



Estimates Committee F 2008

Report to the Legislative Assembly

Introduction

1. The Legislative Assembly appointed Estimates Committee F on 1 May 2008 to examine and report on the proposed expenditures contained in the *Appropriation Bill 2008*.
2. The Legislative Assembly appointed this committee to examine and report on the proposed expenditure for the organisational units within the portfolios of:
 - the Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations; and
 - the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation.
3. The committee conducted a public hearing on Wednesday, 23 July 2008 to take evidence from these ministers. A transcript of the committee's hearing is available on the Parliament's Internet web site at: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Hansard/>.
4. For the purposes of examining the proposed expenditure for the organisational units allocated to it, the committee considered information obtained at the public hearing and in:
 - budget papers;
 - written responses provided by ministers to the committee's questions on notice prior to the public hearing;
 - documents tabled at the hearing; and
 - written responses provided by ministers to questions taken on notice at the hearing.
5. During its inquiry the committee examined a wide range of issues including those listed in this report.
6. Answers to the pre-hearing questions on notice and questions taken on notice at the hearing, together with other material provided in response to requests by the committee and minutes of the committee's meetings, are included in a volume of

additional information tabled with this report.

Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations

7. The Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations portfolio consists of the Department of Transport (Queensland Transport), the Department of Trade (Trade Queensland), the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, government-owned corporations (GOCs), and statutory authorities and other organisation units that report to the Minister.

Department of Transport

8. Queensland Transport is the lead agency responsible for developing and managing the land, air and sea transport environments in Queensland.
9. The Service Delivery Statements (SDS) (at 3-195) lists Queensland Transport's primary roles as: setting the future direction and development of the transport system in Queensland; planning and managing a transport system that is sustainable, safe, efficient, and equitable; and delivering and operating consistent, integrated and efficient services and infrastructure to an agreed standard.
10. The department is also responsible for delivering trade related outcomes as identified in the Driving Export Growth for Queensland: 2006-11 strategy.
11. The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2008-09.

	2008-09 \$'000
Departmental Outputs	2 113 975
Equity Adjustment	550 112
Administered Items	863 840
Vote Total	3 527 927

Source: *Appropriation Bill 2008* – Department of Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations, p. 15

12. The department's projected outputs for 2008-09 are as follows:

Departmental outputs	2008-09 \$'000
Rail, Ports & Aviation Systems	713,206
Integrated Transport Planning	43 359
Road Use Management	267 237
Maritime Safety	116 484
Public Transport Services	1 344 238
International Trade Development	29 284
Total	2 513 808

Source: 2008-09 Queensland State Budget - Service Delivery Statements – Department of Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations (at 3-200)

Budget highlights

13. Key funding initiatives in 2008-09 include:

- Continued progress of projects as part of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Infrastructure Plan and Program. Key projects include:
 - \$204.5 million towards construction of the Northern Busway: Royal Children's Hospital to Kedron
 - \$33.7 million towards the construction of cycle links in SEQ
 - \$13.6 million towards construction and design of projects as part of the TransLink Station Upgrade Program
 - \$60.3 million towards construction of an Eastern Busway corridor connection: Eleanor Schonell Bridge to Ipswich Road
 - \$50 million towards construction of the Eastern Busway: Princess Alexandra Hospital to Buranda
 - \$123.9 million towards the construction of the Eastern Busway connection: Buranda to Main Avenue at Coorparoo
- An additional \$40 million over four years to address increased levels of congestion through programs and strategies to alter travel behaviour, spread peak hour demand and to promote walking and cycling.
- An additional \$168.4 million over the next four years for additional public transport services as part of the TransLink Network Plan.

- Continued implementation of the program of work arising from the 2006 Queensland Road Safety Summit.
- \$7.3 million towards the construction of new recreational boating facilities.

