



ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

2000

REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

By Sessional Orders adopted by the Legislative Assembly on 22 June 2000, seven estimates committees were established to examine and report on the proposed expenditures contained in the *Appropriation Bill 2000* and the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2000*.

Estimates Committee A was allocated the organisational units within the portfolios of the following Ministers:-

- ◆ Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities;
- ◆ Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading; and
- ◆ Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services.

This committee has considered the estimates referred to it, through an examination of the budget documents, the taking of evidence from the Ministers and supporting officers at a public hearing on 1 August 2000, and a consideration of answers to pre-hearing questions on notice and to questions taken on notice at the hearing.

Accordingly, the committee presents this report to the Legislative Assembly.

Pursuant to leave granted by the Committee, two non-committee members, Hon Vince Lester MLA (Member for Keppel) and Miss Fiona Simpson MLA (Member for Maroochydoore), asked questions at the committee's public hearing, directed to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading.

Attention is directed to:-

- the volume of Additional Information accompanying this report, and containing the minutes of the committee's meetings, questions asked before and during the public hearing, and the Minister's answers to those questions; and
- the transcript of the public hearing held by the Committee, which can be accessed at the Queensland Parliament's Hansard web-page at www.parliament.qld.gov.au

2. MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

The total appropriation for the Department of Primary Industries for 2000-2001 is \$260.478 million, an increase of 15.85% on the 1999-2000 appropriation.

A summary of the Department's outputs for 2000-2001 follows:-

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Policy Analysis and Industry Development	25,023
Market Access and Development	44,569
Rural Community Development	29,941
Food and Fibre Science and Innovation	141,509
Fisheries	47,898

Key initiatives for the Department include:-

- ◆ an allocation of some \$25 million over three years (including \$9 million in 2000-2001) for

initiatives arising from the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement;

- ◆ \$29.9 million for Rural Community Development;
- ◆ \$141.5 million to the recently established Agency for Food and Fibre Sciences for the development of innovative food and fibre technologies; and
- ◆ \$1.4 million towards the establishment of Safe Food Queensland, a new authority to regulate food safety in meat, dairy, and seafood production.

During its public hearing the committee questioned the Minister regarding a wide range of matters, including:-

- measures to assist dairy farmers as a consequence of the restructure of the industry;
- funding associated with the Department's new responsibilities, including the establishment of the Safe Food Queensland Authority;
- the Department's internet web-site;
- assets disposed of by the Department;
- funding for the Department's equity return;
- initiatives and innovation in biotechnology;
- funding arrangements associated with the recent transfer of the Office of Rural Communities to the Department;
- the Department's hardwood plantation establishment initiative;
- staffing levels and costs for the Department;
- funding for the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority;
- measures to assist women in rural industries;
- funding issues associated with the recent establishment of the Queensland Fisheries Service;
- Departmental assistance pursuant to the Regional Forestry Agreement for South East Queensland; and
- cattle tick clearance services.

3. MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN'S POLICY AND MINISTER FOR FAIR TRADING

3.1 Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development

The total appropriation for the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development is \$85.23 million, a decrease of 0.8% on the figure for the preceding year.

A summary of estimated Departmental outputs follows:-

2000-2001 Output	Total Cost \$'000
Strategic Policy Advice	7,740
Community Development	51,790
Community Governance	31,565

Key initiatives for the Department include:

- ◆ the development of *Towards a Queensland Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership 2001-2011* (the Ten Year Partnership), a coordinated effort to deal with indigenous affairs in a strategic manner;
- ◆ \$0.9 million for the Local Justice Initiatives Program;
- ◆ \$0.45 million for operation and maintenance of the water supply upgrade in the Torres Strait;
- ◆ compensation payments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for underpayment of wages between 1975 and 1986; and
- ◆ \$1 million to build new Aboriginal Council Chambers at Mapoon.

3.2 Department of Equity and Fair Trading

Given the transfer to the Department of Equity and Fair Trading of a sum of \$35 million from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund, no separate appropriation is made to the Department under the *Appropriation Bill 2000*.

Departmental outputs are summarised as follows:-

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Fair Trading Services	31,258
Women's Policy and Services	4,424

Key initiatives for the Department include:-

- ◆ continuing a series of community outreach forums for women;
- ◆ the continuation and extension of the Women's Infolink program;
- ◆ an Office of Fair Trading Infrastructure Modernisation initiative;
- ◆ the GST Complaints Taskforce; and
- ◆ a marketplace compliance program, aimed particularly at motor dealers, estate agents, and fringe credit providers.

