



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2010

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. John Mickel, Logan) read prayers and took the chair.

For the sitting week, Mr Speaker acknowledged the traditional owners of the land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor letters in respect of assent to certain bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letters for the information of members.

The Honourable R.J. Mickel, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 23 May 2010

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Building Act 1975, the Land Title Act 1994, the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland Act 1971 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, Community Ambulance Cover Act 2003, Environmental Protection Act 1994, Nature Conservation Act 1992, Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, Public Service Act 2008, Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003, Sustainable Planning Act 2009, Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Adult Proof of Age Card Act 2008, the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, the Coastal Protection and Management Regulation 2003, the Criminal Code, the Electrical Safety Act 2002, the Electrical Safety Regulation 2002, the Electricity Act 1994, the Environmental Protection Regulation 2008, the Explosives Regulation 2003, the Judicial Review Act 1991, the Land Act 1994, the Maritime Safety Queensland Act 2002, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006, the Right to Information Act 2009, the South Bank Corporation Act 1989, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, the Transport Infrastructure (Ports) Regulation 2005, the Transport Infrastructure (Rail) Regulation 2006, the Transport Legislation Amendment Act 2007, the Transport (New Queensland Driver Licensing) Amendment Act 2008, the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Regulation 2008, the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004, the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, the Transport Operations (TransLink Transit Authority) Act 2008, the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994, the Transport Planning and Coordination Regulation 2005, the Transport Security (Counter-Terrorism) Act 2008, the Transport (South Bank Corporation Area Land) Act 1999, the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 and the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008 for particular purposes"

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

24 May 2010

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 24 May 2010, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 23 May 2010 [[2294](#)].

The Honourable R.J. Mickel, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of Assent: 7 June 2010

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Racing Act 2002, the Racing Regulation 2003, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Wagering Act 1998 and the Wagering Regulation 1999 for particular purposes"

This Bill is hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

8 June 2010

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 June 2010, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to a bill on 7 June 2010 [[2295](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Incorporation of Material

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with previous practice, I advise that for debate on the appropriation bills, which is commencing Thursday, members may incorporate a portion of their speech in the second reading debate. The following rules must, however, be followed:

1. The member's total speech must not exceed that which would normally be allowed in a 20-minute speech, thus no speech should exceed 3,500 words;
2. Speeches should not include graphs, charts or other material;
3. Members must provide *Hansard* with their speech in electronic form prior to rising to give their speech; and, importantly,
4. All speeches must be shown to myself as Speaker or the Deputy Speaker prior to leave being sought for incorporation.

Speeches intended to be incorporated should not offend standing orders in any way, such as by containing personal reflections.

P150

Mr SPEAKER: On 22 May the Queensland parliament celebrated the 150th anniversary of its first sitting. This milestone—150 years of continuous parliamentary democracy—is a significant achievement that all Queenslanders should be proud of. To mark this, a number of P150 related events have taken place. The parliament hosted three youth parliaments, two here at Parliament House and one in Mackay. These involved more than 250 students from 49 schools participating as youth members. Two books were launched: *Order in the House—the story of the Queensland Parliament*; and *That Gallant Gentleman*, a biography of Colonel Charles Gray, the parliament's first Usher of the Black Rod and librarian. Several hundred copies of these books have been sold to date. The 'Re-Member' online database was launched and demonstrated, along with the 1860-63 *Record of Proceedings* project. These databases provide Queenslanders with easy access to historical records of their first parliament. Two new parliamentary wines were launched. These wines, titled 'The Speaker's Chair' and 'The Governor's Chair', are available for sale from the gift shop and continue the parliament's support of the Queensland wine industry.

A commemorative dinner was held here on Friday, 21 May. Contrary to the impression created in some sections of the media, this dinner was open to any person who wished to attend on the purchase of a ticket for \$150, \$50 of which was donated to charity. The dinner and its auctions raised more than \$9,000 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia, Queensland Section, and Foodbank Queensland. I thank the honourable members, former members, and many members of the public—who all paid to attend this dinner—for their support of our two charities on the night.

Finally, on 22 May, the 150th anniversary of the first sitting of the Queensland parliament, we hosted an open day and launched the Speakers' Corner project in the George Street forecourt of Parliament House. The open day saw more than 2,100 people visit their parliament and have a look behind the scenes at the people's house. The Speakers' Corner project, when completed in a couple of months, will be a legacy item for all Queenslanders. It will commemorate Queensland's 150 years of continuous parliamentary democracy and at the same time highlight one of the basic democratic freedoms that citizens in a democracy enjoy—that is, freedom of speech.

Again, I thank everyone who was involved in organising these projects, the media for its coverage and support of P150, staff who were involved in the planning and execution of the events and all Queenslanders who attended and participated in these events. I table for the record of the House the town crier's call to the citizens of Queensland on the open day and a transcript of the speeches and panel discussion at the P150 celebration dinner.

Tabled paper: Town Crier's call to the citizens of Queensland on the Open Day [2296].

Tabled paper: Transcript of speeches and panel discussion at P150 celebration dinner [2297].

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Wyborn, Mr G

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.34 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late George Wyborn, a former Clerk of the Parliament of Queensland.
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

George Wyborn was born in Brisbane on 1 June 1916, the son of John Ernest Wyborn and Sara Hellen, nee Clayton. He was educated at Moore State School and Ipswich Grammar School, and also completed a commercial course at the State Commercial High School in Brisbane.

Mr Wyborn joined the Parliamentary Service on 3 April 1933 as a junior clerk and later served as Third Clerk Assistant until 1969. Mr Wyborn was appointed Second Clerk Assistant in 1969 and, on the elevation of Cyril George to the position of Clerk of the Parliament in September 1970, he was appointed as Clerk Assistant and Sergeant-at-Arms, in effect Deputy Clerk as we know it today.

Following the retirement of Cyril George in January 1978, George Wyborn was appointed as the 8th Clerk of the Queensland Parliament. His appointment as Clerk was, however, toward the end of his career, and his term as Clerk proved to be the shortest to date, when he retired on 6 July 1979 at the age of 63. However, service from 1933 to 1979 must be one of the longest periods of service. As a clerk-at-the-table of this House for many years, Mr Wyborn would have witnessed at very close quarters the majority of the policy debates conducted by this parliament, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s. He was involved also in the planning and construction of the Parliamentary Annexe in the 1970s, together with the early stages of planning for the restoration of Parliament House itself which commenced in the early 1980s. I am also advised that during the late 1960s and early 1970s, Mr Wyborn was the honorary team manager of the Queensland Parliamentary Bowls Club, attending many interstate parliamentary bowls carnivals with the Queensland team.

None of us here were members of this House when Mr Wyborn was a parliamentary officer and I am advised that only a handful of current parliamentary staff were here at that time. However, from his lengthy years of service to this parliament and his elevation to the position of Clerk, it can naturally be assumed that he was an excellent parliamentary officer, well respected by the various Speakers and members of this House throughout that time as a person with a thorough understanding of parliamentary procedure and of standing orders of the parliament.

I am advised the Mr Wyborn was very dedicated to his wife, Audrey, who sadly passed away not very long after he retired in 1979. They had no children. I also understand that Mr Wyborn was a very keen surfer and well into his late 80s he was still surfing daily all year round. Maybe it is that sort of fortitude that saw him do all of those years of parliamentary service.

George Wyborn passed away peacefully on 27 May this year, just a few days short of what would have been his 95th birthday. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service that Mr Wyborn gave to our parliamentary democracy and on behalf of the government I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to his family and friends.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.39 am): I am happy to rise and second the motion moved by the Premier about George Wyborn, who was the 8th Clerk of the Queensland Parliament. It is interesting that in 150 years we have only had 11 Clerks. He was born at Brisbane on 1 June 1916, the son of John Ernest Wyborn and Sara Hellen. He was educated at Moore State School and Ipswich Grammar School and, after leaving school at junior, completed a commercial course at the State Commercial High School in Brisbane. He joined the Parliamentary Service on 3 April 1933 as a junior clerk and then served as Third Clerk Assistant until 1969.

It is interesting that, for many of us, some of these things may seem like ancient history, but 1933 was only 11 years after the abolition of the upper house. That means that George Wyborn served here through the Depression years and, as the Premier mentioned, worked here until he retired in 1979. Certainly that puts in perspective some of the time lines about when he served here and the things he would have seen and experienced, given that many of us would regard as ancient history the abolition of the upper house.

As the Premier said and as I have mentioned, he joined the Parliamentary Service in 1933 and served as Third Clerk Assistant until 1969. He was appointed Second Clerk Assistant when Bill Johnson became the Clerk of the Parliament and, on the elevation of Cyril George to the Clerk's position in September 1970, George Wyborn was appointed Clerk Assistant and Sergeant-at-Arms. When Cyril George retired in January 1978, George Wyborn was appointed Clerk of the Parliament. As the Premier mentioned, of the 11 Clerks, his period of office proved to be the shortest to date and he retired the next year, on 6 July 1979, after 18 months as the Clerk of the Parliament.

As the Premier has mentioned, in 1943 he married Audrey Frances Moore. She predeceased him. I pass on the condolences of the opposition to his family. I understand that in his later years he resided at Golden Beach. I note that he passed away peacefully on 27 May 2010, aged 94 years. I pass on the condolences of the opposition to his family.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Slade Point State School, Kindergarten

Mr Mulherin, from 30 petitioners, requesting the House to fast track funding for the Slade Point State School Kindergarten to allow Slade Point to have the facility for the commencement of the 2011 year [\[2298\]](#).

Miles, Queensland Government Agent Program Office

Mr Hobbs, from 34 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the retention of the Miles QGAP office and the current suite of services offered and cease the cutbacks of State government services across the communities on the Western Downs [\[2299\]](#).

Beenleigh-Beaudesert Road, Upgrade

Mrs Keech, from 818 petitioners, requesting the House to fast track: the four-laning of Beenleigh-Beaudesert Road between Mt Warren Boulevard and Shaws Pocket Road; the resurfacing of Beenleigh-Beaudesert Road between Mt Warren Boulevard North and Bahrs Scrub Road; and the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Tallagandra Road [\[2300\]](#).

Woorim, Dunes

Mrs Sullivan, from 50 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately cease works by the Moreton Bay Regional Council to almost totally remove vegetation from the foreshore dunes at Rickman Parade, Woorim; to investigate any contraventions of State policies and acts by this project; to seek proper consultation and revision of these works; and to stop the high risk practices being adopted by the Council in respect of its foreshore activities [\[2301\]](#).

Palm Lake Resort, Noise Barriers

Mr Kilburn, from 203 petitioners, requesting the House to call upon the Department of Main Roads to continue negotiations with Palm Lake Resort residents regarding the installation of noise barriers [\[2302\]](#).

Bundaberg Sugar, Sand Mining Project

Mr Messenger, from 78 petitioners, requesting the House to use all legislative and political powers to stop the proposed Bundaberg Sugar Sand Mining Project [\[2303\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Forestry Plantations Queensland

Mr Powell, from 192 petitioners, requesting the House to halt the privatisation of Forestry Plantations Queensland, or in the alternative, ensure that the Government abides by their promise to sell 'the trees not the land' [\[2304\]](#).

Racing Industry

Mr Stevens, from 1,106 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately ensure that the Queensland Country Racing Committee and Queensland Country Racing Associations are not dissolved and this statute be incorporated into any new legislation with a guarantee of no further loss of racing dates and reference to this to remain as part of the legislation and not to be part of any new Control Body constitution [\[2305\]](#).

Animal Welfare, Codes of Practice

Mrs Sullivan, from 2,041 petitioners, requesting the House to review the Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals, specifically with reference to the protection of chickens [\[2306\]](#).

Cemeteries, Vandalism

Mr Fraser, from 1,260 petitioners, requesting the House to make wilful damage in a cemetery or other burial ground a serious offence, without the need for the Crown to prove that such damage is unauthorised [\[2307\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

21 May 2010—

[2286](#) Environment and Resources Committee: Paper No. 2, May 2010—Growing Queensland's Renewable Energy Electricity Sector.

[2287](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations (Mr C R Dick) to an ePetition (1367-10) sponsored by Mr Foley from 3035 petitioners regarding the Surrogacy Bill 2009 and the rights of the child.

24 May 2010—

[2288](#) Response from the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Hinchliffe) to an ePetition (1409-10) sponsored by Mr Bleijie and a paper petition (1415-10) presented by Mr Bleijie from 42 and 1442 petitioners respectively regarding the proposed Palmview development.

25 May 2010—

[2289](#) Environment and Resources Committee: Report No. 2—Energy Efficiency: Queensland's First Energy Resource: Interim Government Response.

26 May 2010—

[2290](#) Response from the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Hinchliffe) to an ePetition (1385-10) sponsored by Mr Nicholls from 106 petitioners regarding the proposed sale of the Riverton Centre at 58 Riverton Street, Clayfield.

[2291](#) Economic Development Committee: Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed speed cameras—Submissions 1 to 47 (excluding submissions 4 and 9) received in relation to the inquiry.

27 May 2010—

[2292](#) Committee System Review Committee: Inquiry into the Queensland Parliamentary Committee System—Submissions 1 to 10 received in relation to the inquiry.

7 June 2010—

[2293](#) Overseas travel report—Report on an overseas visit by the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade (Mr Robertson) to Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates from 27 April to 7 May 2010—Report on a Trade Mission to Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Community Ambulance Cover Act 2003, Duties Act 2001—

[2308](#) Revenue Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2010, No. 89

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994—

[2309](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2010, No. 90

Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936—

[2310](#) Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 91

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2311](#) Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 92

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2312](#) Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 93

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2313](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Amendment Conservation Plan (No. 1) 2010, No. 94

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

[2314](#) State Penalties Enforcement Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 2010, No. 95

Building and Construction Industry Payments Act 2004, Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000, Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991—

[2315](#) Queensland Building Services Authority and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 96

Local Government Act 1993—

[2316](#) Local Government (Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 97

Sustainable Planning Act 2009—

[2317](#) Sustainable Planning Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2010, No. 98

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002—

[2318](#) Standard Plumbing and Drainage Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2010, No. 99

Tow Truck Act 1973, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

[2319](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 100

Adult Proof of Age Card Act 2008—

[2320](#) Adult Proof of Age Card Regulation 2010, No. 101

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2321](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2010, No. 102

Land Court Act 2000—

[2322](#) Land Court Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 103

Electrical Safety Act 2002—

[2323](#) Electrical Safety Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2010, No. 104

Public Trustee Act 1978—

[2324](#) Public Trustee Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2010, No. 105

Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2325](#) Forestry and Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2010, No. 106

Industrial Relations Act 1999—

[2326](#) Industrial Relations (Tribunals) Amendment Rule (No. 1) 2010, No. 107

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Afghanistan, Death of Soldiers

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.46 am): It is with great sadness that we have learned in breaking news this morning that two Australian diggers, including possibly a Queenslander, have been killed in Afghanistan. Details are sketchy at this point, but it appears that those two Australians were among 10 armed personnel killed in what has been described as the deadliest day for the alliance in Afghanistan. As I said, it is yet to be confirmed, but it is believed that one of those soldiers is a Queenslander.

Today, on behalf of members from all sides, I can say that our hearts go out to the families of the two soldiers who have died in the war on terror and in the fight for peace. Those two Australians have made the ultimate sacrifice and it is a very sad day for their families. The deaths add to a confronting and sad tally. Since operations began in Afghanistan in 2001, 11 Australian soldiers have lost their lives. More details of this tragedy are expected to be confirmed later this morning. In the meantime, on behalf of all members I say that our thoughts and our prayers are with the friends and loved ones of those two Australians.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Population Growth

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.46 am): The Growth Management Summit, which was held on 30 and 31 March 2010, was a wonderful opportunity for Queenslanders to discuss, debate and decide on ideas for managing population growth here in our fast-growing state. I would like to thank everyone who participated. At the summit I gave a commitment that my government would consider the 1,400 ideas generated and report back on how we might take them forward. On 27 May I released our government's response, *Shaping Tomorrow's Queensland*. I seek leave to table a copy of that response for the information of the House.

Leave granted.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Shaping Tomorrow's Queensland: A response to the Queensland Growth Management Summit: Detailed government response' [[2327](#)].

Tabled paper: Brochure titled, 'Shaping Tomorrow's Queensland: A response to the Queensland Growth Management Summit' [[2328](#)].

Ms BLIGH: This response commits the government to six priorities that will underpin our growth management strategies. *Shaping Tomorrow's Queensland* focuses on shaping our future, strengthening our regions, promoting liveable and affordable communities, delivering infrastructure, protecting our lifestyle and environment, and connecting communities. Those themes are supported by 22 new initiatives and 25 new supporting actions to manage growth across the whole of our state.

We have already committed to and established a new agency within government, Growth Management Queensland, to lead the implementation of the government's growth management agenda within the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. We have committed to delivering a new Queensland regionalisation strategy to build stronger regions and take the population pressure off the south-east. To support this, we have introduced a new \$11,000 regional first home owner grant for newly constructed homes outside the south-east corner, which is a \$4,000 boost to the existing state funded first home owner grant.

From next year, we will prepare a state-wide Queensland infrastructure plan, which clearly links infrastructure delivery with population growth and economic development. It will incorporate the existing SEQIPP and other planning documents such as the Roads Implementation Plan. As we develop the plan, I have asked South-East Queensland councils to enter into discussions with the government about

the long-term dwelling targets set for their regions. Councils must ask themselves: are the dwelling targets, as currently outlined in the South-East Queensland plan, the right targets for their areas; should we make changes within the existing urban footprint and, if so, what should those changes be?

We are also developing a long-term plan to transform the interurban breaks in South-East Queensland into major new greenspace and outdoor recreational opportunities. In addition, we have tasked the Urban Land Development Authority with facilitating the delivery of three major new cities at Ripley Valley, Yarrabilba and Flagstone, which between them can provide homes for around 250,000 residents in the long term.

I have also brought together a new Infrastructure Charges Task Force, bringing together some of our state's best and brightest minds from industry and government. The task force will be looking at how we might establish flatter, simpler infrastructure charges that are transparent and fair for industry, government, particularly local governments, and the community.

The government's response to the summit signals a new era in growth management in Queensland, and I am committed to continue working with all levels of government and the wider community to continue the dialogue on how we manage population growth.

Queensland Week

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.51 am): Last week Queenslanders up and down our state celebrated Queensland Week—the annual celebration of Queensland's statehood. Last year Queenslanders came out in strong numbers to celebrate 150 years of our state, and this year was no different. State pride, it seems, is as strong as ever. The Queensland Week program again focused on our great people, our places and our stories.

Queensland Week was filled with barbecues, comedy, award celebrations, film, food, citizenship ceremonies and even a few lamingtons. We kicked off the week by celebrating with more than 700 of our newest citizens at the Queensland Week citizenship ceremony at South Bank on Saturday, 29 May. Then that night more than 2,800 people got their free comedy fix at South Bank.

Last Tuesday, 1 June, we recognised 2010's high-achieving Queenslanders with the Suncorp Queenslander of the Year Awards. This year's awardees represent the best of what Queensland has to offer, with Dimity Dornan AM, the founder of the Hear and Say Centre, being recognised as Queenslander of the Year; 19-year-old Yassmin Abdel-Magied was awarded Young Queenslander of the Year for her work with a group called Youth Without Borders, working with international young people; and Dr James Morton took out the Community Spirit Award for his outstanding work with the AEIOU Foundation for children with autism.

Last Thursday, 3 June, we celebrated 10 years of honouring the significant contributions of Queenslanders through the Queensland Greats Awards. These awards celebrate those people who have made a lifetime of achievements, many of them in a number of different roles. It was my great honour to announce the 2010 recipients—Ruth Hegarty, Dr Eddie Liu, Sir Llewellyn Edwards, the Hon. Mike Ahern and Professor Michael Good as the individual Queensland Greats for this year—and to recognise one of our great and iconic institutions, the University of Queensland, which celebrates its centenary this year.

Throughout Queensland Week the Queensland government also partnered with the likes of Old Government House, Lunch on Q and the Regent Cinema to deliver other celebratory events. The week-long celebrations culminated on Sunday on Queensland Day, when the RACQ Big BBQ welcomed about 20,000 people to a fun-filled, free family day out at Roma Street Parkland.

Last week I also announced a brand-new Queensland Week Sponsorship Program, whereby the Queensland government will offer sponsorship of up to \$10,000 to communities to host 2011 Queensland Week events. I encourage all members of the House to look out for these grant programs. They are small grants—somewhere between \$2,000 and \$10,000—to undertake community events during Queensland Week next year.

Jessica Watson, Homecoming; Samantha Stosur, French Open

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.54 am): I was very pleased that on Queensland Day, 6 June, we also had the opportunity to welcome home an extraordinary young Queenslander. On Sunday, Queensland Day coincided with the triumphant return to Queensland waters of Jessica Watson, and thousands of people turned out to witness this historic event. We all know that Jessica is just 17. We all know that she has conquered insurmountable odds to achieve her remarkable, solo effort around-the-world sail. We all know that she is a proud Queenslander who has made her fellow Queenslanders very proud. What we might not be fully aware of is just how acutely Jessica's achievement has touched the lives of ordinary Queenslanders. That was particularly on show on Sunday in her home patch on the Sunshine Coast.