Issues considered by the committee

14. The committee considered a range of issues including:

- investment in rail infrastructure as part of the SEQ Infrastructure Plan and Program
- Queensland Rail (QR) greenhouse gas emissions
- QR workplace health and safety compliance issues
- rail passenger rolling stock investment
- central Queensland coal rail network upgrade
- investment in Queensland's major ports
- Queensland Trade and Investment Commissioners and Trade Queensland offices: performance indicators and associated costs
- establishment of a temporary trade office in Beijing
- trade relations with the Queensland China Council
- overseas travel: Queensland Trade
- benefits to Queenslanders from international trade development initiatives
- the growth of knowledge intensive exports
- the Queensland Transport customer service centre in the Gladstone Electorate
- overseas travel: Queensland Transport
- initiatives to tackle traffic congestion and improve public transport services in SEQ
- Translink Transit Authority
- Translink Network Plan: services, programs and activities
- TransLink's go card
- the Gold Coast rapid transit system

- Inner Northern Busway project, Brisbane
- Eastern Busway project, Brisbane
- the benefits for regional public transport users from the launch of *qconnect*
- the Regional Airport Development Scheme
- redevelopment of the Cairns domestic terminal
- road safety issues and initiatives
- new Queensland Driver License
- introduction of the hazard perception test
- funding for the construction of new recreational boating facilities
- departmental expenditure in the Gladstone electorate

Department of Employment and Industrial Relations

15. The department aims to improve productivity, equity, safety and participation in Queensland workplaces. Fair, safe and decent work for Queenslanders supports social wellbeing and sustained economic growth closely aligned to the Government's identified community outcomes of Building Queensland's economy and Strengthening Queensland communities.
16. The department focuses its services on the three key business areas of employment, safety and industrial relations to achieve its aim and to help Queenslanders achieve economic growth and social wellbeing through fair, safe and decent work (SDS at 3-218).
17. The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2008-09.

	2008-09 \$'000
Departmental Outputs	148 528
Equity Adjustment	(210)
Administered Items	..
Vote Total	148 318

Source: *Appropriation Bill 2008* – Department of Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations, p. 16

18. The Department's projected outputs for 2008-09 are as follows:

Departmental outputs	Total cost 2008-09 \$'000
Employment Initiatives	100 995
Private Sector Industrial Relations Services	23 099
Administration of the Industrial Court and Commission System	6 317
Public Sector Industrial and Employee Relations Services	4 445
Workplace Health and Safety Services (including Workers' Compensation Policy)	66 702
Electrical Safety Services	14 072
Total	215 630

Source: 2008-09 Queensland State Budget - Service Delivery Statements – Department of Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations (at 3-224)

Budget highlights

19. Key funding initiatives in 2008-09 include:

- \$0.7 million in 2008–09 for the Smart Workplaces strategies and also to focus on work–life balance and pay equity to improve workforce participation by women and employees with family responsibilities.
- New Participate in Prosperity projects have been launched in Caboolture and Deception Bay, continuing intensive case management and social enterprise development. The department will also identify opportunities to link social housing tenants to employment and training opportunities in the existing pilot sites with a focus on Indigenous tenants in north and far north Queensland. As part of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative the department will invest \$5 million to enhance this employment strategy in 2008–09.
- A new program under the Queensland Workplace Health and Safety Strategy 2004–12 provides \$0.65 million to assist workplaces in developing strategies to avoid musculo-skeletal injuries. A further \$1 million is allocated for the Homecomings advertising campaign stressing the importance of coming

home safely from work to family and friends.

- An additional \$1.9 million in 2008–09 to improve community education and to employ 10 new electrical safety compliance staff.

Issues considered by the committee

20. The committee considered a range of issues including:

- the role of WorkCover in assisting employers to improve workers compensation outcomes
- WorkCover’s role in enhancing business processes to improve service delivery for employers and workers
- amalgamation of WorkCover’s fraud area to include employers and injured workers
- closure of Gladstone’s WorkCover office
- workplace health and safety resource allocation
- involvement in the negotiation process for enterprise bargaining arrangements, specifically in relation to energy companies and council employees
- photographic licensing system for prescribed occupations
- training payments to employee associations
- funding provided for organisations to deliver information, advice and advocacy to Queensland workers about Work Choices
- workplace safety campaigns, such as the Homecomings campaign
- Indigenous employment schemes
- the Queensland Workplace Rights Ombudsman
- Q-Comp’s initiatives to help injured workers return to work
- initiatives and activities being undertaken by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to improve worker safety

- reducing the incidence of compensable workplace injury
- employment initiatives for disadvantaged jobseekers
- review of youth training incentives
- Experience Pays Awareness strategy
- the role of the Electrical Safety Office in reducing the number of electrical fatalities
- proposed removal of the rural industry exemption under the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997
- new maternity leave options for eligible Public Service employees
- Wageline service and Wageline web site
- departmental expenditure in the Gladstone electorate

Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation

21. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of the Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation portfolio manages the long-term challenges of ensuring a sustainable future for Queensland.

22. The EPA contributes to the Queensland Government priority to ‘Managing climate change and protecting the environment’ by providing environmentally sustainable solutions for Queensland through leadership in conserving Queensland’s landscapes; enabling sustainable development; improving business and industry’s environmental performance; and by building community knowledge and participation in realising an environmentally sustainable Queensland (SDS at 3-141).

23. The following table sets out details of the appropriation for 2008-09.

	2008-09
	\$'000
Departmental Outputs	354 233
Equity Adjustment	(9 643)
Administered Items	..
Vote Total	344 590

Source: *Appropriation Bill 2008* – Department of Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation, p. 16

24. The Department's projected outputs for 2008-09 are as follows:

Departmental outputs	Total cost 2008-09 \$'000
Conservation and Environment Services	256 938
Sustainable Futures	130 226
Performance and Capability	23 914
Total	411 078

Source: 2008-09 Queensland State Budget - Service Delivery Statements – Department of Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (at 3-146)

Budget highlights

25. Key funding initiatives in 2008-09 include:

- Review of Queensland's climate change strategy - ClimateSmart 2050.
- \$30 million from the Queensland Climate Change Fund to fund new climate change initiatives.
- Introduce a ClimateSmart Home Service in January 2009, which will help Queenslanders to monitor and reduce their energy use, electricity costs and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Coordination of the whole-of-Government response to the Queensland's Vulnerability to Rising Oil Prices Taskforce Report.
- Introduce ecoFundQ in 1 January 2009, which will take financial contributions to meet environmental offset obligations, and to meet the current demand for voluntary carbon offsets.
- Allocate 1000 grid-connected solar power systems to Queensland households under the Solar Homes Program.
- As the co-signatory Minister with the Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry, be responsible for the Government's investment in research and development infrastructure through the Innovation Building Fund.

- Review applications submitted to the Innovation Projects Fund and the Innovation Skills Fund.
- Introduce the ecoBiz rebate program and the Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund.
- Increase gazetted Nature Refuges to 750,000 hectares through the Nature Refuge, Nature Assist and Environmental Partnerships Scheme programs.
- Manage the State-wide EPA estate acquisition program, including the Daintree Rescue Package and SEQ Rainforest Package.
- Finalise the 10-year Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan in 2008-09.
- Continue to provide high quality management of fire, weeds and pests on EPA managed lands.
- Launch the Ma:Mu Canopy Walk.
- Promote Centenary of Parks celebrations to be held in the second half of 2008 and early 2009.
- Deliver the EPA actions outlined in the Queensland Tourism Strategy.
- Implement tenure resolution in accordance with the *Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007*.
- Introduce an enhanced Environmentally Relevant Activity regulatory regime, which will yield \$20.7 million in 2008-09.
- Complete the Binary Site Remediation Project at Narangba.
- Deliver intensive air monitoring programs in Townsville, Gladstone and Mt Isa.
- Continue implementing the Public Place Recycling program.
- Implement the Back on Track species prioritisation framework.
- Expand the Remote Sensor Network from 10 to 200 in collaboration with external partners.

- Implement the Wetland Information Capture and Wetland maps systems.
- Produce and publish the SEQ State of the Region report, which has been developed to inform the review phase of the SEQ Regional Plan, through State of Environment Online.
- Achieve a Carbon Neutral EPA.

Issues considered by the committee

26. The committee considered a range of issues including:

- monitoring the water quality in Moreton Bay
- air monitoring programs in Townsville, Gladstone and Mt Isa
- funding for air and soil monitoring programs and hazard reduction in Mt Isa
- the Clean and Healthy Air for Gladstone Project
- dust emissions from quarries in the Redland Shire
- review of EPA's environmental protection policies for air and noise emissions
- monitoring of the lead levels at the Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital
- progress of the remediation by EPA of state and local government-owned land adjacent to the Binary factory on the Narangba Industrial Estate site
- implementation of new litter enforcement laws and supporting training program
- the SEQ Healthy Waterways Strategy 2007-2012
- additional funding for the compliance program for industries regulated by the EPA
- contribution by EPA regional offices to improve the environmental performance of business and industry
- conservation of Queensland's cultural and historic heritage sites
- assistance to Torres Strait Island communities to improve their waste management practices
- waste management issues
- changes to the special agreement Act mines
- proposed extension to the Gladstone State Development Area on to Curtis Island
- management of all national parks in the Cape York Peninsula under Indigenous Management Agreements
- staff accommodation in National Parks
- the role of the Premier's Council on Climate Change to identify priorities for climate change action, such as the Zero-Gen project
- Queensland Climate Change Fund dividend
- measures and costs to achieve a carbon neutral EPA
- the new environmental off sets policy
- issues in relation to greenhouse gas emission levels in Queensland
- the Clean Coal Fund
- the economic impacts of a national emissions trading scheme on Gladstone
- latest developments in the science of climate change in Queensland
- procurement issues in relation to the Office of Climate Change
- initiatives to assist householders to reduce their carbon footprint such as the ClimateSmart Home Service, ClimateSmart Living, and the Solar Homes Program
- the sustainable housing initiative
- the role of EPA in assisting other departments to develop capacity to report their greenhouse gas emissions in their annual reports

- requirement by departments to include climate change impact statements in all relevant cabinet submissions
- government reporting under the Online System for Comprehensive Activity Reporting (OSCAR)
- development of an oil mitigation strategy and action plan
- inclusion of biodiversity outcomes in the draft Far North Queensland Regional Plan
- assistance to Queensland businesses through the Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund
- industrial estate inspection program
- Koala Conservation and Sustainability Areas under the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2006: application of koala assessment criteria to development applications, and mapping new areas of koala habitat
- Back on Track species prioritisation framework
- issues related to fire, pest animal and weed management on EPA managed lands
- dingo management on Fraser Island
- conservation status of the hairy-nosed wombat
- management of the interaction between crocodiles and people in central and north Queensland (new Estuarine Crocodile Conservation Plan)
- the Nature Refuge Program
- activities to mark the 100th year anniversary of national parks
- the Great Walks of Queensland project
- resource allocation for the EPA Gladstone office, specifically skills training for staff
- appointment of senior positions in the Office of Climate Change
- changes to EPA's organisational structure

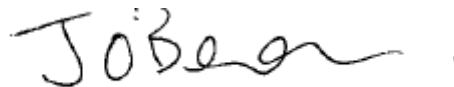
- costs associated with government boards, committees and statutory bodies under the environment portfolio
- regulatory fees and charges
- EPA financial reporting

Recommendation

27. The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2008 for the organisational units and portfolios allocated to it, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Acknowledgements

28. The committee thanks ministers and their staff for their cooperation and assistance during the estimates process.
29. Additionally, the committee acknowledges the assistance of officers of the Parliamentary Service who contributed to the organisation of the estimates process.



Jason O'Brien MP
Chair

August 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Jason O'Brien MP (Chair)
Member for Cook
Mr David Gibson MP (Deputy Chair)
Member for Gympie
Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP
Member for Bundamba
Mr Timothy Nicholls MP
Member for Clayfield
Mr Steve Wettenhall MP
Member for Barron River
Mrs Elizabeth Cunningham MP
Member for Gladstone
Mr Peter Lawlor MP
Member for Southport

SECRETARIAT

Ms Rachele Stacey (Research Director)
Ms Margaret Telford (Executive Assistant)



Estimates Committee F

2008

Statements of Reservation

Mrs Liz Cunningham MP, Member for Gladstone

Mr Timothy Nicholls MP, Member for Clayfield

Mr David Gibson MP, Member for Gympie

Statement of Reservation

Estimates F

I refer to the report for Estimates Committee F and submit a statement of reservations on the report, in particular, on the time frames established for the public hearings.

In the Parliamentary documents outlining the purposes of the Estimates process they state -

“Since 1994, estimates committees have been established under Sessional Orders of the Legislative Assembly to provide a better means for parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's expenditure proposals for each department.

The current practice is to establish seven estimates committees, titled A-G. There are seven days of public hearings (one for each committee) during which time the entire budget is scrutinised.

During the estimates process, Ministers (supported by senior departmental staff) are required to answer committee questions regarding their portfolio's proposed expenditures.”

Allocated time for Estimates hearing are from 8.30 am to 7.30 pm (with no more than 9 hours of actual hearings).

Given the above constraints, there remains a reasonable opportunity for a fair allocation of time to each portfolio due for review by the Committee. In the case of Estimates Committee F, a reasonable person would question the allocation of only 30 minutes to the Transport portfolio (QRail) for the 2008 estimates review process.

While debate occurred in an endeavour to extend that time, the majority vote of the Committee restricted the time for review to 30 minutes (to be divided equally between Government and non-Government members) for Queensland Rail and 30 minutes for the Department of Trade (Trade Queensland). A further allocation of 60 minutes was made for Queensland Transport (excluding Rail). This decision demonstrates little regard for budget scrutiny given Queensland Rail's importance to the State and local economy.

The budget review process (Estimates) as it currently stands and with the broad based financial information available is difficult enough, the grossly inadequate allocation of time in this instance further exacerbated those difficulties. All Estimates Committees are able to conclude by 7.30 pm. Estimates F concluded at 4.30 pm leaving more than enough time to extend these examination times.

Signed

Liz Cunningham

Member for Gladstone.

Estimates Committee F – Statement of Reservations

General Reservations

I express the following reservations about the outcomes and some general comments on the process of Estimates Committee F's hearing in relation to Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations.

The Estimates Committee process followed this year, again highlights the significant weaknesses in this process as a mechanism for the proper scrutiny of the expenditures of Government departments and agencies. In particular, I express the following general reservations in relation to the Estimates Committee Process:

- The structure of the Estimates Committee process does not allow detailed analysis of the expenditures provided for in the Queensland Budget.
- There is simply not enough time provided to enable proper and detailed consideration of individual Service Delivery Statements given the number of programs and expenditure. An entire day per portfolio would still not provide sufficient time given the breadth of some portfolios.
- The limited number (10 for non-government members) of Questions on Notice allowed to be asked on each Service Delivery Statement prevents the pursuit of important issues.
- Receiving responses to Questions on Notice less than 24 hours prior to the start of Committee hearings severely limits the capacity to further research the completeness and accuracy of answers provided.
- In addition to the limited time provided for questions, the practice of Ministers to avoid answering questions and expenditure being scrutinised is a consistent theme. Despite follow up questions, Ministers either avoided answering questions or simply read prepared briefing notes on subjects not related to the issues raised in the questions.
- The structured nature of the Committee proceedings into blocks of questions with set times from Government and Non-Government Members prevent Members being able to follow a line of questioning in a logical and consistent manner to finality.
- The inability of Estimates Committees to directly ask questions of Senior Public Service administrators.

Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations

Mr Tim Nicholls MP notes the following reservations:

Queensland Rail

The general reservations expressed above also apply for the half hour of questioning allocated to Queensland Rail (QR). When considering the size and scope of operations of QR, the time allocated was woefully inadequate and made it impossible to analyse and question in detail the undertakings of QR. Considering the capital outlay for QR in 2008-09 is anticipated to be \$2.18 billion the ability to ask only three non-government questions is farcical. There was no opportunity to explore issues of relevance to Queensland taxpayers.

These include:

1. The delivery of additional trains promised since 2004 to alleviate passenger overcrowding.
2. The program to address the issues identified in the O'Donnell report into coal freight bottlenecks.

3. The need for a second CBD rail crossing to alleviate the current Merivale St Bridge bottleneck.

Department of Trade

The standout feature of this part of the estimates process was the Minister's failure to explain why a Question on Notice was so heavily revised as to be non-responsive. In answer to exactly the same question last year a proper answer was provided detailing travel made by departmental officers.

This year in a classic example of humbug, the Minister attempted to avoid answering a question that rightly sought information on taxpayer funded travel. When asked the question directly in estimates, the Minister, rather than sensibly taking the question on notice, sought to waste Committee time by reading the details of each trip. As a result of such tactics a proper examination of the outcomes of the Trade component could not be properly performed.

While such missions and trips may be valuable in improving Queensland's trade relations, it is also important they are subject to proper scrutiny. Queensland taxpayers deserve to know and be assured that any funds spent on trade related trips and missions are properly and clearly accounted for and made readily available to the public. Queenslanders are entitled to question the appropriateness of expenditure in this Department.

Department of Transport

Once again the time provided for questioning during this part of the hearing failed to reflect the wide scope of activities covered by the Department of Transport. This severely restricted any opportunity to question the government on the important issues of road safety, the new Queensland driver licence and public transport initiatives. Of those questions asked, the Minister failed to provide any clear explanations that answered concerns raised.

In response to questions asked about investigations or examinations into the question of congestion or cordon tolling, the Minister both ducked the question and palmed it off to his officers. The net result was Queenslanders do not know if the Government is or has considered introducing congestion or cordon charging in Queensland.

In response to questions on the increase in registration fees for boats, no answer was provided to explain why the operations and maintenance budget is increasing from \$712,000 this financial year to almost \$6 million in the following year. Clearly there is no program to explain this enormous increase or to limit cost blowouts.

No clear explanation was provided to answer why the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project has had both scope and budget cuts. There seems no clear plan to deliver the rapid transit project as originally proposed anytime soon.

Again, answers to questions about delays in building the Eastern Busway from Coorparoo to Capalaba were avoided. Given the great community interest in this project the lack of transparency about future intentions and funding is of concern.

Department of Employment and Industrial Relations

Unlike the other portfolios, the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations was provided ample time for questioning and scrutiny. Unfortunately, once again the Minister avoided directly answering any questions, instead sidestepping the intended nature of the question and providing inconsequential information.

In the course of questioning it became apparent that no real measures of the outcome of complaints to the Workplace Ombudsman are kept. There is no record of the number of proven complaints kept and no other measures of its success in resolving complaints. The question of its ongoing usefulness must be examined given it operates out of premium CBD office space and costs \$1.2 million a year to run.

The practice of deleting uncomfortable performance measures was again highlighted. The measure "Reduction in the incidence of compensable workplace injury by at least 40%" is to be removed. This follows admissions in the Service Delivery Statement that the target would not be reached. It is of concern that this government continues to remove measures of its performance when it fails to achieve those measures.

This year's Estimates Committee F hearing highlighted the need for greater accountability and transparency within the State Government and its departments. Details of expenditure, its effectiveness and appropriateness cannot be confirmed under the current process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Nicholls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Nicholls MP

Member for Clayfield

Jason O'Brien MP
Chair – Estimates Committee F
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr O'Brien,

I refer to the draft report for Estimates Committee F and submit a statement of reservations on the report and some general comments on the process of Estimates Committees hearings.

This year has once again shown major deficiencies in the Estimates Committee process that has limited the effective scrutiny of the expenditures of Government Departments and agencies. The following general reservations are held with regards to the Estimates Committee Process:

Regarding the portfolios scrutinised by the Committee, the following reservations are raised:

- The overall Estimates process has failed to allow for any real analysis of the expenditures detailed in the Queensland Budget Statements.
- The limited time available to scrutinise each of the portfolios and agencies outlined in session timetables fails to ensure adequate analysis of each portfolio's expenditure.
- Reservations are held with regards to the limited number of Questions on Notice allowed for each portfolio, which limit the ability to examine in depth all areas of the allocated budget items.
- The failure of Estimates Committees to allow direct questioning of Senior Public Service administrators
- Receiving responses to Questions on Notice less than 24 hours prior to the actual commencement of Committee hearings greatly inhibits the capacity to further research the completeness and accuracy of answers provided.
- In addition to limited time provided for questions, the avoidance tactics of Ministers who reply to questions in such a way as to evade the issue being scrutinised was a consistent theme throughout the hearings. Despite numerous follow up questions, Ministers either avoided answering questions or simply read prepared briefing notes on subjects not related to the issues raised in the questions.
- The structured nature of the Committee proceedings into blocks of questions with set times from Government and Non-Government Members prevent Members being able to follow a line of questioning in a logical and consistent manner to finality.
- The integrity of the Estimates Committee process is grossly compromised due to amendments made to the Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) in June 2006, which abolished the crime of knowingly providing false evidence to the Legislative Assembly or a committee.

Following consideration of the Committee's debate the following reservations are held –

Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation

- Despite being asked twice the Minister was unable to provide the committee with a figure for Queensland's greenhouse gas emissions in the 1990 Kyoto base year. With the Kyoto agreement such a key element of any Climate Change planning the inability of the Minister to answer such a basic question was of concern and puts in Question the very foundation of the Governments ClimateSmart 2050 policy.
- The Minister was unable to provide the committee with any detail to impact on emissions of the recent growth in the Queensland coal industry and how that will impact on the state's greenhouse gas emissions? His failure to address this issue raises grave concerns as to by how much will ordinary Queenslanders have to

reduce their total greenhouse gas emissions to accommodate growth in these industries to meet the targets

- The Minister did not have a clear understanding or knowledge of key areas of his department, despite the Premier's calls for all Ministers to be across their portfolios.
- The Minister was not aware of the failure of his department to abide by the Dept of Premier's requirements for the details of the cost of all government boards, committees and statutory bodies under his portfolio to be included in Annual Reports.
- The Minister was not aware of the failure of the EPA to comply with the Queensland government's Strategic Energy Efficiency Policy (SEEP), in that the EPA was required to develop an energy management plan for its building portfolio and have this plan recorded on the DPW central register by June 2008 as indicated under the policy.
- Of additional concern with the SEEP was the Minister's comments that he did not want his department "to be stuck to a plan"¹ when it came to targets surrounding strategic energy efficiency despite the Government making very clear that this policy applies to all Queensland Government departments responsible for government buildings.²
- There are also concerns regarding the Minister's management of the Office of Climate Change with specific regard to the appointment of senior staff and the way in which the Office departs from the State government's own procurement policies.

Signed



David F Gibson MP

Deputy Chair— Estimates Committee F

¹ Hansard (Qld) 2008, 'Estimates Committee F—Sustainability, Climate Change & Innovation', pp 49

² Queensland Department of Public Works 2008, 'Strategic Energy Efficiency Policy for Queensland Government Buildings'