3.3 The hearing

During the hearing, the Minister was questioned regarding issues including:

- indigenous staffing numbers within the Department, particularly at senior levels;
- stores operated by the Islanders Board of Industry and Services in the Torres Strait;
- the local justice initiatives program;
- infrastructure programs in the Torres Strait;
- the proposed Ten Year Partnership;
- allocation of monies from the Domestic Violence Fund;
- staffing levels and costs for the Office of Women's Policy;
- legal assistance for Aboriginal women under threat of violence;
- progress on opening new consumer affairs offices in regional areas;
- the transfer of \$35 million from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund to the Department;
- measures to combat payday lending schemes, unscrupulous car rental firms, and unethical real estate marketing practices;

- increases in insurance premiums levied by the Queensland Building Services Authority;
- funding for the Queensland Building Services Authority;
- educational campaigns by the Residential Tenancies Authority;
- the role of the Office of Women's Policy in implementing and monitoring initiatives combating domestic violence and eating disorders; and
- the number of women appointed to senior Government positions.

4. MINISTER FOR FAMILIES, YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

4.1 Department of Families, Youth and Community Care

The 2000-2001 vote total for the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care is \$417.075 million. Outputs for the Department are summarised as follows:-

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Services for Children and Young People	160,612
Families and Community Support	76,503
Youth Justice Services	50,048

Key initiatives for the Department include:-

- ◆ \$1 million for new and upgraded youth homelessness services in high need areas;
- ◆ \$1 million towards implementing staffing models at the new Brisbane Detention Centre; and
- ◆ \$0.5 million per year for new and upgraded Youth Outreach services, aimed at preventing young people becoming involved in the sex industry;

4.2 Disability Services Queensland

The 2000-2001 vote total for Disability Services Queensland is \$191.4 million. Outputs are summarised as follows:-

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Support for Adults	164,216
Support for Children and Families	88,238
Community and Infrastructure Development	20,018

Key initiatives include:-

- ◆ the provision of additional Adult Lifestyle Support Packages;
- ◆ \$4.1 million to enhance services to support children with a disability, including the development of eight new family support and respite services throughout the State in the next two years; and
- ◆ \$1.6 million to implement community infrastructure projects.

4.3 The hearing

During its hearing, the committee inquired into a number of issues, including:

- screening checks for persons wishing to engage in child-related employment;
- staffing levels and operating costs for the Children's Commission;
- costs for the Children's Services Tribunal;
- the Department's needs register in respect of persons with a disability, in particular children with disabilities and their families;
- expenditure of monies from the Disability Sector Training Fund;
- the Volunteer Friends Program;
- activities of the Family Support Program of Disability Services Queensland;
- the regional Disability Councils;
- assessment and treatment programs for young sex offenders;
- child protection notifications; and
- funding for the equity return.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditures, as stated in the *Appropriation Bill 2000* for the organisational units within the portfolios of:-

- the Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities;
- the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading; and
- the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services;

be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The committee thanks the three Ministers and their departmental staff for their cooperation and assistance during the estimates process.

Lindy Nelson-Carr MLA
Chair

21 August 2000

MEMBERSHIP

Ms Lindy Nelson-Carr MLA (Chair)
Mr Denver Beanland MLA (Deputy Chair)
Mr J Goss MLA
Mr G Musgrove MLA
Mr M Rowell MLA
Mr P Wellington MLA

STAFF

Mr Stephen Finnimore (Research Director)
Ms Louise Gell (Research Officer)
Ms Tania Jackman (Executive Assistant)

The transcript of the committee's public hearing is available on the Internet via the Hansard site at www.parliament.qld.gov.au

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

Acknowledging it is the Government's responsibility to apportion expenditure to programs within each portfolio, the Queensland Coalition nevertheless holds reservations with a number of aspects of the 2000/2001 budget for the Department of Primary Industries.

1. BUDGETARY POSITION

While an overall budget increase of \$6.9 million has been claimed in 2000/2001, the addition of new functions and the amalgamation of other agencies with the Department have eroded the value of the increase. The impact on funding for existing operational programs, evidenced for example by the Government's intention to impose divest itself of the cattle tick clearance service and impose full user pays, remains a concern. It should also be noted that the claimed budget increase has not recovered the \$26.6 million reduction in DPI's 1999/2000 budget.