To witness her homecoming, along with the thousands who gathered between Caloundra and Alexandra Headlands, was one of those goosebump moments, as she sailed home along the coast—on a perfect Queensland winter's day—accompanied by a flotilla of boats to a genuinely moving homecoming. It was an honour to be there with Jess's family and friends; her parents, Julie and Roger, who are understandably very proud of their little girl; Sunshine Coast Mayor Bob Abbot; and the member for Buderim, Steve Dickson, to welcome Jess home. I want to thank the member for Buderim for the work that he did with his community to ensure that this really was a great day for everyone. I congratulate the Sunshine Coast. They really turned it on. I do not know who was responsible for the weather, but you could not have had a more perfect day. I think others in the House would join me in welcoming this young woman home, and we are all very, very proud of her efforts.

It was a very big weekend for girls from the coast. While the Sunshine Coast welcomed home Jess, a Gold Coaster also did us all proud. Samantha Stosur put in an extraordinary effort at the French Open at the weekend. She has done great things for Australian women's tennis as well as been an inspiration to young tennis players everywhere. Regardless of the result, her achievements have been remarkable. It has been a very long time since we have seen an Australian woman on centre court at the French Open, and it was terrific to see her there. I am sure members will join with me in congratulating Samantha on a fantastic effort, and I am sure that we are going to see more young people, particularly young women, take up sailing and tennis as a result of these efforts.

Kavanagh, Ms P

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.56 am): Mr Speaker, as you know only too well, this week the Queensland parliament will farewell one of its longest serving staff, Ms Pauline Kavanagh. Many members here may be unfamiliar with the name but they will all instantly recognise her voice. As the senior telephonist here at Parliament House, it is Pauline's ever cheerful and professional voice that we and every member of the public who calls know as one of the voices of the House.

Pauline Kavanagh has served on the switchboard here for 24 years. Over almost a quarter of a century Pauline has seen huge changes in the technology that has delivered our telephone system, and she has also seen her fair share of political upheaval and changes. No doubt she has also been privy at times to numerous, very interesting, perhaps sometimes heated, exchanges, but all members on all sides have always been able to rely on the professionalism and discretion of Pauline and her team.

Like so many of us who have the privilege of calling this remarkable building our workplace, I know that Pauline loves this heritage building and will miss being here daily. It takes so much to run this parliament. It is often the people who go unseen who are unfortunately sometimes unrecognised. I am pleased today, on behalf of all members of the House, to recognise Pauline's extraordinary service. I wish her all the best in her retirement. I trust that her last week on the other end of the parliamentary phone is a great one for her, and I encourage all of those who have the opportunity to be on the phone this week to wish Pauline all the best as she moves to another stage of her life.

Queensland Health, Payroll System

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.58 am): I rise to give an update on the stabilisation of the Queensland Health payroll system. We recently completed the sixth pay under the new payroll system for the roster period of 17 May 2010 to 30 May 2010. Over the six pay cycles since the system was introduced, the payroll stabilisation team has made steady progress and there have been signs of improvement from cycle to cycle, subject to one point I would make about the current cycle.

Reports of no pays and low pays are produced from trial pay runs undertaken in the week prior to the actual pay run. A manual check of these reports is undertaken to determine if there are staff who worked during the pay period who are not recorded as receiving a pay or an unusually low pay. This has allowed pays to be adjusted overnight so that these staff can receive correct pays. The number of Queensland Health staff who were not automatically paid as of Friday, 4 June was 318 out of a payroll of 75,000. This is about one-quarter of one per cent.

About 70 per cent of those reported as no pay are casual workers who had late roster changes or contracts extended late in the pay cycle and therefore not processed. Another 24 were new starters who did not have their commencement paperwork completed. Collectively, that is 90 per cent of those who did not receive pay.

One of the focuses of the stabilisation team's work in coming weeks will be how we can ensure those staff forms are processed in a timely way. The single biggest challenge facing Queensland Health is the backlog of adjustments that need to be processed. Since the new payroll system was implemented, Queensland Health has reduced the backlog significantly, concentrating on the older adjustments including thousands that were outstanding under the old Lattice system when it was closed off.

One of the challenges of the stabilisation process is that neither system kept track of system throughput which means it is onerous to determine on any given day how many of the adjustments processed relate to that cycle's roster changes and how many are from the backlog. Last week the number of adjustments and the backlog was increased by about four days worth of processing, or about 16,000 adjustment forms, when staff at a number of payroll hubs discovered adjustment forms that had been archived and required processing.

The stabilisation team has a strategy in place to reduce this backlog by 30 June 2010, with an additional 200 staff recruited to assist with the processing taking the total payroll staff to approximately 830. Queensland Health has committed to ensuring that no staff member is directly financially disadvantaged as a result of the current pay issues. In consultation with health unions, Queensland Health is developing principles for providing reimbursement of costs and losses. In instances where staff have incurred late fees or other charges as a direct result of the introduction of the new pay system, Queensland Health will reimburse the staff member for those costs.

Upgrades to the speed and usability of the system have been implemented which have led to positive feedback from payroll staff. Further testing and improvements are underway. Roster screen changes have been made to make it easier for the plotting of rosters. Dual screens or larger screens have been deployed to payroll staff to enable two programs to be viewed simultaneously. A state-wide roster centre is being piloted to speed up roster processing and free up other payroll staff to concentrate on adjustments with positive results. A dedicated payroll assistance website has been published to provide staff with access to the latest updates and information about the payroll situation. There are also contact details for assistance in districts and divisions.

The Queensland government commissioned KPMG to undertake an independent review of the implementation of the Workbrain rostering and SAP 3 human resources systems. The Auditor-General is also producing a report into the implementation of the system. The government is looking forward to receiving these reports so it can get on with the job of fixing this problem. As health minister, I again apologise to our hardworking Queensland Health staff who have done nothing to cause this situation. I have taken responsibility for this issue and I will take responsibility for fixing it.

Global Economy

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (10.02 am): The last 24 hours have again provided a stark reminder that the global economy remains fragile. Once again, the need for governments to provide strong economic policy frameworks has been underscored. This is the world in which we have put together the state budget to be delivered today.

We have seen the first contraction of global output since the Second World War, and it has left its mark on Queensland. Our major trading partners—most particularly Japan—suffered severe recession, while private investment became scarce and remains subdued.

As unemployment soared across the globe, the Bligh government put forward a plan that put jobs before all else. We put together and delivered an economic strategy, including the structural reform of our balance sheet, that put first and foremost the jobs of Queenslanders. That meant doing whatever it took to preserve our building program—the single biggest weapon a government can deploy to generate jobs and stimulate local economies. It also meant introducing initiatives that encourage employers to take on new employees and the implementation of programs like the Green Army—getting disadvantaged workers back in the workforce and skilling them up for a better future.

Our economic reforms stared down the global recession, keeping employment moving and unemployment rates lower than first feared. We have also kept the economy moving forward. As we saw from the state and national accounts released last week, it is public investment that is the backbone of the nation's economic growth, as private investment is yet to recover its full strength.

Today the Bligh government hands down its third budget. It will again put jobs before all else. It will again continue to build the recovery we are determined to deliver as we build tomorrow's Queensland.

Capital Works Program

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (10.03 am): Later today the Treasurer will outline this government's plan to keep on delivering infrastructure and jobs in Queensland. This government has an economic plan and it has stuck to it through difficult economic times. This will allow us to maximise economic growth as conditions continue to improve.

The Department of Public Works is contributing to Queensland's economic recovery by managing an extensive Capital Works Program on behalf of this government. Even before the budget, it is worth looking at what Public Works is doing in terms of jobs. Public Works is delivering \$8.5 billion worth of building infrastructure on behalf of this government.

Take the \$600 million Brisbane Supreme Court and District Court building in George Street. Construction is currently up to levels 4 and 5 for concrete slabs and levels 6 and 7 for concrete lift cores. During construction some 5,000 full-time equivalent jobs will be supported. The schematic design for the Cairns Hospital redevelopment is now approximately 50 per cent complete. This \$446 million project will support 2,596 full-time equivalent jobs during construction. Out at the southern Queensland correctional precinct development at Gatton, roofing has been completed on all buildings—with another 3,660 full-time equivalent jobs supported during construction. The \$1.8 billion Gold Coast University Hospital will see a massive 9,487 jobs. The list goes on.

There are currently 830 projects underway, each with a budget of \$2 million or less not including GST. These projects have a total project cost of \$272 million, not including GST, and will support 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs during construction. For medium projects—that is, those with a budget between \$2 million and \$30 million—there are currently 187 underway. These projects represent total expenditure of \$840 million and are supporting 6,300 jobs. In addition to maintaining state assets, QBuild is also involved in a number of state-wide housing improvement programs in Indigenous communities.

This government is able to deliver these current jobs because it has stuck to its economic plan. Had those opposite been elected, none of these jobs would have existed.

Gateway Upgrade Project

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads) (10.06 am): The country's biggest road and bridge project—the Gateway corridor upgrade—will go a long way towards tackling congestion and slashing travel times for busy motorists. The twin bridges across the Brisbane River are much more than a landmark; they are at the front line in our fight to tackle congestion.

With 2,000 people moving to Queensland each week, this new infrastructure could not have come at a better time. Indeed, 2010 is shaping up to be one of the most significant years in the delivery of better roads to manage growth and deliver a brighter future for Queenslanders. The infrastructure that is being signed, sealed and delivered right across Queensland will make a big difference to people's lives. It is about building for the future and generating jobs.

The Gateway Upgrade Project alone has created up to 6,000 jobs for workers at a time when jobs and job security are more important than ever before.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr WALLACE: I take the member for Inala's interjection. It is good news for Queensland. Yesterday, we reached yet another milestone with the completion of 12 kilometres of upgraded motorway all the way from the Port of Brisbane Motorway to Mt Gravatt-Capalaba Road. We have delivered 20 kilometres of high-speed, high-quality motorway up to nine lanes wide. On top of the \$1.88 billion Gateway upgrade, we are spending an extra half a billion dollars to widen the Gateway Motorway between two major arterial roads from four to six lanes, and we are delivering a major boost to one of the state's economic engine rooms by extending the Port of Brisbane Motorway.

How did we achieve this? We had a plan. We stuck to that plan. We made the right choices, the right decisions and we delivered for Queenslanders. We had our detractors. The doomsayers opposite talked about distance based tolling and the like. I will say it again: it is not on—not now, not ever. I will keep on saying it until I am blue in the face—as blue as the new asphalt we lay on our motorways. It is our true-blue investment—\$2.5 billion worth—to ease congestion, slash travel times and deliver jobs for Queenslanders. It does not get much better than that.

Airport Link

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.08 am): The Bligh government's commitment to infrastructure and jobs for Queenslanders is evident in the progression of the combined Airport Link projects. The \$4.8 billion project, which includes the Airport Link roundabout upgrade, the Airport Link tunnel and the Northern Busway from Windsor to Kedron, is the largest infrastructure endeavour underway in Australia.

Close to 3,000 workers are currently working on nine separate work sites. Thanks to their efforts, the elimination of Brisbane's worst bottleneck—the airport roundabout—is this week one step closer. Following the opening of the new Gateway Motorway overpass in recent weeks, demolition has begun on the old structure. The staggered removal of the old Gateway Motorway overpass will allow for the ongoing construction of a 750-metre-long overpass between the East-West Arterial and Airport Drive—a structure that will allow motorists to completely avoid the intersection. In addition, this project will see the old roundabout eliminated and replaced with a signalised fast diamond that recognises and responds to traffic as it arrives. Infrastructure underway at the intersections is expected to save motorists 10 minutes to and from the airport.

The other Airport Link projects—the Airport Link tunnel and the Northern Busway from Windsor to Kedron—will create a new underground highway that enables motorists to bypass 18 sets of traffic lights. That is six new lanes between Bowen Hills and Kedron and four new lanes between Kedron and Toombul as well as a vital addition to our public transport network with the busway. The Bligh government promised infrastructure and jobs, and that is what we are delivering. We made a plan and we stuck to it. It has not always been easy, but this plan will see travel times slashed in a city currently experiencing some of Australia's worst peak-hour traffic. This plan is also producing jobs. This project is expected to create close to 10,000 direct and indirect positions. The combined Airport Link projects are, as planned, delivering much needed infrastructure and generating thousands of jobs.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister for Transport, I should have informed the House that question time will commence at 10.42.

Principal Cycle Network Plan for Far North Queensland

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.11 am): A modern transport network is about roads—like the ministers for infrastructure and main roads have just discussed—it is about public transport, and it is about active transport like walking and cycling. The Bligh government is committed to improving safety for cyclists in Cairns and addressing congestion and climate change by investing in an extensive bikeway network and supporting infrastructure in Far North Queensland. That is why we have developed the Principal Cycle Network Plan for Far North Queensland. The plan identifies the major cycle routes in the region and will guide state and local governments to implement a safe and connected principal cycle network right across the region. My department is working closely with other local and state government agencies to achieve coordinated planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Work has now started on the \$6.1 million Cairns CBD to Aeroglen cycleway that will provide a high-class facility for commuters, recreational cyclists and tourists. The cycleway will physically separate cyclists from vehicles and decrease conflict—a major victory for cyclist safety. This is the first stage of a dedicated cycleway that will ultimately connect from Palm Cove in the north to Gordonvale in the south via Smithfield and the CBD. The cycleway will link Aeroglen to the CBD via the Esplanade, providing a very scenic, flat and enjoyable route alongside landscaped parklands with ocean views. The Bligh government is paying 75 per cent of the cost of this project, or \$4.6 million, with the remainder being made up by the Cairns Regional Council.

The cycleway is expected to be completed in December this year, weather permitting. Cycling is booming across the state, with nearly half of residents having access to a bicycle. Last year new bikes outsold new cars in Australia for the 10th year in a row. To support this increased demand, the state government is spending a record \$100 million in cycling infrastructure in 2009-10. Some \$10 million is being spent in Cairns alone. Other cycling projects delivered in Cairns include \$2.4 million for nine Captain Cook Highway roundabouts and off-road links and \$500,000 for green treatments and design projects at various intersections, as well as \$1 million to improve the busy McLeod and James Street intersection. The delivery of a safe and connected cycle network will provide residents and visitors to Cairns with the option of choosing pedal power over petrol power, and this helps us work towards the state government's Toward Q2 green target of cutting by one-third Queenslanders' carbon footprint with reduced car usage.

Tourism Industry

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.14 am): Under the Bligh government the core business of tourism is to increase international and domestic visitors, because that is the way we protect tourism jobs. That is why in 2009 we boosted tourism funding through a \$36 million election commitment to support and protect jobs in the tourism industry. This commitment was very important to a tourism sector badly affected by the global financial crisis, swine flu and currency fluctuations. We are now seeing the solid results that come from having a plan. For the first time in more than a decade, later this year Chinese visitors will be able to fly direct to Queensland three times a week on China Southern Airlines. This opens the door to an extra 3,600 Chinese travellers a month.

To support this, a \$520,000 marketing campaign will splash images of Queensland across outdoor screens in Shanghai and on the sides of buses and trains—images such as these that I am holding up to show off what Queensland has to offer and entice Chinese visitors directly to Queensland. We also have to remember that this is the year of the World Expo in Shanghai and it is expected that 70 million visitors will go to Shanghai for the World Expo. The campaign includes a \$400,000 commitment from Tourism Queensland, and these flights will make it easier and quicker for Chinese travellers to get to the Gold and Sunshine coasts, the Whitsundays or tropical North Queensland. China is one of Queensland's most important markets, with 153,000 Chinese visiting Queensland last year, and that is up 16 per cent on the previous year.

Another important market for Queensland domestically is Melbourne, so it is great news that Tiger Airways is commencing a new daily service between Melbourne's Avalon and the Gold Coast. This new daily service will bring an extra 1,260 seats to the Gold Coast each week from November onwards. That is good news for Gold Coast hotels, resorts, restaurants, car hire and other attractions such as theme parks. Melbourne has always been one of the Gold Coast's biggest markets. Last year more than 400,000 Melbournians travelled to the Gold Coast and spent over two million nights in the region in the same year.

Also on the domestic front, Tourism Queensland and Qantas Holidays have teamed up for a \$1.6 million marketing campaign starting this week on television, press and radio. The 'Uncover a Great Deal of Queensland' campaign promotes deals from around Queensland under three key themes—beach, adventure and luxury—and targets Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Domestically and internationally, our plan is to support and strengthen tourism in Queensland through the good times and the bad.

School Closures

Hon. GJ WILSON (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training) (10.17 am): As part of the Queensland government's commitment to ensuring Queensland students have access to the best possible learning resources, for the last 10 years the education department has conducted an annual review of potentially unviable small schools. A decision on a small school's viability is made based on population projections, proximity to other schools and other factors, including of course educational opportunity for the students. If a small school does not meet these criteria, it is listed for review and public consultation begins. After extensive consultation with parents and the local community, a decision is made to either temporarily close the school or let it remain open. This is about ensuring the best possible educational opportunities for students given the size of the schools and the availability of alternative learning options. The schools in this review are not earmarked for closure but are under review subject to community consultation.

In May this year Education Queensland identified 15 small schools for such an annual process. The department has advised that when Building the Education Revolution funding is allocated to these schools it is allocated pending any decision on the school's future viability. That decision on viability is only made of course, as I say, after community consultation. If these schools are mothballed or finally in fact closed, the money follows the students to their new school. Where a new building has been provided, wherever possible a relocatable structure has been used. This is the general practice for schools throughout Queensland with small enrolments that may fluctuate year on year. I must reiterate that just because a school comes under review does not mean it will be mothballed or in fact closed at a later date. It is the preference of Education Queensland to keep every school open and accessing world-class resources. The Queensland government is dedicated to getting the best possible value for money from the BER funding. That is why we have some of the tightest auditing processes in place.

I find it interesting that the opposition continues to oppose the provision of new facilities in Queensland schools. While they constantly criticise in the media, not one of the opposition members has called me and said that they do not want these facilities. We have seen, for example, some time ago the member for Hinchinbrook spruiking new facilities in his local paper and just recently the member for Glass House posing for this lovely photo of cutting his local school's celebratory cake.

The difference between the Bligh government and the LNP is clear: while we build and drive employment the opposition stands for job cuts and a freeze on new school infrastructure.

Waste Management

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Acting Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (10.20 am): Our government has a plan to tackle Queensland's mounting waste problem. Behind the introduction of an industry waste levy is a bold 10-year reform plan which aims to reduce landfill by one-third and to transform how Queenslanders manage waste. With more than 32 million tonnes of waste each year, Queensland is one of Australia's biggest waste generators, yet we are also one of the worst recyclers. We are recycling only about a third of our waste. South Australia recycles about 70 per cent of theirs. As landfill space runs out and more greenhouse gases are emitted by our dump-and-run habits, Queensland needs to become a leader in waste management. Put simply, we want businesses to match the remarkable recycling efforts of households.

Today I table Queensland's draft Waste Strategy 2010-2020 for public consultation and detailed development with industry and local government. It proposes sweeping reforms and introduces Australia's most comprehensive suite of waste infrastructure and industry support measures. A major focus of the strategy will be to help businesses transition to better waste management practices. Examples of business initiatives to be considered as part of an investment worth more than \$160 million include a smart resource register, where businesses can exchange their waste materials with others

that could use them; an online database, which will allow businesses to quickly identify where they can obtain recycled products for their operations; and a network of collection hubs to improve the state's recycling of computers, TVs and other e-waste, batteries and fluorescent light bulbs.

The draft strategy represented the beginning of a conversation with industry, local governments and the community about why Queensland's approach to waste needs to change. The document sets bold 2020 targets, such as 75 per cent recovery and recycling of construction and demolition waste, which is currently at 35 per cent, and 60 per cent of commercial and industrial waste, which is currently at 18 per cent. This strategy will help bring about the behavioural change that is necessary to increase Queensland's recycling rates.

Tabled paper: Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-2020: Waste Avoidance and Recycling Consultation Draft, June 2010 [2329].

Infrastructure Projects; Somerset Dam

Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (10.22 am): The Bligh government is getting on with the job of delivering the infrastructure that we need to secure our state's future. We are investing in projects that will deliver jobs today and guarantee the services of tomorrow. And we are making the tough decisions to ensure that these projects can be delivered—projects like the raising of the Hinze Dam wall, a \$395 million project that has created around 300 jobs and which ensures the long-term water security of the region; projects like the Cloncurry pipeline, a \$42.5 million project that created 215 jobs over the past year and which has provided a guaranteed water supply to a region that was under threat of running out of water; and projects like the Wyaralong Dam, a \$348 million project that will create around 420 direct jobs and, in conjunction with nearby Cedar Grove Weir, will provide 26,000 million litres of water each year, which is enough for more than 300,000 people. These projects are delivering jobs for Queenslanders as we recover from the global financial crisis. They are promoting investment in our state to help build our economy and they are projects that will ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to support our growing population into the future.

It was around 80 years ago that a former Labor Premier, William Forgan Smith, took similar decisions to build the infrastructure for the future that would deliver jobs in a time of economic hardship. One such project was the Somerset Dam. Forgan Smith commissioned the start of the construction of the dam as a major job-generating project to help Queensland rebuild from the impacts of the Great Depression. The dam was completed in the 1950s after workers had to be diverted to the war effort along the way. But since its completion it has proved to be an outstanding part of South-East Queensland's water supply network.

That is why I am very pleased to advise the House that the value of this dam has today been recognised by Engineers Australia, which named the dam a National Engineering Heritage Landmark. This recognition of the dam as a significant Australian engineering feat is a reminder of the long-term value of such major projects—projects that provide jobs in times when our state needs them the most while also ensuring security into the future. The decision of Forgan Smith to build Somerset Dam was the right decision for Queensland—a decision that continues to pay off today. Similarly, the decisions of the Bligh government in 2010 are delivering the jobs that our state needs right now and which will deliver the infrastructure security that our state needs for the future.

