most appropriate. Overall expenses for the period of 2024-25 to 2027-28 are higher than the 2024-25 MYFER, as well as being higher than the 2024-25 budget, so over the four years to 2027-28 general government sector expenses are \$34.5 billion higher than the 2024-25 budget estimates. For more details about some of the specifics, I refer you to BP2.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Under Treasurer. Thank you for confirming that agencies were not actually allocated any of this money. Given that agencies, when asked, could not tell us how much they had been allocated—we now know there was not any money allocated—would you characterise the addition of these allowances as disciplined fiscal policy?

**Mr Williams:** May I ask you to repeat the question?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Given agencies were never allocated any money and there have been no public statements about how this \$23 billion figure came into existence, would you characterise the addition of \$23 billion in operating expenses—estimated operating expenses—as disciplined fiscal policy?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker: that is clearly an opinion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba South and Treasurer, thank you for your point of order. Member for Waterford, that is seeking an opinion. I would ask you to rephrase, ask another question or move on.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, the Director of Government Ratings at S&P, Anthony Walker, questioned how much of this \$23 billion was real and how much of it was 'setting up the new government to be the saviour', and he went on to say that they knew there was a political narrative within MYFER and they were trying to figure out the true story. I table a copy of those comments as reported in the *Australian*. Treasurer, are S&P—

**Mr JANETZKI:** Sorry, can I see a copy of the tabled remarks?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Of course you can. Are S&P Global incorrect in saying that the government exaggerated the state's debt position for political pointscoreing?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can members and the chair please receive a copy of the tabled document?

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I believe that the Treasurer has given all the right answers with regard to the budget, and I believe that the member for Waterford keeps going back to the same question because she does not like the answer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am happy to answer it, Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Maryborough. I think it is about relevance.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am very happy to—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand. The question is relevant. Now that we have the document, carry on.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have seen the tabled document, thank you, Deputy Speaker. I thank the honourable member for the opportunity to speak about credit ratings. I recall the reaction of S&P, Moody's and the serious financial press to the former Labor government's last budget. Who can forget the *Australian Financial Review*, after hearing about state owned service stations, another state owned energy retailer, state delivered school lunches and state owned medical practices, calling that final budget of the former government 'a populist clown show'? S&P noted waning fiscal discipline.

In the first speech I gave as Treasurer, I foreshadowed that it was now highly likely that we had inherited a rating downgrade. We had seen an outlook downgrade and the likelihood of a rating downgrade is nearly inevitable. The member for Waterford sat around the CBRC table and watched all the projects blow out—let \$638 million for the Springfield Mater Hospital and \$461 million in child safety be unfunded. The member for Waterford sat around the CBRC table and let all that happen. MYFER was an important part of the budget process. That is where we saw all the unfunded jobs and services, project overruns and cost blowouts on capex projects. The member for Waterford talks about \$23 billion and quotes Anthony at S&P. Well, if the member for Waterford had observed the budget there is actually \$30 billion in the budget. So any allegations that the member for Waterford makes of \$23 billion, do you know what we actually invested more into the budget—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: again on relevance. The question was: are S&P incorrect? He talks about what S&P said when we were in government. If they were correct then, are they correct now, Treasurer?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I consider that the Treasurer is being relevant to the question asked and he is likely coming to a conclusion to his answer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Comparing budget for budget, like for like—\$23 billion to \$30 billion—every department, every line agency received more funding in the budget. Directly to the member's question, I note what the ratings agency said post the budget—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We will get to that.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I note the 10-year bond stabilised 4.99 per cent. I note credit spreads are returning—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We are being responsive to a budget that has been well received. I note what S&P and Moody's have said. Moody's noted post budget in relation to the demonstration of fiscal discipline. S&P noted the steps that we had taken.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have met with S&P and Moody's since the budget and I will continue to maintain discussions with them but the challenge, the fiscal disrepair inherited by the Crisafulli government is obvious. You only need to see the commentary around Labor's last budget to know it.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, Saul Eslake is reported in the *Courier-Mail* as questioning the validity of this \$23 billion. I will table that for you. John Kehoe, the economics editor of the *Financial Review*, in a radio interview with Steve Austin also questioned this \$23 billion and said there was 'exaggeration and inflation' and in his words it was 'mumbo jumbo'. Are Saul Eslake and John Kehoe wrong?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Could all members have that tabled document please? Treasurer, you have the call.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will spell it out very clearly for the member for Waterford—I am going to read it for the member for Waterford to follow closely. Comparing table 8.1 in the 2025-26 Budget Paper No. 2 on page 107 to the equivalent table in the 2024-25 budget—Labor's last budget—there has been an increase in funding of \$30.3 billion in operational expenditure.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: my question is whether Saul Eslake and John Kehoe are wrong about MYFER and the estimated \$23 billion in underfunded legacy allowances. Could you come to the question please, Treasurer?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you for your point of order, member for Waterford. The Treasurer had only just begun to answer the question.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, I have more to say.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am certain the Treasurer will definitely be answering the question.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Again, budget to budget, there was an increase in funding of \$30.3 billion in operational expenditure between 2025-26 and 2027-28. That shows the investment that we are making. The member for Waterford casts doubt over the \$23 billion that was in MYFER. The truth is in the budget. We actually invested \$30 billion. As we went through the budget process we saw more and more examples of those unfunded jobs and services that they left behind. The member for Waterford sat around the CBRC table knowing all of those capex project lies that I have already detailed. She knew that there was a black hole, a *Yes Minister* style hospital moment in Queensland with the Springfield Mater Hospital that was fully built but could not take any patients because the former government had not funded \$638 million in operational expense.

In answer to the direct question in relation to MYFER compared to the budget: MYFER at the start of this year forecast \$96 billion in spending; the budget delivered \$99 billion. The supposition or the subtext of the honourable member's question is wrong. It is false because we actually invested more in the budget than what was in MYFER.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** That is the truth because we had a lot of funding black holes and capex projects that had overrun which we needed to fund.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Treasurer, isn't it the case—particularly given the commentary from economists and ratings agencies—that this \$23 billion was just a slush fund for government to exaggerate debt, hide your own spending and then miraculously see an improvement at budget time?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will allow the question, even though it does contain some arguments.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The fact the member for Waterford cannot change her line of questioning—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** This is my line of questioning.

**Mr JANETZKI:**—after having it explained to her—

**Mr WHITING:** Try and answer. Give us an answer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The answer is clear. We have actually invested \$30 billion—not \$23 billion, as was in MYFER. Unfortunately, the member for Waterford is on a one track here and could not change her line of questioning. The question has been answered.

**Ms ASIF:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: the shadow treasurer is asking questions about MYFER.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Sandgate, I realised you had raised a point of order. Before I had given you the call, you commenced. Wait for the call, please.

**Ms ASIF:** I can.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Sandgate.

**Ms ASIF:** My point of order is that the shadow treasurer is entitled to ask questions about MYFER which she is doing, so I would ask that the Treasurer withdraw that comment.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Sandgate, thank you for your point of order. I am not sure that there is one under the standing orders. The member for Waterford is able to take personal offence at comments but you cannot take personal offence on behalf of another member.

**Ms ASIF:** I was not taking personal offence; it was a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, and I do not think there is a point of order under the standing orders. Treasurer, the question is before you. You can continue answering.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The question has been answered.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The investment into services as detailed in 8.1 of the budget papers, as at Budget Paper No. 2 is \$30 billion. Compared like for like, it shows that we have invested in jobs and services. It was a necessary investment into jobs, services and capital projects in Queensland that had been abandoned by the former government—that is what the budget delivered.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Waterford—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** If that is the case—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Waterford, the time for—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have one quick question remaining, Mr Deputy Speaker. If that is the case, Treasurer—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Waterford, it is time for government questions now and I am going to hand the call to the member for Coomera.

**Mr CRANDON:** Treasurer, earlier you were talking about productivity and I will ask you as Treasurer to provide an update to the committee on the work of the Queensland Productivity Commission, please.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Queensland Productivity Commission was an important step. It was re-established by the Crisafulli government on 12 March and it is delivering on our promise to Queensland that we took to the election. Re-establishing the QPC is an important step towards cutting unnecessary red tape and encouraging innovation. Just like we promised, our first action was to direct the QPC to undertake an inquiry into construction sector productivity. The terms of reference I issued require the commission to investigate and report on conditions in both the residential and non-residential construction sectors. They also require the commission to closely examine and review the policy factors impacting the sector's productivity.

The QPC, led by the commissioner, has been hard at work delivering on these terms of reference. Already the QPC has conducted more than 50 stakeholder meetings with industry groups, trade unions, businesses and government agencies and has received over 80 public submissions and comments. The commission conducted in-person regional visits to Townsville and on the Gold Coast and virtual visits to Gladstone and Toowoomba. All of this input is feeding into an interim report that will be handed down shortly. During August the QPC will continue to meet with stakeholders and conduct round tables on key issues. The final report will be handed down in October and the government will then have three months to provide a response.

That is not all the commission is doing. The commission has also been tasked with providing advice on Queensland's energy and emission settings and I have asked the QPC to provide advice on a range of key matters including the productivity of the energy system, any impact of current energy and emissions settings on price, and the role of the state government in facilitating a shift to reduce emissions. Importantly, the commission has also been asked to identify any policy and regulatory barriers that are impeding efficient private sector investment into new electricity infrastructure. That last point is so important because unlocking private sector investment is crucial to our state's future. Re-establishing the QPC is one way we are showing the world that Queensland is open for business.

I am pleased to have been the Treasurer who restored the Productivity Commission and I look forward to collaboratively working with the commission and all stakeholders to continue to drive our productivity agenda in Queensland.

**Ms MORTON:** Will the Treasurer advise the committee of key projects within the government's record capital program and how the new government's approach to capital infrastructure differs from the approach inherited from the former government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** This budget delivers a record capital program for Queenslanders. Over the next four years we have planned investments of \$116.8 billion. In 2025-26 alone we will invest \$29.3 billion. That is investments into hospitals, schools, roads, rail and everything in between, all to improve the living standards of Queenslanders today and into the future. Through this record program we are delivering a range of key projects and initiatives across the state. Let me start with hospitals.

This budget delivers and fully funds our government's \$18½ billion Hospital Rescue Plan. This is a comprehensive plan that fixes the issues of Labor's failed capacity expansion program. It is the same program that was found to be undeliverable as part of the Sangster review, plagued by blowouts and delays. Our comprehensive plan is delivering on our promise to the people of Queensland to deliver health services when they need them. The plan will deliver more than 2,600 new beds including three new and 10 upgraded hospitals, including in the member for Coomera's electorate, alongside new CT and MRI machines. It is an example of the important investments that this capital program will deliver for Queensland.

Our landmark 80-20 Bruce Highway funding deal with the Commonwealth is locked into this budget. The amount of \$9 billion will be spent to deliver upgrades across the Bruce, delivering improved safety on a road that runs the length of our state. That includes Bruce Highway upgrades at Walker Street in the member for Maryborough's electorate. The budget also includes investments into rail, like our joint \$5.75 billion investment with the Commonwealth into faster rail between Logan and the Gold Coast and our investment into heavy passenger rail to Birtinya to deliver seamless public transport all

the way to the Sunshine Coast Airport with the Wave, much to the enjoyment of the member for Caloundra.

We are also making significant new investments into educational infrastructure across Queensland. The budget makes a \$1.09 billion investment to deliver 15 new schools across Queensland's fastest growing communities and there are new primary schools in Caloundra South, where I was pleased to make the announcement with the member for Caloundra, and Ripley Valley. I was also recently with the member for Rockhampton visiting the site of the new high school in Gracemere, a project that has been called upon for generations and that our government will finally deliver.