2. PERFORMANCE BONUS

The Beattie Government's lack of accountability was again exposed with the Minister's refusal to provide the committee with details regarding the performance bonus paid to senior public service executives within his Department and the provision for those in the Departmental budget. The Minister's answer varied with the Premier statements regarding performance bonuses and the answers provided by other Ministers to similar questioning.

3. CAPITAL WORKS

The Government has demonstrated very little commitment to capital works in the 2000/2001 budget, with only three new projects with a combined value of \$900,000. The low level of capital works development belies the need for further investment in rural and regional areas of the State.

4. STAFFING

A cut in staff numbers of 137 from last year's projections is contrary to the Minister's pre-election promise that "there would be no job cutbacks in DPI under a Labor Government." It appears unlikely the Beattie Government will fulfil its promise to create 200 jobs in the management of plantations and forestry under its South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement. No allocations have been made or foreshadowed in this budget.

5. TRANSFER OF AGENCIES

The budget for the Corporate Services Agency (CSA) lacks definition in the budget papers in relation to the transfer of this agency to the Department of Natural Resources. Similarly, budgetary details of the transfer of the Office of Rural Communities and the Queensland Fisheries Management Authority to the Department of Primary Industries have been shrouded from full scrutiny.

6. INSTITUTES

The demise of the Industry Institutes and centralisation of control within the Agency for Food and Fibre Sciences under the current government is a loss to industry and government alike. As the role of industry in determining research and development priorities and expenditure is diminished and the Department is forced to divest core services, the Beattie Government is diminishing the relevance of DPI to many of the State's primary producers.

7. RFA FUNDING

Claimed new initiative funding for the implementation of the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement of \$8.9 million for 2000/2001 was actually revealed as including \$3.4 million in funding carried over from 1999/2000. Various statements within the budget papers imply that the \$8.9 million allocation is "new" money and are therefore misleading.

8. QUEENSLAND ABATTOIR CORPORATION

As the Minister responsible for the Queensland Abattoir Corporation (QAC), the Member for Inala failed to convince the Coalition he has administered the government's exit from the meat processing industry in the best interests of taxpayers. The Coalition was far from satisfied with the Minister's attempt to avoid questioning regarding his government's intervention and negotiation of redundancy provisions far superior to those available in the private sector. The anticipated cost of these to taxpayers, as foreshadowed in the QAC's 1999 Annual Report, remains an issue.

9. GULF FISHERIES BUYBACK SCHEME

The Minister did not answer whether or not \$280,000 in funding raised through the Gulf Fisheries Buyback Scheme had been diverted and used to buy out licences in Trinity Inlet. The failure of the Government to fully expend those funds in the Gulf and maintain its share of the scheme raises questions over the Government's level of genuine commitment to improving the sustainability of Queensland fisheries. The Government's actions in this case have eroded industry's confidence that government will honour its undertakings regarding any future such schemes.

10. QUEENSLAND RURAL ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY

It is perhaps synonymous of the overall budgetary difficulties the Beattie Government has created for itself that the cash reserves of various statutory authorities and government owned corporations have been raided to prop up overall spending in this Budget and the previous one. The Coalition views with concern the seizure by Treasury of \$57.7 million of the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority's cash reserves for unknown use in the State Budget. This concern is exacerbated by the Beattie Government's oft-used excuse that it does not have the financial resources to fund particular Departmental services or provide much needed assistance to soften the impact of restructuring in industries such as dairy and sugar.

EQUITY & FAIR TRADING

The performance of the Minister for Equity and Fair Trading during this term of the Beattie Labor Government has been nothing short of disastrous. The Minister has repeatedly made public commitments and promises, yet has continually failed to meet them. The Minister has made statements claiming that a set of circumstances or courses of action are inappropriate or abhorrent, yet in her duplicitous manner, the Minister's actions have been precisely those for which she has condemned. The majority of these issues are outlined below.

11. PAYMENT OF DIRECTOR'S-GENERAL PERFORMANCE BONUS

The responses of the Minister to questions pertaining to a performance bonus paid to her Director General were intolerable. Despite the fact that the Director General was listed as a staff member of the Department of Equity and Fair Trading in the Minister response to Question on Notice #4, the Minister initially denied that the Director General was paid by the Department. After correcting this misleading statement, the Minister then refused to identify the quantum of the performance bonus paid to her Director General contained in *Employee Expenses* on page 2-22 of the MPS. This failure to fully explain and justify the expenditure of the Department by the Minister is an blatant abuse of the Committee process.

