



ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G - 2000

REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Estimates Committee G was appointed on 22 June 2000 to examine and report on the proposed expenditure set out in the Appropriation Bill 2000 for the organisational units within the portfolios of:

- The Minister for Communication and Information, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Sport;
- The Minister for Tourism and Racing; and
- The Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources

The committee considered the estimates by examining the budget papers and Ministerial Portfolio Statements, answers to pre-hearing questions on notice, evidence taken at a public hearing on Thursday, 10 August 2000 and answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing.

During the inquiry the committee examined a wide range of issues, which are listed in this report. For details on these issues the committee directs readers to:

- the volume of 'additional information' (tabled in the House) that contains the committee's questions on notice, the Ministers' answers, and minutes of the committee's meetings; and
- the transcript of the committee's public hearing, which is available on the Hansard web-page at:

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au>

2. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PLANNING AND SPORT

The total appropriation for the Department of Communication and Information, Local Government, Planning and Sport in 2000/01 is \$655,003,000. An output summary is in the following table.

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Policy, Regulatory and Advisory Services	31,724
Policy advice	6,937
Statutory and regulatory services	8,878
Advisory services to government, business, industry and the community	11,497
Regional and strategic planning services	4,412
Services, Infrastructure and Facilities to Queensland Regions	367,142
Access to government, information and services	7,214
Administration of local government grants and subsidies	275,696
Government communication and information service delivery	10,233
Sport and recreation infrastructure, facilities and support	67,420
Elite athlete development	6,579
Total	398,866

2.1 Issues considered by the committee

During the course of its inquiry the committee examined a range of issues including:

- National Standards Sports Facilities program
- Community Sport and Recreation facilities Program
- Minor sport and recreation facilities program
- Community sport and recreation development program
- Local Government Recreation Planning program
- State sport and recreation development program
- State owned Outdoor Recreation Centres
- local government grant and subsidy programs
- transfer of responsibility for the Office of Rural Communities to the Department of Primary Industries
- Local Government revenue raising powers
- equity return paid on assets for 1999-2000
- Administration of Local Government Grants and Subsidies
- the Landfill Remediation Assessment program
- occupancy rates for Outdoor Recreation Centres
- athletes in the QAS programs
- adult participation rates in sport and physical activities in Queensland
- economic value of Indy Honda 300
- development of Ballymore
- economic benefit of pre-Olympic teams training in Queensland
- achieving sustainable communities in Queensland's Regions
- review of the Commonwealth Local Government financial assistance grants
- grant to the Torres Strait Council to replace a waste facility
- vision-stream communication project
- whole-of-government expenditure on telecommunication and data services
- distributed Systems Technology Centre funding
- strategy for the development of IT incubators
- Government Information Terms and Conditions agreements
- communication and information industry development strategy
- development of a communication and information industry portal
- IT support by the Department for the office of rural communities
- development of Government Information Architecture
- development of an electronic local laws database
- costs of Y2K bug compliance
- staffing of 'Government Communication and Information Service Delivery' and 'Access to Government, Information and Services' areas.
- Electronic Service Delivery strategy
- provision of scholarship funding to QANTM for targeted educational programs
- development of a website for local government elections
- promotion of the export potential of small and medium IT&T companies
- compatibility of software developed for the State Purchasing Policy
- review of the local government election procedures
- changes to the local government system
- March 2000 local government elections
- National Competition Policy local government Financial Incentive Package
- administration of the Regional Centres Program

- implementation of Regional and Strategic Planning Services in Queensland
- the Rural Living Infrastructure program
- Advanced Waste Treatment Technology program
- The role of the Electoral Commission in local government elections
- the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*
- local government water charging arrangements
- the Smaller Communities Assistance program (water and sewerage infrastructure survey)
- assistance to local government to improve the safety of public areas through lighting and security cameras
- establishment of Ministerial Regional Community Forums
- the future development of new State Planning policies
- Queensland State Archive regional visits and seminars
- mobile communications coverage through the Commonwealth's 'Networking the Nation' program
- development of new building and plumbing codes
- impact of the implementation of the GST on the Department's client groups
- the future development of dispute resolution processes for appeals related to building work
- establishment of guidelines for management of local government complaints
- the sport and recreation benefit fund
- proposed redevelopment of Lang Park
- funding for the Mt Gravatt Showgrounds
- review of sports funding
- funding for the Queensland Institute of Sport
- assistance to Olympians and paralympians