Disaster Management

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (10.25 am): Queensland's disaster management system is built around the concepts of all hazards, comprehensive, all agencies and a prepared community. It is also based on the principle that local government is primarily responsible for responding to local disasters with support from district and state level disaster groups.

An important facet of our disaster management system is planning and preparation for future events. With this in mind, Emergency Management Queensland has worked with local government, the police and other disaster management agencies to organise a three-day exercise code named Exercise Poseidon, which commences today. Exercise Poseidon is designed around a hypothetical but realistic extreme weather event—an ex-tropical cyclone followed by heavy and sustained rainfall—affecting disaster districts and local governments of Far North Queensland.

The exercise will involve agencies including Emergency Management Queensland, local government authorities, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, the Red Cross, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Department of Education and Training and Ergon Energy. The Bureau of Meteorology is also playing a critical role in this exercise, as they do in every natural disaster that Queensland encounters. Exercise Poseidon is designed to activate local disaster management arrangements and plans; evaluate the communication flows and test call centre capacities; exercise the capacity of the Cairns base and Innisfail hospitals to respond to multiple casualties; and exercise resupply arrangements and the establishment of a recovery transition strategy.

In the past 12 months, North Queensland communities have experienced a number of significant natural disaster events, including cyclones Olga, Neville and Ului, resulting in widespread flooding and damage. This exercise provides a significant opportunity for agencies to put into practice and refine their well-honed disaster management practices. I commend Emergency Management Queensland, the Queensland Police Service and the many representatives of the district and local disaster management groups in conducting this essential training.

Cape York, Family Responsibilities Programs

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.27 am): On top of the Bligh government's significant contribution of \$40 million over four years for the Cape York Welfare Reform trial, I am pleased to announce more funding for targeted programs on the ground in Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale and Mossman Gorge. More than \$256,000 is going to Griffith University's Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership to deliver new programs that will help empower local residents to stand up and say 'no' to family violence and to address problem gambling and poor nutrition—all important steps to achieving positive change for the long term.

We know gambling can bring about community and family dysfunction and this, in turn, can undermine the positive gains we are starting to see through the Cape York trial, such as improvements in school attendance. What these new programs will do is deal with problems head-on, as the Bligh government does when it comes to dealing with tough issues. This includes trialling new and innovative solutions in partnership with the communities themselves. Our shared objective is to close the gap on disadvantage. We are doing this through these new programs and by equipping communities and individuals to take action locally to bring about healing and change for the better.

The Bligh government is providing \$100,000 to deliver training to help on another front. In a first, Queensland Corrective Services is using the funding to train family responsibility commissioners to run an ending family violence program in their towns. Local commissioners are doing such a great job already in bringing about real change and I commend each and every one for their tireless efforts. This new initiative will strengthen what they are doing, with an estimated 300 people in the four trial communities to be put through the ending family violence program.

The Bligh government is not only committed to creating safer and stronger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; we are and will continue to deliver results as we work together with Queenslanders to build a stronger, better Queensland for this and future generations.

Criminal Justice System

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.30 am): The Bligh government is well aware, as should all members of this parliament be, of the over-representation of Indigenous Queenslanders in the criminal justice system. That is why we have devoted significant effort to identify the causes of this over-representation and have responded with innovative programs. Among the policy responses that have been introduced by the government are the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program and the Murri Court. These two programs are important components of the government's continuing campaign to address the over-representation of Indigenous Queenslanders in our justice system and tackle the entrenched problem of alcohol abuse in Indigenous communities.

The Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program is a pilot program that aims to improve Indigenous health outcomes and reduce the number of Indigenous people involved in the criminal justice system. Participants who appear before the courts can access detoxification, counselling and after-care programs. Their involvement in the program becomes a condition of their bail.

The Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program started in 2007 and, although the pilot still has some time to run, the results are encouraging. It is certainly not a tokenistic, feel-good program, as it was described recently. Of the 389 treatment plans endorsed since the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program started, 170 participants have completed the program and another 41 are continuing in the program. This represents 54 per cent of the participants who have had their treatment plans endorsed. This is an encouraging start for the program, which is trying to overcome one of the most difficult, complex and intractable issues affecting Indigenous communities: the abuse of alcohol.

Our Murri Court program is similarly having positive effects on the interactions between our courts and Indigenous communities throughout the state. Just last week, I was very pleased to join with the member for Toowoomba North to officially open the 17th Murri Court in Queensland, which is operating in Toowoomba. These Murri Courts provide a vital link between the courts and Indigenous communities, with elders, respected persons and community justice groups involved in the sentencing process.

The government is currently seeking feedback from key stakeholders on reviews of these two important Indigenous justice programs. Both reports show the programs have achieved some objectives and they both contain recommendations on how to improve each of the programs. The government is

now consulting with key stakeholders, particularly Indigenous groups, to get further feedback on the programs and the results. These two programs are part of the Bligh government's commitment to modernising our criminal justice system. We are dealing with complex issues but we are prepared to adopt policies that provide targeted responses to specific problems. I encourage all honourable members to apprise themselves of the details of the Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program and the Murri Courts program so that they have a full and properly informed understanding of the complexities involved.

Sports Projects, Job Creation

Hon. PG REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (10.32 am): I think members would agree that to be successful in sport requires excellent teamwork, a strong work ethic and the courage to make tough decisions while sticking to a game plan. I have every confidence that this year's budget will be a fine example of all of those principles. We are making the tough decisions now to build a stronger economy for all Queenslanders. Perhaps the LNP can take note of how to support each other as a team instead of carrying on like the divided rabble it is.

The Bligh government is sticking to its game plan to deliver the infrastructure and jobs Queenslanders need. Over the past two years the Queensland government and its project partners have invested more than \$326.5 million to develop key sport and recreation facilities across the state. This includes large projects such as the \$144 million redevelopment of the Carrara Stadium to cater for the Gold Coast's new AFL team—which we still do not know whether those opposite support. That project will provide up to 1,100 jobs during construction and up to 700 jobs an event once operational. It also includes projects that bring both funding and confidence to smaller communities such as Dysart, Donnybrook, Highfields, Charters Towers, Yeppoon and Woorabinda. For instance, in Kowanyama, the multipurpose indoor facility created 11 jobs, while Cooktown gained jobs for five people through its event centre project. In the growth areas of South-East Queensland, a new aquatic centre is being built at Colmslie creating nine jobs and the Redcliffe Tennis Centre upgrade is creating six jobs.

Storms and flooding earlier this year had an enormous impact on the stability and, in some cases, the very existence of many local sporting and recreation clubs.

Mr Dempsey interjected.

Mr REEVES: Obviously the member opposite does not care about the Disaster Recovery Program for the member for Warrego's electorate, but the member for Warrego probably does. Under the Disaster Recovery Program, the Queensland government has so far made available grants totalling almost \$1.69 million for 114 projects across the state. The grants are being used to repair fields, fairways and clubhouses and to replace such things as whitegoods, PA systems, equipment, uniforms and sprinkler systems. Local tradesmen and tradeswomen are hard at work on these repairs, with other benefits flowing to local service and product suppliers.

Like the New South Wales Origin team, the LNP has not had a winning game plan for years. It has no on-field direction and it has a leader who does not even like attending postmatch media conferences after a loss. Like the Queensland Origin team, which is rarely ever the bookies' favourite, the Bligh government has stuck to its game plan, made the tough selection decisions and is chasing victory for Queensland through delivering the growth, infrastructure and jobs Queenslanders deserve.

Lifeline

Hon. KL STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (10.35 am): While we are through the worst of the global financial crisis, many people are still doing it tough and the Bligh government is doing what it can to help. One measure introduced by the state government to make life a little easier for people feeling the pressure is additional support to Lifeline. Lifeline will receive an extra \$2 million to continue a very successful financial counselling and referral service around Queensland.

The service started in late 2008 with a Bligh government contribution of \$3 million over 18 months to help people who were struggling as a result of the global financial crisis. More than 14,500 people used the service between March 2009 and April this year and the results speak for themselves. In just one example, a woman in her 50s was facing the prospect of losing her home after her hours were unexpectedly slashed by her employer. With the help of a Lifeline counsellor she was able to negotiate some breathing space with her creditors and set up a weekly budget that allowed her to cope with her repayments and keep her home. Where would we be without Lifeline?

Providing funding for financial counselling is just one of the ways the Bligh government is helping Queenslanders doing it tough. The concessions we provided to seniors and pensioners this financial year were worth \$150 million. We also committed to making sure that pensioners in social housing see the full value of pension increases by not counting the increase granted in the 2009 federal budget towards the rent calculation.

One of the best ways we can offer relief is to make sure people have a safe and affordable place to live. By 30 June construction work on 3,100 social housing dwellings will be underway, giving more people a roof over their head each night. This is also an \$837 million cash injection to the construction industry. That is 5,000 jobs around the state as builders and tradies work to build the infrastructure that we need.

There are many more initiatives and this government has a strong plan for a strong economic future. Because we have made the tough decisions and we are sticking to our plan, we will be able to fund initiatives well into the future to assist Queenslanders who need our help most.

Action Plan for Children with Disability

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (10.37 am): Ensuring children with a disability get the very best start in life is one of the Bligh government's key priorities. Last week, the Premier and I launched a comprehensive action plan for children with disability. *Building bright futures: an action plan for people with a disability—birth to eight years* has the potential to transform the lives of thousands of people across the state. I table a copy of that plan.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Building bright futures: an action plan for children with a disability—birth to eight years' [2330].

Our plan outlines the government's commitment to ensure children with a disability and their families can access the supports they need. It has five key priority areas: easy access to information about services; more early intervention services; improved services in rural and regional areas; delivering a skilled workforce; and developing evidence based best practice. In 2009-10 the Bligh government has invested \$70 million to provide specialist disability services to children with a disability. As part of our new children's action plan, we will spend an extra \$12.7 million over the next three years to provide practical assistance to children with a disability and their families.

We are continuing to invest in disability services in the regions. This year we have provided the Umbrella Network in Townsville with \$90,000 a year to provide support. We are also providing Butterfly Kids on the Gold Coast with \$125,000 a year. Next month I will be up in Nambour and we will be announcing \$175,000 towards the construction of their new therapy centre.

The first eight years is an important time for children with a disability. It is crucial that families can access appropriate services during those years. On a recent listening tour of regional Queensland, I got a very clear message that Bundaberg and Mackay need stronger autism support services. This government is listening and we are responding. We have announced \$3 million over three years to fund brand-new autism early intervention services in both Bundaberg and in Mackay.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.39 am): I wish to advise the House that Minister Palaszczuk will be Acting Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, including for the estimates committee hearings, until Minister Jones returns from leave.

CITY OF BRISBANE BILL

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.39 am): As I foreshadowed last sitting, in addition to the budget bills being debated this sitting there are two additional bills for passage this week. The bills are the City of Brisbane Bill and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I invite the opposition and Independents to discuss the amount of time they would like to see allocated to each bill.

SCRUTINY OF LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Report

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (10.39 am): I table the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee's *Legislation Alert No. 7 of 2010*. In addition, I table a copy of the submission received from the Queensland Law Society regarding the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010.

Tabled paper: Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, Legislation Alert No. 7 of 2010 [2331].

Tabled paper: Submission, dated 31 May 2010, from the Queensland Law Society regarding the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill [2332].

NOTICE OF MOTION

Giant Rat's Tail Grass

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—Ind) (10.40 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House calls on the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland to:

- Classify giant rat's tail grass as endemic, withdraw and cancel all fines against landowners who can no longer comply with government regulations to control this noxious weed; and
- Commission an emergency task force in order to find a biological solution for this plant, which is threatening the viability and profitability of the Queensland grazing industry.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call question time, I acknowledge to the House today that we will be visited by students and teachers from the Oakey State School in the electorate of Condamine, and the Kuluin State School in the electorate of Buderim.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resource Super Profits Tax

Mr LANGBROEK (10.42 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Last week the Premier, the president-elect of the federal Labor Party, met with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to tell him how Queenslanders were hurt and jobs had already been lost because of Labor's super tax on mining. I ask: was the Premier able to convince the Prime Minister of the damage caused to our state and where is the proof of her standing up for Queensland, given that the Prime Minister has ignored her?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member and Clive Palmer for the question.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Ms BLIGH: I take the interjection. The member for Clayfield thinks the words 'Clive' and 'Palmer' are somehow some form of obscenity. On Friday evening, I was very pleased to have an opportunity to have a lengthy discussion with the Prime Minister about the proposed mining tax arrangements. I have also had a number of discussions with the federal Treasurer. I can confirm to the House that a number of mining companies are actively engaged with the federal government in a series of very constructive discussions about the particular circumstances of their part of the industry. I am very confident that, as a result of those constructive discussions, we will see those companies meet some of their concerns.

What I have said in the public arena and I am happy to repeat here is that those companies that are on a major campaign on this issue are not helping. I do not think it is helpful to continue to argue about these issues. I think that these things will only—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order. Resume your seat, Premier. Order, those on my left.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, Deputy Premier.

Ms BLIGH: I think everybody in this House knows that these sorts of issues are only ever resolved when people come to the table, sit down and start negotiating. That is what I expect to see. Queensland—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I can understand if honourable members are being attacked, but at the moment I am listening to an explanation.

Ms BLIGH: Our government has a very clear economic strategy and one very important component of that is the development of an entirely new export industry, the liquefied natural gas industry. What we do not know is the economic strategy of those opposite. Where do they stand on the issues around liquefied natural gas? We know that they continually ask questions to undermine the development of this industry, while at the same time seeking to get credibility on an economic strategy.

We will stand up for Queensland. We will support the LNG industry. We will deliver a new export industry for Queensland that will bring prosperity and growth to the south-west, that will bring prosperity and growth to Gladstone and Central Queensland. As always, we will have to do it over the whingeing of those opposite, over the undermining that they persist with, over their lack of confidence. They are always running Queensland down. We will work with these companies and we will deliver a new industry in liquefied natural gas, despite—not with—the assistance of those opposite.

Resource Super Profits Tax

Mr LANGBROEK: My second question without notice is to the Treasurer. Will he confirm that employment projections in today's state budget specifically ignore the impact of the federal government's job-destroying super tax on mining and, therefore, is it the case that Labor's budget is out of date before it is even handed down?

Mr FRASER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I have been asked about this before in the public arena and I am happy to repeat what I have said. It is this: the profits based taxation regime that has been proposed by the federal government remains unlegislated. Therefore, it remains a taxation regime that is before industry and government to determine. The budget does not include the funds from the resource super profits tax infrastructure fund which has been foreshadowed, and quite properly so. Given that the taxation regime has not been settled, it is not possible—in fact, it is entirely impossible—to model the impact at an economy-wide level of something that remains theoretical.

Nevertheless, the budget papers do acknowledge at a number of points the importance of getting this taxation regime right for the future of the Queensland economy and the resources industry that is contained within it. We make no bones about that. We have been absolutely crystal clear about our view on this from the start. Time is not on our side to determine this and the policy hard yards do need to be made between industry and government. They are the sort of policy hard yards that make those opposite curl up and duck underneath the seats of the chamber, because they would not know policy hard yards if they rose up and sat in front of them.

The reality is this: this government has put in place a plan that is delivering a recovery. It is a plan that is working to deliver and build a new recovery. This afternoon from this government you will see a budget that implements a comprehensive economic strategy, that builds on the recovery that we have built and looks very much to the future. It is a budget that is comprehensive in the plan that we have put in place, that we have executed to date and that we are determined to continue. It will stand in stark contrast to the absolute silence that still comes from the other side of the chamber and the Leader of the Opposition, who has yet to put forward one single policy.

Yesterday morning and today the Leader of the Opposition was out again building the expectations and the anticipation that we all have that, yes, now is the hour! One year on from the budget reply last year—wait for it—it will be the budget reply to end all budget replies. Coming to you at 11.30 on Thursday is the blockbuster budget reply. Producer: John-Paul Langbroek, the member for Surfers Paradise. Production value: one year. Will it be a rolled gold comprehensive policy platform? No, it will not! It will be a whinge and a whine. It will not go to the issues. It will reach for the tissues. It will be a big moan without a proposal. It will be comprehensively lacking in detail and it will prove, once and for all, that those opposite do not have a policy idea between them. All they are interested in is the same old rabble, the same old fights, the same old divisions that have proven them unfit for government and unfit for opposition.

(Time expired)

Jobs

Mrs ATTWOOD: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the House on the government's commitment to deliver jobs for Queenslanders and to build the foundations for a stronger economy?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question and I thank her for her continuing support for our strong jobs program. It is important for people to understand just how big some of the projects are that this government is delivering and what that means in terms of jobs for Queenslanders and their families. On the Gold Coast, we now see work on the Gold Coast hospital really starting to ramp up. There are now 450 workers on-site.

Mr Lucas: Ten cranes.

Ms BLIGH: That will build throughout the life of the project to some 9,000 workers who will get an opportunity through that project. I take the interjection from the Minister for Health that on the Gold Coast University Hospital site there are 10 cranes. This would be one of the biggest projects currently under construction around the country. Similarly, on the Robina Hospital expansion project more than 1,500 jobs will be delivered, and the Princess Alexandra Hospital and the Smart Therapies Institute will build to 2,770 jobs. These are thousands of people and thousands of pay cheques. Airport Link now has 2,900 workers across a number of work sites.

In addition to our infrastructure program, which is the foundation of our economic strategy, the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program has assisted 27,500 disadvantaged job seekers. In today's budget we will see a program that strengthens the foundations of the Queensland economy, and it will be delivered by a strong and united team that has a clear vision for Queensland and that has a clear economic strategy to deliver that vision.

When it comes to solid foundations, what do we see on the other side of politics? What are the foundations that are being delivered by the conservative forces in Queensland? So far in the last two weeks we have seen the disendorsement of two federal candidates. We have seen two state members leave the party. We have seen the disendorsement of one local councillor. We have seen the opposition office lose another staffer in controversial circumstances. We have seen a whole new party launched. We are seeing the fracturing and disintegration of this so-called happy marriage in the LNP. What the member for Southern Downs has created is a Frankenstein's monster and we are seeing it fracture.

Mr Springborg: You've got the lowest approval rating of any Premier or Prime Minister ever!

Mr Lucas: You lost three elections.

Ms BLIGH: Three elections—three.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Both sides of the House will come to order.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable the Minister for Public Works. I have called for order. I ask you to respect that and respect the fact that the Premier has the call. The honourable the Premier.

Ms BLIGH: As we listen to them later this week whinge and whine and moan about the budget, whatever they say about it they cannot deliver.

(Time expired)

Queensland Economy

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Today's budget will show that in the last year Queensland's debt has risen from \$42 billion to \$51 billion—another \$9 billion in debt. Despite another \$9 billion on the credit card, the Treasurer yesterday claimed that Labor's debt was actually going down. Does the Treasurer now understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government ever says?

Mr FRASER: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the question. What I said yesterday was that the forecast debt levels from the 2009-10 budget for this year, which were forecast at \$57 billion, would in fact come in at \$51 billion. Last time I checked, when you subtract \$51 billion from \$57 billion you get \$6 billion. So the relevant point I made yesterday was this: the forecast that was in the last budget would in fact come in lower, and why? Because this government is putting in a reform plan to deal with it.

What is most amazing about the question from the deputy leader is this: what is his plan? What is his alternative? What is the deputy leader's alternative plan? We know that it is getting to about that time in the cycle when the deputy leader has been out in regional Queensland whipping up apathy over the last couple of weeks. We know that he is positioning and ready. Of course, what does that mean? He is cooking up the policy proposals. So, as we all wait here for the policy proposal on Thursday, the Leader of the Opposition will leave us jilted at the altar again. What will happen on Thursday? Nothing. What will happen shortly thereafter? The Yelarbon barn dance will start again, as the deputy leader rounds up and rounds up, ready again. He is corralling the forces, the disparate divide of forces, who are up there tearing apart the opposition office, tearing apart the party—losing candidates left, right and centre. What is going to happen? The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will come out with a few old, tired, tawdry statements, whipping up apathy and prejudice and saying, 'That is a policy proposal.' What will happen? People like the member for Warrego will go, 'You beauty! That's what we're after—a bit of old prejudice. No ideas for the future. Why don't we give Lawrence another go? Let's round him up for go No. 4. Let's have another crack at election No. 4.'

What is going on here? We have put in place a plan. We have the courage and the conviction to put in place a plan, to stick to it, to turn the economy around, to start delivering. The answer to the deputy leader's question is: we have a plan and it is working. What is his plan? What taxes would he raise? What projects would he cut? How many jobs would he slash out of front-line services? The 12,000 jobs that he went to the last election with do not seem nearly enough to satiate the desire of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to tear the heart out of front-line services in this state. What you will see from this government is an economic strategy that is delivering on the front line, delivering to those Queenslanders who need it most. When the budget is handed down at 2.30 this afternoon, it will be there for all to see and the bare cupboard on the other side will be revealed on Thursday.

(Time expired)

Environmental Protection

Mr O'BRIEN: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier please advise the House what the government is doing to improve the natural environment in the state's north?

An opposition member: Ha, ha!

Mr SPEAKER: I will just wait for the House to come to order. There should be no need for an interjection by anyone before the person who has been called upon to speak even speaks. I call the honourable the Premier.

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for Cook. I think we can all boast about beautiful parts of our electorate, but the member for Cook I think is particularly blessed with one of the great wilderness zones on the planet in Cape York. I can assure the member for Cook and other members of this House that our government is absolutely committed to protecting our environment, and we are committed to protecting those parts of our environment that are pristine and maintaining them in that state. That is why the internationally renowned Wenlock River on Cape York has been declared a wild river, to preserve it for current and future generations.