It should be noted that the Director General was paid a performance bonus despite the fact that both the Queensland Building Services Authority (of which she is a Board Member) and the Residential Tenancies Authority produced operating deficits in the 1999/2000 financial year and forecast further operating deficits for the 2000/2001 financial year.

12. ACCURACY OF 1999/2000 ESTIMATED ACTUAL EXPENDITURE

The accuracy of the overall State Budget and the \$40M surplus projected for the General Government Sector in the 1999/2000 financial year has to be in question. Especially after responses to questions asked on the Minister pertaining to the accuracy of the Estimated Actual Figures contained

in the MPS for 1999/2000 financial. After an initial response from a Departmental officer that the figures were 4% above the figures contained in the MPS, this was later revised down to 2.7% above the figures provided.

13. AUCTIONEERS & AGENTS FIDELITY GUARANTEE FUND

Despite recommendations that financial raids on the fund by Government were unsustainable, which were contained in a \$12,500 review of the Auctioneers & Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund commissioned by the Minister, the Government has decided to remove a \$35M lump sum payment in 2000/2001.

The Minister justified this action by announcing the underwriting of the fund by the State Government. The Minister further explained that a minimum balance of \$2M would be kept in the fund based on historical evidence that the total of claims against the fund averaged approximately \$1M per annum. This raises further questions about the motive of the Minister for this course of action. Given that the annual revenue to the fund from licence fees significantly exceed the value of compensation payments, it is obviously the intention of the Government to pocket the surplus revenue for non-industry related expenditure.

The Minister also claimed (in reference to the Auctioneers & Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund) that:

“The money went under both Governments. But obviously the position of the fund was not going to be sustainable in the long term with that kind of money going to Housing.”

An examination of the closing balances (as at 30 June) for each financial year since 1989 reveals that the biggest raids on the fund have all occurred under Labor Governments.

Auctioneers & Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund	
Financial Year	Closing Balance (\$'000)
1990/91	101,130
1991/92	67,668
1992/93	60,064
1993/94	55,065
1994/95	52,297
1995/96	50,931
1996/97	50,699
1997/98	49,744
1998/99	44,195

Sourced: Treasurer’s Annual Statement (1990/91 to 1998/99)

A closer examination also reveals that despite the continued payment of the grants to the Department of Housing, the drop in the balance of the fund during the term of the Borbidge-Sheldon Government was from \$50.931M in 1995/96 to \$49.744M in 1997/98 equates to reduction in the fund balance of only \$1.187M during this period.

It is obvious from the figures above that successive Labor Governments have perpetrate devastating raids on this fund (Goss - \$50.199M & Beattie - \$5.549 + \$35M in 2000/01) to mask their poor financial management.

14. NO DEFT NEW OFFICES

Although the Minister made a promise in her ALP Consumer Affairs Policy Document for the 1998 State election to open new consumer affairs offices in areas of rapid growth and in regional areas, and subsequently during the past two year’s of Estimates Committees has said:

“(I) hope to come back in next year’s budget process and announce where such offices will be located.” (Page 65 of the Estimates Transcripts of 1998);

and

“In the last year we have not established any new offices. In terms of opening new regional offices—we are certainly examining the feasibility” (Page 562 of Estimates Transcript of 1999).

It is a sad inditement on the Minister that she has failed to deliver on this policy commitment for the consumers of Queensland during her term as Minister.

15. BUILDING SERVICES AUTHORITY - OPERATING DEFICIT

Comments of Spence

Whilst the non-Government members note the surplus of \$298,000 in the General Fund of the BSA for 1999/2000, we still express serious concern in the overall management and financial performance of the BSA. For this small surplus needs to be consider against the fact that the surplus was only achieved after an injection of some \$5.5M into the general fund from the insurance fund.

