



# ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B - 2002

## REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

---

### INTRODUCTION

On 21 June 2002 the Legislative Assembly referred proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill 2002 to estimates committees for examination and report. Organisational units within the portfolios of the following ministers were allocated to Estimates Committee B—

- Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
- Minister for Emergency Services and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland
- Minister for Police and Corrective Services.

The committee has considered the proposed expenditure using the various budget documents and written and verbal evidence from the relevant ministers and public officials. The Additional Information folder tabled with the report includes answers to questions asked on notice before the hearing, answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing, documents tabled at the hearing and minutes of committee meetings.

### EXAMINATION OF THE PROPOSED EXPENDITURE

#### Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

##### *Appropriation Summary*

Within the portfolio of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. R Welford) the Appropriation Bill 2002 proposes the following budgets for 2002-2003—

- Department of Justice and Attorney-General \$278 597 000
- Electoral Commission of Queensland \$8 229 000

*Issues raised by committee members at the hearing include:*

- the number of complaints addressed by the Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
- the effectiveness and cost of the drug court program
- State Penalties Enforcement Registry: number of fines registered and fines, fees and taxes collected; the use of new technology
- the effectiveness of the traffic management program
- funding for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- expansion of the drug court program to Cairns and Townsville
- reform of the coronial system
- the number of victims of crime receiving support from the State and the role of the victim liaison office
- reforms proposed for the taking of evidence from children, including closed circuit television facilities
- the level and rate of fees charged by the Public Trustee
- public works conducted by the Department of Justice and estimates of expenditure
- client satisfaction surveys of the Magistrates Court
- the review of the legal profession, including examination of lawyers' fees
- measures to educate young people about the Queensland justice system
- the construction schedule of the new Brisbane Magistrates Court complex
- plans for the improvement of court facilities in Mackay, Cooktown, Caloundra and Thursday Island
- implementation of electoral reforms resulting from the Government's Restoring Integrity initiatives
- the Electoral Commission's ballot paper survey of the 2001 state general election
- the commencement of court sittings at Badu Island

- the voting rights of people convicted of serious offences and serving custodial sentences
- the new fee structure introduced in the Supreme and District Courts to differentiate individuals from corporations
- the caseload of the Land and Resources Tribunal
- the response by Legal Aid to a survey of legal services provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Cape York and the Gulf of Carpentaria
- achievements of Legal Aid, including the telephone advice service
- the management of the State's Justices of the Peace
- funding and eligibility for the drug diversion scheme in the Brisbane Magistrates Court
- statistics relating to alternative dispute resolution
- development of the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House and coordination of pro bono legal work
- review of the law relating to the defence of provocation in relation to offences of murder
- the issue of fine defaulting by serious offenders
- monies raised during the recent amnesty on fine defaulters
- launch of stakeholder education booklets by the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland
- lighting and voice amplification improvements in courthouses, including Townsville and Southport
- awareness programs to promote the role of the Children's Services Tribunal
- the civil registration scheme in the Magistrates Court, and the use of a new database
- plans by the Alternative Dispute Resolution Branch to provide greater access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- cost of outsourced legal advice and the matters it related to
- casual, temporary, acting staff and vacancies within the department
- the use of consultancies
- achievements of the Queensland Ambulance Service
- flood boat fleet
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Whyte Island training academy
- assistance and funding to community helicopter providers
- funding for the indigenous service delivery enhancement package
- paramedical, search and rescue and counter-disaster operations in the Wide Bay-Burnett region
- ambulance response times
- Queensland Ambulance Service subscription scheme
- independent and random audits of drug stocks in ambulance stations
- Balmoral Fire Station
- budget support for volunteers such as rural fire brigades
- Department of Emergency Services involvement in response plans to chemical, biological and radiological incidents
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service: communication technology; training programs for firefighters; fire safety inspections of hospitals, nursing homes and aged care hostels
- community safety in National Parks
- survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrests
- protection for State Emergency Service and Rural Fire Service volunteers from liability
- funding for emergency helicopter services
- Department of Emergency Services: involvement in the implementation of the Cape York Justice Study; implementation of Smart State initiatives;
- the CPR 2000 project
- State Emergency Service: communication devices and training for operators; cadet scheme
- baby capsule hire service
- fire safety standards in budget accommodation
- Queensland Ambulance Service community education

**Minister for Emergency Services and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland**

*Appropriation Summary*

Within the portfolio of the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland (Hon. M Reynolds) the Appropriation Bill 2002 proposes the following budget for 2002-2003—

- Department of Emergency Services \$231 982 000

*Issues raised by committee members at the hearing include:*

- the ambulance fleet
- Q-Fleet vehicles within the Department of Emergency Services

## **Minister for Police and Corrective Services**

### *Appropriation Summary*

Within the portfolio of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (Hon. A McGrady) the Appropriation Bill 2002 proposes the following budget for 2002-2003—

- Department of Police \$924 969 000
- Department of Corrective Services \$421 711 000

*Issues raised by committee members at the hearing include:*

#### *Department of Police:*

- upcoming enterprise bargaining agreement for the Police Service
- Queensland Police Service: funding and budget allocations; determining priorities for resource allocations, involvement with CHOGM
- traffic policing and camera operations
- clear-up rate for property crime
- benefits of the Flying Squad to rural and regional areas
- the implementation and operation of the 16 tactical crime squads
- State and Federal Government responsibilities and actions regarding the illicit drug trade and drug use in the Torres Strait
- police numbers, police beats and police shopfronts
- Prostitution Licensing Authority and the operation of the prostitution legislation
- the number of acting officers in officer in charge positions
- statewide activity survey and determination of administrative workload
- training in Information Technology and for handling domestic violence
- speed camera warnings
- school based policing
- Australian Crime Commission and issues of trans-national crime
- the drug diversion program

#### *Department of Corrective Services:*

- the number of escapees from open security centres
- the three-month study into the use of drug-free units within correctional centres, and the effectiveness of addiction programs
- electronic monitoring and home detention trials, examination of the costs and the technology
- escape and abscond rates in Queensland prisons
- the success of urine-based drug testing

- the value of community service work and the benefits to the wider community
- the achievements of the vocational training pilot program at Woodford Correctional Centre
- actual income revenue from prison industries and new initiatives in prison activities
- recent changes to the appointment and make-up of community corrections boards
- privately run correctional centres and related security issues
- the long-term prospects of the Palen Creek prison farm
- the merit of mobile courts in reducing the need for prison escorts
- general precautions taken to ensure prison staff are not passing drugs to prisoners
- the responsibility and supervision of prisoners released to community programs for work or other purposes
- the adoption of electronic technology for monitoring the release of work prisoners and prisoners on home leave
- employment of local people and the use of training programs at the new prison at Maryborough
- the role of community custody facilities in rehabilitating offenders
- comparison of the Queensland corrections system to other states
- the benefits and effectiveness of the sex offender treatment program
- the nature of various therapeutic programs offered to prisoners to address their offending behaviour
- community projects achieved by the western outreach camp program
- the success of the western outreach camp program in rehabilitating prisoners

## RECOMMENDATION

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as outlined in the Appropriation Bill 2002 for the organisational units in the portfolios referred to it, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The committee thanks the ministers and departmental officers for their cooperation during the estimates process. The committee also acknowledges the support and assistance of the committee's secretariat and those other officers of the Parliamentary Service who contributed to the conduct of the estimates process.

Mr Geoff Wilson MP  
Chair  
July 2002

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Geoff Wilson MP (Chair)  
Mr Lawrence Springborg MP (Deputy Chair)  
Mr John English MP  
Mr Bill Flynn MP  
Mr Ted Malone MP  
Mrs Christine Scott MP  
Mrs Christine Smith MP

## SECRETARIAT

Mr Andrew Timperley (Research Director)  
Ms Lynda Pretty (Research Officer)  
Ms Tamara Vitale (Executive Assistant)

**The transcript from the hearing held on 10 July 2002 is available on the internet via the Hansard site at**

**[www.parliament.qld.gov.au](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au)**