- sport and recreation facilities for indigenous communities
- increased access to sport and recreational facilities
- funding for the Dairy Farmer's stadium
- audits of state recreation camps
- promotion of sport and recreation programs for youth
- applications for funding from community sporting groups
- ticket sales for the Olympic soccer at the Gabba

3. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND RACING

The total appropriation for the Department of Tourism and Racing in 2000/01 is \$56,541,000. An output summary is in the table below

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Liquor industry regulation and development	9,716
Racing industry development and support	5,728
Olympic 2000 opportunities for Queensland	368
Strategic policy and advice	2,021
Total	17,833

3.1 Issues considered by the committee

During the course of its inquiry the committee examined a range of issues including:

- the Training Track Subsidy Scheme
- staff for Racing Industry Development and Support
- development of alcohol management plans in indigenous communities
- the Adult Entertainment Permit Scheme
- Tourism Queensland staff appointed to the Olympic Main Press centre and Sydney Media Centre during the Games time
- staff in the Strategic Policy Advice output.

- funding provided to the State's 14 Regional Tourist Associations in 1999/2000
- research projects focusing on consumer needs and market opportunities
- tourism policy, destination development and environmental projects
- licensed premises in Queensland
- the standard trading hours for licensed premises in Queensland
- prosecutions by the Liquor Licensing Division
- Responsible Service of Alcohol Training Packages
- fines imposed by the Liquor Licensing Division
- hits on the Liquor Licensing Division website since its launch in April 1999
- testing by the Racing Science Centre
- appeals to the Racing Appeals Authority
- tourism publicity by Tourism Queensland
- the liquor subsidy scheme
- revenue from processing licences and permits
- Liquor Industry Regulation and Development
- complaints and investigations against Liquor licensees
- response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's taskforce on violence
- employment of indigenous liquor licensing officers
- irresponsible alcohol servicing practices
- planning guide for event managers
- liquor regulation during schoolies week
- prosecutions under the *Liquor Act 1992* relating to the Players Inn
- the adult entertainment permit system
- development of a cruise shipping strategy
- Tourism Queensland's base budget
- the tourism rescue plan
- air services to Queensland

- flights to regional Queensland by Virgin Airlines and Impulse Airlines
- convention centre marketing
- hosting of the Australian Tourism Exchange 2001
- impact of the GST on the tourism industry
- sales of Sunlover holidays
- funding of regional tourist associations
- criteria for monitoring of government appointed boards
- racing industry user charges – Racing Science Centre
- training track subsidy
- transfer of the Deagon race-course and the education and training system to the racing industry
- implications of the National Competition Policy review for the *Racing and Betting Act*.
- benefits to Queensland from the Olympic games

4. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY AND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The total appropriation for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2000/01 is \$212,686,000. An output summary is in the table below

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Environmental protection	84,538
Parks and wildlife management services	153,940
Total	238,478

The total appropriation for the Department of Natural Resources in 2000/01 is \$336,385. An output summary is in the table below.

Output	Total Cost \$'000
Water resource development	86,533

Natural resource management services	197,743
Land services	97,969
Information integration services	34,557
Land court and land tribunals services	3,274
Total	420,076

4.1 Issues considered by the committee

During the course of its inquiry the committee examined a range of issues including:

- consultancies for the financial year 1999/2000
- pest and weed control programs
- expenditure made by or on behalf of the Directors-General
- projects identified in the *Plan for Improving Water Resource Development and Use*
- the State Water Projects' plan
- Natural Heritage Trust program
- Local Government Association of Queensland Public Inquiry into the Management of National Parks in Queensland
- the capital works program for National Parks
- protection of places and buildings of heritage value
- pollution management
- enforcement powers of EPA
- waste management – Rochedale landfill
- management of pest plants and animals on State land
- maintenance and upgrade of service provision
- demand for open space and recreational facilities in south-east Queensland
- measures to reduce the social and economic costs of flooding
- the Rural Water Use Efficiency Initiative
- tree clearing at Cedar Bay National Park
- funding for enhanced protection of biodiversity and endangered species
- management of terrestrial protected areas
- maintenance, refurbishment and enhancement of park facilities
- Queensland Abattoir Corporations Ipswich and Cannon Hill meatworks
- management of algal bloom outbreaks
- the Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypass project
- re-establishment of the NatureSearch initiative
- costs of transferring environmental regulation of mining to the EPA
- the Better Parks program
- nature conservation initiatives
- coastal management initiatives
- proposed NatureLink project
- funding for marine parks
- commercialisation of national parks
- implementation of the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement
- the Industry Eco-Smart program
- the plastic recycling industry in Queensland
- water audits of industry and local government
- development of a standardised permit system in marine parks
- payment of performance bonuses to senior executives
- preparation of the *Water Bill 2000*
- use of departmental motor vehicles
- financial assistance for landholders affected by the government's tree clearing policy
- the Condamine-Balonne draft Water Allocation and Management Plan (WAMP)
- water resource planning and management
- improving the movement of fish along the Dawson and Fitzroy Rivers
- prevention of land degradation

- purchase of land at Trinity Inlet, Cairns
- development of a Queensland Rivers Policy
- automation of land registry services
- St George Irrigation Area water buy-back
- the draft Burnett WAMP
- compensation relating to the implementation of standards for vegetation management
- funding for the State Water Projects Office
- pest prevention strategies
- Yeppoon sewerage treatment plant project
- hand over of part of Musgrave Park to its traditional owners
- release of the first braille directory of Brisbane suburbs.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditures, as stated in the *Appropriation Bill 2000* for the organisational units within the portfolios referred to Estimates Committee G for examination, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Phil Reeves MLA

Chairman August 2000

MEMBERS

- Mr Phil Reeves MLA, Chairman
- Hon Vince Lester MLA, Deputy Chairman
- Mr Graham Healy, MLA
- Mr Howard Hobbs MLA
- Mr Jim Pearce, MLA
- Mr Warren Pitt MLA

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STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G – LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING

The Queensland Coalition objects to the proposal by the Minister for Local Government and Planning to deliver a decision relating to the rules under which elected councillors serve on their City, Town and Shire Councils.

The Minister for Local Government and Planning is using the position of Minister of the Crown to further the political objectives of the ALP rather than to benefit the wider community.

The report does not express my concern that the Minister for Communication, Information, Local Government, Planning, and Sport is clearly maneuvering to unfairly influence the outcome of the next State Election by requiring Local Government Councillors to resign before standing for the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

The Minister misled the committee by asserting that he was being fair and stating “there are two people of whom I am aware – and there could be more – who are councillors endorsed by political parties to run at the next state election. I am aware of only two one is a Labor Party Councillor on the Townsville City Council. I do not think I would be accused of trying to do something corrupt against my own Party”. The second is a National Party Candidate.

The Townsville Councillor referred to is an ALP Candidate endorsed to run in the Federal seat of Herbert and not in the State Election as the Minister stated. The clear motive is to discourage high profile independent council candidates running against sitting ALP members and to reduce the number and calibre of high profile conservative candidates when the ALP at the time of the hearing had no councillors endorsed to run at the next state election.

The proposed changes to the Electoral Arrangements are unnecessary they will discriminate against councillors and put them in a similar category of bankrupts and criminals who cannot stand for the Legislative Assembly. No other State in Australia has such conditions and no such requirement is imposed on public servants or ministerial advisors who wish to stand for State Parliament.

Howard Hobbs
Member for Warrego
Shadow Minister for
Local Government, Planning, Regional and Rural Communities