The continued growth in expenditure from the general fund is in direct contrast with the slow growth in revenue into the same fund. This is a serious management issue that is growing unchecked under this administration. Especially given the memorable comments made by the Minister regarding the BSA and budget deficits made in *Business Queensland* on 4 September 1998, which included:

*“... .. the practice is not sustainable.
We cannot allow the BSA to continue to
operate at these very large losses”*

and

*“it is unforgivable for the BSA to
be in deficit and there will be a need to
cover BSA’s funding in the Labor
Budget”*

and a response of the Minister to a question during the 1998 Estimates Hearings:

*“There is no way that I, as the
responsible Minister, am about to sit
back and go to the Treasurer next year
and say, yet again, “The Building
Services Authority cannot pay its debt.”*

16. BUILDING SERVICES AUTHORITY - INSURANCE SCHEME

After questioning from the then Shadow Minister at last year’s Estimates Hearing, the then General Manager, Mr Matt Miller, stated and that the overall deficit, some \$2.1m, for the Queensland Building Services Authority was due to a loss in the Insurance Fund, which I quote:

*The \$2m deficit in 1999/2000 is almost in
entirety due to delays in introducing the
new premium structure.*

and

*The other significant contributor to the
loss in the Insurance Scheme for
1999/2000 is, in fact, an unforeseeable
impact of GST liability.*

Non-Government members noted that Mr Miller claimed that the deficit in the insurance fund was attributable to these two reasons above, yet fail to mention that two days before his appearance at that hearing last year, he had signed the Certificate for the Financial Report for the Queensland Building Services Authority which included a note stating that \$5.5m was to be transferred from the Insurance Fund to the General Fund of the Building Services Authority.

Another issue of concern for non-Government members is the proposition of the Minister that builders with a record of poor workmanship should be entitled to pay the same insurance premium to that of good quality builders. The Minister during the hearings condemned moves by Royal Sun Alliance to penalise poor performing builder with higher premiums. This situation is no different to the current operational policy adopted by car insurer who levy higher premiums on drivers with poor accident or claim records. Non-Government members find the logic and policy of the Minister severely flawed.

17. TERMITE ADVERTISING

In response to Question on Notice #7, the Minister stated that there was no additional funding being allocated with the 2000/2001 budget of the BSA for the advertising or community awareness campaigns regarding termites. Whilst non-Government

members note the continued presence of advertising of the BSA's brochure through the electronic media past 30 June 2000, despite no budget allocation, it disagrees with the Minister not to continue to inform homeowners of the need for vigilance for termite damage.

18. BSA GENERAL MANAGER CREDIT CARD EXPENDITURE

Given the overall operating deficit of the BSA in 1999/2000, the non-Government members cannot support the ascertains and justifications given by Mr Miller and the Minister to certain expenditures made of the corporate credit card of the BSA General Manager.

Non-Government members do not support the expenditure of over \$500 on a "Wine & Cheese" function for 20 people or a "Christmas Breakfast" for regional BSA staff at taxpayers expense. The justification by Mr Miller that it was "*a very modest amount of money to say to regional staff who work very hard for the BSA, "A big thank you... .. " " when the agency is operating at a deficit.*

Mr Miller stated that consideration of such expenditures should be in the context of "*the somewhat arm's length semi-Government business environment in which the Authority operates*". If this was to be considered in such a way we would also have to apply the fiscally responsible expenditure principles adopted by such bodies as to not consistently spend in excess of revenue, especially on excessive hospitality.

The non-Government members would also wish to make the point that most regional public servants work incredibly hard and if the logic of Mr Miller and the Minister were to be widely applied, these hard working public servants could also have and expectation of similar benefits and recognition.

The other items of expenditure for which the non-Government members have concerns pertain to the expenditure for petrol and tyres on the corporate credit card, despite the fact that this expenditure should have been made on either a Q-Fleet or fuel card system.

19. BSA NON-EXPENDITURE OF \$300,000 CREDIT INFORMATION BUREAU

Given the importance of information on the financial performance of persons involved in the building industry and the reliance on such information by those involved in the subcontracting within the industry, the non-Government members express concern at the failure of the Minister and the BSA to allocate or expend the \$300,000 grant identified in the 1999/2000 budget for the provision of a credit information bureau.

20. WENSLEY QC

Whilst not questioning the appointment of Mr Wensley QC to the position of Chairperson of the Queensland Building Tribunal, the non-Government members do express concern at the fact that despite being remunerated at the same level as the previous full-time Chairperson, the expectation is that Mr Wensley will only be working part-time.

This change in the working conditions of the Chairperson has led to an increased costs to the operation of the QBT. This is evidenced by the need to increase the number of full-time members of the QBT by two.