We have cancelled the unrealistic Pioneer-Burdekin scheme and we have scrutinised the unrealistic and unachievable QEJP. It has been a challenge, but we are up to it. Because of these decisions, we are able to make the investments needed for the future of our state.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** My question is to the Treasurer. I have to say that I am very proud to be able to ask the Treasurer a question as a first-year member of the parliament representing my electorate and the community. Will the Treasurer inform me what initiatives this budget includes for my electorate of Maryborough?

**Mr JANETZKI:** It gives me great pleasure to talk about the honourable member's electorate, and he is doing an outstanding job in representing it. I know how proud he is of Maryborough, of his local area and of the people who live there. It is great to have him here today because I know how important this budget is to his community because of the significant investments we are making in his electorate.

Fully funded in this budget is our 2032 Delivery Plan. The 2032 Delivery Plan is ensuring we have a games that delivers not just for the south-east corner but for all of Queensland. As part of this plan, Maryborough is going to have the generational opportunity to host archery during the 2032 games. This is an opportunity to show off the beautiful history of this part of Queensland on the world stage. We are so proud as a government that Maryborough, along with so many other parts of regional Queensland, will have that opportunity.

As part of our historic 80-20 funding deal with the Commonwealth government, we are also making investments needed to enhance safety on the Bruce. It is an important measure to ensure families can get home safely and it will provide much stronger flood immunity for the local area.

We know, too, how important the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program is to the community of Maryborough and the Wide Bay more broadly. We also know that the opposition has shamefully attempted to scare the community on this front, but their scare campaign has ended. Our budget delivers \$4.8 billion to save the QTMP and protect local jobs. These jobs were put at risk by hidden blowouts and chronic mismanagement under the former government. Over the next year Downer is looking for tradies, with close to 200 trade jobs in total. We are ensuring this project continues so that the benefits it will bring to Maryborough are realised.

This budget also makes important investments into local community groups and investments that enhance the community's access to local facilities. There is \$1½ million in the budget for beach erosion mitigation and protection and \$150,000 towards renovations at the Maryborough Salvation Army. There is \$2.7 million for new LED pedestrian lighting at Anzac Park and \$20,000 for the fit-out of a delivery truck for RDT Angels.

The Crisafulli government, supported by an outstanding member for Maryborough, is committed to delivering for the Maryborough community. We are delighted to be making this significant investment in the budget and we will continue to invest in the jobs, services and infrastructure needed to ensure Maryborough continues to thrive in the years and months ahead.

**Mr CRANDON:** It is my pleasure in my sixth term in this place, Treasurer, to ask you a surprisingly similar question. Will the Treasurer inform me of what initiatives this budget includes for my electorate of Coomera on the northern Gold Coast?

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is with great pleasure that I do so, member for Coomera, and congratulations on your re-election last year. We all know how much the member for Coomera's electorate has grown over the years and he represents a large part of the Gold Coast. He has been talking about the growth in his electorate for a decade—longer—and now it is good to have a government in power that is doing something to deliver for your part of the Gold Coast, member for Coomera.

There is perhaps no better example of the investment that we are making into the northern Gold Coast than the Coomera Hospital. As the member would know well, this is a project that the former government said they would deliver as part of their failed capacity expansion program but never did.



The former government's plan would have seen a 404-bed hospital built that did not have key services like an outpatients department, pharmacy or pathology. That is not to mention that it had an almost \$1 billion cost blowout and was delayed by at least six months, but our Hospital Rescue Plan—fully funded with \$18½ billion over five years in this budget—delivers a fit-for-purpose hospital for Coomera with 600 new overnight beds. That is the number the independent Sangster review found was needed for this growing part of our state. It will also include a multistorey car park. Works are already underway on site while planning continues.

Because this is such a significant and growing area, we are also making new investments into infrastructure needed to support the population. As part of our \$815 million investment into new schools, we will deliver a new special school in Coomera to relieve pressures and deliver better education for the Coomera community.

One of our most significant and important investments made in this budget is into the Coomera Connector. We know that under the former government this project was delayed and blew out significantly. Simply put, we would get less for more. We are committed to actually delivering this road for the northern Gold Coast to get families home sooner and safer, with \$610 million to be spent on the project in 2025-26 as part of the budget.

We are also making a range of investments in local infrastructure across the Coomera community. There is \$450,000 for oval seating and shade sail upgrades at Coomera Rivers State school and another \$450,000 to deliver stage 2 of an open space nature playground at Norfolk Village State School. We have also made an investment of \$5 million towards the construction of the Pimpama PCYC. This is a project that I know the member cares about passionately and I want to congratulate him on his long-term advocacy. I am delighted now that as a government we can deliver this long-awaited contribution for the Coomera community. This is a growing and important part of the Gold Coast that you represent, member for Coomera, and as a government we are delighted to be responding to this growth with significant investments across the community that deliver not only local projects but the significant infrastructure needed to ensure this region continues to thrive.

**Ms MORTON:** Will the Treasurer inform me of what initiatives this budget includes for my electorate of Caloundra?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The member for Caloundra has already proven herself to be an outstanding advocate for her community. She knows that under the former government and the former member for Caloundra investments were not made to support Caloundra as a growing community. That is why it is excellent to have her in the parliament—a genuine advocate who is making her community better. The Crisafulli government is making the investments in this budget that did not come for a decade under the former government. For example, our government has fully funded in this budget a new primary school for the growing Caloundra South Priority Development Area. This area has grown massively, but its rise is not new. The former government announced this school in 2022 but failed to fund it or deliver it. Our government recognises the need for this school, and that is why it is fully funded in this budget as part of an \$815 million investment to deliver new schools across Queensland.

The Crisafulli government is also delivering a TAFE centre of excellence for the Caloundra community, with a \$78 million investment. Developing the skills needed to support our ambitious housing plans and to provide essential services to Queenslanders is made more difficult after a decade of underinvestment. That is why our total of \$201 million investment for new TAFE centres of excellence in Rockhampton, Caloundra, Moreton Bay and the southern Moreton Bay islands matters, but that is not all. This budget also includes our Caloundra congestion-busting plan. The member for Caloundra was with the Deputy Premier and the Premier just a few weeks ago announcing our major plan to ease traffic on Caloundra Road and is now listed in QTRIP for the very first time. These are generational infrastructure projects that will futureproof the Caloundra traffic network to accommodate future growth.

We are also investing into local community groups, including a \$1 million combined investment as part of the Games On! fund to upgrade the Caloundra senior Rugby League football club, the Pelican Waters Bowls Club, the Baringa Football Club and Caloundra Rugby Union. We are investing \$4 million for the Create Caloundra plan to deliver upgrades for the CBD and \$6.8 million for the Turbine project—a new food and beverage manufacturing and education precinct. Our investments in Caloundra are about setting this community up for the months and years ahead and we will continue to deliver for this very important part of Queensland.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** My question is to the Treasurer with regard to the establishment of the Treasury transactions team. Will the Treasurer be able to update the committee with regard to the planning and objectives and the role of the Treasury transactions team please?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Queensland needs to attract private capital to ensure that we get projects delivered in the most cost-effective way for the taxpayer, and our government wants to use the resources of Queensland Treasury to make that happen. I confirm today that the Treasury transactions team—the TTT—that I announced in my post-budget CEDA speech will be established from 1 August as part of a broader strategic realignment of Queensland Treasury. The TTT will be a dedicated unit within Queensland Treasury focusing on attracting private capital to help deliver the infrastructure we need as our state continues to grow.

The TTT will focus on procurement and service delivery models that utilise private sector innovation and expertise, as well as financing and funding models. They will offer a plan to support the private sector to work with government. They will be looking for new proposals that government can actively look to partner with in new partnerships with the private sector. By its nature, the TTT will start small and build a work program. It is a clear signal that Queensland is open for business and demonstrates a culture where government is willing to work with the private sector. Market engagement will occur and be critical to taking advantage of opportunities for collaboration. The TTT importantly will not replace project coordination and facilitation functions that already exist across government and it will work in lock step with existing commercial investment and coordination functions across government to promote private sector collaboration.

While we have already seen the opposition attempt to run another scare campaign, it is anything but what they have claimed. It is about delivering projects and services in genuine partnership with capital that wants to come to Queensland. Former Labor governments attempted these partnerships. They attempted it with the HIF that never built a home while they were in government and with build-to-rent projects. I had the privilege of opening the Mirvac Newstead build-to-rent project just recently, as an example. The former government also legislated a 46 per cent private sector renewables mandate but had no plan or framework to deliver it, but we do. We are taking action to bring capital to Queensland, showing that we are open for business, and we are showing already that we are taking steps to deliver it. I look forward to the TTT being established and beginning to deliver outcomes for the people of Queensland.

**Mr CRANDON:** Can the Treasurer update the committee on the government's actions to stamp out illegal tobacco as it relates to enforcement action taken by SPER, please?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Crisafulli government has taken a nation-leading approach to stamping out illegal tobacco and vapes. I am not even going to say the pun, Deputy Speaker. I know it is an important issue that the member is passionate about, because we know the significant negative impact that vaping and the illegal tobacco trade are having on our community and our young people. We have introduced the nation's toughest fines for rogue store operators caught selling illicit tobacco and vapes and will continue to target them to keep dangerous vapes out of the hands of children.

In May I was with officers from SPER to talk about the work that they do to clamp down on illegal tobacco operators who refuse to pay their fines. In that round of raids SPER was able to seize \$468,000 in cash and other assets from illegal traders, targeting more than 20 stores across South-East Queensland. The officers I met told me about some of their finds that included an illegal trader hiding cash behind a fake wall and another operating a hidden shop at the back of a retail store. On top of the cash they seized, a Mercedes AMG valued at almost \$200,000 was impounded.

Today I can share that in 2024-25 more than \$18 million in fines relating to illicit tobacco was referred to SPER by Queensland Health for collection and enforcement. Across the financial year, SPER has targeted illicit tobacco traders across the state, executing more than 30,000 search warrants to seize cash and vehicles and garnish bank accounts. That has led to more than \$6½ million in cash secured through SPER enforcement operations just in 2024-25. I acknowledge the hard work of my colleague health minister Nicholls and the work of his department in tackling these issues. We will continue to work collaboratively across all levels of government to target this issue because it is important to us and it is important to Queenslanders.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand the member for Maiwar may have a question.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Yes, I have, thank you, Deputy Speaker. Treasurer, you would know that the former government's treasurer proudly maintained relationships with Ferra engineering, which supplies weapons components for the F-35 fighter jets that the Israel Defense Forces used in its illegal and clearly disastrous war in Gaza. Given the growing acknowledgement of Israel's unacceptable violations of international law, including recent acknowledgements by the Australian government, will the Treasurer rule out any additional support for companies manufacturing or supplying weapons or

weapons components for use by the IDF? I include in that question any funding via Queensland Investment Corporation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will seek some information in relation to it and return by the end of the session, honourable member, because in machinery of government there are certainly different responsibilities now with me than the former treasurer had as his ministerial responsibilities as outlined. I will seek some information in respect of that question, in particular that investment and those investments that you are seeking, and I will come back to the committee by the end of the session.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I would appreciate that. Might I ask a follow-up question?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, but just before you do, Treasurer, do you mean before the end of this Treasury session or before the end of the day?

**Mr JANETZKI:** By the end of the day. I think the end of this session is 4.30. It will be by the end of the day, just to be clear.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I will put this question to the Under Treasurer, if I might. Weapons manufacturer Rheinmetall Defence is still listed on Treasury's website as a key investment growth story and has previously received public funds in Queensland for its domestic and international defence projects. Given that Rheinmetall was specifically named in the UN Office of the High Commissioner's warning that states and companies supplying weapons to Israel risk responsibility for human rights violations, what assurances has Treasury sought that Rheinmetall will stop arming Israel?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Under Treasurer, just a moment, please. I am seeking some advice about that question. Under Treasurer?