The Wenlock River is one of the most spectacular natural assets of this nation. It covers an expanse of more than 7,000 square kilometres and includes 13 major tributaries. Importantly, it is home to an extraordinary level of biodiversity. In fact, it is home to the highest number of freshwater fish species in any Australian river. It is surrounded by rainforest which provides very important wildlife habitat.

The wild rivers program is a nation-leading program providing protection to the Wenlock. The Wenlock is the 10th declaration that we have made under this legislation. What it does is protect natural assets while allowing for appropriate development in and around those assets. One of the key issues of extensive consultation in relation to this river was the extent of the high preservation area or buffer zone declared around the natural springs that are on Bertiehaugh Station, also known as the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve. This is a truly beautiful place. The decision is that the buffer zone will be 500 metres.

I note that mining company Cape Alumina, which has a mining exploration permit—no project, an exploration permit—will still have access, as indeed any other exploration permit holder will have, to some 70 per cent of the bauxite deposit in that region. I think it is important to remember in relation to Wenlock River that the great heroes of those opposite, John Howard and Tony Abbott—when he was a member of the John Howard ministry—paid \$6 million of taxpayer funds to purchase this area of land and provide it to the Steve Irwin Australia Zoo group. What for? For the purpose of conservation and wildlife preservation. So the people of Australia paid to put this into private hands for the purpose of wildlife preservation.

The Wenlock River declaration secures that protection. I look forward to seeing some of the work that the wildlife rangers will do when they are employed as part of our Wild River Rangers Program. What they are doing in the gulf is great work and I look forward to seeing it happen on the cape.

Credit Rating

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer the Treasurer to Labor's abandoned charter of social and fiscal responsibility which said that protecting Queensland's AAA credit rating was 'an integral part of the government's commitment to the community'. Given that Labor has broken this integral commitment, does the Treasurer now understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government says in its budgets?

Mr FRASER: I thank the shadow Treasurer for the question. I am sure that the shadow Treasurer was here for the last budget. I am almost certain he was here for estimates as well when we went through the budget papers in detail. What the budget papers included at the handing down of the budget almost a year ago was a charter of fiscal principles designed to implement our economic reform program, to rebuild strength to the state's finances and to chart a course back to a AAA credit rating. That charter of fiscal principles was laid upon the table in this chamber on budget day last year. The budget papers last year reported against them. The budget papers this year will report against the charter of fiscal principles.

Those fiscal principles are put in place to deliver a tough fiscal discipline to ensure that the state's finances can be rebuilt to once again achieve a AAA credit rating. It is a central policy goal of this government. What we have said in the past is that it will take time to deliver. It will take time because we need to put in place a comprehensive reform plan on the state's balance sheet in order to achieve the goals that are set by the ratings agencies to once again achieve a AAA credit rating.

We are determined to do that. That is why we have put in place a plan. That plan is delivering. It stands in stark contrast, of course, to the plan that has been put forward by the shadow Treasurer which, of course, to this point is zip. He joins with the policy apathy at the front of the LNP—the Leader of the Opposition. He joins with the policy apathy from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who has had three cracks at it, in not putting forward a single idea.

It was revealed last week that an opposition staffer was tired and dispirited by going into the office and seeing all the senior people playing solitaire. What we have seen so far is the solitaire policy delivery of the opposition. Why sit down and do any policy hard yards when you can shift a heart up onto the other one? Why should you ever open a policy book and write something out when you can wile away the hours on solitaire or PacMan on the taxpayer funded computers in the opposition office?

The one thing that occurred to me—and it was a bit late in the budget process—is that there has to be a huge IT efficiency dividend out of the opposition office because they are clearly not using the equipment that is being provided by the taxpayer to do any policy work. So the shadow Treasurer stands in this place and asks a question, completely naked and devoid of any plan of his own. He is completely naked of any plan to put forward an alternative.

The question here is fine, but the questions are going to be on the other side on Thursday. The questions to the shadow Treasurer are: what is your policy, what is your alternative plan, what are you going to do about getting it back, what are you going to propose to the people of Queensland?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Treasurer will address his comments through the chair.

Mr FRASER: Of course we know that the answer will be nothing.

(Time expired)

Health System

Mr KILBURN: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health. Could the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health please advise the House how the Bligh government's tough decisions are paying dividends in delivering expanded infrastructure, jobs and health services across the state?

Mr LUCAS: I am delighted to take the question from my honourable friend. It is interesting to hear the Treasurer speaking about those opposite playing solitaire. I would have thought that they would be much more suited to three-handed cutthroat 500, frankly, and see who gets dealt out. It is a revolving game.

We are delivering on our commitment to provide jobs for Queenslanders through the health infrastructure program. It is all about choices. It is all about choices in this game. We heard the Leader of the Opposition say earlier this week that what he wants to see out of this budget—and he will have his opportunity later this week—is a return to surplus at a higher rate and, at the same time, no commitment to infrastructure construction like the government is making.

It is about tough decisions. It is not easy to take the decisions that we have taken in relation to privatisation, but similarly we need to take the tough decisions to get the dividends for the community. We only need to look throughout the state to see what we are doing in Health alone when it comes to infrastructure.

Queensland Health's capital budget—we will see it revealed further today—prior to today's budget was about \$6 billion. The state nearest is New South Wales with just over \$2 billion. That is the difference. Why can we do that? Because in the 21st century this government understands that the priorities have to be no longer owning coal rail assets that coal companies can pay for; this government understands that it is fundamentally about hospitals, schools and social infrastructure. Some 100 years ago it was about butcher shops and state owned hotels. We are the party of the 21st century and those opposite are the party of Artie Fadden—and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is Artie Fadden personified, there is no doubt about that.

We have 200 capital projects delivering close to 40,000 FTE jobs. The \$1.3 billion Queensland Children's Hospital will deliver 7,000 jobs. The \$134.6 million PA Hospital expansion will deliver 255 jobs. The \$1.76 billion Gold Coast University Hospital will deliver 9,847 jobs. We have the \$368.3 million Townsville Hospital expansion and the Robina, Mackay and Bundaberg expansions. In every provincial city one goes to one can see what is happening in those hospitals. They will be delivering.

The other day I was in Cairns Airport. Do members know what? I actually did two things when I was there. The first thing I wanted was two packets of wasabi macadamias from Queensland. They were very tasty; I had some last night. Secondly, I noticed how the airport, which is now in private hands, is expanding. Do members know what? In Cairns we have got a new hospital being built alongside the old hospital site. As well in Cairns we have the commitment to the cultural precinct. That is what this government is doing. I thank the honourable member for the question because what we have seen in Queensland Health since 2005 is 12½ thousand more doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. That is something one could only dream of.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Queensland Rail

Ms SIMPSON: My question is for the Minister for Transport. The minister gave a commitment on 21 May last year that 'Queensland Rail is not for sale'. As this promise was made and this promise was broken, does the minister now understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government says?

Ms NOLAN: Yesterday this government announced \$646 million to bring forward the expansion of our Citytrain network out to Springfield. Yesterday this government announced an infrastructure—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Just resume your seat. I will wait for the House to come to order. The honourable Minister for Transport.

Ms NOLAN: Yesterday this government announced a major expansion in public transport infrastructure. The reason that we are in a position to do that is because we have made the tough financial decisions. Politics is about choices. Politics is about taking the tough decisions when the tough decisions are required. That is what this government has done.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister will resume her seat. I can understand the interjections if a member is being personally offended or even if the opposition is under some attack, but at the moment I cannot hear that. I again call the Minister for Transport.

Ms NOLAN: That is what this government is doing. Our priorities in the budget last year and in the budget this year are in exactly the right place. Our priorities are for passenger trains, not coal trains. Our priorities are around restoring the state's AAA credit rating as soon as possible whilst delivering the services that people need and whilst delivering the infrastructure that this state needs to grow its economy and to grow its urban areas in a sustainable way. That is what this government is all about.

Let us contrast that with the position of the shadow minister for transport and of her team. Those on the other side have suggested that they would not engage in a program of asset sales, but they have not put forward an alternative. At the last election they said that they would build the Petrie to Kippa-Ring railway, that is—asterisk—'subject to global financial crisis'. On the other side the member for Maroochydore has suggested building a railway line on the Sunshine Coast that does not link in to the broader network. On the other side of the House the shadow minister for transport constantly makes unfunded policy announcements. Hand on heart she says, 'We'd love to do this,' and they make those announcements in the complete absence of any fiscal strategy.

Government is not just about today's popularity; government is about financial responsibility and about taking the tough decisions. Our tough decisions mean that we can build public transport infrastructure for the future. They are decisions by which we stand, and they are decisions for which that side of the House has no alternative.

(Time expired)

Payroll Tax

Mrs KIERNAN: My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development. Can the Treasurer provide the House with an update on Queensland's payroll tax competitiveness compared with other states?

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Mount Isa for her question and for her unceasing obligation and her unceasing efforts in supporting business investment in the great north-west of this state and the vast area that she represents. The member for Mount Isa would have to be one of the most pro jobs people in this chamber. She is always advocating for the development of her part of the state and always advocating for the development of the resource wealth in the north-west, and she does a fine job for the people of the north-west.

The member for Mount Isa knows, like every member on this side of the chamber, that you have to put the policy settings in place. You have to put the policy settings in place and the taxation regime in place which attracts investment, which promotes business investment and which generates jobs that deliver to Queensland families. That has been our obsession. Our obsession over the last 12 months has been to build jobs, to build a recovery, to avoid the ravages of unemployment—to build jobs into the economy and to build a recovery for the future.

I know that in another chamber in another state today another Treasurer will be trumpeting their changes to payroll tax. The New South Wales Treasurer will be on his feet later this afternoon reportedly announcing the massive achievement of cutting payroll tax in New South Wales from 5.75 per cent all the way down to 5.45 per cent. What an achievement! But he is not even close to the starting line of where Queensland is, because Queensland does not have a payroll tax rate of 5.75 per cent. No! It has a payroll tax rate of 4.75 per cent—the lowest rate in the nation and the highest threshold on mainland Australia. Why? Because we have been obsessed and focused on jobs. If we put in place the payroll tax regime that the New South Wales Treasurer is changing today, we would have \$600 million more in the budget. And what would that be built on the back of? It would be built on the back of the businesses out there employing people as times are tough, and we reject that policy setting.

So what will the budget do this afternoon? It will reject that policy setting and it will stick with the lowest payroll tax rate in Australia. The Victorian government is cutting its rate from 4.95 per cent to 4.9 per cent. Big deal! That is not even close to where we are. In the past we have been called to match the achievement of Western Australia, which of course has a payroll tax rate of 5.5 per cent. So what are we going to do? We are going to make sure we keep the taxation regime that promotes business investment, that promotes jobs, that helps build a recovery. It is our obsession with jobs that has been the guiding light for all of the decisions that we have taken, for the strategy that we have put in place, for the reform program that we have put in place and that we are going to stick with as we stand on our record of building a recovery and delivering jobs for Queenslanders.

(Time expired)

Fuel Subsidy

Mr McARDLE: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to her promise in this House in June 2008 that she would not remove the fuel subsidy and to the Treasurer's promise in January 2009 that the Bligh government would not remove the fuel subsidy. Given these promises were made and given they have been broken, does the Premier now understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government says?

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable the—

Mr Sorensen interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Again, I just remind the House that there is no need for an interjection before the person I have asked to speak has spoken. I call the Premier.

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for the question. What we have seen today is what we will see more of this week and what we see week in, week out from those opposite—always living in the past. What they are doing here this morning is re-prosecuting matters that were from last year's budget, not this year's budget. This government was faced with the most difficult of economic circumstances, like governments around the world, and we had to front up to some very tough decisions. They were not decisions that we enjoyed making. They were not decisions, frankly, that we ever contemplated we would have to make. But when the circumstances demand it, you have to be up to the tough job. When the circumstances change and when the world spirals into the worst economic crisis in three-quarters of a century, you cannot stand still, frozen in the spotlights, or put your head in the sand.

So, yes, we made some decisions that we did not like making and that we wished were not necessary. We wished there had never been a global financial crisis. But there was and we had to respond to it, and that is what we did. What does it mean? It means very clearly that we have an economic strategy that is delivering for Queenslanders. It is delivering jobs at a time when jobs were set to be lost in just about every industry. We are seeing unemployment drop. That means jobs growth—more jobs created. In fact, Queensland is now the jobs-generating capital according to last month's figures. What does it mean for regional Queensland and the south-east? It means that we are able to deliver as a government the infrastructure and services that a growing population needs.

What those opposite recommend is that we do nothing, that we just ride along, maintaining the status quo, and we let Queensland freeze and go backwards. That in fact was the policy they implemented the last time they were in government and it is the policy that they are proposing now in opposition. In a state like Queensland, you never stop moving forward. In a state like Queensland, you never stand still. You keep delivering new hospitals, new roads, new bridges. You keep delivering new schools, and you keep delivering a competitive tax environment that makes it possible to employ people here at a lower rate than anywhere else in the country. This afternoon you will see a good, strong Labor budget that delivers the economic bottom line and, importantly, delivers to people in regions across Queensland and delivers to working families wherever they are. We have an economic strategy. Those opposite are frozen in the spotlight.

Road Infrastructure

Ms STONE: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. With 2010 shaping up as the year for delivering key transport infrastructure across Queensland, can the minister please update the House on the rollout of the major road projects around the state and the number of jobs being generated as a result of this hive of activity on our road network?

Mr WALLACE: I thank the honourable member for Springwood for the question. She is a great advocate for better roads in her community, like everyone is on this side of the House. Our road crews have their hard hats on—from Bamaga to Burleigh Heads and everywhere in between. We are building a better, first-class road network for Queenslanders and we are generating jobs into the bargain.

Last week, I presented a certificate to our 30,000th road worker. That is right: 30,000, for the benefit of those job blockers and job knockers opposite. We are rolling out a record \$18 billion building program right across this state. What does that mean up in Townsville?

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr WALLACE: You just wait for the west, brother. You just wait for the west.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister, it will help if you direct your comments through the chair.

Mr WALLACE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The member for Gregory can just wait for the west, because I am getting there. Up in Townsville, young Damian Andrews—one of our new trainees—is hard at work helping us to deliver a road network that is second to none. Of the 30,000 jobs this financial year, 12,000 are in regional Queensland and the remote parts of our state. I take my hard hat off to them. They are working.

What are they working on? The Bruce Highway planning on the southern approaches to Cairns, stage 2 of the Townsville Port Access Road, duplicating the Douglas section of the Townsville Ring Road, the Forgan Bridge replacement in Mackay, \$135 million to upgrade the 13-kilometre stretch of the Leichhardt Highway, the \$100 million Bundaberg Ring Road, the \$236 million Cooroy-Curra section of the Bruce Highway and, just for the member for Gregory, out west millions are being spent on the Diamantina, the Kennedy, the Thomson and Capricorn highways. I drove that Gregory Developmental Road and I know that the hundreds of millions of dollars that we are spending on regional roads are going to have a great impact. Planning is underway to pave and seal the link from Jericho to Windorah. We are getting out there in Western Queensland. Indeed, Main Roads is one of the biggest employers in some of those western shires.

Here in the south-east, there are 18,000 jobs for road workers upgrading the Ipswich Motorway, the Pacific Motorway, duplicating the Houghton Highway and, of course, the project I spoke about this morning, the \$2.5 billion Gateway corridor—the new Sir Leo Hielscher Bridges.

We are building a better network right across this state for all Queenslanders and we are creating jobs for local road workers—30,000 jobs. We are able to do this because we have a plan and we have stuck to that plan. We made the tough decisions but the right choices. That is why these 30,000 people are building better roads across Queensland and that is why there are 30,000 reasons the opposition members should hang their heads in shame. Whilst we deliver, they dither. The harder we work, the louder they whinge. Whilst we are out there doing things, they are out there doing each other in.

Electricity Prices

Mr GIBSON: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade. Before Labor embarked on the privatisation of Energex and Ergon, the Premier promised—

... nobody—not one Queensland—will be worse off ...

Given that this promise was made and given that electricity prices have since skyrocketed by 54 per cent, putting major pressure on household budgets, does the minister now understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government says?

Mr ROBERTSON: I thank the member for the question. I assume he is suffering from short-term memory loss because, when the legislation for full retail contestability was brought in, I recall the debate very well. Who was it supported by? It was supported by the opposition. I just happened to go to the debate back in 2006 to recap what some members said and I came across this. It said—

I note that this bill is the next stage in the privatisation of the electricity industry in Queensland. It allows for the implementation of full retail contestability in the small consumer market, and that is in large part for most residential domestic customers in Queensland.

I congratulate the Beattie Labor government for following the trailblazing efforts of the Kennett Liberal government that first embarked on the privatisation of the electricity industry in Victoria a decade ago.

It goes on—

This bill is a positive step for Queenslanders, and I will be supporting it. Giving people a choice in a competitive market can only increase service and performance from energy companies and their staff. Indeed, the privatisation is good for consumers ...

Indeed, one has to wonder why, if privatisation is so good, it has taken so long to be achieved. It is important to give credit to the government for at last accepting the benefits of privatisation, but this government's effort is half-hearted at best. One has to ask: why not sell the poles and wires as well? Why not sell the generators as well? Most informed commentators know that this is the best solution to provide adequate power efficiently and with little risk to government.

Who said that? Can the member for Clayfield please stand up! In 2006 the shadow Treasurer was pro privatisation. That was back in the days when we had a Liberal Party in this state—a very proud Liberal Party. What has changed between 2006 and 2010 for the member for Clayfield, the shadow Treasurer, the person who wants to bring down budgets in this state? It can only be the good old boys from the National Party who have got to you, Tim, because back in 2006 you were pro privatisation. You wanted to go further. You wanted to sell the generators. You wanted to sell the poles and wires. And you and your Liberal and National party colleagues—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr ROBERTSON: The LNP now carries on this absolute dishonesty and farce of opposing privatisation when the record shows that back in 2006 it did not want to stop at retail contestability; it wanted to go the full monty.

Hendra Virus

Mr WENDT: My question is to the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland. Can the minister inform the House of the Bligh government's actions in the past year to raise awareness about Hendra virus among veterinarians and the horse industry?

Mr MULHERIN: I thank the member for Ipswich for his question and for his interest in such an important matter that affects Queenslanders, particularly his constituents in Ipswich West. The recent Hendra incident at Tewantin has been a reminder to all horse owners and vets to remain vigilant in practising protective measures, including ensuring that all horse feeding and watering troughs are clear from flying fox roosts.

Yesterday, the second blood tests for the remaining horse on the Tewantin property came back negative and that is great news. I understand that Queensland Health is in constant contact with the 12 people who came in contact with the horse and who are awaiting their results. They should get those results back later this week.

On advice of the recent incident, Biosecurity Queensland and Queensland Health acted swiftly to ensure that appropriate measures were put in place to alert and reassure the surrounding community of the incident. Biosecurity Queensland and Queensland Health officers should be thanked for their efficient response to the most recent Hendra incident. They worked for very long hours under extremely emotionally straining conditions.

Since the incident at Cawarral in Bowen in 2009, Biosecurity Queensland has made significant efforts to promote awareness, risk reduction, support and preparedness to continue the fight against Hendra. The key approach to prevention and preparedness for Hendra has been to promote risk reduction practices through targeted communication and engagement with the industry, including the veterinary profession, horse owners and the general horse community and government agencies.

Last week at the Rockhampton community cabinet I launched the most practical information pack to date, which will assist veterinarians, in particular equine veterinarians. These packs contain a checklist and practical advice to remind vets of best practice when attending sick horses. Biosecurity Queensland will be holding information sessions across the state for vets to promote these packs over the coming months. In 2009, Biosecurity Queensland convened five veterinary workshops, including presentations on general infection control principles for practising veterinarians, workplace health and safety and advice on personal protective equipment. There have also been a significant number of community engagements promoting Hendra awareness and precautions for those in contact with horses, including 15 Hendra seminars attended by 553 horse owners.

(Time expired)

Small Schools, Spending

Mrs STUCKEY: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education. Early in this term the minister implemented LNP policy by increasing staffing in very small state schools. In light of this hard-won improvement, how can the minister justify reckless spending under the school hall scheme on schools so small they face closure: \$300,000 on a school with three students and \$300,000 on a school with five students? Can the minister understand why Queenslanders cannot believe a single word this Labor government says?

Mr WILSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. The fact is that, under the Building the Education Revolution program, substantial funds are coming into all schools—state schools and non-state schools—making an unprecedented, never-to-be-seen-again improvement in the facilities that are available for students across all schooling sectors in Queensland.

As I indicated in my ministerial statement—and maybe the member did not hear that statement—in the state school system, after annual assessment that has been going on for 10 years or so, there is a small number of small schools and schools with declining enrolment population that are examined as to whether they are long-term sustainable. I explained it all in the ministerial statement. It identified that we are going through a rigorous process of consulting with the community and parents, as we should.

What the member would like the parliament to believe is that, if the funding is allocated to a school and there is no question of its future viability, we should somehow not spend the money in accordance with the federal government guidelines. We have allocated the money and expended it in conformity with federal government guidelines. If, however, there are funds allocated and then the school is identified as prospectively going to be temporarily closed and the funds have not been expended then those funds are set aside pending the eventual decision on whether or not to close the school.