21. DEFICIT OF RTA

Given the operating deficit of the RTA in 1999/2000, the non-Government members question the expenditure made on catering for the opening of the new building and the continued rental payments on a the now vacant building (previous premises). This expenditure is within the context of a continuing forecast operating deficit for the RTA until 2003/2004.

FAMILIES, YOUTH & COMMUNITY CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

The Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services again displayed a lack of commitment in delivering services in her portfolio.

Important issues which the Minister said had priority or were significant were not followed up and showed a lack of planning and effort.

1. The Minister's commitment at the previous year's Estimates Committee hearing to develop an Unmet Needs register for children with disabilities within families.

The Minister at this year's hearings indicated that after giving that commitment the work did not proceed.

There will be one central register only, for adults, and at some point in the future families and children and post school leavers will be included.

This is another broken commitment to the Parliament and the people of Queensland.

2. In the 1999/2000 financial year the Minister indicated that more than \$800,000 would be expended in the Disability Sector Training fund.

However, in this year's Estimate committee hearings the Minister indicated that only \$125,755 was spent in May and June of this year and that \$720,000 was not spent last financial year and has been carried forward to this financial year. This is in a sector where the community is desperate for funding to train those with disabilities.

3. The Minister indicated in the 1999-2000 Budget that as a matter of priority, a comprehensive quality framework for services, including service standards for the delivery of disability services.

However the Minister now admits that the framework has not been developed, although this was, according to the Minister, a priority.

4. The Minister admitted that there is no funding for the implementation of the Disability Services 5 year Strategic Plan beyond that allowed for under the 2-year business plan.

5. The State contribution under this Minister relating to Community and Infrastructure Support, Disability Services has decreased by \$209,000 because of a significant Commonwealth Government increase.

This is a cost shift of expenditure to the Federal Government in a very significant area of disability services.

6. Last financial year there were various output statements in the Ministerial Portfolio Statements in which the Minister hopelessly failed to meet the targets.

In this budget the Minister has changed the output measures making comparisons with last year's under-performance impossible, and making many of the so-called new measurements this year of little value.

7. Output Statements can be useful to measure performance, however the statement in MPS p.2-9 this year contains only the cost per person receiving support and therefore is of little value. Last financial year the Output Statement covered average cost per annum per person receiving assistance under Accommodation Support Services, the Moving Ahead Program, Community Support Services and Respite Services.

This year the Minister is unable to provide the information in that form and is obviously trying to hide the Government's lack of performance making the measurement virtually worthless.

8. The Minister refused to provide details in relation to whether the Director-General of the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care was paid a bonus, the criteria for the bonus, and the amount of the bonus for last financial year and the amount budgeted for in this financial year.

The Minister admitted funds for the Director-General's salary were in the departmental

budget however refused to indicate what amount of funds had been placed in the budget for the Director-General's bonus this year or what had been paid out last financial year.

There has therefore been a lack of openness and transparency in relation to the Department's budget and the estimate process has been turned into a farce. The Government is clearly determined to hide the bonus figures.

9. Last year the Minister indicated that she was concerned about the significant risk of long term damage as a result of constant placement turnover of children in foster care.

This year according to the output statement the percentage of children in care who have had only one placement within the last 12 months has deteriorated from 75% to 66%.

So much for the Government's concern.

10. Capital expenditure on the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre at Wacol was only \$9.7M of the \$18.1M budgeted for by Parliament last financial year.

The expenditure of approximately half of which was budgeted is another example of this Beattie Labor Government's lack of interest in creating jobs.

11. The Staffing Table (Full-time equivalents) in the Ministerial Portfolio Statement p.1-8 shows that the increased figure for staff in the financial years 1999-2000 to 2000-2001 for services for children and young people was 59 staff, not 77 as indicated by the Minister on page 1-2.

12. The additional funding of child protection in terms of Recommendation No.4 of the Government's Forde Inquiry has not occurred, contrary to the Government's claims. The funding is way short of Recommendation No. 4 for \$103M as recommended by the Inquiry.

The Government has failed to respond in a timely manner to child protection cases following complaints. The delay in responding to many of these cases show the Government has failed to provide sufficient resources.

Marc Rowell MLA
**Shadow Minister for Primary Industries
Member for Hinchinbrook**

John Goss MLA
**Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs &
Fair Trading
Member for Aspley**

D E Beanland MLA
**Shadow Minister for Families, Youth and
Community Care and Disability Services
and
Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Member for Indooroopilly**