**Mr Williams:** We engage a number of government policies in due diligence processes around the granting of money in alignment with government policy. With respect to that specific example, I will have to seek further information and return by the end of the evening session.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I would very much appreciate that, and if possible can you add to that whether any future public funding to this company would be dependent on assurances about not continuing to assist in arming Israel?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, we note your supplementary question. Under Treasurer, it is up to the Treasurer whether he wants to take things on notice or not.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can I ask that we come back by the end of the session?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** By the end of the day, given the time.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, not 4.30 but by the end of tonight's session—by seven—with that further information, to the question from the honourable member that I received and also the question to the Under Treasurer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr CRANDON:** I have a point of order. I believe we were giving up some of our time to the member for Maiwar because he arrived late so that he could be afforded some time to ask questions.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have a question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, that is not a point of order. I am keeping time.

**Mr CRANDON:** The member for Caloundra does have a question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand that. I will give the call to the member for Waterford.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Under Treasurer, despite the Treasurer's protest, the fact remains that this \$23 billion in MYFER was revised in the budget by \$16.6 billion. The Treasurer might talk about expenses and funding his own election commitments by \$30 million, but I want to talk about this \$23 billion in MYFER. Under Treasurer, is the addition of this \$23 billion in operating expenses for underfunded legacy projects one of the reasons one of your deputy under treasurers refused to sign off on MYFER?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Just one moment, Under Treasurer. Under Treasurer?

**Mr Williams:** I do not believe that the question is particularly relevant in the context of MYFER.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** To be fair, Under Treasurer, that is not a call that you get to make. Was it the reason one of your deputy under treasurers refused to sign off on MYFER?

**Mr Williams:** Thank you. My understanding is that CBRC signs off on MYFER and whether or not—

**Mr JANETZKI:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I seek clarification of your direction, because the Under Treasurer was not even in the role as Under Treasurer—

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Perhaps the Under Treasurer could take some advice from his bureaucrats.

**Mr JANETZKI:**—at the time of MYFER.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It is irrelevant. Perhaps he could get advice from his bureaucrats.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Treasurer, for the point of order. That is not a point of order. Member for Waterford, thank you for your assistance. Under Treasurer, you obviously are able to seek what advice you would like from other members or officers here, but you have the call.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Sorry, Deputy Speaker, point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Or have you answered the question?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can the member for Waterford authenticate her claim?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is a point of order I will take some advice on.

**Mr Williams:** I will say, member, that—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Just a moment, Under Treasurer. Member for Waterford, I take on board the point of order raised by the Treasurer and would ask whether you are able to authenticate the fact or the statement provided in your question to the Under Treasurer.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Is there a standing order that requires me to authenticate that? I am happy to explain the basis for the question, but I am wondering on what basis you have made that ruling.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Waterford, the question for authentication is in line with Speaker's rulings made on a number of occasions.

Member for Waterford and members of the committee, the time is now 4.30 and, in accordance with the motion moved and passed by the House, the time for the exploration of Treasury estimates has expired. We now move to the examination of the estimates for the portfolio relating to home ownership, which we will examine until 5 pm. I note a change in substitute members from the member for Waterford to the member for Gaven. I welcome the member for Gaven. Treasurer, would you like to make an opening statement on the issue of home ownership?

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is a very great privilege to be the first home ownership minister in Queensland. In October 2023 the Premier announced the creation of the portfolio to send an important message to a generation of young people that had given up hope on home ownership here in Queensland. It was an acknowledgement that Queensland was at the bottom of the home ownership ladder at 63½ per cent. New South Wales is at 64 per cent, South Australia and Victoria are at 68 per cent, and Tasmanian and WA are at 70 per cent and 71 per cent. Queensland is at the bottom of the home ownership ladder and we must do better for a generation of young people that are giving up hope. This is a time of increasing rents and booming house prices. If you do not have the benefit of the bank of mum and dad, which we all know is the fifth biggest lender in the country, then you will have a hard time breaking into the market.

That is why early on we focused on the abolition of stamp duty for first homebuyers buying a new home. We have implemented the rent out a room scheme under which someone will not lose their concessions or their first home owner grant if they decide to rent out a room within the first 12 months, which was previously the case. We have also announced our Boost to Buy scheme, which is an important part of the shared equity process for our state. On its own, that will not drive home ownership. However, across the length and breadth of government we are focused on driving supply and delivering more homes for Queenslanders. Obviously we have targets of one million homes by 2044 and 53½ thousand social and community homes by 2044. We are taking a multifaceted approach. We have our \$2 billion Residential Activation Fund, \$1 billion of which will be distributed by 30 June next year and that is an important part of our plan.

I will contrast that with the former government, which saw Queensland at the bottom of the ladder. In their *Homes for Queenslanders* document, home ownership got one bullet point. Seven hundred and fifty build-to-rent dwellings that were promised at the end of 2023 were not delivered. When we started to add all of that up, we were determined to contrast ourselves and our focus on home ownership with that of the former government.

I am reminded of when the Premier and I did a press conference with John and Lena on the south side of Brisbane, just before the budget. They are Yazidi refugees and now Australian citizens. They were desperate to get their foot on the housing ladder in Queensland. Our extension of 12 months

to the first home owner grant boost of \$30,000 and our abolition of stamp duty for first home buyers purchasing a new build will help make their home ownership dream come true. That is what it is about. At the end of the day, it is about Queenslanders having an opportunity to buy their own home and live their own dream if they choose to do so.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Treasurer. I turn to non-government members.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, why has the Pathways Shared Equity Loan program, designed to help low-income public housing tenants buy their homes, been cut under your government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** There is a \$5.6 billion investment in the housing budget as we deliver a whole range of different services and funding into programs. I am focused on making sure that everybody has the choice to own their own home and a way to get there. The program to which the member refers sits in the portfolio responsibilities of the housing minister and I will let him speak to the operational and administrative aspects of her question. However, without a doubt across the board, whether it is investments into the housing budget which we have seen substantially grow, whether it is the \$5.6 billion, whether it is the \$365 million or whether it is the \$209 million into the permanent 20 per cent funding uplift for specialist homelessness services, we are continuing to invest in housing and in home ownership in Queensland.

**Ms SCANLON:** Minister, are not you the minister for home ownership? How can you claim that the decision to cut the only program that is essentially available to public housing tenants to purchase their home is not your responsibility? You have just mentioned a whole range of housing programs yet you cannot answer a question that is directly about home ownership.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have answered the question in the respect that the operational and administrative components of that program sit with the housing minister. My administrative responsibilities are clear in my charter letter. That program sits with the housing minister. My reference is to the investment that we are making and the actions we are taking in the home ownership space as we want anybody who seeks to live in their own home to be able to achieve it.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, the opposition has received correspondence from a young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman who is a mother of two children aged four and three, a newly registered nurse and a public housing tenant who expressed her concern about this program being cut. The Labor opposition office received the same advice from the Public Service that this program, in fact, has been cut and public housing tenants are being referred to the Boost to Buy program. Treasurer, do you accept that cutting the Pathways Shared Equity Loan program and telling people to go through the Boost to Buy scheme will reduce home ownership opportunities for low-income public housing tenants?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Again, I will let the housing minister speak to the operational and administrative nature of the question. Let's be clear about the funding that has gone in to Boost to Buy. In the budget we have allocated \$165 million over the next two years to roll out this project. We have already seen an extraordinary expression of interest in the program. The program is broad. It is nation-leading. The income threshold for the federal program for a single is \$125,000. We have set ours to between \$150,000 and \$225,000. We are broadening the scope. We are making it clear for the total quantum of the value of a home. They are nation-leading parameters. It is a nation-leading program.

Work is continuing on its rollout because, as I said, we are determined to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to access our Boost to Buy program. I want everybody to do it. We know some of the greatest disadvantages in home ownership are in Indigenous communities. We know that a growing cohort facing homelessness are women over 50—and I see it in my own hometown—and we must do more to support them.

**Ms SCANLON:** Point of order: relevance. We only have limited time. The Treasurer said that he cannot answer the question as it is a matter for Housing, so I am happy to move on to my next question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not hear the Treasurer say that, but you can move on to your next question. Treasurer, have you concluded your answer?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, we have public housing tenants who were able to go through a scheme that only required a \$2,000 deposit. Do you agree that it is significantly different to ask public housing tenants to provide a much higher level of deposit? The Boost to Buy scheme requires a two per cent deposit. They are also now being asked, in effect, to enter into a lottery system because, as you said in your own media statement today, 10,000 people have put in an expression of interest for only 1,000 places. How is that fair to public housing tenants?

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is exciting that we have such significant interest in the Boost to Buy scheme. In respect of the program that the housing minister will speak to, as it is administratively his, there is no reduction in that program. That program is continuing. In fact, I want to see Boost to Buy bring more opportunity. With a significant registration of interest in the Boost to Buy program, which sits within the existing program in the department of housing, there is an opportunity for us to move the dial on home ownership in Queensland and give people the opportunity, no matter where they live, to realise their dream of home ownership, if they seek it.

The premise of the honourable member's question is false. In fact, we are creating more opportunity for those people aspiring to the dream of home ownership. It is exciting to see. The people who are reaching out to us and registering their interest in the Boost to Buy scheme are young people, parents, grandparents—everybody who wants to know more about it and to be able to share in the opportunity that our Boost to Buy scheme will bring.

**Ms SCANLON:** Will the regional low-deposit home loan be extended beyond 2026? If so, where is the detail in the budget?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Again, that is not within my administrative responsibilities as the home ownership minister but with your—

**Ms SCANLON:** You are the home ownership minister. Nothing seems to be in your remit.

**Mr JANETZKI:** With your indulgence, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will seek further information by the end of the evening's session and share it with the committee.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, can you confirm whether the \$10 million committed to under the former Labor government's Homes for Queenslanders plan to increase First Nations home ownership outcomes through the Our Place Action Plan will continue in full under the Crisafulli government, and what has been delivered under this action plan to date?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, that funding is secured. Again, administratively that sits with the housing minister. I will let him provide further details on that. Yes, the funding is secured.

**Ms SCANLON:** My question is to the Under Treasurer. The former Labor government engaged the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute to develop a comprehensive housing supply and demand model for Queensland. Can you advise whether Queensland Treasury is committed to progressing the supply-side modelling to complement the demand model developed in phase 2?

**Mr Williams:** I will have to seek advice from my colleagues in relation to that particular question and ask for a bit more time, if I may.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We will take that on advisement as well, and I will come back with additional information by the end of the session.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, how many first home buyers who have received the concessions you mentioned in your opening remarks have rented out a room?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Those numbers are not able to be kept by the Queensland Revenue Office. They are not factored at this stage because of the inability to capture those numbers.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, how is it that your government is proposing to track the outcomes of this measure if you are unable to determine how many people have benefited from this policy change?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Our government is unapologetic for doing everything possible to drive supply and home ownership outcomes in Queensland. This was for those I like to call the one percenters. The renting out a room measure was a perfect example of a one percenter, as supported by a range of stakeholders across the sector, particularly the REIQ. I know that other property related participants and stakeholders in the sector were supportive of this because it was one of those things that overnight created some supply but had a minimal regulatory impact and a minimal administrative burden. It was simply the right thing to do. Renting out a room is one of those efficient measures that drives supply and could be easily undertaken if the political will was there, which it was. We have done it and I am pleased that it is now part of the Queensland landscape.

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, your media release references Treasury modelling and a figure of \$20,000. If this was such a signature policy to make permanent something that Labor had already done, surely you would be monitoring the results. Treasurer, have you asked your department to undertake any work to determine what that number might be and to track that information? If not, does the lack of reporting not make this commitment more about headlines than about results?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Honourable member, you quoted 20,000. Can you rephrase that question, please?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, I must admit that I was not quite sure where that went. Could you please repeat the question?

**Ms SCANLON:** Treasurer, your media release references Treasury modelling and a figure of 20,000 people who could benefit from this policy. My question is: have you asked the department to do any work to determine how many people have in fact benefited from this policy? You have just told me that you do not know. Have you asked the department to get that answer so you can actually track whether or not this measure has been effective?

**Mr JANETZKI:** That was on the basis of numbers of first home buyers and that work. Yes, we are always wanting to capture more information. In relation to these matters, I have spoken with Treasury as to whether we can capture that information. If there is an efficient way for us to capture that either through Treasury or the Queensland Revenue Office, yes it will be done. At this stage, there has been no tracking of those numbers. My hope is that we will have tracking of those numbers so we can see the real benefits. Regardless, we know the benefits that are there. We know that it has simply and efficiently added more supply to the market as a one percenter. We are going to keep looking for new initiatives, new programs, new things we can do to drive up supply and, ultimately, help more people into home ownership.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, I am going to go to the member for Maiwar because I understand he has a question.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Treasurer, you will recall that in your budget speech you referred to the up to 1,000 dreams that might be realised through the Boost to Buy scheme, but you have told us today that more than 11,000 people have expressed interest in the scheme within less than a month. Can you confirm for us that the scheme will be limited to no more than 1,000 Queenslanders and do you appreciate that that 1,000 dreams represents about 0.05 per cent of the 1.8 million Queenslanders who are currently renting?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I said at the time that my aspiration was that the program would be oversubscribed and that the registration of interest would be oversubscribed. The great news is that it is. The scheme will be expanded. Obviously, for those 11,000 expressions of interest there will be applications and criteria that they need to go through. There is still going to be a need for credit eligibility criteria to be met. If they are seeking loans there will need to be evidence of the two per cent savings for the deposit. We will need to ensure that they are within the threshold and they meet the other qualifying criteria.

It is exciting to see so many people interested. I am very pleased to see the interest in the program. I note what you say. It is just the beginning. That is why it is an important part of our policy platform. It is something that we are dedicated to. The scheme will be expanded, absolutely. The level of interest demands it. I obviously said in the budget that there is \$165 million for it. It will be expanded. We will get through the process of registering interest and then the official application process will begin and we will start to see those applications processed.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We are going to move to questions from government members.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** There is no doubt listening to the Treasurer that we will have good results in the long run and fix the housing crisis that was created by the former Labor government. Will the Treasurer update the committee on any representations he has made to Queensland banks on behalf of first home buyers to ensure it is easier for more Queenslanders to get into homes sooner?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I know how much this topic means to the member. As I mentioned, it is an important policy matter for everyone in the government. As a government, we have done a significant amount of work to help make the dream of home ownership more realistic for thousands of young Queenslanders. The Crisafulli government has done more in nine months than the former government did in nine years. It is a significant task and there is more to do in the years ahead to realise the benefits of the government's agenda across all housing portfolios.

We also recognise that home ownership is significantly influenced by factors outside of government, including access to finance. We want to ensure the banking sector is engaged with government and fully informed of all incentives being offered to first home buyers so they can be considered as part of new loan applications.

That is why today I have written to the chief executives of every bank operating in Queensland to inform them of the government's agenda and what we are doing to support first home buyers. That includes the Boost to Buy scheme, the first home owner's grant and the stamp duty concessions, all of

which I have discussed. Very importantly for accessing finance, I have also highlighted to the banks the steps we have taken to allow first home buyers to rent out a room. In the Revenue Legislation Amendment Act we passed earlier this year we allowed recipients of the transfer duty home concession to rent part of their property during the one-year occupation period while still retaining the full benefit of this relief. We took this measure because we want to make sure home ownership is more affordable and it can unlock restrictions for Queenslanders.

The rental market is still under extreme pressure with very low vacancy rates. Labor disincentivised the investment and failed to support enough new homes into the system, leading to record rent increases and difficulty in accessing well-priced leases. This in turn reduced the capacity for renters to save for their own home.

In my letter, I called on the banks to consider the positive impact of our subletting changes on a first home buyer's capacity to repay their mortgage. By introducing this policy we have ensured that new home buyers can establish a sustainable income source to support repayments—something we think banks could consider in their assessments.

I will continue to work collaboratively with the property and banking sectors to ensure that the maximum benefit of our policy initiatives are realised with benefits widespread across the housing market. We will do everything we can to ensure more young people can buy their first home sooner and we would welcome the support and engagement of the banks to achieve this outcome.

**Mr CRANDON:** Will the Treasurer provide an update to the committee on the recently re-established Property Consultative Committee and how the government's approach to engaging with the property industry differs from previous approaches?

**Mr JANETZKI:** As the member has alluded to, our government has re-established the Property Consultative Committee. It has existed for some time and prior to 2019 met regularly. Under the former government the important link between the property sector and the government was forgotten and left behind. We are a government that is committed to engaging regularly with industry to reduce regulatory impediments and supplier constraints to help ease housing pressures. Rather than demonising the sector, we want to genuinely engage with the property industry to identify what government can do to get more Queenslanders into homes sooner.

By re-establishing this forum it means government can have a better understanding of the challenges on the ground. Equally, industry can better understand the challenges and focuses of government. The re-established Property Consultative Committee met earlier this year with attendance from industry leaders across the sector. A range of important matters were discussed, including the ex gratia relief framework for the land tax foreign surcharge and the additional foreign inquirer duty. We discussed in detail the industry's concern about the process set up by the former government, which is a process that created delays and uncertainty, held up development and sent investment and capital to other states. That is why in our budget we committed to streamline and simplify the process.

Treasury, through the Property Consultative Committee, is now engaging further with key stakeholders to examine how current ex gratia relief processes and criteria could be streamlined to reduce red tape and support investment and new housing supply. Our government is proud to partner with the private sector. After all, it is the private sector which has and will continue to do the heavy lifting when it comes to deliver the new homes we need. It is an important measure that our government is taking to show that we genuinely listen to the impediments the sector is facing and that we are committed to acting in genuine partnership to deliver more housing stock for Queensland.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Caloundra, you may have time to ask a question.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Deputy Speaker, can I ask for the indulgence of the committee to make some early thankyou's to Treasury staff who will be departing at the end of this session?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** This is coming from government time, so you may.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I wanted to say some thankyou's before the end of the session at five o'clock—namely, to the QIC, QTC, Queensland Revenue Office and the Productivity Commission, who will not be returning after the break. I wanted to say thank you to all those present here today and to the Treasury staff, particularly those focused on the Treasury and the home ownership components of this afternoon's committee hearing. While they are all here, I want to offer my sincere thanks for all of their hard work. It is a significant effort across government, as those in opposition would appreciate and the former minister would appreciate. I want to thank them all for their efforts and contributions in preparing and being with me at the committee hearing this afternoon. Thank you to all.



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We have now reached the conclusion of the time allocated for the examination of the proposed expenditure of the home ownership portfolio area. Treasurer, I note there are a number of issues from this area and also the Treasury area you are intending to come back to the committee on. I wanted to remind you of that. The committee will now adjourn for a short break. The hearing we resume at 5.30 pm with the examination of estimates for the energy portfolio area.

**Proceedings suspended from 5.01 pm to 5.30 pm.**



**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Welcome back, Treasurer and officials. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the energy portfolio open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

If you would like to, Treasurer, you could make an opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to say a few words. The Crisafulli government's first budget is delivering for Queensland and laying the foundation for the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for. In 2025-26, Queensland's state owned energy businesses are investing more than \$5 billion across the energy supply chain, with further investments to be made as part of our five-year Energy Roadmap, which will be released by the end of the year.

Our plan for the energy mix is grounded in economics and engineering, not ideology, to put downward pressure on power prices and deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable electricity for Queenslanders. It is about producing more electricity to meet future demand and put downward pressure on power prices. It includes extended coal generation, more low-cost energy production in wind and solar, and more dispatchable supply including gas turbines, pumped hydro and batteries for firming and storage. We intend to keep our coal-fired power stations operating for as long as is economically sensible, not the ideologically-driven early shutdowns planned by our predecessors.

The long-term proven energy generation in Queensland is coal, which accounts for more than 60 per cent of the electricity generated across the state. Queensland's coal-fired power stations provide more than eight gig of generation capacity and are part of the youngest fleet in the country. That is a competitive advantage for our state and it will continue to play an essential role in our grid. The reliability of our coal-fired generators is critical. That is why the budget increased the available funding in our Electricity Maintenance Guarantee to \$1.6 billion, up from \$1.4 billion, and we have directed government owned corporations to provide real-time updates on the status of their generators—something that has already been put into effect.

While we are supporting coal generation for longer, we are also backing the development of more renewables as an essential foundation of a credible path to net zero and to meet growing demand, particularly with the support of the private sector. Renewables account for 28.8 per cent of our power generation, and this market share will grow. Our focus is on leveraging our state's natural attributes like plentiful sunshine and wind that blows at night, as well as smaller, more manageable pumped hydro projects. The government is also progressing pumped hydro projects with an investment of \$355 million towards early works on the Borumba pumped hydro scheme, while QIC progresses a proper commercial assessment of delivery options.

We promised to fund smaller, more manageable pumped hydro projects, and we are delivering on that promise. We are investing \$79.4 million to progress ongoing development of CleanCo's Mount Rawdon and Stanwell's Big-T pumped hydro projects, and CS Energy continues investigative works on the Capricornia project—all being progressed in partnership with the private sector.

While coal will play an important part of our future energy mix for years to come and renewables are going to play an increasing role, we are also planning for the future by building the generation capacity from gas which bolsters our firming capability. In 2025-26, Stanwell will continue to work with Quinbrook on the proposed 114-megawatt Lockyer Energy project near Gatton, while CleanCo will investigate a new gas turbine at Swanbank. The 2025-26 budget also invests \$479 million into the development of the 400-megawatt Brigalow gas peaker project at Kogan Creek, and we are investing \$378 million for utility-scale batteries at the Stanwell, Tarong and Swanbank power station sites.

It is clear that much is already happening to secure the state's energy future, and we will continue to build on that work with the upcoming Energy Roadmap.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Treasurer and Minister for Energy. I am going to commence questions now. We will go to the non-government side first. Member for Bancroft?

**Mr WHITING:** We will go to the member for Bundamba.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Minister, I refer to the Capital Statement expenditure for CS Energy, and I ask: were you contacted by any members of the CS Energy board regarding the explosion at Callide C3 on Friday, 4 April before your energy speech on Tuesday, 8 April?

**Mr JANETZKI:** These matters have been well ventilated, whether it is in the parliament repeatedly or whether it is in questions on notice 4 and 11 today. What always needs to be kept in perspective is the steps that we took once the full story was known. Obviously the statement from the CS Energy board says it all: there was an understatement of the gravity of the incident and there were deep-seated cultural issues. We acted as soon as this was known. We acted. I contrast that with the former government.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is your point of order, member for Bundamba?

**Mr McCALLUM:** It is on relevance. I asked specifically about whether or not the minister had been contacted by the CS Energy board between those dates.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundamba, I note your point of order. I have been listening to the Treasurer and believe he is being relevant to the question asked.

**Mr JANETZKI:** As soon as the incident became clear, we acted. We did not wait 1,200 days; spend \$10 million, like those opposite, on a Brady report; take 3½ years before they acted after they tried to hide the Brady report for that time; spend \$38 million on legal fees; allow the deep-seated cultural problems to take shape; and be fined \$9 million. Once it was clear what had happened, the decisiveness of our actions was obvious—whether it was the immediate action protocol that was implemented, whether it was the review into GOC culture that we have commenced now, in conjunction with the development of the Energy Roadmap.

The opposition's record on Callide is that, prior to the explosion in 2021, they pulled out \$500 million in dividends. They let that asset not be properly maintained, and we saw an example of that when it exploded. They hid—they obfuscated—for years. Once it became clear to ask what had happened—

**Mr McCALLUM:** Point of order, once again, on relevance, Deputy Speaker: speaking of obfuscation, there has been a long preamble and lots of context. I ask that the minister be brought back to the direct question that was asked about being contacted by CS Energy board members.

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Moggill, what is your point of order? Is it to that point of order?

**Dr ROWAN:** Yes. My point of order is that the minister is being responsive. He is providing broad context to the question as asked and he is being responsive to the question as asked.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, I understand there is some context to your answer, but I would ask you to—

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, Deputy Speaker. My diary is clear when I met with the board of CS Energy and that is on the public record.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I note the minister's non-answer, but moving on. Minister, I table text messages obtained by the opposition under right to information from Queensland Treasury about Callide from a person noted as 'JS' whose first name is Jeff—who, on the balance of probabilities, appears to be current CS Energy deputy chair and ex-LNP deputy premier Mr Jeff Seeney—to the other shareholding minister, finance minister Bates. Those texts are on 7 April and 9 April. I ask: were you also contacted by text or any other communication by CS Energy deputy chair Jeff Seeney prior to 8 April about Callide blowing up?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have tabled the document. Minister, you have had a chance to peruse the document?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Deputy Speaker, I will have to seek further information and come back to the committee by the end of the session. What is clear is that the steps that were taken by us in relation to these matters once the full story became known—I am not sure what the point of the text messages is, because at the end of the day the position is clear—

**Mr McCALLUM:** You are not sure why a deputy chair would text you saying that the power station has blown up?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Bundamba, you do not have the call. The Treasurer is responding.

**Mr JANETZKI:** At the end of the day it was clear. The board's statement from CS Energy is clear that there had been deep-seated cultural problems. Once it was clear that those deep-seated cultural matters were known, the board acted. The board took operational steps. Staff were changed. There is a new CEO. It was clear that holding statements and media releases all gravely understated the gravity of the position and what had happened. It was not just the board that had been misled; it was also senior management and obviously ministers. As the statement from the board of CS Energy made clear, we acted. We acted in accordance with what is obviously publicly available and we acted appropriately to take steps.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Minister, did the finance minister raise the issue of Callide blowing up with you prior to your speech when you stood up at the Energy Club, especially given that you now know there had been communication from the deputy chair to the other shareholding minister?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I cannot recall whether that was the case or not. On the Friday when the explosion took place, at the time obviously, as we know, it was gravely understated for senior management, for the board and for ministers. That information was known on the Friday. Whether I discussed it with the finance minister I cannot recall. She was made aware of the incident. However, as I have said, once the gravity of the incident was known—and as we know from the statement of the CS Energy board, everyone was misled as to the gravity of the incident—we acted appropriately. That is in sharp contrast. Once it was known, we acted. That was in sharp contrast to the former government, which pulled \$500 million out in dividends, fought for 5½ years to hide the Brady report, spent \$10 million on the Brady report and paid \$38 million in legal fees to keep it hidden. Once the gravity of the incident at Callide became clear, we acted. We introduced the immediate protocol. We were undertaking a review. The board took steps to address various operational matters, and that work was undertaken.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I thank the minister for taking that question on notice and I look forward to the response by the end of the hearing, because it would be extraordinary if only one shareholding minister was briefed and the energy minister was unaware. I call the CEO of CS Energy, please.

Mr Gillespie, the former CEO and plant manager of CS Energy were terminated following the incident at C3. Can you please advise the committee if any termination payments were made, and if so, what is the total value of those payments?

**Mr Gillespie:** I do have some information here.

**Mr CRANDON:** It will not be anything like \$57 million, 1,200 days, \$500 million.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order on my right!

**Mr Gillespie:** A couple of executives did leave the business. You will understand that I do not understand exactly under what circumstances they left the business. In terms of your question, I believe that the CEO received a termination benefit as per his contract and long service leave. I do not believe he received any other termination payments. This is going to be detailed in our annual report, which will come out shortly. For the other gentleman I do not have quite as much detail. Exactly whom are you referring to?

**Mr McCALLUM:** There was a plant manager.

**Mr Gillespie:** The plant manager, yes. I believe there was a very small termination payment made, and it was very small. Again I have to be honest: I am not across the exact number, but it is not something I have asked about. I believe it may have been in the nature of four weeks in relation to contractual requirements.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Deputy Speaker, could I ask that those details be obtained and provided to the committee by the end of this session, please?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is a matter for Mr Gillespie and the Treasurer to consider.

**Mr WHITING:** Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: it is not a question on notice. It is a request to have the information provided.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I understand. Mr Gillespie, are you willing to try and obtain that information before the end of this session?

**Mr Gillespie:** I am willing to try. It is not something that has been provided to me and it is not something I have seen. Maybe I will refer that to the Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Deputy Speaker, there may be other reasons why that cannot be disclosed in terms of confidentiality of payments and the like. I am happy to take it on notice and let the CEO make the requisite enquiries and investigations, and I am happy to come back and report back to the committee.

**Mr Gillespie:** I do not know the personal commerciality that was provided to these former executives. I believe, as I have said, there were not any material payments, but I will make enquiries as to the commercial undertakings we made with them.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr Gillespie, just so we are clear, if you could try and get that information prior to the end of the session. If you cannot, we will revisit the matter then.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We will make the necessary enquiries and the CEO will do so and come back to you by the end of the session.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Thank you. Under Treasurer, in relation to the Callide C3 explosion in April, did you provide any briefings to DPC or the Premier's office, or were you present at any briefings with the Premier or his office, regarding the explosion in April this year?

**Mr Williams:** Could I answer that in two parts?

**Mr McCALLUM:** Yes.

**Mr Williams:** Addressing the first question, detailed responses have been provided in questions on notice 4 and 11 in relation to this matter. I just note that for the honourable member's attention. CS Energy provided a range of briefing materials and advice on the incident on the day and thereafter. Treasury provided information to government based on briefing materials provided by CS Energy. On 16 April—in reference to what the Treasurer has already said—the CS Energy board confirmed: that briefings and holding statements by CS Energy to government understated the gravity of the incident; that there had not been adequate reporting by CS Energy to senior management, the board or the government; and that deep-seated cultural problems at CS Energy had not been addressed. With respect to the second question around whether or not I was present in any meetings with the Premier, the answer is no.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Or his office?

**Mr Williams:** That is correct.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Thank you. I know that there have been a number of references to question on notice No. 4 regarding Callide. In asking my next question, I want to reference the part of that answer that highlights the importance of transparency and accountability. Treasurer, did you or your office share any correspondence or communications or discuss what happened at Callide C3 with the Premier or the Premier's office at any stage in the fortnight following the explosion? My question is specifically in relation to the Callide C3 incident in April.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can the honourable member describe the timeframe again? In the fortnight after the incident: is that correct?

**Mr McCALLUM:** Yes. In the two weeks after 4 April.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, of course.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Okay. I now table a document that was obtained under RTI for an application for any document in relation to Callide sent to the Premier's office or received from the Premier's office from 31 March to 14 April. The decision states that the Premier's office did not provide the RTI officer with the documents after two requests. Treasurer, if you briefed the Premier during that timeframe, how can it be that there are no documents provided in response to that RTI?

**Mr JANETZKI:** There are two comments I would make. Firstly, I spoke with the Premier in relation to the Callide incident repeatedly over the fortnight after the incident, so that is the first thing. The second thing in respect of the RTI application is that that is a matter for the RTI officer and not for me.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Just to confirm your answer, Minister: you briefed the Premier on multiple occasions over that time period but there was no documentation whatsoever over that time period. It was all oral briefings, was it?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundamba, I think your question actually contains some inferences and is bordering on argumentative in that you are suggesting what has or has not transpired. I will allow the minister to answer, but could you just ask your questions, please, without inserting other things in them?

**Mr JANETZKI:** As the member would appreciate, I am not privy to every email that is sent between every officer and every office in government. I spoke with the Premier in relation to the matter. In terms of the RTI request, that is a matter for the RTI officer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am going to move to questions from government members.

**Mr CRANDON:** Will the Treasurer advise how the Crisafulli government is ensuring Queenslanders have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable power through the Electricity Maintenance Guarantee and how this measure responds to past failures in energy asset management?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Crisafulli government is acting decisively to ensure Queenslanders have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable power. A cornerstone of this commitment is our Electricity Maintenance Guarantee. This initiative is backed by \$1.6 billion over five years to maintain, upgrade and extend the life of Queensland's government owned coal-fired power stations. The guarantee reflects our belief that energy policy should be grounded in engineering and economics, not ideology. More than \$400 million of this was already committed in 2024-25. This investment is delivering: the refurbishment of the cooling tower at Tarong Power Station; major upgrades to Callide B1 and B2 units; and a broader program of preventive maintenance and safety improvements across our publicly owned generation fleet. Through the guarantee, we have provided up-front approval of all investment required by Stanwell, CS Energy and CleanCo to implement five-year asset management plans to ensure these facilities keep running for longer to provide base load power and meet statutory and safety compliance requirements, while maintaining asset integrity and performance.

Queensland has the youngest coal-fired fleet in Australia. With proper maintenance, these assets will continue to play a crucial role in backing up renewables, firming the grid and putting downward pressure on power prices. We introduced this guarantee to fix the failures of the past. Under the former Labor government, maintenance budgets were repeatedly slashed in favour of short-term savings, and asset integrity and worker safety were compromised. The consequences of this were real for all Queenslanders.

On 25 May 2021 the Callide C4 unit exploded due to years of neglect. It was a catastrophic failure that took the unit offline for over 1,200 days, triggered emergency reliability measures and helped drive a 19.9 per cent increase in power prices for Queenslanders. Since then, the full extent of Labor's mismanagement has been laid bare again and again. Only recently, on 23 July 2025, the Australian Energy Regulator released its *Annual compliance and enforcement report 2024-25*. The report referenced the Federal Court's imposition of a record \$9 million penalty—the highest ever for a single breach of national energy laws—on Callide Power Trading Pty Ltd for failing to ensure that the Callide C4 unit met its generator performance standards. The court found that Callide Power Trading failed to plan, design and operate the facility in accordance with mandatory performance standards. These failures directly led to the explosion which had widespread impacts on energy supply and grid stability.

Rather than just a technical failure, this was also a failure of leadership, governance and responsibility. The people of Queensland were left to suffer the consequences when 470,000 homes and businesses lost power. The Electricity Maintenance Guarantee seeks to rectify the failures of the former Labor government. It is about restoring discipline to asset management, investing in safety and reliability, and protecting Queenslanders from unnecessary price shocks.

It is also a key pillar of our forthcoming five-year energy road map which will ensure Queensland's energy system is equipped to handle the demands of a changing grid and growing population. We are building a system that is affordable, reliable and resilient because Queenslanders deserve nothing less.

**Ms MORTON:** Treasurer, the CopperString project is crucial to North Queensland. Will the Treasurer provide the committee an update on the project and provide information on any previously undisclosed cost increases?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Member for Caloundra, I spent much of last week driving the length of the CopperString transmission line to meet with the communities, businesses and industries that will benefit from this massive project. I am excited to provide an update on this important piece of nation-building infrastructure. Firstly, though, it must be stated plainly: under Labor, CopperString never would have been delivered. The project blew out in cost and the timeframes were unrealistic. The way Labor handled CopperString was appalling. But we are saving it.

This year, the budget includes a \$2.4 billion investment in CopperString. It is real money to build the transmission line and real investment in the economic growth of our state, including our mineral and renewable-rich North West. It means on-the-ground work in the upcoming financial year as work progresses to connect the \$225 million Hughenden Hub to future renewable energy and wind projects

in Flinders Shire to the National Electricity Market, pending approvals. Powerlink is preparing site accommodation along the Eastern Link and overseeing the procurement of transformers, lines and tower steel needed for the construction of CopperString. By prioritising work on the Eastern Link of the transmission line, we can connect renewables projects around Hughenden to the National Electricity Grid sooner, and by encouraging private sector investment through the involvement of QIC, we can strengthen the case for the project and get the best value for taxpayers, while helping industry in the North West.

My trip last week from Townsville to Mount Isa reinforced for me the importance of this project and the potential it has to supercharge the North West, the Queensland and the national economy. I met with mayors, miners, community members and renewables participants who shared with me their belief in the transformative potential of CopperString. As I travelled along the future route of the transmission line, the message I shared was clear: CopperString is coming and we are determined that it hooks up renewables resources, mineral resources and optimises the economic opportunities that they bring to the North and the North West.

On the way, I stopped at Windlab's Kennedy Energy Park, a world-first hybrid wind, solar and energy storage facility. They have plenty of wind already online there and there is plenty more to come. That will be connected to the National Electricity Grid sooner with the prioritisation of the Eastern Link of CopperString.

We stopped in at Julia Creek and spoke to the council there where they have mining and agricultural opportunities ready to go. It was the same in Cloncurry where they shared the potential CopperString operations that would benefit from the supply of affordable, reliable and sustainable power through the CopperString transmission line, and what it would mean for their copper interests and other interests in the region. As Mount Isa Mayor Peta MacRae described it, CopperString will be the economic spine of the North West. We are delighted to be supporting North and North West Queensland and to build the region's economic future.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** Treasurer, we know hydrogen was a key focus of the former government. Will the Treasurer provide an update to the committee on the status of hydrogen development in Queensland and is the Treasurer able to inform the committee of any alternative approaches from former governments?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Our government is committed, member for Maryborough, to delivering an energy system for our state that provides affordable, reliable and sustainable power for every Queenslanders. Importantly, investments into the system need to demonstrate respect for taxpayer money, and our financial support of projects is incumbent on financial and operational performance. That is why, as a government, we took an early decision to not grant the more than \$1 billion in equity requested for the Central Queensland Hydrogen Project. We want our energy generators and government departments to be focused on the delivery of affordable, reliable and sustainable power and to maximise value from existing generation assets for Queenslanders. We have renamed the hydrogen division under the former Department of Energy and Climate to the gas and sustainable fuels branch within Queensland Treasury.

Of course, as a government, with our open-for-business approach, we welcome commercially viable hydrogen projects and investment from the private sector and federal government. But with regard to hydrogen, there have been some clear indicators that the market is in agreement with the sentiment behind our decision not to proceed with funding the Central Queensland Hydrogen Project. Last year, Fortescue Metals Group scrapped a 2030 target for producing so-called green hydrogen, and Fortescue last week ended its Gladstone hydrogen project. In March, Origin Energy backed away from a joint venture with chemicals giant Orica in the New South Wales Hunter Valley. In February, Woodside Energy said it would delay a hydrogen venture in the US and last year ditched early-stage hydrogen plans in Tasmania and New Zealand.

Our careful approach is in contrast to the former government's all-in style. They had a minister for hydrogen in the member for Springwood, and an assistant minister for hydrogen development, a position that the member for Bundamba held for almost three years, but hydrogen did not develop in their time in the roles. Not only that, but the former government proudly appointed Hydrogen Champions. In November 2020, the member for Springwood announced the appointment of the now former members for Mundingburra, Rockhampton and Redlands as the three champions who would be responsible for spearheading the development of the sought-after resource. The member for the Springwood said at the time—

The world is increasingly looking to green hydrogen to fuel the future, and this government wants Queensland to be the supplier.

That government was the Palaszczuk government with the now Leader of the Opposition as its then deputy premier. The member for Murrumba said less than a year after the member for Springwood that—

Encouraging investment in job-creating industries like hydrogen is part of Queensland's economic recovery plan.

But it seems that former premier Palaszczuk who appointed a minister for hydrogen and led a government with a suite of Hydrogen Champions has changed tune since Labor's election defeat. She has since said that hydrogen is proving to be in the too-hard basket and that she does not think we will see those projects taking off the ground. She even said that our decision to not invest into CQ-H2 was understandable.

She is not the only one to have lost her enthusiasm. The Leader of the Opposition has not mentioned hydrogen once since the election, and neither has the former minister for hydrogen, the member for Springwood. However, I must give credit to the member for Bundamba; he is still out fighting the fight, going so far as to say in March that CQ-H2, along with Pioneer-Burdekin, would have reduced energy prices.

I will inform the member and the committee what reduces energy prices: it is focusing state-owned generators on delivering affordable and reliable power through proper maintenance. We welcome commercially viable hydrogen projects and investment from the private sector and federal government, but our energy policy is grounded in economics and engineering, not ideology, and projects must always stack up.

**Mr CRANDON:** Treasurer, more on hydrogen and gas, if you would not mind. Will the Treasurer provide an update regarding the government's approach to investing in gas peaking and how this investment is bolstering firm capacity in contrast to the approaches of the previous government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Crisafulli government is taking a practical, technology-neutral approach to energy policy, one that ensures the grid remains reliable, affordable and sustainable as we move forward. At the heart of this strategy is targeted investment in gas peaking generation to provide firming capacity when the sun is not shining and the wind is not blowing.

The budget includes a record \$479 million in 2025-26 for CS Energy to develop the 400-meg Brigalow gas peaker project at Kogan Creek. This is a critical investment that will deliver dispatchable firm energy when it is most needed to support grid reliability and put downward pressure on wholesale prices. We are also progressing additional gas-peaking investments. CleanCo is investigating a new open-cycle gas turbine at Swanbank—a flexible asset that can help respond to daily and seasonal demand variations. Stanwell is continuing to work with Quinbrook to progress the 114-meg Lockyer Energy Project—another gas-peaking facility that will strengthen capacity in southern Queensland.

These investments are about putting engineering and economics over ideology. Queensland's energy demand is growing. With the expected electrification of more sectors, we must ensure we have enough dispatchable power to avoid blackouts and price shocks. Gas-peaking generation provides the flexibility and speed we need to stabilise the system as renewable growth continues. By contrast, the former Labor government took a reckless approach, deprioritising dispatchable generation, underinvesting in asset maintenance and presiding over avoidable system failures. Labor's neglect of the Callide Power Station contributed to a catastrophic explosion and an almost 1,200 day outage, removing critical supply from the grid and pushing power prices higher. This neglect had consequences. Queenslanders paid the price, with a 19.9 per cent increase in electricity bills in just one year. The Labor government put ideology before engineering, and the result was an energy system that became more fragile and expensive.

We are taking a different path. Gas generation is not the enemy of renewables; it is their enabler. It provides the firming power needed to make renewables viable at scale. It ensures when weather-dependent sources diminish, we can keep the lights on, industry moving and costs down. Even the Clean Energy Council has recently noted its wish to be pragmatic on the role of gas as a firming technology, stating that 'acknowledging this reality is critical to our ability as an industry body'. Investment in gas peaking is part of our broader strategy to be outlined in the forthcoming Energy Roadmap which we will deliver a coordinated plan for the grid to 2030 and beyond. Our approach includes investment in smaller, manageable pumped hydro projects, expansion of battery storage and ongoing support for coal-fired generation and maintenance, but gas will play a key role in generation and firming capacity.

In short, the Crisafulli government is building a balanced, commercially grounded energy mix—one that restores reliability, attracts private investment and ensures Queenslanders are no longer

paying for past failures. We are fixing the mess we inherited and delivering the energy security Queensland needs for the future.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will move to non-government questions again.

**Mr McCALLUM:** If I could ask the CS Energy CEO to come back to the table please. I refer to the answer to question on notice No. 11 and I ask: when will CS Energy's internal review into the Callide C3 explosion be completed?

**Mr Gillespie:** As you would understand, we have a new COO who was appointed three days before the incident at Callide and then myself who was appointed 26 days ago. I will defer to my COO. We are doing our best to ensure it is out in August—definitely before the end of August—but we absolutely want to make sure it is a definitive report.

**Mr McCALLUM:** My next question is to the Treasurer and if I could, in the meantime, ask the CEO for Powerlink to make his way to the table. Treasurer, will you commit to releasing the report publically immediately upon receiving it?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can the honourable member confirm which report he is talking to?

**Mr McCALLUM:** The report that the CS Energy CEO just spoke about in terms of the internal review into Callide which will be completed before the end of August.

**Mr JANETZKI:** My strong preference is that report is released, subject to any confidentiality or obligations in that regard. Yes, my strong preference is that that report is released.

**Mr McCALLUM:** My next question is for the CEO of Powerlink. Mr Simshauser, I refer to page 9 of Budget Paper No. 3 in relation to CopperString and I ask: when did you first learn that QIC would be taking over oversight of the CopperString project?

**Prof. Simshauser:** I think probably the first discussions were had during the February-March period. It was probably in early April that I learned that role or function would be formalised.

**Mr McCALLUM:** My second question to the CEO is: when will CopperString be built all the way to Mount Isa and electrified?

**Prof. Simshauser:** I think with the QIC review process underway at the moment—due to come out later this year—I probably need to defer to that and respect the process that is underway.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Under Treasurer, was your department responsible for assisting with the drafting of the Treasurer's energy speech that was delivered on Tuesday, 8 April?

**Mr Williams:** I am not aware of the extent of our involvement other than to check some of the facts as you would expect Treasury to do in the instance where there are points that are relevant to our policy.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Under Treasurer, I refer to a 160-page RTI document that has been obtained by the opposition that includes multiple drafts of the Treasurer's Energy Club speech that was delivered on 8 April. I table two of those 160 pages for the committee's benefit. They are the two that I will speak to.

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: if we can be furnished with the relevant documentation that has been tabled it would be helpful for committee members to have a look at.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is being circulated right now. It is also being furnished to members across the table.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Those two pages of the RTI show a distinct difference in the speech draft. One includes a reference to the QIC, the Queensland Investment Corporation; the other does not. Under Treasurer, when was QIC proposed as the solution and included in the draft speech?

**Mr Williams:** I note that the government announced QIC as the partner for Powerlink to deliver CopperString on 8 April 2025. QIC's role is around project oversight and governance of CopperString, supported by Powerlink's demonstrated experience in transition, planning and delivery. QIC is overseeing the prioritisation of the Eastern Link and undertaking analysis of options that will hopefully deliver the best economic value for the Western Link. QIC is considering commercial models to leverage private sector investment. Powerlink remains the key contact on project activity. With respect to your question, a range of discussions occurred in the weeks leading up to that point. I think that answers the question you have asked.

**Mr McCALLUM:** My follow-up question then, Under Treasurer, is: was the reference to QIC added at the direction of the minister's office?



**Mr Williams:** Which reference are you pointing to?

**Mr McCALLUM:** To assist, out of the two documents that I have tabled, if you look at the bottom of those two documents, one has a page number of 19. If you read that page, the second paragraph at the top talks about the Treasurer announcing ‘the CopperString project scope did not include’ et cetera. The total cost is nearly \$14 billion. However, if you look at the second page, which is numbered 62, it has that same paragraph but then there are three new paragraphs that also say—

... I can announce today that we have decided to leverage the infrastructure expertise of the Queensland Investment Corporation .. to work with Powerlink to deliver CopperString.

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr McCALLUM:** When was it put in?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** One moment, member for Bundamba. Member for Moggill, what is your point of order?

**Dr ROWAN:** My point of order relates to the member for Bundamba’s line of questioning. There are a number of suppositions and hypotheticals. In relation to what has been circulated I would submit to you that there is limited information in relation to the documents to actually provide the context and to authenticate some of the statements that are being made in relation to the questions being asked. I would say to you that the question needs to be rephrased or ruled out of order given that there are these number of suppositions and hypotheticals relating to limited information being circulated.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is it to that point of order?

**Mr McCALLUM:** It is. It is in relation to the fact that these documents were obtained under right to information legislation and have been tabled. If it pleases the committee, I am happy to table the whole 160 pages that constitute what we received as part of that RTI. I would suggest that I could do that electronically. I am happy to do that.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am happy to receive them.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you for your advice, Minister. Thank you, member for Bundamba. That is a matter for the committee. Thank you, member for Moggill, for your point of order. I do take the point of your point of order. There were only two pages out of 160, as you yourself stated, tabled which does not provide the entire context of your line of questioning. I would ask perhaps if you could make your question more direct without the lengthy preamble and statements, inferences or suppositions, as the member for Moggill put it, being included. In relation to your offer to table the entire 160 pages, that is a matter for the committee.

**Mr CRANDON:** Absolutely.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Does someone want to move that the entire 160 pages be tabled? Are you offering to do it?

**Mr McCALLUM:** I am happy to table those 160 pages electronically to the secretariat.

**Dr ROWAN:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is my understanding that they would have to be furnished in hard copy to the committee or members’ individual discretions as to whether they would prefer to have that electronically or in hard copy. If the member for Bundamba has the available copies in hard copy that would be of assistance to the committee.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Everyone just please pause for a moment. I would like to consult with the Clerk about this procedural aspect. Member, I am advised that if you move to table that document it would likely need to be considered in private session and also would need to be provided in hard copy to the committee and to ministers and officers.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I am happy to move on.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please carry on.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I have a question for the CEO of Powerlink, who is still at the table, Mr Simshauser. I refer to page 9 of BP3 in relation to the cost of CopperString. The Powerlink email sent to stakeholders in the week of 8 April said that there had been a big change in scope; is that correct?

**Prof. Simshauser:** The advice that we have given government has been fairly consistent dating back to our submission of the final investment proposal in August 2024. In that document we set out two key pieces of information. One was what we would call a transmission backbone. That is the

connection running from Townsville in the east, down to Hughenden and west across to Mount Isa. We set out the cost of that as being \$9 billion inclusive of interest during construction, risk and contingency and so on. The second part of the cost which was included in that final investment proposal was what we would refer to as the spur lines or connections into renewable generators, mining loads and so on along the alignment. In our final investment proposal our estimate at the time in 2024 dollars was about \$4 billion. When you escalate that through to its term of development, that would be \$4.9 billion, so \$9 billion plus \$4.9 billion would take in the entire scope.

That advice was given in August 2024 and again in December 2024 to the current government. We sent out an email to our regional reference group on the date in April following the Energy Club lunch just confirming with the regional reference group, who are obviously very familiar with the \$9 billion number and not so much with the \$13.9 billion. All we did was set out that this is the advice we have been giving government. It is a matter of scope.

**Mr McCALLUM:** My next question is to the Treasurer. There are 17,000 jobs at risk between Townsville and Mount Isa because of the impact of energy prices on Glencore's smelter. Will you commit to keeping businesses like Glencore alive in the region until CopperString comes online or risk an 18 per cent unemployment rise?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for the question because it is a very important question and one that has the full attention of the Crisafulli government. If there was one thing my drive last week from Townsville to Mount Isa confirmed for me it was the importance of the economic ecosystem in the north and the north-west. Obviously that is fundamental for the economic future. We know the opportunities that are in the north and the north-west with respect to renewables resources and minerals resources. I met the mayors through the various communities—Liz in Charters Towers, Patsy at Richmond, Mayor Kate at Hughenden, Mayor Greg at Cloncurry, Peta in Mount Isa—and it does not matter where you go, they are all very concerned. To the honourable member's question directly, we have made it clear that Queensland has been good to Glencore and Glencore should think very carefully about its next steps.

We are remaining at the table negotiating. We have put an offer on the table and I would hope that Glencore is considering it very carefully. It would be unacceptable for the federal government and Glencore not to remain at the negotiating table. We know how important it is. We have put an offer on the table, but we are not offering a blank cheque. Glencore has a responsibility to do the right thing by a state that has been so good to it, but we are taking it very seriously. It is a very serious matter that we are dealing with. I would round out my answer with a request for the honourable member to pick up the phone and talk to his colleagues in Canberra. The federal government must be absolutely involved in this decision. It would be a national disgrace if the federal government and Glencore were not at the negotiating table.

It is fundamental to sorting this and getting a resolution because those communities are concerned and the possibilities of the north and the north-west are so significant. I have come home energised by the opportunities up there. I met the CEO of Windlab at Hughenden. We all know that the wind at Hughenden is special. It blows at night and complements the solar during the day. To see that wind blowing in the evening, growing Windlab's renewables as well as many other proponents out there, and then you get the potential copper resources around Cloncurry, there are opportunities there. If we get it right the north and north-west will help drive our state's and our nation's prosperity for generations.

**Mr McCALLUM:** As a quick follow-up, Minister, have you written to the federal government regarding this?

**Mr JANETZKI:** My diary shows that I have been a part of two meetings with Glencore. The resources minister has been working on this.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Yes, but have you written to the federal government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The resources minister has responsibility for this matter. Obviously I am closely involved. We all want to see the north and the north-west supported. The resources minister is in constant contact and is conducting further discussions as we go along. We continue to meet with Glencore and the federal government to make sure we get the right outcome for the north and the north-west that provides so much wealth today and stands ready to provide so much more of our future wealth.

**Mr McCALLUM:** So, Minister, you have not written to the federal government about this?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thanks, Minister, for your answer. We are passing to questions from government members now. I call the member for Caloundra.

**Ms MORTON:** Will the Treasurer outline to the committee the work the government is doing to progress smaller, more manageable pumped hydro projects? Is the Treasurer able to advise the committee how the Crisafulli government's approach differs to those of the former government?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Crisafulli government is committed to progressing an affordable, reliable and sustainable energy system for Queensland—one that includes firming technologies like pumped hydro energy storage—in a measured, deliverable and fiscally responsible way. While the failed former government chased mega projects with price tags in the tens of billions of dollars and little regard for deliverability, our government is taking a different path, progressing smaller, manageable pumped hydro projects with clear commercial frameworks and private sector involvement.

Our approach focuses on practicality and cost-effectiveness. In 2025-26 we are investing \$79 million to support the acquisition and continued development of the Mount Rawdon and Cressbrook pumped hydro projects—two promising, scalable storage solutions. We are also supporting Capricornia pumped hydro energy storage and other small hydro proposals being progressed through working groups within government owned corporations and private sector developers.

This strategy stands in contrast to the former Labor government's top-down approach. Their marquee project, the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro hoax, was launched with great fanfare but little substance. Who can forget that first energy that was promised from that project by 2032 went from \$7 billion to \$12 billion to \$36.8 billion, and yet when we took government there had not been any environmental approvals, there had not been any Indigenous discussions and there had not been any serious community stakeholder engagement? That project was a hoax and the former government knew it. In November 2024 the Crisafulli government made the responsible decision to cease all works on the Pioneer-Burdekin project, protecting Queenslanders from a white elephant that would have been a drag on our balance sheet for a generation, and I think even the honourable member for Bundamba knew it because I do not think he has ever mentioned it in the House, which is telling. Site demobilisation and land divestment are now well underway and we are ensuring that landholders who voluntarily sold during the investigation phase have the opportunity to repurchase their properties with personalised support available throughout the process.

In contrast to Pioneer-Burdekin, Borumba, which is further advanced, remains in development. However, the government has taken critical steps to strengthen oversight and commercial discipline. QIC has been appointed as investment manager of Queensland Hydro which will ensure that the project proceeds in a way that is affordable, deliverable and subject to the same rigour as any major infrastructure investment. In 2025-26 the budget allocates \$355 million for early works on Borumba, with a total commitment of \$3 billion through to 2028-29, and \$81 million through Powerlink to progress essential transmission connections. This work is being done under strict governance and financial oversight to avoid spiralling costs and unrealistic timelines that have plagued past hydro projects.

As many of us know, pumped hydro has a rich history in Queensland politics. The Wivenhoe pumped storage hydro-electric power station, just an hour west of here, generates 570 megawatts of reliable low-emissions energy for Queensland consumers. The system at this site is sufficient to store 10 hours of continuous energy in peak times. When it was opened by the Bjelke-Petersen government 41 years ago, the Wivenhoe Power Station was proclaimed a world leader in the technology of remotely controlled pumped storage hydro. In addition to pumped hydro, our government owned corporations are actively partnering with the private sector not only on pumped hydro but across the renewable energy supply chain. The range of offtake and connection agreements being struck reflect our belief that the private sector is essential to building the system Queensland needs. In short, the Crisafulli government is focused on credible, commercially sound energy storage projects, not press release politics. Our approach is practical, measured and responsible—exactly what Queenslanders expect and exactly what they elected us to deliver.

**Mr BAROUNIS:** My question is to the Treasurer. Could the Treasurer please provide an update on the development of his five-year Energy Roadmap and the key principles which are informing this policy? I would love to hear it!

**Mr JANETZKI:** The Crisafulli government is delivering for Queenslanders as it develops an Energy Roadmap that will provide long-term structural relief from rising energy costs. The 2025-26 budget lays the foundation for Queensland's future energy system. It includes more than \$5 billion in new investment by Queensland's state owned energy businesses to strengthen the entire energy supply chain and put downward pressure on power prices.

Our focus is on delivering more electricity that is affordable, reliable and sustainable. The Crisafulli government's five-year energy road map, which will be delivered by the end of 2025, is

grounded in economics and engineering, not ideology. It will address cost-of-living pressures by reducing volatility in the energy system and ensuring we have a credible, coordinated plan to 2030.

The road map will identify where the state government should concentrate its limited resources and what tasks are better left to private investors and the federal government. It is built on three key principles: easing pressure on the state's balance sheet, de-risking our energy future and adding new dispatchable generation capacity in partnership with the private sector.

Already our Electricity Maintenance Guarantee is delivering \$1.6 billion over five years to properly maintain our fleet of coal-fired generators, ensuring reliability and putting downward pressure on electricity prices. This includes major works at Tarong and Callide. Labor's decade of underinvestment saw maintenance deferred and safety risks ignored. The tragic consequence was the explosion at Callide C in 2021 and a 19.9 per cent increase in power prices in just one year. The Electricity Maintenance Guarantee is reversing that lack of investment by restoring reliability and helping Queenslanders with cost-of-living challenges.

To secure Queensland's future we are also progressing new energy projects across the state: \$435 million in 2025-26 to advance three pumped hydro projects, including Mount Rawdon, as part of our commitment to smaller, more manageable storage options; \$2.4 billion for CopperString by 2028-29 to connect the state's west to the National Electricity Market sooner—unlock the North West Minerals Province, connect renewables to the grid sooner and support renewable jobs and industry; \$479 million in 2025-26 for CS Energy's 400-megawatt Brigalow gas peaker project at Kogan Creek to provide faster generation; CleanCo is investigating a new open cycle gas turbine at Swanbank; while Stanwell continues to work with Quinbrook to deliver the 114- megawatt Lockyer Energy Project. To ensure major projects deliver value for taxpayers, the government has transferred Queensland Hydro to QIC for better commercial oversight and governance following the Borumba project cost blowout of \$4 billion and significant delay. We are also supporting the energy needs of renters and the broader grid through the Supercharged Solar for Renters program providing rebates of up to \$3,500 for eligible landlords who install solar. Our energy road map will be pragmatic, commercially grounded and focused on results and is a clear break from the past failures of the former Labor government.

**Mr CRANDON:** You have just touched on the Supercharged Solar for Renters program and you might want to expand on it. Can the Treasurer update the committee on the progression of the Solar for Renters scheme?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for the question, the member for Coomera. The Crisafulli government is committed to the Supercharged Solar for Renters program that was promised at the 2024 election. This cost-of-living relief program will provide eligible landlords with rebates up to \$3,500 to install eligible solar systems on rental properties. Our program will benefit approximately 6,500 rental properties, saving those households an estimated \$700 per year depending on their location and other factors.

Under the Supercharged Solar for Renters program, the immediate benefit of cheaper power bills will flow directly to renters who pay for their own electricity, while the grants are designed to incentivise eligible homeowners who would benefit from the long-term investment of solar technology on their investment property. The Supercharged Solar for Renters program is part of the Crisafulli government's comprehensive commitment to driving down cost-of-living pressures for Queenslanders. The Supercharged Solar for Renters program is a win-win for tenants and landlords, easing costs for renters and enhancing property values, all while supporting renewable energy adoption and emissions reduction in Queensland. The program will target eligible Queensland rental properties with existing tenancy agreements to ensure tenants receive immediate benefits.

The \$26 million program is anticipated to launch later this year and will run over a three-year period from 2025-26 or until allocated funding is fully expended. Our plan will deliver practical, long-term cost-of-living relief to Queensland renters while charging up our solar powered capabilities. Not only is the Crisafulli government committed to driving down power bills by supporting power plant reliability, our Supercharged Solar for Renters plan will also eliminate hundreds of dollars in electricity costs for Queensland renters each and every year. After a trial of a similar program in 2019-20 the scheme was discontinued by the former government despite the plan having broad support from industry and renters. Driving down the cost of living is a priority for the Crisafulli government because it is a priority for Queenslanders.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I understand the member for Maiwar may have a question.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I have, thank you, Deputy Speaker. I have a question to the minister. You are well aware that the Queensland Productivity Commission has been tasked with providing advice on

energy and emissions settings that is due by 1 September this year. Will that advice from the Productivity Commission be made public?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Yes, he is right, the second referral to the Queensland Productivity Commission was a referral into energy and productivity related to the energy system and that work is being undertaken. Again it is an important piece of the energy road map and I have spoken about the development of that energy road map over the five-year period and the work that needs to be done and I have made clear the signposts in the energy road map. Coal will be for longer where it is economically and technically responsible, we will have more gas generation, for generation and for firming. We want to see a flood of private capital coming toward renewables here in Queensland. It is there. If my trip last week between Townsville and Mount Isa showed me again, it is the renewables that are coming.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker. The question was deliberately cast as narrowly as I could to avoid a long-winded answer. Could the minister please just answer whether or not the advice will be made public.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is your point of order relevance?

**Mr BERKMAN:** Yes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Treasurer, the point of order is on relevance. I know there is context around a lot of these issues, but come back to the question, please.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I was providing the context to the review and why it is important. It will form part of the energy road map development and I would anticipate that the Productivity Commission advice that informs the energy road map would be released, yes.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Thank you, Treasurer, I appreciate that. If I could ask one quick further question.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Go ahead, member for Maiwar.

**Mr BERKMAN:** On election night on the ABC you said that the LNP were 'committed' to both the 75 per cent emissions reduction target for 2035 and net zero by 2050. Do you stand by that commitment on election night?

**Mr JANETZKI:** We are committed to net zero by 2050. That is our commitment. This is where the energy road map plays an important first step in that. The development of that energy road map will help us. We obviously know that Queensland has passed its 2030 emissions targets. We know that the federal government has not yet finalised its midpoint emission targets. That work is continuing. Our energy road map will be completed by the end of the year. Bearing in mind some of that work is ongoing, as is the federal government's work on their emissions midpoint targets, which I understand they are continuing to work on. I have an energy ministers meeting in the next month or so. I am sure I will receive an update then.

The federal government's work will continue. We will deliver the Energy Roadmap. Certainly next year as we start work on our sector plans, which obviously are a very important part of emissions reduction, we will get the Energy Roadmap completed by the end of the year. Through 2026, building on that Energy Roadmap work and observing what the federal government does with their emissions targets, we will continue work on our sector plans as we map a way forward to net zero by 2050.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundamba, I am conscious we need time for questions on notice to be answered before the end of the session. You have the call.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Picking up where we left off, Minister, can you confirm, based on your previous answer, that you or to the best of your knowledge any other member of the Crisafulli government has not bothered to write to the federal government to seek financial assistance to save 17,000 jobs around the Glencore smelter in Mount Isa?

**Mr JANETZKI:** The resources minister is responsible for this administratively. There would have been repeated and repetitive communications between the minister who has carriage of this matter and the federal government. My concern right now is that we need the federal government to step in and support finding a short-term solution while they develop a long-term strategy. We know the federal government is discussing a long-term strategy. Smelters are under pressure around the country—aluminium, lead, copper, Tomago, Nyrstar, Bell Bay. No matter the metal and no matter the location, smelters are under pressure. The federal government must play a role at the negotiating table with Glencore given that right now only the state government has put an offer on the table.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Minister, you have mentioned your recent trip to Mount Isa. I saw a press conference that you held outside the Glencore smelter. During that trip, did you take the time to meet with any of the workers whose jobs are under threat and did you meet with Glencore or tour the smelter?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes. It was quite moving to look in the whites of the eyes of the employees of Glencore. I did a tour with the Mount Isa mayor, Peta. The depth of their concern was obvious. MIM is part of the fabric of our state and that goes back a very long way. Absolutely, I met with workers and it was moving to see them and their concern. Our primary concern is the workers of Glencore and the hardworking families that underpin that company. Many are long-term employees who have worked there for a very long time. That is what drives us as a government. Our priority is the workers and that is what drives us.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Minister, I refer to CopperString, some of the previous answers that we have heard from the CEO and the other issues that have been canvassed in relation to CopperString, its scope and its budget. How long were you hiding your announced cost increase and the QIC proposal around CopperString from the Premier?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundamba, could you rephrase that question, please? It is quite argumentative and makes some inferences. I am sure the Treasurer can answer it but can you rephrase it, please?

**Mr McCALLUM:** Treasurer, when did you discuss the CopperString announced cost increase and the QIC proposal with the Premier?

**Mr JANETZKI:** This has all been canvassed on the public record in the parliament. Once more, for the honourable member's benefit, obviously the cost was tested. I talked to the Premier's office about the cost. We talked to the Premier's office about it. It was a scarcely imaginable number. You had the spine cost which the CEO of Powerlink identified and then you had the arteries, the on ramps, the off ramps, the costs. That was tested.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Powerlink had to send an email to clarify.

**Mr JANETZKI:** That was tested, the final confirmed figure and the solution were presented to the Premier and we are getting on with it. At the end of the day, we are going to save CopperString when the former government would have seen it not delivered, not done. That \$13.9 billion project was going nowhere. It had gone from \$1.5 billion to \$6.2 billion to \$9 billion. That is where it was going.

**Mr McCALLUM:** Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order on relevance. I ask the minister to come to the other component of the question around the QIC.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, you have the call.

**Mr JANETZKI:** As was articulated by the CEO of Powerlink, it was discussed over a number of weeks as to how we would engage Powerlink and the QIC to ensure the project was delivered because under those opposite it was not going to be delivered. A \$13.9 billion project—as I started to say, \$1.8 billion to \$5 billion to \$6.2 billion to \$9 billion—was going nowhere. With the infrastructure capability of the QIC undertaking the review and the transmission capability of Powerlink, we now have a program to be delivered. Pending approvals, we will get stuck into the \$225 million Hughenden hub, we will get the Flinders substation moving, we will get the EPBC federal approvals done and dusted and we can get on with the job. The QIC finished their review. It is an exciting time for the north and the north-west because at last we have a government that has a real plan to deliver CopperString for the people of the north and the north-west.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, given the time, we will take this opportunity for the minister to come back to the committee with some answers to questions that were informally taken on notice earlier. Minister, there were a number. Do you have any material for the committee?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, Deputy Speaker. Several matters were raised during the session this afternoon and this evening. The member for Maiwar raised support provided by the former government to both Ferra engineering and Rheinmetall and we have ongoing agreements with both of them.

The member for Maiwar raised concerns regarding the potential provision of weapons to certain countries. I have been advised that the Commonwealth Defence Export Controls office regulates and approves the export of weapons and, therefore, this is not a state matter.

The member for Gaven raised two issues regarding the regional low-deposit home loan scheme and the Pathways Shared Equity program. As those programs are overseen by the Department of Housing and Public Works, any further questions are best directed towards the Minister for Housing and Public Works.

The member for Gaven asked whether Queensland Treasury is committed to progressing supply-side modelling related to the Queensland housing market to complement demand-side modelling previously undertaken by AHURI. Queensland Treasury has a detailed understanding of the AHURI modelling, which is one of the many analytical tools used by Treasury in its assessment of housing

market conditions across Queensland. Queensland Treasury continues to undertake detailed analysis of housing market conditions on an ongoing basis—in particular, analysis of a range of supply-side indicators. Queensland Treasury's ongoing analysis of supply-side factors is important to help ensure those factors are more responsive to the demand for housing, thereby helping to improve housing and rental affordability over time.

The member for Bundamba asked if I was contacted by text or any means of communication by CS Energy directors prior to 8 April about incidents at Callide. I confirm that neither shareholding minister received text messages in relation to the incident from the CS Energy board prior to 8 April 2025. The former CEO of CS Energy tendered his resignation on 3 April 2025. On 8 April CS Energy reported his last day of official duties to be 2 May 2025; however, that day was subsequently brought forward to 13 April 2025. CS Energy advised that Mr Busine received a payment following his resignation, as per contractual terms. The value of the payment will be disclosed in CS Energy's annual report, which will be tabled in parliament in due course. CS Energy also advises the details of the separation of the former general manager of Callide Power Station are confidential. CS Energy confirms it has complied with its legal obligations.

The Clean Energy Council reported Queenslanders having 28.8 per cent renewable energy penetration as a proportion of generation as of May 2025. For 2024-25 Queensland Treasury estimates renewable energy generated 29.6 per cent of the state's electricity as at the end of June 2025. In closing—

**Mr BERKMAN:** Point of order, Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, I will listen to your point of order but I note that we are pretty much out of time. I think the Treasurer is about to finish by thanking officials.

**Mr BERKMAN:** I appreciate that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I preface whatever you are going to say with these words: once the Treasurer has finished thanking people, we are wrapping up this session.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Indeed. The Treasurer committed to come back to us on notice about the issues around Ferra engineering and Rheinmetall, but the statement he has just made goes no way towards answering those questions. Will the Treasurer commit to taking them on notice and answering whether he will rule out any additional support for companies manufacturing or supplying weapons—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maiwar, I will stop you there. As I said to you earlier, the time for examination of the estimates has expired. You have made your statement. I will give the call to the Treasurer to thank people and then we will wrap up this session today.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Deputy Speaker, the question is whether the Treasurer will take those questions on notice.

**Mr JANETZKI:** No.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The answer is no.

**Mr JANETZKI:** In closing, can I thank you, Deputy Speaker, and all members of the committee who have attended here today. This is an important function of our democracy and the Crisafulli government is pleased to be strengthening it in this budget.

I want to thank all the witnesses who have appeared here today. The Under Treasurer, Paul; my office, led my Matt; and the officers of Queensland Treasury who have supported our attendance at the committee today. Thank you all. A significant amount of work goes on behind the scenes to prepare the government for estimates, as I am sure all the members of the committee are aware. As it comes straight after the budget it has been a very busy few months for Queensland Treasury, and I am forever grateful for their support, hard work and diligence.

I have appreciated the opportunity to talk about the Crisafulli government's first budget here today. I thank the members of the committee again, and I thank Queenslanders for entrusting us with the privilege of serving in government and delivering the fresh start that they voted for.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** This concludes the hearing of estimates for the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee today. I would like to thank the committee members and visiting members who participated. Thank you also to Hansard and the parliamentary broadcast staff, together with all the other parliamentary staff who assisted here today. I declare the hearing closed.

**The committee adjourned at 7.03 pm.**