If construction work has actually commenced on-site—putting a relocatable building in, for example—and then a decision is made to potentially mothball the school, what the member opposite would have us do is freeze that, say, ‘Don’t continue to put it into the school,’ and pre-empt the consultation that the public are entitled to have about whether or not that school will continue. We put relocatable solutions into those schools so that they have the benefit of the federal government’s funding program without pre-empting the public consultation that will be gone through rigorously with that school community to determine its long-term viability. We will then make the appropriate decisions in consultation with that local community. That is how it ought to be.

Local Government

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the minister please inform the House how Queensland councils are working together to deliver for the people of our state?

Ms BOYLE: I thank the honourable member indeed for the question. As has been mentioned in this House before, there are very significant changes occurring in the world of local government, particularly for those councils that were amalgamated. Whenever I visit I hear the same words from the mayors and councillors: ‘We might not have been fans of amalgamation but we have to admit that things are much stronger for our council now’. They are talking of how, as regional councils, they have more oomph, how they are taking a strategic approach and how much more productive it is in regional forums not to have groups of 10 or 15 small councils but instead to have four or five major regional councils working together to provide strategic direction.

In fact, I can inform members that at the Regional Summit of the Central Queensland Local Government Association only weeks ago 19 local governments indicated their support for a new group to be called the Powerhouse Alliance of Councils. The councils involved in this group stretch from Kingaroy to the Whitsundays and west to Longreach. They are councils that are all touched in one way or another by the resources industry. The alliance will ensure that these 19 councils speak with one clear, loud regional voice to capture the ear of state and federal governments and industry.

This is important news for Queenslanders in Central Queensland because the alliance will be working more strategically to deliver infrastructure, maximising economic opportunities out of the mining boom and improving the region’s capacity to overcome challenges. The mining opportunities for the Central Queensland councils and some other Western Queensland councils are a mixed bag. It is not all good news from their point of view. Yes, of course they welcome the jobs for their constituents, but they worry, too, over the impact on their towns of fly-in, fly-out arrangements. Yes, of course they look forward to boosts to their infrastructure, but they feel the pressures, financially and otherwise, of planning for it and providing it ahead of the jobs actually occurring. Yes, of course they welcome the contributions made by some mining companies through toilets or community facilities and other donations to beneficial organisations, but at the same time they feel the pain month in, month out, year in, year out of the damage done to local roads and without contributions from those companies to the councils’ roads budget.

So I do welcome the new Powerhouse Alliance of Councils, councils such as the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council, North Burnett, South Burnett, Longreach, Isaac and others who have joined together.

Sale of Public Assets

Mr McLINDON: My question without notice is to the Premier. Given that in every 100 Queenslanders only 15 support the sale of assets, will the Premier give Queenslanders an undertaking to outline to the House and table all relevant research related to the projected asset value, the projected annual revenue and the projected employment figures in 10 years from now should the current asset sales not proceed?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question and for his interest in this issue. All of the information in relation to the current value of not only this asset but also other assets is available in the annual reports of the government owned corporations. Queensland Rail is required to make all of that information public through company law and the requirements of itself as a company. I would be happy to provide the member with the annual reports. They have all been tabled in this parliament and can be accessed through the Table Office.

I think I am right in my recollection that it was the member for Beaudesert who very strategically identified that the problem with those opposite continually bashing the sale of assets was that they had no alternative. He made the point, I thought very clearly, that they had no right to be criticising the government on this when they had no economic strategy to take Queensland forward.

What I can tell the member is that, while there is no forecast on those assets, as one would expect, with any precision, for 10 years time, what I think we can identify without any fear or concern is that QRNational Coal will grow between now and 2020 and it will grow regardless of who owns it. It will grow for one very clear reason: it transports coal that is in high demand from all of our major markets

around the world. By 2025 we expect to see coal exports in Queensland come close to doubling. There are already very high levels of public investment in expanding the network and the above-rail capacity and there are extensive private commitments to extending the network and the capacity.

For example, the northern missing link project will be underwritten by coal companies. Similarly, Wiggins Island, the expansion at Gladstone Port, will be funded and underwritten by coal companies because they will use those assets. Why are they funding that expansion? Because they have absolute confidence that we will see more coal going into Asia. That means more rail lines, more coal wagons and, most importantly, more jobs for people working in the railways of Queensland. In my view, with privatisation we will see the ability for Queensland Rail to leverage private investment for the first time in its history, to help it grow and achieve its full potential. QRNational is a great national company, it will continue to be a great national company and it will be based in Queensland. It will go from strength to strength and it will employ more Queenslanders, not less.

Townsville Marine Precinct

Ms JOHNSTONE: My question is for the Minister for Transport. Could the minister please advise the House of the latest developments in relation to the Townsville Marine Precinct project?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable minister, you have two minutes.

Ms NOLAN: I thank the member for Townsville for the question. This government, unlike its opposition, has a fiscal strategy that means that we can build infrastructure and create jobs. We can build infrastructure such as the new railway line to Springfield in the City of Ipswich, the Cairns cruise ship terminal currently under construction, and the \$110 million Townsville Marine Precinct, on which the member for Townsville, the member for Mundingburra and I turned the first sod just a couple of weeks ago. That \$110 million project will create a new purpose-built precinct for Townsville's marine industries such as those involving boat building and the major fishing fleet.

In creating the new Townsville Marine Precinct, this government will protect 500 existing jobs and create 400 construction jobs during the period of its building, not even allowing for the growth that will happen in Townsville marine industries as a result of this move. That comes on top of the port access road into Townsville, the upgrade to the Mount Isa railway line that will allow more bulk to come into the Townsville port, and the cruise ship terminal that the government and its partners are building in Townsville. However, that is not all. We are creating jobs and we are building infrastructure, but this is also about a great lifestyle element for the people of Townsville as 14 new boat ramps will be built as part of the project. This proves that this government's tough economic decisions are working and delivering for the people of Townsville.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Budget

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.42 am): This afternoon we will hear from the Treasurer, who will deliver another budget about the government's plans for the Queensland economy for the next year. Already this morning a number of ministers have displayed the techniques that we have seen from this Labor government for over a decade, that is, to change the targets and the plans. They reannounce things they have announced before but have not delivered, making out that there is some sort of redemption in the fact that they are reannouncing them, whether it is the rail line to Springfield or the incredible statements of the Treasurer yesterday that our debt is going down when very clearly it is going up. His statement was as bald as that. He said that our debt, which has grown to \$51.6 billion, is somehow less than it was at \$42 billion but that that is okay because it was going to be \$56 billion.

The amazing thing about this Treasurer, the member for Mount Coot-tha, is that he sells this line to the journalists. I refer to today's *North West Star*, that fine journal of the north, and an article by Steven Schubert. The article states that Treasurer Andrew Fraser said the state's debt levels were starting to come down, but a return to budget surplus was still five years away. The article states that the budget will show debt levels for 2009-10 coming in at \$51.6 billion. Therefore, Mr Schubert believes our debt is coming down, because this Treasurer told him that the debt is coming down. Very obviously, you could make the debt whatever you like in the out years and then say, 'I came in underneath that. That means our debt is coming down.' It is just like Wayne Swan saying that the next three years will return our federal budget to a \$1 billion surplus based on a resource super tax. However, when he says it will be three years ahead of schedule, that is a schedule that the federal Labor government came up with just last year, a schedule that suddenly said we are now going to have years and years of deficit. Although they only came up with that schedule last year, a month ago they suddenly said, 'We'll get there ahead of schedule,' because the schedule had changed.

It does not matter what this budget says; Queenslanders will not be able to believe a word of it because of what this Labor government has done for the past decade and, in fact, for nearly 20 years. We expect to see a debt repayment strategy and relief for Queenslanders with cost of living issues. On the privatisation agenda and the selling off of Queensland's assets, we have said very clearly that we oppose Labor's privatisations. Under the LNP Queensland is not for sale. We want to protect the jobs of Queenslanders, instead of having a mining super tax. Supposedly the Premier has had a word in the ear of Kevin Rudd, but clearly that did not work because the Prime Minister is determined to go ahead with the things he has announced.

Let us look at the issue of the AAA credit rating. The Treasurer is always issuing challenges. My challenge to him is to tell us what he will do about easing the squeeze on Queenslanders who are facing massive increases. Last week I travelled the state, going to Ingham, Thangool, Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Mackay. In the weeks before that I visited Napranum, Mapoon, Cairns and Weipa. Everyday Queenslanders are saying they cannot bear the costs that have been imposed on them by this Labor government, which went to an election last year and misrepresented what it was going to do subsequent to that election.

Let us look at one of the biggest priorities, the AAA credit rating, which is costing this state over \$1 billion in extra payments. The priority for any state government should be to protect the AAA credit rating. The priority for any government should be to spend within its means. The priority for any government should be to ensure that it has a debt repayment strategy. Of course, we have not seen that from this government even though it has talked about it at estimates over the years. Today the Treasurer has his third crack at bringing down a balanced budget, but we know that all we will see from this Treasurer is more debt, more deficit and, in the great Labor tradition, a new tax. That is what we will see from this Treasurer.

Was the priority of the Labor government to bring down a balanced budget? As I have already outlined, this Labor government has made an art form out of economic buffoonery with the Treasurer saying yesterday that our debt will be lower, even though everyone can see from the budget papers that it will be higher. On the weekend the Treasurer claimed that he had a four- to five-year goal to retrieve the AAA credit rating. He had been Treasurer for only 18 months when he lost the credit rating. The Treasurer wants five years grace to get back what he lost in 18 months and the Premier, so lacking in leadership, so lacking in authority, so lacking in standards, keeps amongst her cabinet ranks the economic dunce that made Queensland's economic management the laughing-stock of Australia. The Treasurer was never asked to attain a AAA credit rating; he was asked to retain the AAA credit rating. It was not hard. It was already there. All he had to do was keep it. The Labor Premier and the Labor Treasurer even unveiled a plan to keep the AAA credit rating. Do members remember what it was called? It was called Toward Q2. Does everyone remember the No. 1 economic priority of Toward Q2? It was to keep the AAA credit rating.

Queensland's economic recovery starts the day a sign goes up on our border stating 'Queensland under new management'. National and international investors—those national and international job creators—have baulked at investing in Queensland. Of course, they are still baulking because we have lost our AAA credit rating and because of the job uncertainty created by this mining super tax. They saw our AAA credit rating go down the drain. Only when this state is under new management will they be prepared to take a second look. Restoring Queensland's AAA credit rating will be the No. 1 priority of an LNP government and the No. 1 priority for my Treasurer. Strange as it seems, this is in itself a policy contrast with Labor.

Last year the Premier made much of her Ministerial Charter of Goals—the priorities she would demand of her cabinet ministers. Among the 40 pages of goals and priorities, nowhere was restoring our AAA credit rating mentioned—not anywhere. Restoring our AAA credit rating was so far removed from the priorities of this government that it did not appear anywhere in 40 pages. When its absence was exposed by the LNP, suddenly as an afterthought the words were added in a column lamely titled 'Other strategic priorities'.

As I said, the loss of our AAA credit rating is costing Queensland an additional \$1.2 billion in interest payments—higher interest payments that we are making simply because Labor could not manage the books, higher interest payments that we are making simply because Labor did not heed the clear warnings. Queensland did not lose its AAA credit rating because of some global situation; otherwise every other state would have lost their AAA credit rating. We lost our AAA credit rating simply because of the economic mismanagement by Labor—the sort of mismanagement you get from putting a junior minister in charge of the state's finances.

The government's Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility says that protecting Queensland's AAA credit rating is 'an integral part of the government's commitment to the community'. Well, the Treasurer has failed to deliver on the most integral part of his charter—the same Treasurer who ignored the warnings of the credit agencies. Let us remember what Standard & Poor's, the rating agency, said on 20 February 2009, when Queensland became the only mainland state to be stripped of its AAA credit rating. It said—

Queensland's balance sheet is unlikely to remain consistent with a 'AAA' rating. Standard & Poor's has previously indicated that the rating would be under pressure if net financial liabilities as a proportion of operating revenue reach 100%-110%.

I repeat: 'Standard & Poor's had previously indicated'. In other words, they warned this Labor government and warned this Labor Treasurer. What did this Treasurer do? He carried on like the chipmunk he was this morning. He laughed and said that he knew better. That is how he carries on in this House.

Mr Springborg: A chipmunk on speed.

Mr LANGBROEK: A chipmunk on speed—I take the interjection. To ensure there was no doubting the economic buffoonery of this Labor Treasurer, three months later Moody's also stripped Queensland of its cherished AAA credit rating. On 20 May, Moody's specifically said—

The lack of a medium-term strategy to restore budgetary performance and financial flexibility also contributes to the rating downgrade.

So there was not even a government financial strategy to pay back debt, and we know we will not see one today. To think that this Premier actually sends our Treasurer overseas as our economic ambassador! How embarrassing is that? What else did Moody's say? They said—

The downgrade reflects the state's deteriorating financial and debt performance ... and financial flexibility.

There we have it. This is not the opposition's assessment of the government; that is the credit rating agency's assessment. So the Treasurer will come in here at 2.30 this afternoon and deliver another budget that we know will give us more debt, that will give us another tax and more deficit. The debt is still going to be \$83½ billion in 2013-14 because Labor cannot manage the debt. All they are good for is debt and taxes.

LOTE in State Schools

Ms CROFT (Broadwater—ALP) (11.52 am): It is my pleasure to rise to speak for the first time in this House on my new responsibility as the Parliamentary Secretary for Education. I thank the Premier for giving me the opportunity to serve in this capacity for the Bligh government during what is an exciting time for education in Queensland. I am committed to visiting as many schools as possible. Recently I visited Burleigh Heads State School, Miami State High School and Varsity College on the Gold Coast. At the recent community cabinet I was pleased to visit Rockhampton State High School and enjoyed the opportunity to tour the school's newly renovated science block. During these visits I also had the privilege of stepping back into the classrooms of two of these schools that offer an immersion program for languages other than English, LOTE. The students at Varsity College on the Gold Coast and Rockhampton State High School, who do immersion programs in Chinese and Japanese respectively, just blew me away with their talents.

For those who do not know, a language immersion program sees students conduct other curriculum subjects such as math and science in a second language. So these students were not only learning their normal workload in math and science but learning it in Chinese or Japanese, which really is a feat that should be commended. The immersion program at Varsity College, as Executive Principal Jeff Davis will tell anyone, has added extraordinarily to the abilities of children involved. Mr Davis informed me that students study social studies, math and science and portions of other subjects such as drama all in Mandarin. Mandarin is chosen as one of the most spoken languages in the world, and students get involved in the cultural side of things by participating in study tours to China. The school also has a sister school relationship with three other Chinese schools and is developing a state-of-the-art language centre for students' digital learning.

This school is a great example to parents and the community that learning another language is an invaluable part of the curriculum. Of the students who do this program at Varsity College, most of them are in years 6, 7 and 8, which are the key years in which the Bligh government is committed to offering mandatory LOTE. This government recently announced the restoration of mandatory LOTE in these years, with 90 per cent of Queensland state schools teaching languages in these years by the start of 2011 and the remainder coming on board in 2012. Offering mandatory LOTE is crucial to a 21st century education which will help our students participate even more confidently in an increasingly globalised world.

The Queensland government knows that learning a language helps students gain skills that have intellectual, social and cultural benefits. Mr Davis from Varsity College explains that students who learn a language, whether it be in an immersion program or otherwise, increase their lateral thinking, problem solving and cognitive skills by huge degrees. As I witnessed myself, learning languages also helps with how students discuss and understand other subjects, including English itself. Students learn grammar, sentence structure and other technical details about the language itself but are also introduced to other cultures and given a window into other worlds.

Schools across the state offer different languages for different reasons. These reasons could be cultural or, in the case of Asian languages, they make sense given Australia's regional neighbours. Importantly, the restoration of languages in the middle schooling years will recognise that Indigenous languages and Auslan, or sign language, are also legitimate options for student study. I have seen how important learning a second language can be and even for a few years studied Japanese myself.

This is about offering students in state schools the full range of subjects that they need to place them in a globalised society, and the Bligh government recognises just how important that is. When the national curriculum comes online, the important status of languages will be confirmed, and our students will continue to learn in a world-class curriculum. It is wonderful to see students participating in language study, and I am proud to advise the parliament of this government's commitment to our students through LOTE.

Pipeliner Park

Mr WENDT (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.57 am): I alert the House this morning to the fortunate position I was in on Saturday morning when I attended Esk, a beautiful town in the Somerset valley. I was there with Graeme Lehmann, the Mayor of the Somerset Regional Council, and his councillors; as well as Peter Taylor, the Mayor of the Toowoomba Regional Council; Paul Antonio, his deputy; Peter McManamon, the CEO of LinkWater Projects; and a number of distinguished guests and of course lots of community members. We were there to open Pipeliner Park. Pipeliner Park was the government's and the councils' way of saying thank you to the people of Esk for their support and patience during the construction of the recent Esk-Toowoomba pipeline.

As most members in this House would recall, in early 2007 Toowoomba as a city was close to running out of fresh drinking water. There are about 125,000 people in Toowoomba and they were directly reliant on dwindling supplies of less than 10 per cent in their dams, and that has been spoken about many times in this House. It was actually a critical situation for a major south-eastern hub and something that could not be allowed to continue. With that in mind, the Queensland government made the commitment at that time to provide a safe, secure and reliable supply of drinking water to Toowoomba and the surrounding districts.

Going forward, the Queensland government provided a financial contribution of about \$190 million, which is not insignificant, and commissioned its specialist water infrastructure provider, LinkWater Projects, to establish the Toowoomba Pipeline Alliance. That of course was made up of partners Clough Projects, WDS and AECOM. The resulting pipeline is about 38 kilometres long and now links Wivenhoe Dam to Cressbrook Dam. It took only about 10 months—just short of a year—contained about 3,325 pieces of pipeline and took more than 620,000 hours to construct. I can assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the project has worked. Since the pipeline was turned on by the Premier in January, Cressbrook Dam's levels have risen from under eight per cent at the time to about 19 per cent on Saturday, which is a significant contribution.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr WENDT: I take the interjections from members. The pipeline has a capacity of about 14,200 megalitres per year, but in the first year we are going to concentrate on about 10,000 megalitres to make sure everything is okay. That means it will actually pump around 27 megalitres of water per day, with Toowoomba using between 20 and 25 megalitres. There is a little bit of spare capacity. That is why dam levels are increasing.

The construction of the project gave an estimated \$11.5 million economic boost to the region through the purchase of goods and services and 30 per cent of the workforce was employed from the local area. The project team also understood the importance of supporting the community which supported them in great kind. The alliance repaired drainage problems at Esk State School and created an Indigenous heritage garden for them. It helped the Esk kindergarten with some work on its playground facilities. It provided access to the state forest for UQ Gatton to conduct research into the habitat of the red deer. It worked with the Nanango State High School which bred tiny little bugs that will feed on cat's claw, which is a local weed. Of course, one of the greatest gifts for the people of Esk was Pipeliner Park, which is where I was on Saturday.

The park has a playground and bike track for the kids. There is heaps of space to run around which is fantastic. There are exercise stations and cycle tracks, barbecues and picnic spots, an area for markets and food stalls and water-sensitive urban design elements which will allow water to be filtered, processed and conserved on-site, therefore minimising run-off and waste. The best part of all is that it has a turfed amphitheatre, which is where we held the opening.

One of the other great celebrations to come out of the opening of the magnificent park is that it reopens the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. As everybody here knows, I am chair of that facility. This trail is an outstanding contribution to Queensland's green space. The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail was part of the Queensland government's investment in outdoor recreation in South-East Queensland.

Just over 20 years ago the last of the old rail motors travelled along the Brisbane Valley line. Before that, even older steam trains were used on the line. The old Brisbane Valley rail corridor is being redeveloped, as everyone knows. It is about 148 kilometres long and about half of it has been opened so far. I have had the pleasure of travelling along many kilometres of the trail in the northern part of my electorate. I can tell members that it is an outstanding contribution to green space. A number of local groups are heavily involved in recreational activities on that trail. Of particular note is ATHRA, the

Australian Trail Horse Riders Association. A couple of weeks ago I led off a ride from Fernvale. There were about 70 riders from a number of states who travelled from Fernvale right through to Blackbutt. They camped for four or five nights along the way in some of our towns. It was an outstanding success again. Hopefully, we will be doing many more of those in the future. This is all part of Pipeliner Park in the future.

Queensland Health, Payroll System

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—LNP) (12.02 pm): On 24 March 2010 Queensland Health's SAP payroll system was to go live and pay Queensland Health employees. In fact, what it did from day one was crash, leaving thousands of employees either without full pay or without any pay. Queensland Health processes more than 75,000 individual staff payments every fortnight. Yet the officials of Queensland Health failed to follow standard compliance procedures, placing thousands of employees at risk of not receiving their pay on time, in full or at all, and with deductions paid. This affected not only doctors and nurses but cleaners, cooks, maintenance workers and others.

On the first run of the new system 72,500 pays were proposed. But by 1 April this year 3,803 manual pays had to be made to employees who had not received their normal pay. That equates to over five per cent of employees. The minister's first response to this crisis was that it was not his fault, it was someone else's responsibility and it was not a matter that he should be responsible for. Meanwhile employees of the health department continued not to be paid or not paid their full entitlements.

Queensland Health employees violently did not agree with the minister. They held—and hold—the minister and the government accountable for the incredible bungle that has impacted on their lives and on their families' lives and which could result in bad credit ratings and nonpayment of mortgage repayments, insurance premiums, health cover and other deductions.

Just how much of a disaster this is and the level of unpreparedness can be judged from a number of points. It was acknowledged that pay slips were so complicated that a DVD was produced, and a series of satellite broadcasts explaining the document were held. By 18 April 2010 tens of thousands of adjustments had been processed to correct pays. By the end of April, staffing in the payroll section had increased with further increases of up to 100 additional temporary staff occurring over ensuing weeks, taking staffing levels to over 700.

The matter became so complicated that staff had requested dual computer screens to be deployed at work stations to make it easier and quicker to process pays. The April Queensland Health update reads—

The two screens mean payroll staff can operate two systems simultaneously.

By the end of April, an additional 171 extra computer screens had to be deployed to payroll staff, with more screens set to be rolled out.

The steps taken are not those of a competent system but rather highlight an incompetent government. In addition, the government was forced, through public pressure, to put in place an inquiry into the collapse, headed by KPMG. The inquiry was to provide an independent review of the implementation of the new Queensland Health payroll system. By mid-May 2010 this inquiry was scrapped with the matter being referred to the Auditor-General. I will not go into detail, but let me state that the Auditor-General cannot deliver the forensic examination of the payroll system development and its implementation as the health minister said of the second stage of the KPMG review.

Queensland Health has given a name to the process to fix this problem. It is called the 'payroll stabilisation project'. May I suggest that a title that is more apt and would reflect the reality would be 'the Titanic'.

'Frequently asked questions' is the subject of a separate six-page document with some 24 questions. If there was a document highlighting incompetence this is it. One of the headings is: 'How can I find out how to read the new pay slip?' It appears no-one, not even Queensland Health, can understand what is, in essence, a critical document which should explain simply an employee's entitlements and tax position.

On 25 May 2010 an update issued by Queensland Health said—

Queensland Health has engaged KPMG to provide advice regarding the options for the Payroll Operating Model and the Roadmap that describes the way the preferred model should be implemented.

This statement was made two months after the first pay cycle and its wording clearly shows that the government is no closer to fixing this problem. One could conclude that the next stage of this disaster is about to unfurl—the end of the financial year and the requirement to file income tax returns.

Some time ago I asked for an independent inquiry to be established and headed by a retired judge. This inquiry would look at all aspects of the implementation and bring home to roost those who are responsible for what has taken place. At the end of the day, this minister has stood in this House on many occasions and said that health workers should be paid properly and adequately. I agree with that.

(Time expired)

Disability Services

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (12.07 pm): I was delighted to be present last Wednesday, 2 June at the launch of the Inclusive Future for People with a Disability together with the Premier and the Minister for Disability Services, Annastacia Palaszczuk. We all remember the wonderful and real advances made to the lives of people with a disability during the breaking down the barriers campaign—in my view, one of the most successful campaigns in bringing to the forefront the issues facing people with a disability and their families. Therefore, it was extremely pleasing to be present with the Premier and the minister to announce that a record \$1.61 billion would be allocated for disability and community care services in Queensland, up from \$1.4 billion last financial year.

This 15.2 per cent increase in funding puts Queensland in a strong position to ensure that even more people get a service, which I know will be well received in my electorate of Brisbane Central. This record spend will result in better care and support for many Queenslanders and their families in the area of disability and community care where early, excellent and essential services are crucial for people with a disability to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives.

Total funding announced last week includes around \$529 million for Home and Community Care, around \$28.6 million for community mental health services, \$4.4 million to support young people with a disability leaving school, \$3.2 million to support people with spinal cord injuries, \$2.9 million for early intervention and support services for the families of children with a disability, \$1 million for the community living initiative to help people with a disability to live independently in the community, and \$1 million to create new autism early intervention centres in Bundaberg and Mackay.

Already Queensland is leading the way when it comes to diverting younger people with a disability from aged-care facilities, and so far 100 younger people have been assisted to move or to be diverted from aged-care facilities into supported accommodation, enabling them to live independently in the community. However, there is no doubt that more needs to be done, and I welcome wholeheartedly even more help to more people making the transition to independent living, which improves their quality of life while freeing up aged-care beds. After all, what could be more important than giving children a better start in life, helping young and adult Queenslanders to retain their independence, and supporting families and carers? That is why it was extremely pleasing to welcome the release of the draft *10-year plan for supporting Queenslanders with a disability* for public feedback to build on the work already underway. The 10-year plan proposes 10 priorities and strategies to improve access to transport, education, health care, housing, employment, social, arts, sport and recreational pursuits. This plan is now out in the community for consultation and I encourage all stakeholders in the community to provide their valued feedback and comments. There will be forums held throughout the state in order to give Queenslanders an opportunity to have their say.

We all know that our children are our future, and also released on the day was *Building bright futures: an action plan for children with a disability—birth to eight years 2010-13*. This plan focuses on delivering more responsive and better targeted supports and services to children with a disability and their families. The early years of a child's life have a significant impact on their future health, development, learning and wellbeing. Building Bright Futures aims to connect families to the supports and services they need to meet their child's disability support needs and maximise developmental opportunity. There are five priority areas identified through consultation with families, non-government service providers and government agencies such as access to information, early intervention services, services in rural and regional areas, a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, and a strong evidence base about what really is working. The Department of Communities will work with relevant government and non-government service providers to implement the action plan and to promote social inclusion of children with a disability and their families.

I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the parents, carers and non-government service providers for the continued valuable and meaningful work they undertake day in and day out in the disability sector. There are many service providers in my electorate whose input into the draft 10-year plan will be greatly received and valued. These service providers provide excellent and life-changing essential services, and I also thank the volunteers and dedicated hardworking staff who, together with families and carers, make a real difference. Your efforts are recognised and greatly valued.

(Time expired)

Bligh Labor Government

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.12 pm): Last election Premier Bligh and Labor promised that Queenslanders could count on them. Twelve months later, Queenslanders are counting—and they are finding less money in their pockets but there is also another hand in there with sticky fingers clawing at their hard-earned dollars, and it belongs to the Premier of Queensland, Anna Bligh. The only things that Queenslanders can count on from Labor are hikes in registration, hikes in petrol prices with the loss of the fuel tax rebate, hikes in electricity, hikes in tolls, hikes in public transport fares, hikes in water bills and hikes in general charges. And why? Because this Labor team has mismanaged

the boom years and now is raiding the household savings of every mum and dad, every pensioner or self-funded retired Queensland, small business owner or student. Altogether households are being whacked with a government fuel price rise of about \$1,200 extra this year, according to estimates. The Premier and her Labor team shrug their shoulders and tell people, 'Tough luck!' But I ask people in the street and I ask people in the community, and they say that they do not think they are getting value for money with these huge price hikes. They respond with a resounding anger that this is unfounded and that they should not be hit with these costs because they are not seeing value for money.

Under Labor, Queensland is now the most expensive state in Australia to own and operate a car. That is a broken promise of Labor, and Queenslanders deserve better. The average household will be paying about \$220 more this year in running costs. With the removal of the petrol tax rebate, Queensland's fuel tax-free status is lost—another broken promise. This means that Queensland now has some of the most expensive petrol in Australia and registration fees. I table a list of a range of these price hikes under Labor.

Tabled paper: Document listing registration, toll, go card, and driver's licence costs [\[2333\]](#).

Registration fees have seen the cost of running a vehicle increase by up to 24 per cent. Tolls have gone up by more than 30 per cent as at July 2010. In terms of the go card for public transport, there have also been huge increases, with some tickets going up by more than 40 per cent. Depending on how one configured their travel before, there are people who as regular commuters are finding that they are paying up to \$1,000 more because of the loss of some of the capped fares they previously had. These are huge increases, and they are hurting people. Driver's licences is the next one to come. This Labor government promised the so-called smart card, but guess what? It has a pretty smart price tag attached to it. It is going to more than double the cost of a Queensland driver's licence, and all for what? A so-called smart chip which does what? Well, not much actually, because when we ask members of the government what it does they say, 'We're future proofing.' They cannot tell us! This is a bungled project—one that was started for a promise of more and all we are getting is more costs and not more service. This project started out at less than \$20 million and now has blown out to more than \$100 million, and this is why Queenslanders are being asked to pay more.

With regard to the driver's licence hike, I have initiated an e-petition on the parliamentary website, and I have hard copies of it as well. I urge people to go to the parliamentary website—www.parliament.qld.gov.au—to add their voice on this issue. Did the transport minister, Rachel Nolan, or main roads minister, Craig Wallace, stand up to their cabinet colleagues and say, 'Hang on a moment. These costs are hurting people. They're unsustainable'? No! They ignored the pleas of the people and they ignored the waste and mismanagement which has occurred under their watch, such as the \$800 million cost blow-out on the Ipswich Motorway, which is equivalent to 4,000 kilometres of rural and regional roadway upgrades. As I have mentioned, there is also the blow-out of the so-called smart licence, and they rubber-stamped their approval for the price hikes the same way they rubber-stamped the Premier's decision to sell out Queensland Rail, the ports and motorways—*income-earning assets* which have traditionally offset the costs borne by taxpayers.

It is time that Labor and its mates got their sticky fingers out of the pockets of Queensland motorists. The answer is about better management, not wasting the valuable money of Queensland taxpayers. Our plan is to restore Queensland's future and get the sticky fingers of this Labor government out of people's pockets. It is time to appreciate the cost of each hard-earned dollar of Queenslanders rather than treating them like milch cows to bleed when you cannot manage the budget. It is time to value professional public servants with a particular focus on rebuilding in-house engineering capacity in Transport and Main Roads so these ridiculous cost blow-outs and politicised decisions—

(Time expired)

Townsville Marine Precinct

Ms JOHNSTONE (Townsville—ALP) (12.17 pm): Tuesday, 25 May saw the official sod turning which signalled the commencement of the long-awaited Townsville Marine Precinct. This \$110 million project is the culmination of years of planning and preparing for the port access road, of which one section is already completed and on which work is already underway in the approach to the Ross River and the Port of Townsville. This bypass will take heavy vehicles off our residential roads at both Wulguru and through Oonoonba, Railway Estate and South Townsville. Railway Avenue and Boundary Street residents will be offered the most relief when the port access road is completed in mid-2012. The construction of the 34-hectare marine precinct, which will be completed by the end of 2011, will preserve 500 existing jobs in marine industries and will generate 400 new jobs during construction. The project is being developed under an alliance agreement between Laing O'Rourke and the Port of Townsville. The Townsville Marine Precinct provides sustainability for the existing Ross River marine businesses. The program of works has been carefully planned and has enough leeway to ensure that the new marine precinct will be ready in plenty of time to allow for the port access road construction to proceed on schedule.

The location of the marine precinct has been selected to fit in with the future expansion of the port. The port is looking to expand away from the city—not towards it—and this site has long been designated for future commercial marine industry development. The precinct will have an impact on public access to the beach at Benwell Road. The port has, however, worked hard to address these matters of public access and to the coastline in the environmental impact statement for the marine precinct. It is the port's intention that some areas of Benwell Road beach may remain available until later stages of the marine precinct are developed, subject to operational and safety requirements by the port access road and the marine precinct construction.

However, it has to be recognised that this land has been made available for public use. It is port land and has been long designated for development for port purposes. The state, the port and the council have reached an agreement to provide for community facilities on the upstream Ross River land that will be vacated by industries relocating to the marine precinct. The project will provide a direct economic boost to the city and the region. By co-locating marine industries in a purpose-built facility, it also offers potential for industry growth and development.

This project also offers an important opportunity to reshape the upstream use of the river, with a focus on new boating and recreational facilities. The project sees the state government committing to building 12 new boat ramps, two pontoons and 250 parking spaces as part of the marine precinct project. The Townsville City Council is to contribute to the cost of the associated land facilities of the boat ramps.

During the past year the issue of recreational boating facilities in Townsville has been one of my highest priorities. For many years boaties have been campaigning strongly for increased facilities both above and below water. The new boating facilities contained in the Townsville Marine Precinct will be good for boaties, but they will also be good for the Townsville economy, because better boating facilities means more boats and that means more jobs in the boating equipment, fish tackle and bait supply industries.

Trailer parking is sorely underresourced and the coastal topography of Townsville's inner city has limited practical and available sites where any new boat ramps or trailer parks could be constructed. The planning for the marine precinct has been in turbulent times, to say the least. The government's decision to fast-track the port access road was well received but it shortened the time line for the marine precinct to be constructed to allow for the relocation of the upstream marine users prior to the bridge going across. This was all unfolding in the middle of the global financial meltdown.

The Queensland government is showing its confidence in the future of the north's marine and fishing industries in addition to the anticipated growth in port trade. Planning done by the Port of Townsville estimates that activity and trade at the port will treble over the next 25 years. The trade potential and opportunities allowed by the marine precinct cannot be underestimated in a city that boasts a diversity of industry as its key economic strength.

But it is not just diversity of industry that makes Townsville appealing. I will continue to remind people that Townsville remains a very liveable city, and having access to quality recreational facilities is critical to Townsville's appeal. Over the past 10 years the city has evolved, and the vision shown with the transformation of the Strand is just one example. Currently, Townsville is a construction zone. Thanks to the state government, work is well underway on the Flinders Street redevelopment, project planning is almost complete on the Jezzine Barracks precinct, hundreds of new social housing dwellings are underway and now we have construction commencing on the marine precinct. This government is committed to the task of reforming and strengthening our finances while building infrastructure that Queenslanders can be confident will secure future growth in places such as Townsville.

Managed Investment Scheme Plantation Forestry Properties; Moresby and East Palmerston State Schools

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (12.22 pm): I rise to address two issues that are of importance to my electorate of Hinchinbrook. The first is also an issue of importance to North Queensland as a region. Two weeks ago, I toured my electorate documenting the absolutely disgraceful state of disrepair of failed managed investment scheme plantation forestry properties in the Herbert River district, the Tully district and the Innisfail district.

Last week I wrote to several state and federal ministers to lodge a formal complaint about the disastrous land management practices of several MIS companies, a number of which have now gone into receivership, which have established plantation forestry properties across North Queensland. These failed MIS companies have left behind an environmental disaster on a massive scale, with pest weeds and feral animals thriving unchecked, creating huge problems for neighbouring landowners and a serious fire risk. The MIS companies have replaced thousands of hectares of good-quality farmland with plantation forestry. There is also the issue of derelict cane that they have failed to remove which risks harbouring and spreading sugarcane diseases such as smut.

I believe that DERM has been negligent in allowing these properties of MIS companies to fall into such a terrible state of disrepair. The Bligh government is being hypocritical, following 12 months of imposing several layers of regulation on North Queensland farmers for supposedly being responsible for hurting the Great Barrier Reef. But it has ignored the abject failure of these absentee landowners to meet basic land management standards. Although private landowners in North Queensland have had new regulations imposed on them over the past 12 months, DERM has done nothing in respect of these MIS companies. The Bligh government has been fully aware that these MIS companies are failing miserably to do basic maintenance.

DEEDI has agreements in place with these MIS companies to run plantation forestry trials on these properties, including at Abergowrie in my electorate. It demonstrates terrible double standards on the part of the Bligh government. Owing to the height and volume of unmanaged pest weeds on some MIS properties, local landowners have expressed serious concerns about the risk of fires in the coming dry season and the damage that they could cause to neighbouring farms. Now that these MIS companies are going broke, they are dumping the costs of managing their properties on neighbouring landowners. Given the economic cost, the environmental damage and the fire safety concerns involved and the sheer scale and size of the problem, I believe that it is fair to say that we have an emergency on our hands in North Queensland.

The second issue that I want to canvass is the advice that I received from the Minister for Education last week that Education Queensland will be conducting a review of the viability of East Palmerston State School and Moresby State School in my electorate of Hinchinbrook. In the first instance, I am extremely disappointed that less than two years after Moresby State School was last forced to endure a review of its viability—and survived—it is subjected to yet another viability review by the Bligh Labor government. If there is one thing that undermines confidence in a school and disrupts and distresses school communities, it is the threat of a school closing. Currently, enrolments at Moresby State School are at 16. Only one student will leave the school, having completed year 7 at the end of 2010, and at least four new students will commence the prep year in 2011. A simple phone call by EQ to the school would have avoided this unjustified review and its associated disruption to the school.

At East Palmerston State School, news of the viability review has certainly upset the school community, in particular the parents of several students who have brought to me stories of the significant progress that their child with learning difficulties has made under the guidance of the teaching principal of this small school, who has been able to provide more time, individual attention and support to these children with special needs when other larger schools have been unable to provide a conducive learning environment. Parents are entitled to make choices about their child's education and that includes sending their child to a small school to take advantage of this opportunity. Some parents choose to drive past other schools to send their child to East Palmerston State School, such is the reputation that it has earned of providing a supportive learning environment for students with special needs.

Currently, East Palmerston State School has 18 students. Other schools in the district are more than 20 kilometres away—a journey that would put these students on the Palmerston and Bruce highways, Henderson Drive and the Innisfail-Japoonvale Road for almost 50 kilometres every day when it is totally unnecessary. Indeed, \$300,000 is being spent at both Moresby State School and East Palmerston State School to construct new facilities and to refurbish classrooms and other school facilities under the Commonwealth government's stimulus package. Today, I want to say to the Minister for Education that I will provide every support I can to the P&C associations of Moresby State School and East Palmerston State School to prevent these two great little schools from closing.

Keppel Electorate, Community Cabinet

Mr HOOLIHAN (Keppel—ALP) (12.27 pm): People of any democratic state benefit from their ability to interact with their government and to have contact with their elected members and their governing cabinet. Since 1998, Labor governments in Queensland have conducted community cabinets and public community forums in regional areas. Even though there is a financial cost to conducting these regional meetings, no Queenslanders could dispute that many people who would not have any opportunity to meet with their cabinet ministers appreciate the bringing of their senior elected representatives to meet with them.

Just as Captain James Cook landed in Keppel Bay 240 years ago on 30 May and the iconic Singing Ship at Emu Park had been operating for 40 years on the same day, the 24th community cabinet held its community forum at Emu Park. The last community cabinet was held in March 2004 in Yeppoon. It was the first community cabinet of the 51st Parliament. The people of Emu Park appreciated the fact that the government had acknowledged their place in Queensland and had honoured their town with their presence. Mother Nature turned on her best weather, which makes the Capricorn region one of our state's great secrets. Even the member for Barron River, who represents an area of great beauty in North Queensland, marvelled at the beaches and beachfront areas.

Local people were somewhat concerned that their town had been targeted for a protest, which diminished their ability to showcase their town and region. But they respect people's democratic right to protest. It was sad that the protesters chose to continue their chants during the welcome to country by Auntie Cindy Williams of the Darumbal people and the presentation by Gaebriel Hanlon and the Yeppoon State High School band. Incidentally, our high school band is one of the best in the state which people can check from the records of Fanfare competitions over recent years. Many thanks to Jeanette Douglas and Gaebriel and the band.

There were 182 formal deputations sought. It was one of the largest groups of deputations since community cabinets commenced. They were held in Emu Park on Sunday and with parliamentary secretaries and senior bureaucrats at the PCYC in Rockhampton on 31 May. There were also many unofficial deputations that really are an exercise in democracy, which was greatly appreciated by all who attended. A community reception was held at the CQ NRL bid club in Rockhampton. Certain ministers were late for that gathering because they were still engaged in deputations. That Sunday was a very good night and the people of Rockhampton and the coastal and inland areas appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity to mingle and have discussions with cabinet ministers, parliamentary secretaries, their staff and senior bureaucrats. One positive indication given on that night was that if the CQ NRL bid was successful the government would construct a stadium to cater for the enthusiastic supporters who will follow our CQ team.

Cabinet was held in the Rockhampton sector of Keppel on 31 May at the DEEDI conference centre at DPI. There were some far-reaching decisions made at that cabinet meeting. I believe the beautiful Central Queensland setting and our weather helped those decisions. One in particular has an impact on regional Queensland and that was the moving forward of the regional first homeowners grant implementation to 1 June from 1 July.

Many ministers were able to meet and have productive discussions with many of the stakeholders in their individual portfolios. Full focus of all government departments was on the Central Queensland region. I thank the cabinet for choosing my electorate, together with the Rockhampton electorate, as it also gave me an additional opportunity to discuss ongoing difficulties with relevant ministers. The Premier and Treasurer inspected the old Yeppoon Hospital site and hopefully they will have been able to assist with funding in the budget to demolish the building and return the site to an area for community enjoyment. It is right next to an all-abilities playground, incidentally. Confirmation of further boat ramp and pontoon work at Rosslyn Bay Harbour was given by the transport minister and I was pleased to welcome the acting environment minister, Anastacia Palaszczuk, to launch the Byfield National Park Management Plan. She travelled to the Five Rocks area early in the morning before the launch and I believe she was taken by its beauty and will be back.

Ms Palaszczuk: Absolutely!

Mr HOOLIHAN: These are some of the benefits of having regional community forums and cabinet meetings and it really does focus on individual regions. On behalf of my constituents in Keppel and the people of Rockhampton I thank the Premier, cabinet members, parliamentary secretaries, their staff and departmental officers for continuing to support and care for regional Queenslanders and enhancing the democratic process for many central Queenslanders.

Woolooga-Eerwah Vale, High-Voltage Electricity Transmission Line

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (12.32 pm): People who want to make a submission on Powerlink's proposed new high-voltage electricity transmission line from Woolooga to Eerwah Vale in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast have until 5 pm tomorrow to make their submission. One of the problems we have is that the community action committee, which has a proposed alternative electricity transmission corridor, has been unable to take Powerlink's senior representatives on an inspection of their proposed new alternative corridor. I understand that the invitation to Powerlink to undertake this inspection has been submitted on a number of occasions and, as recently as this morning, my advice is that Powerlink representatives still refuse to inspect the alternative corridor with committee representatives.

I cannot understand why Powerlink senior management continue to refuse to accept an open invitation from my constituents. It will not be a media circus. We will not be disrespectful during the inspection process. As an example of our good faith, I simply refer members to the inspection that occurred in late March when the minister's parliamentary secretary travelled to the Sunshine Coast and spent approximately one hour inspecting the proposed alternative corridor that we have invited Powerlink's senior representatives to inspect. There was no media ambush. Everyone was very respectful and very dignified in their presentation.

All that the action committee and I as their representative ask is that Powerlink come and undertake an inspection. I ask the minister to request Powerlink to undertake not only a guided inspection but also accommodate our request for a further extension of 14 days so that Powerlink can inspect the alternative corridor and the community members who wish to make a further submission are able to make a further submission to the proposed alternative corridor.

Powerlink will in due course apply for ministerial designation so that the land to be affected by this proposed new powerline can be identified as community infrastructure. We believe that it is appropriate and totally necessary that Powerlink representatives undertake this offer of an inspection. In relation to community consultation on this proposed corridor, we have seen a lot of talk from Powerlink's representatives and their consultants on their community consultation. I am asking members and the minister to consider by way of a comparison the level of community consultation Powerlink has been prepared to undertake when the community has presented a viable, realistic, alternative corridor which is contained within a national infrastructure corridor.

All I am asking on behalf of my constituents is for the minister to grant a further 14 days extension so that Powerlink representatives will be able to hopefully hear my request, come and do the inspection and then community representatives will be able to respond by way of a further submission to the minister and to Powerlink.

Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (12.35 pm): There is an old country and western song that has the line *Some days are diamonds, some days are rust*. As every hardworking local member will tell you, it is the diamond days that make our job so rewarding. Last week I had a red-letter, solid gold, diamond day. It was one of those Whitsunday mornings that make you know why you stay through the hot, sweaty summers: a slight chill in the air, the sky a deep clear blue, the ocean a sparkling turquoise hue with barely a ripple to disturb the lazy rising tide. Thus was the day and I was off to Whitehaven Beach with the Minister for Tourism, representatives of the local traditional owners, the Ngaro people, and a number of officers from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

The occasion was the official opening of Queensland's newest great walk, the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail. From its conception in August 2007 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, led by project manager David Harper, has designed and constructed the most magnificent great walk ever. The Ngaro Sea Trail is a unique combination of seaways and short walks literally following in the steps of the traditional land and sea owners, the Ngaro people. The Ngaro are island people who inhabited the islands and waters of the Whitsundays and it was especially poignant to have representatives of the elders with us on the day. They have played a huge role in advising Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service about the cultural significance of the area. The trail includes special insights into the relationship between the Ngaro people and their landscape. For example, at Nara Inlet on Hook Island a 30-minute walk takes visitors to a rock shelter featuring Ngaro art motifs and cultural deposits. A newly constructed boardwalk, viewing area and interpretive displays, which include a listening post with recordings of traditional owners, acknowledge the indelible connection between Ngaro and environment. The new viewing platform at Tongue Point is equally located in a culturally significant area for the Ngaro people. I do not know that there is a more beautiful vista in the world than the outlook across Hill Inlet and down along Whitehaven Beach. I wish I had a dollar for every photograph that has been taken from here to be shared with family and friends from all over the world.

The trail wanders across waters between three Whitsunday islands and features seven different walking tracks of varying difficulty. The most challenging is the walk to Whitsunday Cairn on Whitsunday Island. This four-kilometre round trip ascends a steep path to a stunning rocky outcrop at the highest point on the island. Needless to say, the 360 degree views from the cairn are breathtaking and apparently well worth the effort. I say 'apparently' because I confess to being far from fit enough to take it on but you never know, maybe one day.

For those who choose to take their time to experience the trail in a leisurely manner, camping grounds are available close to the trail heads. In fact, while the walk itself cost \$1.27 million to construct, about \$2 million has been spent upgrading and improving amenities such as camping sites, toilets and viewing platforms associated with the trail. The Ngaro Sea Trail is a complete experience that maximises the natural and cultural assets of the Whitsunday islands. The trail was two years in the creation and consists of 8.1 kilometres of newly constructed tracks, 110 trail markers, three new toilets, four information nodes and over 1,400 stone steps. The amazing fact is that the teams who constructed the trail camped out in all sorts of weather to ensure that the project stayed within time and budget.

The stones used to create the steps were located locally and carried into place. Helicopters were used to bring in gravel, concrete and other necessities, with parcels dropped from above to the teams of QPWS workers below. One of the key principles guiding the state government's Great Walks project is to encourage economic benefit to the local community, so it is fantastic to hear that this project has already attracted the attention of 16 commercial businesses that are interested in conducting tours or transport along the trail. The beauty of this project is that the link between the three islands can be provided by sail, motorboat, kayak or jet ski, all of which offer a unique business opportunity.

As I am sure members know, the tourism sector has been particularly hard hit by the fallout from the GFC. Areas like the Whitsundays, where tourism is the mainstay of the local community, are finding the way ahead particularly challenging, so the timing of the opening of our second Great Walk in the Whitsundays could not have been better. The Whitsunday Ngaro sea trail is a fabulous ecotourism opportunity for local business and it will give us another string in the bow to promote the outstanding natural beauty of the area. Therefore, it was entirely fitting that the Minister for Tourism was on Whitehaven Beach to officially open the trail. We were there with representatives of the traditional owners on that beautiful day.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (12.40 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003 and the Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 for particular purposes. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill [2334].

Tabled paper: Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [2335].

Second Reading

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (12.40 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Queensland is exposed to a wide range of disasters, each with the potential to inflict significant damage on Queensland communities. During 2009-10, Queensland was impacted by tropical cyclones Olga, Neville and Ului and monsoonal flooding occurred across the north and in coastal regions. Earlier this year, South-West Queensland was inundated by one of the worst floods in living memory. As a result of these events, natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements were activated for 67 of Queensland's 73 local government areas.

Queensland communities need to be resilient in the face of natural hazards such as cyclones, bushfires, floods and storm surges and the threat from human-caused events, such as the *Pacific Adventurer* oil spill off Moreton Island last year and the more recent *Shen Neng 1* grounding on the Great Barrier Reef. It is unrealistic to expect one community, one agency or one level of government to be able to respond effectively to the magnitude of such disasters. Effective disaster management requires a collaborative approach with clarity of roles across all levels of government. Local government is the cornerstone of the disaster management system and locally led prevention, preparation, response and recovery, assisted by district and state level strategic coordination and support, remains the most effective way of preparing for and responding to disasters.

As part of the Bligh government's continuous improvement of Queensland's disaster management and response arrangements, the Department of Community Safety commissioned an independent review of legislation and policy. The review assessed the appropriateness of the Disaster Management Act 2003, policies, guidelines and plans, as well as management and accountability issues relating to the State Emergency Service. It concluded that Queensland's disaster management system is soundly based and affirmed that local government should remain the cornerstone of our disaster management system, supported by district and state level disaster management groups. It recommended that this bottom-up approach to disaster management should be reflected in the objects of the legislation. A number of recommendations focused on ensuring an effective and timely response to disasters, including amendments to allow for verbal declarations of disaster situations and to proactively declare disaster situations.

This bill enshrines in legislation key recommendations from the review, as well as other amendments proposed as part of the Bligh government's ongoing enhancement of the state's disaster preparedness and response capability. It establishes guiding principles for effective disaster management. It includes the requirement for disaster management planning to occur across all four phases of disaster management: prevention, preparation, response and recovery. It also includes the principle that all events, whether natural or human caused, should be managed using the state's disaster management framework, including the State Disaster Management Plan and any disaster management guidelines prepared by the chief executive, DCS, under the act. Finally, the bill clarifies the relationships between local, district and state groups.

The bill contains a number of amendments to the roles in disaster management groups. These amendments implement the key recommendation from the review report that the Queensland Police Service take on an increased operational role with Emergency Management Queensland, EMQ, to focus on ensuring there is an effective disaster management framework in place. The amendments also make other changes to the groups to remove positions that do not need to be referred to in legislation and create new roles to recognise current practice. These amendments include: transferring responsibility for providing an executive officer of the State Disaster Management Group to the Queensland Police Service, and the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service will appoint an executive officer to support the SDMG; transfer of the functions of the executive officer variously to the chief executive of the Department of Community Safety, the State Disaster Management Group, the chairperson of the State Disaster Management Group and the State Disaster Coordinator; providing that there will be a member on the State Disaster Management Group nominated by the Local Government Association of Queensland; providing that chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of district disaster management groups will be appointed by the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service rather than the Governor in Council; providing that the executive officer in a district disaster management group will be a person appointed by the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service; creation of the role of local disaster coordinator in a local disaster management group; providing for the functions of a chairperson of a local disaster management group; and allowing members of disaster management groups to nominate, with the approval of the group chairperson, deputies to attend meetings in the member's place, ensuring that groups can meet their statutory quorum obligations and continue to operate when members are unavailable.

The bill clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the groups and individuals within the disaster management system. There is a clear delineation of the roles of the QPS and EMQ. The QPS will have primary responsibility for coordinating disaster operations at the state and district levels, and EMQ is assigned a more focused role in mitigation of and preparation for disasters. The State Disaster Management Group is chaired by the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It includes the chief executives of other departments, including the Department of Community Safety and the Queensland Police Service, an appropriately qualified officer of the department who ordinarily will be from EMQ and, for the first time, the Local Government Association of Queensland. This reflects the importance placed on local capability.

The bill creates two new positions to coordinate disaster response and recovery operations on behalf of the state group. Where necessary, a state disaster coordinator may be appointed. This position will be responsible for ensuring, as far as practicable, that the state group's strategic decisions are carried out. The appointee will also provide strategic advice to district disaster coordinators. The state disaster coordinator is focused on the response phase and would ordinarily be an officer of the Queensland Police Service. If necessary, a state recovery coordinator may also be appointed, to oversee community recovery operations. This person may be a government official or a prominent member of the public. These positions are also reflected at local level with the creation of the position of local disaster coordinator. Appointees will coordinate disaster operations for their local disaster management groups. They will be appointed by the chairperson, who will be a local government councillor. The person appointed must be either the chief executive or an employee of the relevant local government. The local disaster coordinator will report to the local group about disaster operations and ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that strategic decisions of the group are carried out.

The bill also introduces the ability for disasters to be declared both proactively and verbally, where necessary. This enhances the ability of the system to respond to rapid onset events with maximum agility and speed. Existing protections will be retained to ensure disasters are only declared where it is necessary, or is likely to be necessary, to exercise declared disaster powers. When a disaster is declared verbally, it must be confirmed in writing, as soon as reasonably practicable. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The ability to create temporary disaster district groups also increases the flexibility, responsiveness and organisational agility of our disaster management arrangements. Major events like cyclones or floods rarely limit their impact to one locality. If a disaster strikes two or more adjoining disaster districts, a temporary disaster district group may be established to manage the response for all districts. The group will include key players such as QPS, relevant local governments, state government departments and others who are considered necessary for effective disaster management.

The bill also makes some amendments to the act to better define the various roles and responsibilities of the partnership between state and local governments in relation to the State Emergency Service (SES). The SES retains a strong connection to local communities. Reflecting that the SES is supported by both state and local governments, the bill will allow the chief executive of the Department of Community Safety to enter into agreements with a local government, outlining each party's roles and responsibilities with respect to the SES unit in the local government area. I am committed to having such agreements established with local governments.

The bill reflects current practice by stating that the chief executive of the DCS is responsible for ensuring the safe and efficient function of the SES, and that local controllers of SES units carry out their functions. It also includes a mechanism for the creation of new SES units, requiring the chief executive of the DCS to consult with the relevant local government and other community representatives before establishing a unit.

Finally, the bill seeks to amend the Public Safety Preservation Act 1986 to allow police officers to declare an emergency situation where a natural hazard, such as a landslide, occurs. This will allow the QPS to respond promptly to rapid onset natural events, pending the declaration of a disaster situation under the Disaster Management Act 2003. This bill builds on the sound foundations that already exist in Queensland and seeks to enhance disaster management to help communities to better cope with the effects of disasters. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Johnson, adjourned.

CARERS (RECOGNITION) AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (12.49 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 for particular purposes. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill [2336].

Tabled paper: Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [2337].

Second Reading

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (12.50 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Bligh government has a strong record of supporting seniors and carers. On 24 May this year at community cabinet on the Gold Coast, the Premier launched Positively Ageless—Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010-20. This strategy introduces Grandparents Day to celebrate the contribution of grandparents and their important role in the community, and establishes a new grandparents information hotline, to be run by Lifeline, to improve information for grandparents about services and resources for grandparents.

The amendments proposed in the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill 2010 today would make Queensland the first state to legislatively recognise grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren. The government proposes amendments to the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 to extend the existing legislation to specifically recognise the interests of grandparents.

There are approximately 14,000 Australian families in which a grandparent or grandparents are the main carers for their grandchildren. These grandparents, many of whom have completed their child-rearing days with their own children, step up to meet their grandchildren's need for stability and continuity of care. Grandchildren may come to live with grandparents for a range of reasons.

The government's bill will:

- extend the definition of carers to recognise grandparents as full-time carers for their grandchildren where the child lives with the grandparent and the grandparent is the primary caregiver and decision maker for the child;
- extend the functions of the Carers Advisory Council, which already exists under provisions of the Queensland carers act, to include working to advance the interests of grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren;
- expand the membership of the Carers Advisory Council to include two positions for grandparent carers providing full-time care for their grandchildren or a representative body of grandparent carers;
- amend the existing Queensland Carers Charter—again established under the Queensland carers act—to include recognition of the invaluable role that grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren play in the lives of their grandchildren, and to include a further two new principles in the charter which would recognise grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren and assure them of access to information that supports them in their role.

The government's bill will also more closely align the Queensland carers act with the recently introduced Commonwealth Carer Recognition Bill in that it will require public authorities to apply the principles of the Queensland Carers Charter in their human resource policies.

We have long recognised the invaluable contribution of all carers who provide ongoing care and assistance to those in need. The Queensland carers act recognises the selfless support of unpaid carers who provide ongoing care to a person because of disability, frailty, chronic illness or pain in the Queensland Carers Charter. The act also establishes the Carers Advisory Council to advance the interests of carers.

Today, through these new amendments we will further strengthen the carers act. The proposed amendments will ensure that strong legislative recognition of grandparent carers is established in Queensland and that there is a practical application of their interests as part of government decision making. As well as the initiatives proposed for grandparents through our seniors strategy, the government's bill represents a tangible and clear legal framework through which to provide grandparent carers with the recognition they well deserve.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hobbs, adjourned.

MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.53 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill [2338].

Tabled paper: Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [2339].

Second Reading

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (12.54 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill 2010, which delivers on the government's commitment to a fair go for Queenslanders who live in manufactured homes.

Honourable members of this parliament have long recognised the need for strong laws to protect people who live in manufactured homes, many of whom are older members of our community and who need security and certainty when it comes to where they live. It has also been recognised that residential parks play an important role in addressing the housing and accommodation challenges facing our rapidly growing state.

The bill is an important milestone in striking the right balance between protecting manufactured home owners and encouraging the viability and growth of an innovative, vibrant residential parks industry. The Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act applies when a person owns their manufactured home but rents the site it is located on from a residential park owner.

A review has been undertaken to ensure that the act is meeting community expectations and that its provisions remain appropriate. The review benefited from an extensive public consultation process involving manufactured home owners, residential park owners, and community and industry representatives. There were also considerable representations made to me by my parliamentary colleagues on behalf of their constituents for which I thank them. I must say that I am grateful to the hundreds of Queenslanders who have shared their experiences and expertise during this consultation process.

This bill proposes important amendments to strengthen provisions of the act that protect the interests of manufactured home owners. Once positioned in a residential park, moving a manufactured home can be an expensive and difficult exercise. After having moved into a park, the opportunity for a homeowner to change providers and get a better deal for themselves is very limited. For this reason, the act needs to provide strong consumer protection. This emphasis will now be made clearer by changing the objects of the act to confirm that protecting the interests of manufactured home owners is its main purpose.

Amendments will also make things clearer for consumers contemplating entering a residential park. For instance, the bill includes amendments to improve the presentation and content of site agreements. This will be achieved through a requirement for site agreements to be clearly expressed in plain language, which will help homeowners better understand their rights and responsibilities. In

addition, the bill proposes a power for particular special terms in site agreements to be prohibited by regulation. This will ensure homeowners are not exploited by special terms that are unreasonable and unnecessarily onerous.

Amendments in the bill will also provide homeowners with more confidence and certainty regarding site rent increases by substantially limiting the grounds on which a park owner may seek an increase in rent outside the terms of a site agreement. A 'market review' of site rent will not be permitted unless it is specifically provided for in the site agreement. This will protect, for example, residents who have entered site agreements which state that the rent will only increase in accordance with the consumer price index.

The bill also strengthens provisions of the act prohibiting park owners from engaging in threatening, intimidating or coercive conduct regarding site rent issues. The act aims to ensure homeowners have a high degree of certainty and security in their right to reside in a park, consistent with the fact that the park land is owned by someone else. Among other things, the act limits the grounds on which site agreements may be terminated and provides for compensation to be payable to homeowners in certain circumstances.

The bill expands the types of orders the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal can make to assist a homeowner facing termination of their site agreement because the park owner has decided to use the land for another purpose. The amendments allow the tribunal to order the park owner to offer another comparable site to the homeowner, if one is available, for the re-positioning of their home. The tribunal may also postpone the termination date for up to 12 months to provide the homeowner with more time to secure an alternative site or accommodation.

The bill also specifically prohibits the establishment of fixed-term site agreements between homeowners and park owners. Fixed-term site agreements are not consistent with the policy intention of the act. They disadvantage homeowners by excluding their entitlement to compensation if the park owner decides to end the homeowner's right to reside in the park because the park owner wishes to use their land for another purpose.

The bill also clarifies the operation of the act with respect to 'converted caravans'. The act is not intended to apply to caravans positioned in residential parks. In fact, the definition of a 'manufactured home' under the act specifically excludes caravans. There is currently uncertainty and apprehension in the industry about the potential for a park owner to be compelled to enter into a manufactured home agreement with a caravan owner who has made significant structural modifications or alterations to their caravan without the park owner's agreement. The bill clarifies the issue by specifically providing that a converted caravan is not a manufactured home under the act.

However, the bill also provides flexibility by allowing converted caravan owners and park owners to enter into a site agreement under the act if that is their agreed preference. The bill will protect the interests of existing converted caravan owners by providing them with a three-year period to seek an order for a site agreement if the person considers their structure meets the current definition of a manufactured home.

The review has highlighted the need for better data about residential parks offering sites for manufactured homes. As a result, the bill includes amendments to allow the chief executive to establish a record of residential parks. The bill also includes a range of minor amendments to improve the operation of the act. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hobbs, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.30 pm.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

Message from Governor

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.30 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2010

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PENELOPE ANNE WENSLEY, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intitled—

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2010 and 1 July 2011.

(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 07 JUN 2010

Tabled paper: Message, dated 7 June 2010, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill [2340].

First Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.31 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the financial years starting 1 July 2010 and 1 July 2011. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill [\[2341\]](#).

Tabled paper: Appropriation (Parliament) Bill, explanatory notes [\[2342\]](#).

Second Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Appropriation Bill for the Legislative Assembly and the parliamentary service, which provides appropriation for the 2010-11 Budget.

The Government remains committed to the independence of the Legislative Assembly and this extends to the means by which public moneys are appropriated to ensure its continued functioning.

We are therefore adhering to the recent convention that the Legislative Assembly's appropriation be contained in a bill separate from the Appropriation Bill for the other activities of government.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill will provide the necessary funds to ensure the continued operations of the Legislative Assembly and the parliamentary service.

These include advisory and information services to assist the Parliament, its Committees and Members to fulfil their constitutional and parliamentary responsibilities, the services provided by the Parliamentary Library, Committee Office, Parliamentary Reporting Service, Chamber and Procedural Services, and Security and Attendant Services as well as the provision of accommodation, hospitality and Members' entitlements.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

BUDGET PAPERS

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.32 pm): Mr Speaker, I lay upon the table of the House the following documents: Budget Speech; Budget Strategy and Outlook; Capital Statement; Budget Measures; Queensland State Budget 2010-11 at a Glance; Budget Highlights; Service Delivery Statements books 1 to 5, including statements for the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland; and Regional Budget Statements.

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Budget Speech—Budget Paper No. 1 [\[2343\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Budget Strategy and Outlook—Budget Paper No. 2 [\[2344\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Capital Statement—Budget Paper No. 3 [\[2345\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4 [\[2346\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Queensland State Budget 2010-11 at a glance [\[2347\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Highlights [\[2348\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Budget Highlights [\[2349\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Service Delivery Statements—Book 1 [\[2350\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Service Delivery Statements—Book 2 [\[2351\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Service Delivery Statements—Book 3 [\[2352\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Service Delivery Statements—Book 4—Legislative Assembly of Queensland [\[2353\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Service Delivery Statements—Book 5—Appendix [\[2354\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Darling Downs and West Moreton [\[2355\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Far North Queensland [\[2356\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Fitzroy [\[2357\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Gold Coast [\[2358\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Greater Brisbane [\[2359\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Mackay-Whitsunday [\[2360\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—North Queensland [\[2361\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Sunshine Coast [\[2362\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Western Queensland [\[2363\]](#).

Tabled paper: State Budget 2010-11: Regional Budget Statement—Wide Bay-Burnett [\[2364\]](#).

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message from Governor

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.33 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION BILL 2010

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PENELOPE ANNE WENSLEY, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2008, 1 July 2010 and 1 July 2011.

(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 07 JUN 2010

Tabled paper: Message, dated 7 June 2010, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Appropriation Bill [\[2365\]](#).

First Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.34 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2008, 1 July 2010 and 1 July 2011. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill [\[2366\]](#).

Tabled paper: Appropriation Bill, explanatory notes [\[2367\]](#).

Second Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (2.34 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr Speaker.

Twelve months ago, this Government took the decision to fight for jobs, above all else.

We made some tough choices. About what to do, what not to do anymore, and what's in the long-term interests of Queensland.

In this State Budget we report back and recommit ourselves to this task, providing Queenslanders with a chance at the dignity of work.

It's what we have always believed in. It's what we said we would do. And it's what we are delivering.

This is Labor's first commitment and our calling.

It guides us and drives us, just like our determination to offer a quality education system for all children and to provide state-of-the art hospitals for the care of our sick.

The fair go ... the advancement of all, regardless of where you line up at the start.

And in a world still riven with uncertainty, it is these fundamental beliefs that drive the Bligh Labor Government, and underpin the 2010-11 State Budget.

As global markets continue to shudder, we stand steadfast and determined.

For we know that our task today in 2010 remains as pressing as it was in 2009.

We must build, nurture and drive our economic recovery.

We must prepare for the future.

We must keep our shoulder to the wheel.

It is our desire to protect the lifestyle and livelihood of Queensland families that fuels our determination to deliver on our reforms.

The 2010-11 State Budget shows the architecture of our reforms, and the genesis of the Queensland recovery.

Mr Speaker,

The Budget I hand down today shows that the Bligh Labor Government's economic strategy is delivering.

This Budget delivers lower deficits, lower debt, higher growth and more jobs.

It provides for more essential services, and the investment in the infrastructure our growing state needs.

Our strategy is fuelling growth in the economy, and delivering on Labor's promise to create more jobs, sooner.

It is a strategy that applies a strong fiscal discipline, while lending a helping hand to Queenslanders who need it most.

It is a strategy that sees the balance sheet strengthened, as we build a stronger, more robust economy.

And it is a strategy not yet fulfilled, as we strive to build tomorrow's Queensland.

THE ECONOMY: BUILDING A RECOVERY AND GENERATING JOBS

At last year's Budget we forecast the Queensland economy would contract in 2009-10. This mirrored the forecast for the Australian economy by the Commonwealth Treasury.

As the first sustainable signs of recovery began to build this forecast was upgraded at the Mid-Year Review to positive, albeit marginal, growth of 1%.

The Budget today confirms the recovery underway, with estimated growth for 2009-10 now 3%. While this growth remains below trend, it does outpace the national estimate of 2%.

Central to this result has been our investment in our building program and the strength of our export sector.

Our building program represented almost 7% of the state's economy in 2009-10 and supported the jobs of some 120,000 Queenslanders.

Most importantly we have delivered jobs growth for this financial year, where previously job losses were forecast.

Our determination to elevate the jobs of Queenslanders above all else has delivered where it matters: avoiding the heights of expected unemployment and reducing the impact on Queensland families from the devastation of job loss.

As we oversee the recovery now underway we look forward to accelerating jobs growth of 2¾% for the 2010-11 financial year.

The forecast is expected to outpace population growth and thus begin to drive unemployment down.

Our determination to deliver a net new 100,000 jobs by March 2012 has never wavered.

Central to that promise is our commitment to building.

Building means jobs, which is why in 2010-11 we will invest \$17.1 billion in infrastructure.

It is an investment in jobs, it is an investment in local economies, and it is an investment in the future, as we cater for the demands of our growing population.

Mr Speaker,

The recovery underway has delivered additional revenues. At the delivery of the last Budget we adopted new fiscal rules to guide our recovery.

The rules were tough, and deliberately so. As the charter report within the Budget Papers details, we are delivering improved results. Expenditure constraint through the last financial year has helped deliver a materially better result.

We have met the zero net real per capita growth discipline for this financial year. Despite the high cost of natural disasters we are determined to meet it again in 2010-11.

The revenue wipeout still stands at more than \$7 billion as we rebuild. Transfer duty receipts from property still aren't expected to recover to their 2007-08 levels until 2013-14.

The task has not been easy, but we are seeing the results.

The forecast deficit for 2009-10 has been reduced to \$287 million, or 0.1% of gross state product, down from the mid-year forecast of \$2.3 billion.

The deficit position across the forward estimates has been significantly reduced, with the deficit halved in 2010-11 to \$1.74 billion from the \$3.46 billion forecast at the last Budget.

Previously deficits totalling \$11.3 billion to 2012-13 were forecast. The job of repairing our position is well and truly underway, with that figure reduced by \$6.3 billion.

Last year's forecast for a return to surplus has been brought forward. We are now on track to deliver a solid surplus in 2015-16, in accordance with our charter.

With continued discipline we can see a return sooner. It will require all our resolve, something we have in spades.

Last year an efficiency dividend was introduced across government and harvested upfront. This has required agencies to look at expenditure and make savings in their operations.

This Budget continues this dividend and increases it by \$57 million as we continue our drive to direct more funds to the front line, where they are needed most.

HELPING QUEENSLAND HOUSEHOLDS

Last year we asked a lot of Queenslanders.

Tough decisions were required. And while a recovery is underway, we recognise that many are still doing it tough.

Inflation and rising interest rates are putting household budgets under pressure.

Our drive for greater budget discipline has not dampened our efforts to provide relief for Queenslanders where we can.

Our compulsory third party insurance scheme has operated well. CTP today is still lower than it was in 2003.

However in recent times insurers were all filing at the ceiling set by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission—reducing price competition.

In March I announced a review, to ensure the scheme was operating to benefit motorists given rising costs.

Today I announce that the CTP ceiling will be reduced by \$24 from 1 October.

The review will ensure that motorists don't bear the costs of commissions paid to other parties, including motor dealers, and will also bring forward the abolition of a levy surcharge put in place after the collapse of HIH.

This relief will apply across the board, including to pensioners who will continue to enjoy a full 50% discount on their registration: a concession this year that is worth \$90 million.

We are determined to give Queensland families some relief—and this measure will help households and assist in keeping our CTP regime competitive and consumer focused.

Rising electricity prices in particular make it tough for some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders.

Lending a helping hand to those in need is fundamental to our core beliefs.

The Budget I deliver today will increase the electricity rebate for pensioners and seniors from \$190 to \$216 per household at a cost of \$50.4 million over the next four years.

This Budget also delivers a new \$6.7 million subsidy program to assist those vulnerable Queenslanders whose medical condition requires the extra use of air conditioners, such as sufferers of multiple sclerosis.

A helping hand to those who need it most—as is our calling.

The Budget includes a \$1.6 billion budget in the disabilities portfolio, including an extra \$72 million over four years to provide additional support to those with a disability and their families, including two new autism services in Mackay and Bundaberg.

\$28 million from these funds will go towards those with spinal cord injuries and \$21 million is provided for young people transitioning out of school.

A major new \$45 million four year program is being introduced at three pilot sites to provide secondary services in our child protection system. Along with the allocation of \$12 million for additional frontline workers, this allocation will boost the system that supports those who most need our care and our protection.

Mr Speaker,

In recent times the government has extended a land tax exemption to aged-care facilities. Today I announce a new exemption to providers of supported accommodation for people with high care needs—services which house some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders.

I also announce a new tax exemption measure to assist Queenslanders with a disability, by excluding homes purchased through a disability trust from stamp duty.

Individually, these measures are modest, but they target assistance to some of our most deserving Queenslanders.

In total, this Budget provides around \$1.3 billion worth of concessions to Queenslanders in need.

The protection and expansion of these concessions is a direct result of the reform program we have implemented.

It's the dividend for the community, from the economic strategy we have put in place.

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE BY DOING THE BRIGHT THING

The future of our environment and our sustainability are central to our government's policy agenda.

Queensland has enormous potential to develop solar energy and secure not only the environmental dividend, but support new industries of the future and the green jobs possible.

The Budget adds to our commitment to the solar industry through new measures, including:

- our new \$60 million Solar Hot Water Scheme which provides a subsidy of up to \$1000 to assist Queenslanders cut their power bills, and reduce the costs on our environment
- \$5.8 million is allocated to our Solar Kindy Program to install solar power at kindergartens
- \$35 million is allocated for the solar boost project at Kogan Creek.

Renewable energy reduces our call upon the resources of the planet, and so too can a concerted effort to recycle waste and reduce landfill.

The Government will introduce a new waste reform strategy to reduce waste and improve recycling levels. A commercial waste levy will apply from 1 July 2011 across 34 council areas along with a commitment to provide:

- \$159 million over four years to assist business and the community to reduce waste and implement the strategy
- \$120 million over four years to assist local governments introduce waste reduction infrastructure and programs.

All other mainland states of Australia have introduced a levy and we are in danger of becoming the dumping ground for the other states without acting.

Unlike other states, funds from the levy will not benefit the budget bottom line. Every last cent will be put towards waste reform programs and environmental initiatives.

As a government we have committed to increasing our protected estate by 50% by 2020.

The Budget also funds programs to support the acquisition of national park estate and habitat for koalas at a total of \$80 million over the next four years.

The Budget provides the down payment on expanding the estate and dedicates future proceeds from the levy to protect more of our environment through programs such as the acquisition of further national parks.

Our natural heritage is vital to the nation's heritage.

It's vital also to industries like agriculture and investment in our biosecurity and our biodiversity are investments not only in our environment but in our economy.

The Budget also makes new investments in Hendra research and fire ant eradication to protect and preserve our biosecurity—so vital to our state and indeed to the nation.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: GIVING YOUNG QUEENSLANDERS A FLYING START

Mr Speaker, education is the cornerstone of our society, and the key to future prosperity.

It is a core belief, and central to our strategy as a Government.

Our investment in education and training in this Budget will climb by almost \$300 million this year.

This includes funding for up to 316 new teachers and teacher aides, as we deliver on our election commitments.

We will open five new schools in 2011, as this Budget funds the construction of new schools to meet future growth.

Giving young Queenslanders a flying start through our commitment to build 240 kindergarten services is central to our investment in education.

This budget will bring forward the construction of an additional 40 kindies to be opened by 2012, bringing total new services to be opened by then to 108.

By taking the tough decisions we can make the investments that really matter—into schools and kindies to prepare young Queenslanders for their future.

We have listened to employers, and are working to avoid a repeat of the terrible skill shortages in growth sectors.

As the recovery builds, so does the need to get more Queenslanders to take up a trade, to get more Queenslanders to upskill, to get more Queenslanders contributing to the growth of our economy.

The Government will overhaul the skills system in this state through the creation of a new Skills Commission to drive investment in the skills the economy demands, particularly for industries like LNG.

We will also maintain the nation's lowest payroll tax rate, and today I also announce an extension of our 125% payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees, as we support those businesses that are investing in the skills of the future.

We are also co-investing with industry in a \$10 million program to train thousands of workers needed for the new Coal Seam Gas and Liquefied Natural Gas industries.

Investment in innovation, along with new industries, remains central to our economic agenda. A new two-year, \$2½ million innovation vouchers program will provide Queensland firms with the opportunity to access assistance to develop their business.

Our economic reform agenda remains firmly committed to investing in innovation and skills and developing new industries for the future, to deliver the jobs of the future.

INVESTING IN HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

Five years ago our health budget was \$5.35 billion.

It is hard to imagine that the budget could ever reach \$10 billion—but this year the Queensland Health budget stands at \$9.99 billion.

It has been, and remains, the single biggest budget allocation, and a key priority for this Government.

This year we will add another 1200 doctors, nurses and health professionals to the front-line workforce.

Our record health building program, delivering 22 new and redeveloped hospitals across the state, continues with an allocation of \$1.6 billion this year.

New hospitals in Mackay and the Gold Coast are under construction, redevelopments in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Bundaberg are underway.

This Budget provides funds of \$137.7 million for new capacity and new services on the Sunshine Coast over the next four years, as well as locking in the funds for the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital due to open, as we committed last year, by 2016.

Our investment in health across the state also sees the Budget commit \$374 million for new regional cancer services across the state, as we partner with the Australian Government to invest in our health system.

In this Budget I also announce a new initiative to assist Queenslanders who suffer from chronic pain, with a new four-year, \$39 million initiative to provide four new persistent pain clinics.

Mr Speaker,

Queensland led the way in testing newborns for hearing loss, with universal screening now available.

For families who discover their newborn child suffers from hearing loss, the prospect of a cochlear implant can represent hope.

Cochlear has recently announced its intention to expand its facility and production here in Queensland and today I can announce new funding to provide more implants for more children and more funding for the Hear and Say Centre.

We will invest an additional \$16.5 million to double the number of cochlear implants and expand children's hearing services over the next four years.

It is through investment in research that the Cochlear implant has helped change lives.

We have committed more than \$3.6 billion over the last decade to drive innovation and research, and we continue our commitment with an additional \$31 million for medical research in this Budget.

The challenge of an ageing population and increasing medical technology costs requires us to undertake long-term reform to our health system.

This year the federal government's specific health funding allocation to Queensland is \$2.7 billion. The balance of this \$10 billion commitment is met by the state from GST and other state revenue sources.

Queensland has signed up to the new health funding arrangements which dedicate a proportion of the GST to be locked in and the Commonwealth to fund the majority of growth.

Dedicating the GST towards this task reflects the current reality. And doing so harnesses the Commonwealth finally recognising its obligation to be the dominant funder of the health system into the future.

Given the Commonwealth collects 80% of all tax revenue in this nation it should and must be the dominant funder of health.

This Budget also delivers through the funds we negotiated as part of the health reform deal before the GST lock-in, including:

- \$150 million for emergency departments
- \$160 million for elective surgery
- \$327 million for sub-acute care.

Funding health has to be the first priority of any government. It is the first priority of the Bligh Government and this Budget demonstrates our priority and the choices we have made.

BUILDING FOR GROWTH, FOR TOMORROW'S QUEENSLAND

One vital statistic which has not been subject to the volatility of recent years has been our sustained population growth.

The forecast once again is that another 100,000 Queenslanders will call our state home through the next financial year.

That means we need to cater for that growth. And we are determined to guide the growth for the benefit of all of Queensland.

A growing population requires a commitment to building infrastructure and providing new services.

The Budget delivers the frontline services needed—203 extra police, 316 new teachers and teacher aides, 1200 doctors, nurses and allied health workers.

We are also delivering a \$17.1 billion building program as we build Queensland's future, and rebuild our economic strength.

Our building program is delivering the support our economy needs today—and the infrastructure needed for tomorrow.

We need to target a building program that matches both economic imperatives and fiscal requirements. We should not yet step back.

This Budget sees new projects funded, and others on the drawing board brought onto the books, and ready to commence.

Projects like the \$450 million Police Academy will go to the market in 2010-11, to ensure a pipeline of projects is delivered to help sustain our vital construction industry while private investment remains constrained by credit conditions.

As the massive \$1.8 billion Gateway Bridge duplication and upgrade project heads towards the finish line, the Government has committed to the \$240 million Gateway Upgrade South extension, which will deliver 6 lanes non-stop between Nudgee and Nerang.

The Port of Brisbane Motorway upgrade will also commence this financial year, with a funding commitment of \$330 million allocated.

We will complete the \$315 million Ted Smout Bridge to Redcliffe, the \$148 million Forgan Smith Bridge in Mackay and construction on the \$190 million Port Access Road in Townsville will continue.

One of the defining characteristics of the Queensland economy is its regionalised nature.

No two are the same, and across the board we are committed to providing the infrastructure our communities deserve.

There is no doubt that the Cairns region has done it tougher than many in recent times. That's why we put in place a \$116 million stimulus plan last year.

Today I announce our commitment to financially supporting the construction of a new Cairns cultural precinct.

The Budget sees \$42.5 million allocated in land and funds towards this project, which has been proposed as a partnership between the Cairns Regional Council and the federal government.

We are committed to this project—for the long-term benefit of the Cairns economy.

The Budget includes our commitment to the \$96 million new marine precinct in Townsville while funds are also allocated towards the Mackay Showgrounds and towards the next stage of the Rockhampton Riverbank Redevelopment.

Regional growth is also supported through a commitment to fund new access for the development of the industrial precinct at Gracemere, while funds are allocated to support airport upgrades in key regional centres such as Roma, Toowoomba and Bundaberg.

We will also fund key roadworks in regional Queensland, including an investment of \$4.6 million in the Carnarvon Highway between Injune and Rolleston.

Our housing market is showing the first signs of recovery and we have led the way in abolishing mortgage duty and stamp duty for first home buyers of homes up to \$500,000.

We have targeted the first home owner grant to homes under \$750,000 to ensure it goes to those who need the assistance.

This Budget also includes a new Regional First Home Owner Boost, an extra \$4,000 on top of the existing state funded \$7,000 First Home Owner Grant.

This boost brings to \$11,000 the assistance provided by the state for those building new homes outside the south east corner.

The regions of Queensland helped build the Queensland of today.

We are a government that remains committed to the whole of Queensland, and this is a budget that continues to deliver for regional Queensland.

CONCLUSION

Mr Speaker,

The Budget I present today is Queensland's 150th Budget.

A century and a half ago the first Budget of Queensland catered for six hospitals and two schools. The total health and education budget allocations comprised about 3% of the expenditure.

Today I present a Budget for a Queensland with 184 hospitals and health facilities and 1250 schools, which sees nearly half of the entire budget allocated on health and education.

Today I present a Budget for a very different Queensland.

The modern Queensland reveals the change and dynamism that has been at the core of our development and our prosperity.

It's not accidental, it's required leadership throughout our 150 years.

That much hasn't changed.

Now remains the hour for this Labor Government to lead from the front, like Labor Governments have proudly done throughout our nation's history.

With the courage to change. With the capacity to endure.

And with our eyes firmly on the future ...

... firmly on the future of working class kids getting the best start in life because we invested in kindies, in prep, and in reducing class sizes—not in dedicated coal track for coal companies who pay for their own in other states.

... firmly on the future of kids born profoundly deaf getting access to a cochlear implant to change their whole world and make everything possible again—not the future of a commercial timber business milling pine for woodchip.

... firmly on the future jobs for the next generation of Queenslanders as we invest in the State's new industries and new technology to create the jobs of tomorrow and provide the ultimate dignity for the individual—work.

Mr Speaker,

We have made our choices. This Budget again reflects them. They are the choices of a Labor Government in the best traditions.

We are a proud government, determined to continue the legacy of Labor in building a modern Queensland.

We are a proud government—proud of our commitment to jobs and to the workers of Queensland.

Through the tumult of the last two years, we have put the dignity of work as the guiding light for our policies.

We put job protection and job generation front and centre, and put in place a strategy to deliver.

We are delivering: this Budget delivers on our commitments.

On building an economic recovery and delivering a strong economy.

On generating jobs.

On building infrastructure for the future.

On sustainable growth for all of Queensland.

On funding the front-line services.

On working to provide assistance to Queensland families and a helping hand to those most in need.

And on preparing this great state for a future it can capture, not just a reprise of its history.

To endure and prosper always require change.

We are a government determined to change Queensland ... for the future ... for a better future.

I commend the Bills to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (3.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Land Tax Act 2010, the Payroll Tax Act 1971 for particular purposes. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill [\[2368\]](#).

Tabled paper: Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [\[2369\]](#).

Second Reading

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (3.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2010 amends the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Land Tax Act 1915 and the Payroll Tax Act 1971 to give effect to initiatives announced in the 2010-11 state budget. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The amendments are beneficial and provide an additional \$4,000 First Home Owner Grant for first home owners who purchase or build new homes in regional Queensland, a new land tax exemption for supported accommodation facilities and the extension of the payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees to the 2010-11 financial year.

As recently announced by the Premier, the Government is funding a \$4,000 grant for first home owners who purchase or build new homes in regional Queensland. This is in addition to the \$7,000 grant already available to first home owners. Consistent with the Queensland Government's focus on managing population growth in South East Queensland, this initiative is designed to encourage the construction of new homes outside South East Queensland and help ease the pressure of population growth in that region. This new additional grant will apply to eligible transactions to purchase or build a new home entered into on or after 1 June 2010 and before 30 June 2011.

Mr Speaker, the Bill proposes a new exemption for land used for accredited level 3 supported accommodation facilities. These facilities provide residential care to residents who are often vulnerable members of the community in need of assistance with daily living. The amendment will assist in ensuring the viability of the supported accommodation industry.

The 25 per cent payroll tax rebate on wages paid to apprentices and trainees was a 2009-10 Budget initiative designed to support the continuing employment of apprentices in difficult economic conditions. The rebate, currently due to expire on 30 June 2010, is to be extended to 30 June 2011. The rebate applies to wages paid to trainees and apprentices which are already exempt under the Payroll Tax Act 1971 and is allowed as an offset against an employer's payroll tax liability. The extension of the rebate demonstrates the Government's commitment to skills development at a time when the economy is still recovering.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.01 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 3.01 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Attwood, Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Croft, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, Gibson, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hobbs, Hoolihan, Hopper, Horan, Jarratt, Johnson, Johnstone, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Mickel, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nicholls, Nolan, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Roberts, Robertson, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Spence, Springborg, Stevens, Stone, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson