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Subject **FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT** Page

Thursday, 1 December 2011

PETITIONS	4013
TABLED PAPERS	4014
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	4014
Abbot Point Coal Terminal	4014
Members of Parliament, Pay Rise	4015
Queensland Economy	4015
Natural Disasters, Preparedness	4016
Natural Disasters, Preparedness	4016
Child Death Case Review Committee	4017
Public Transport	4017
Governments, Openness	4018
MOTIONS	4019
Health and Disabilities Committee, Referral	4019
Floods Commission of Inquiry	4019
Valedictory, Speaking Times	4019
ETHICS COMMITTEE	4019
Report	4019
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Ethics Committee: Report No. 119—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 12 October 2011 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member.	4019
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE	4020
Report	4020
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE	4020
Reports	4020
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Affairs Committee: Report No. 8—Report on subordinate legislation tabled between 24 August 2011 and 10 November 2011.	4020
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Affairs Committee: Report No. 9—Meeting with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian held on 26 October 2011.	4020
NOTICE OF MOTION	4020
Disallowance of Statutory Instrument	4020
SPEAKER'S STATEMENT	4020
Visitors to Public Gallery	4020

Table of Contents — Thursday, 1 December 2011

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	4021
Cost of Living	4021
Minister for Energy and Water Utilities	4021
National Disasters, Recovery	4022
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland Reconstruction Authority Monthly Report—November 2011	4022
Cost of Living	4023
Investment	4023
Health	4024
Companies	4025
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document titled 'Forward Brisbane Leadership payments'	4025
Police Service	4025
State Election, Voting	4026
Education Reform	4027
Schools, Security	4027
Workers Compensation	4028
Youth Crime	4028
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article, dated 15 November 2008, titled 'The king—Out boxing the bogans'	4029
CSG Industry	4029
Brisbane City Council, Cycle Strategy	4029
Bligh Labor Government	4030
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Picture of the member for Kawana	4030
PRIVILEGE	4031
Ethics Committee Report No. 119	4031
LAW REFORM AMENDMENT BILL	4031
Introduction and Referral to the Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee	4031
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Law Reform Amendment Bill 2011	4031
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Law Reform Amendment Bill, explanatory notes	4031
First Reading	4035
STRATEGIC CROPPING LAND BILL	4035
Second Reading	4035
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4053
Queensland Rail	4053
Civil Partnerships Bill; Q Society	4053
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Copy of flyer by the Q Society of Australia Inc. titled 'It's time to say No'	4053
Redlands Electorate	4054
Newman, Mr C	4054
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Copy of page 32 from section 5 of the GrainCorp Ltd prospectus titled 'Information about the Merger with Grainco'	4054
Lockyer Valley Flood Relief	4055
Katter's Australian Party	4055
Lockyer Valley, Public Holiday; Morrison, Mr P	4055
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Email, dated 1 December 2011, containing statement by Colin Dorber regarding financial hardship suffered by employers within the Lockyer Valley	4056
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Bundle of documents relating to works undertaken in the Lockyer Valley following the January 2011 floods	4056
Newman, Mr C; Ashgrove Electorate	4056
Wind Farms	4056
Natural Disasters, Recovery	4057
Gold Coast Rugby 7s	4057
Bruce Highway, Noise Barriers	4058
EzyGreen	4058
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Press release, dated 6 June 2010, by Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, titled 'Households to get \$20m energy reduction scheme'	4058
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Press release, dated 13 July 2010, by Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, titled 'EzyGreen energy reduction scheme goes live'	4058
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Press release, dated 7 September 2010, by Hon. Anna Bligh MP, Premier and Minister for the Arts, titled '30,000 homes now signed up to EzyGreen'	4058
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 24 November 2011, from Mr Jim Reeves, Director-General, Department of Environment and Resource Management, to Ms Megan Houghton, CEO, CitySmart Pty Ltd, relating to the sponsorship agreement for the EzyGreen program	4058
Female Genital Mutilation	4059
Carbon Tax	4059
Trinity Bay Fishery	4059
Social Housing	4060
Shopping Centres, Paid Parking; Beetson, Mr A	4060
Bankwest	4061

Table of Contents — Thursday, 1 December 2011

Volunteers	4061
Ultralight Off-Road Vehicles	4062
Ludwig, Mr W	4062
Queensland Health, Outpatient Waiting List	4062
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 1 September 2011, from Dr Tim Smart, Executive Director of Medical Services, Wide Bay Health Service District, regarding ophthalmology services at Fraser Coast Health Service	4062
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 28 September 2011, from Dr David Alcorn, Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding outpatient appointment for a specialist ophthalmology surgeon.	4063
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 18 October 2011, from the Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding an outpatient appointment to see a specialist.	4063
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 1 November 2011, from the Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding an outpatient appointment to see a specialist.	4063
Shopping Centres, Paid Parking; Error in Answer to Question; Schools, Security	4063
Child Safety	4064
Riverwalk; World AIDS Day	4064
Rangeville State School, Sport and Recreation Funding	4065
Everton Electorate, Infrastructure	4065
Gold Coast, Water	4066
Pacific Motorway, Upgrade	4066
Carers	4067
COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	4067
Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date	4067
PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4067
Sunnybank Electorate, Schools	4067
Pollett, Mr R	4068
Transit Oriented Development	4068
Nerang River, Speed Limit	4068
Coomera Police District	4069
Labor Party	4069
World AIDS Day	4070
North Stradbroke Island, Economy	4070
Cairns Chamber of Commerce	4070
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Copy of document titled 'Topic 3: Small Business—There's No Business without Small Business' by the Cairns Business Leaders Alliance.	4070
SkillsTech Australia	4071
Poole, Mr G	4071
Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park, Fishing Huts	4072
Bana Yirriji Arts and Cultural Centre	4072
Gladstone Harbour, Fish Health	4072
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 15 October 2010, from Mark Greenaway, Project General Manager, Gladstone Ports Corporation, to Dan Mayer, Planning and Assessment, Fisheries Queensland, regarding early works dredging—revised notification of intention to commence dredging of Curtis Island Construction Dock.	4073
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT	4073
World AIDS Day	4073
STRATEGIC CROPPING LAND BILL	4074
Second Reading	4074
Consideration in Detail	4075
Clause 1, as read, agreed to.	4076
Clause 2, as read, agreed to.	4076
Clause 3, as read, agreed to.	4077
Clause 4, as read, agreed to.	4077
Clause 5, as read, agreed to.	4077
Clause 6—	4077
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Strategic Cropping Land Bill, explanatory notes to Hon. Rachel Nolan's amendments.	4077
Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.	4078
Clauses 7 to 10, as read, agreed to.	4078
Clause 11, as read, agreed to.	4078
Clauses 12 and 13, as read, agreed to.	4078
Clause 14, as read, agreed to.	4079
Clauses 15 to 27, as read, agreed to.	4079
Clause 28, as read, agreed to.	4079
Clauses 29 to 48—	4079
Clauses 29 to 48, as amended, agreed to.	4079
Clause 49, as read, agreed to.	4080
Clauses 50 to 112—	4080
Clauses 50 to 112, as amended, agreed to.	4081

Table of Contents — Thursday, 1 December 2011

Clause 113, as read, agreed to	4082
Clauses 114 to 117, as read, agreed to	4082
Clause 118, as read, agreed to	4083
Clauses 119 to 130, as read, agreed to	4083
Clause 131, as read, agreed to	4084
Clauses 132 to 281—.....	4084
Clauses 132 to 281, as amended, agreed to	4085
Clause 282—	4085
Division: Question put—That clause 282 stand part of the bill.....	4086
Resolved in the affirmative.....	4086
Clause 282, as read, agreed to	4086
Clause 283, as read, agreed to.....	4087
Clauses 284 to 290, as read, agreed to	4087
Clause 291—	4087
Clause 291, as amended, agreed to	4088
Clause 292—	4088
Clause 292, as amended, agreed to	4088
Schedule 1—.....	4088
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Proforma letter, from John Dalton, Secretary of the Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group, to all Queensland members of parliament in relation to strategic cropping land.....	4088
Division: Question put—That the member for Beaudesert’s amendment be agreed to	4090
Resolved in the negative.....	4090
Non-government amendment (Mr McLindon) negatived.....	4090
Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to	4090
Schedule 2—.....	4090
Schedule 2, as amended, agreed to	4091
Third Reading	4091
Long Title	4091
MOTION	4091
Order of Business	4091
MOTION	4091
Revocation of State Forest Areas	4091
MOTION	4093
Parliamentary Amnesty Group	4093
SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT	4095
VALEDICTORY	4095
ADJOURNMENT	4115
ATTENDANCE	4116

THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2011



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

PETITIONS

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

Nerang River, Speed Limit

Mr Langbroek, from 692 petitioners, requesting the House to impose a six knot speed limit on the Nerang River between the Via Roma and Bermuda Street bridges [\[6072\]](#).

Halifax Bay Wetlands

Mr Cripps, from 3,324 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse the declaration of the Halifax Bay Wetlands as a National Park and convert the area to a Recreational Reserve under the control of the Hinchinbrook Shire Council [\[6073\]](#).

Gladstone Base Hospital

Mrs Cunningham, from 754 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently upgrade the staffing levels and facilities to ensure that the Gladstone Hospital is able to fully service such a large and rapidly growing industrial city [\[6074\]](#).

Bellbowrie, Moggill and Birkin Road Intersection

Dr Flegg, from 750 petitioners, requesting the House to reconfigure the traffic lights at the intersection of Moggill Road and Birkin Road, Bellbowrie to allow for a safe u-turn [\[6075\]](#).

Ultralight Off-Road Vehicles, Registration

Mr Knuth, a paper and an e-petition, from 657 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce a change in the conditional registration category for the use of off road vehicles on public dirt roads and lands and endorse a licensing condition to meet public safety controls [\[6076\]](#)[\[6077\]](#).

Nudgee Road-Childs Road, On-Ramp

Hon Roberts, a paper and an e-petition, from 242 petitioners, requesting the House to abandon the proposed changes to the Nudgee Road Northbound Gateway on-ramp to Childs Road and seek an alternative [\[6078\]](#)[\[6079\]](#).

Hills District, Local Government Jurisdiction

Hon Wilson, a paper and an e-petition, from 4,102 petitioners requesting the House to refer to the Local Government Change Commission to transfer the Hills District (Arana Hills, Everton Hills, Ferny Hills and Bunya) from the jurisdiction of Moreton Bay Regional Council to the Brisbane City Council [\[6080\]](#) [\[6081\]](#).

Trinity Bay Fishery

Mr Wettenhall, a paper and an e-petition, from 2,978 petitioners, requesting the House to urge the Government to acquire all necessary permits and licenses from commercial fishers (bait fishers only excepted) with fair and reasonable compensation in order to cease commercial gill netting in the Trinity Bay Fishery [\[6082\]](#)[\[6083\]](#).

The Acting Clerk presented the following paper and an e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and (4)—

Carindale Bus Station, Park-and-Ride Facility

From 1,650 petitioners, requesting the House to take urgent action to provide a TransLink Park and Ride facility at Carindale to encourage public transport use and reduce parking demand in surrounding residential streets [\[6084\]](#)[\[6085\]](#).

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

Bundaberg Regional Council

Mr Messenger, from 84 petitioners, requesting the House to express a vote of no confidence in the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Engineer and other senior managers of the Bundaberg Regional Council; and to take all reasonable steps to ensure that after the next local government election all senior managerial positions on the Bundaberg Regional Council are declared vacant [\[6086\]](#).

Whaling, Ban

Mr Ryan, from 492 petitioners, requesting the House to join with the Federal Government in advocating for a total global ban on whaling and for strong international action to be taken against those countries who continue to support national whaling programs [\[6087\]](#).

Cats, Traps

Mr Moorhead, from 215 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce legislation banning the use of cat traps in urban environments [\[6088\]](#).

Sentencing Advisory Committee

Mr Ryan, from 340 petitioners, requesting the House to support the work of the Sentencing Advisory Committee regarding minimum non-parole periods; increase penalties for certain serious, violent and/or sexual offences and offences committed against on-duty police and/or emergency services officers [\[6089\]](#).

Everton Park, Stafford Road and South Pine Road Intersection

Mr Watt, from 222 petitioners, requesting the House to fix the increasing congestion at the intersection of Stafford Road and South Pine Road, Everton Park [\[6090\]](#).

Uganda, Child Sacrifice

Mr Foley, from 198 petitioners, requesting the House to petition President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and The Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament to use all the influence of their high office to introduce new laws to protect children from the crime of child sacrifice [\[6091\]](#).

The Acting Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(4)—

Licensed Venues, Trading Hours

1,142 petitioners, requesting the House to replace the outdated and ineffective 3 am lockout policy with a comprehensive new strategy that provides safe and enjoyable entertainment areas for patrons, businesses and residents [\[6092\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE ACTING CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Acting Clerk—

Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (Mr Roberts)—

[6097](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Statistical Review 2010-11: Erratum

Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women (Ms Struthers)—

[6093](#) Queensland Child Death Case Review Committee—Annual Report 2010-11

[6094](#) Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian: Deaths of children and young people Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11

MEMBERS' PAPERS TABLED BY THE ACTING CLERK

The following members' papers were tabled by the Acting Clerk—

Member for Everton (Mr Watt)—


[6095](#) Non-conforming petition regarding increasing congestion at the intersection of Stafford Road and South Pine Road at Everton Park

Member for Nudgee (Mr Roberts)—

[6096](#) Non-conforming petition regarding the impacts on the local community of proposed changes to the Nudgee Road Northbound Gateway on-ramp to Childs Road

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Abbot Point Coal Terminal

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.35 am): As we know, Queensland's coal exports create jobs, particularly in regional Queensland, and they bring revenue into the budget that pays for our schools, our hospitals and our roads. We know that the world is hungry for our coal because it is some of the highest quality in the world. So when the government sought proponents for an expansion of the Abbot Point Coal Terminal we expected strong global interest. However, the response we received was simply overwhelming.

Abbot Point currently has one export terminal with another two being constructed and developed, one by BHP and the other by Hancock. The original expansion plan was massive enough, but now we are taking those three and adding an additional four terminals, at a cost of \$6.2 billion of private investment. But such was the international interest that I can confirm today that the government is now planning to supersize the expansion of Abbot Point Coal Terminal to include six new terminals, with a \$9 billion investment by private enterprise that will result in a total of nine export terminals.

An investment of this magnitude will drive an enormous economic surge right through North Queensland. It will turbocharge the local economy, it will boost Queensland's exports to the world and it will create tens of thousands of jobs in the region. It is a huge vote of confidence in the long-term viability of Queensland's resources sector and also in the economy of North Queensland.


Despite the doom and gloom that is peddled sometimes by those opposite, global businesses see a prosperous future here in Queensland and they are putting their money where their mouth is. The export capacity of the port will increase to almost 400 million tonnes per annum, making it one of the largest coal export facilities in the world. The growth in export capacity will be stunning. Just four years ago Abbot Point was handling 15 million tonnes of coal a year. By 2017 it will be handling 385 million tonnes. This is an increase of more than 2,000 per cent in the space of a decade.

The preferred respondents for the expansion, after an international expression-of-interest process, are a 'Who's Who' of the resources industry. The preferred respondents are Anglo American Metallurgical Coal; Macmines Austasia; North Queensland Coal Terminal, which is a consortium of Macarthur Coal, Peabody Energy, New Hope Corporation, Middlemount Coal and Carabella Resources; Rio Tinto Coal; Vale; and Waratah Coal. These companies will now progress to the next stage of contract negotiations for the development of the new infrastructure.


We expect the first exports from the new terminals in 2017. The good news for North Queensland does not end there. These new coal export terminals come on top of the work that is continuing on a new multicargo facility, capable of accommodating 12 Capesize berths at the Abbot Point port.

Our government is putting in place the building blocks to bring private sector investment into the export chain of Queensland whether it is in mine, rail or port development. It is projects like this that are keeping Queensland No. 1, that are making our state the No. 1 state of Australia and that make Queensland the place to do business, to bring investment, to create jobs and to create wealth and prosperity for Queenslanders wherever they live. There will be a bright future for Queenslanders in our regions and right across our state.

Members of Parliament, Pay Rise

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.39 am): I note reports this morning that MPs in Canberra are to receive a sizeable pay rise. I would like to reaffirm the statement that I made on 7 October to the effect that Queensland state MPs will receive a 2½ per cent increase, in line with the government's public sector wages policy. Today for the record I confirm that a Labor government in Queensland has no plans to review or change that decision. Sorry to disappoint.

Queensland Economy


 **Hon. AP FRASER** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade) (9.39 am): As we look towards 2012, our government continues to see a bright future for the Queensland economy. The investment step change is driving a permanent structural change throughout the Queensland economy. While the global economy continues to splutter, our economy winds up and is gathering speed.

There is no doubt that global circumstances will impact on Queensland. The pressure from external factors will all be negative. Already we have seen a new Consensus Economics forecast which downgraded their forecast of our major trading partners for 2012 from 4.25 per cent to 3½ per cent. As the global outlook changes, so too has Australia's, as detailed by the Commonwealth in the Treasury's revision of their growth forecast earlier this week.

Domestically, we continue to see strong investment driving growth. The capital expenditure result yesterday—64 per cent growth year on year—is a historic high. That looks set to continue, with the Abbot Point exercise just completed by the government showing that for mining companies we see a huge horizon of opportunity, as the Premier just outlined. When I became the Treasurer, Abbot Point had a capacity of 15 million tonnes per annum. Today the company has signed on with plans to take it to 385 million tonnes per annum. It turns out that the end of the coal industry predicted by many, including those opposite, as we priced carbon into the economy might not eventuate.

While there are always challenges, we see sentiment pointing strongly towards optimism. The Westpac Institute measure of consumer sentiment surged 17½ per cent to be above 100, coming in at 104.3. This is the highest level the index has been for one year. Most importantly, we have seen continued jobs growth. A total of 90,000 jobs have been delivered this term as we continue to drive growth and aim for our election commitment of 100,000 net new jobs into the economy in this term of government. We set out a plan and we charted a course. We took the decisions that were needed, and we have led from the front, delivering jobs, new industries and future prosperity—just like we said we would.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness


 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies) (9.42 am): I am pleased to announce today that two recommendations under my portfolio responsibilities from the draft report of the Floods Commission of Inquiry have been implemented. The first recommendation was for clear protocols and procedures to be put in place for livestock fodder drops during emergency situations. The second recommendation was for these protocols and payment arrangements to be clearly communicated to rural communities ahead of the wet season.

On the first day of summer, I am pleased to report that both of these recommendations have been implemented ahead of the summer's wet season. Since last summer we have consulted widely with industry to develop a clearer policy that better explains the procedures around a fodder drop operation. We are also ensuring rural communities are aware of the procedures and payment arrangements the government has put in place ahead of future flood events.

Some of the key points of the fodder drop operation guidelines include: animal welfare remains the responsibility of the person looking after the livestock; if livestock becomes displaced from owners, government and industry will determine the appropriate animal welfare needs; the provision of fodder and fodder drops is not eligible under the standard NDRRA assistance; costs are borne by the owner; special NDRRA assistance of categories C and D may pay for or include a fodder drop program in negotiation with the federal government; should there be a conflict, the human need of air transport will be a higher priority than the needs of livestock; and fodder drops must not spread contaminants, chemical residue, weeds, pests and diseases.

These clear protocols and payment arrangements have been communicated to agricultural and food industry groups through our disaster information kits. The information kits provide a predisaster checklist in preparing for a natural disaster, an overview of how the disaster response is coordinated, a summary of financial assistance potentially available after a natural disaster, and a list of key government agency contacts and websites in the event of a natural disaster. I urge everyone to be prepared ahead of this year's wet season and download an information kit from the DEEDI website.

Natural Disasters, Preparedness

 **Hon. NS ROBERTS** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (9.44 am): Today marks the first day of summer, and our emergency services personnel are ready for whatever Mother Nature throws at them, whether it be a summer storm or flooding rains. Our police, paramedics, firefighters and emergency management personnel are hoping for the best but preparing for the worst. Fourteen pre cyclone and storm season seminars have been held across the state to discuss the season ahead and to undertake local-level planning. A three-day major regional training exercise, Operation Nugent's, started yesterday to test disaster response capabilities in the Brisbane region.

Operation Nugent's complements an exercise undertaken in August to fully load test the State Disaster Coordination Centre systems and processes using a cyclone based scenario. I can advise the House that the new emergency services and safety website is also now operational. This site, as part of the government's single website experience, features useful tools, guides and tips to help all Queensland residents better prepare, respond and recover when disasters happen. Through the site, all Queenslanders will have access to localised disaster management information using the community intelligence map and will be able to access information including river and storm tide gauges and local information such as location of schools and SES groups.

I can also announce today that the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service has this week exceeded the required number of trained swiftwater rescue technicians needed for this year's storm and cyclone season. The service now has 275 officers trained in level 2 swiftwater rescue operations, exceeding the target of 253. QFRS is also in the process of purchasing new waterproof radios and updating communication systems for use by swiftwater rescue technicians. Two thousand swiftwater awareness training DVDs are also being distributed to rural fire brigades across the state. EMQ has produced and distributed a district review and assessment workbook for local disaster management plans. This workbook has been developed to enable the Queensland Police Service to conduct reviews of all local disaster management plans prior to 1 November this year.

No Queenslanders want to see a repeat of the devastating weather which impacted the state in late 2010 and early 2011. However, when the weather does turn bad, our police and emergency services personnel are ready to respond.

Child Death Case Review Committee

 **Hon. PG REEVES** (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (9.47 am): The death of any child is a tragedy. As I have said to parliament before, as a father of three young daughters, I could not imagine anything worse than losing a child. Today I acknowledge the tabling of the Queensland Child Death Case Review Committee's report, and I offer my sincere condolences to the families, carers and hardworking child safety officers involved with the lives of these children.


Queensland's child death review process is one of the most rigorous in Australia, if not in the world. When a child who dies has had any form of contact with Queensland's child protection system in the three years preceding their death, a two-tier review process is commenced. This involves an internal systems and practice review followed by a child death case review by the independent Child Death Case Review Committee. The committee is chaired by the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

In the 2010-11 reporting period the committee reviewed the deaths of 65 children and young people known to the department. Importantly, the reviews found that the actions or inactions of the Child Safety Services system were not linked to any of these deaths reviewed in 2010-11. Close to half of the reported deaths were as a result of disease or morbid conditions, and five were as a result of sudden infant death syndrome. Sadly, there were a number of preventable deaths including drowning, suicide, fatal assault and a transport incident. The Queensland government has introduced key strategies in each of these areas such as recent pool safety reform, ongoing road safety campaigns and the Queensland government's suicide prevention strategy. The report also highlights issues with free service delivery areas. However, the committee reflects that identifying these issues enables the Child Safety Services systems to promote learning about the complex interplay of factors relevant to child protection.

As I committed to the parliament on 6 September this year, today I am releasing the executive summaries of the 50 systems and practice reviews on the department's website. The remaining 15 of the 65 reviews did not contain an executive summary. The department's systems and practice reviews are written in such a way that the deidentification of the reports severely limits what is able to be released. Accordingly, I have directed the Department of Communities to reconsider their processes. Starting in 2012 a more detailed summary will be produced during the review process that is able to be released publicly. In addition to the release of the 50 executive summaries, I have today released on the department's website a table showing all of the recommendations made during the systems and practice review process. All of the recommendations have been completed.

As I have previously advised the House, I have written to the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian seeking advice as to what additional documentation can be released following the external child death case review. The commissioner has responded advising that in 2012 the Child Death Case Review Committee will release a list of all child death case review recommendations and the status of implementation of each of the recommendations. The committee is also seeking further legal advice to determine how it will release summaries of all child death case review reports. The release of these documents further highlights the Bligh government's commitment to an open, transparent and accountable child protection system.

Public Transport

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs) (9.50 am): The Christmas and New Year period is a time when many thousands of people hold celebrations in the city area and rely on public transport to get them home safely. It is a time when we need to ensure that not only do we have the resources to keep commuters safe but we also have the capacity to transport those thousands of revellers. Today I can announce that our government will be acting to ensure we have both.


With Christmas just around the corner, 13 new senior network officers are due to graduate in time to be on our network just as office parties are in full swing. They will be out and about over Christmas and the new year undertaking customer safety and customer service roles on the TransLink network. They are a group of highly trained officers authorised to use extended powers to detain and frisk when dealing with some of the more serious issues. Including the new officers, there will now be 33 senior network officers working in conjunction with the Queensland Police Service's rail squad, TransLink transit officers and security guards to provide a safer system.

The latest trainees will be the third group to graduate from the eight-week training course this year and the fourth since the first senior network officers appeared on the TransLink network in September last year. The existing senior network officers issue an average of more than 200 infringement notices a month and nearly 700 warnings each month. When you consider that they speak

to nearly 50,000 passengers each month, this shows the strong customer focus role these officers undertake. This came to the fore during the January floods as they helped customers deal with the disrupted public transport network.

In the lead-up to Christmas, we will also double the usual number of NightLink bus services operating from Brisbane's entertainment precincts. This will help to ensure customers get home safely. These new services, along with the presence of the newly graduated transit officers and existing uniformed staff, will help ensure a safe journey and ensure acceptable behaviour is maintained on our public transport system this holiday season.

Governments, Openness

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (9.52 am): The business of legislative bodies not only has to be done openly and transparently; it has to be seen to be done like that. Members of the public must have confidence in the way that this happens. This Queensland parliament exposes itself to scrutiny every time it meets and has done so in an ever-increasing way. Since our formation we have had *Hansard*, and from the early 1990s that *Hansard* has been available electronically. Recently, the audio became available on the internet, and we now have the capacity to watch real-time live streaming and, indeed, historical video footage. This has been used against all of us from time to time when the public have not been happy with the standards that have been kept. After all, they pay our wages and they have the right to examine the debate.

Let us look, on the other hand, at the Brisbane City Council. The Brisbane City Council has a budget the size of Tasmania, yet, despite having a miked-up chamber, they have no internet live streaming of either audio or video. There is no ability to look at or listen to what is being said. I am advised that they have minutes available online for a year and that they are available for a longer period at a council library. Audio recordings are also available at a council library and I am advised that they are kept for six months. Clearly they have them, so why can't they put them online? Clearly they have the audio set-up already but they cannot manage video cameras.

When you have councillors being kicked out left, right and centre, why is the public not able to watch and listen to the proceedings so they can make up their own minds about whose conduct deserves criticism—either way? If there was ever a need for a body for this to happen to, it is the Brisbane City Council. I have been disappointed to notice the number of suspensions there. There have been five councillors on 16 occasions suspended from council meetings in the last 12 months alone: Councillor Johnston, six times; Councillor MacPherson, six times; Councillor Sutton, twice; Councillor Griffiths, once; and Councillor Hinchliffe, once. In the Brisbane City Council minutes of 6 September 2011 it was noted that Councillor Johnston has been suspended no fewer than 16 times since the beginning of 2010. By way of contrast, I am advised that over the past year the conservative controlled Townsville City Council has kicked out no-one and the divided Gold Coast City Council has kicked out no-one.

Let us look at this parliament itself. The member for Gaven was kicked out for five minutes, yet recently Councillor Sutton was kicked out for two weeks. Since the inception of the 53rd Parliament, seven members of this parliament have been named and suspended on eight separate occasions, most for less than one hour. Compare that to 16 times for Councillor Johnston; that is more than this whole parliament over this term. We have seen the current Lord Mayor text the chair of council to kick people out of the council chamber. Can you imagine the Deputy Premier sending a text message to the Speaker telling him to punt someone from the chamber?

Mr Seeney: It used to happen in the old days.

Mr LUCAS: It absolutely did used to happen under Joh and that is precisely my point.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! When he is saying nice things about me, I want to hear it.

Mr LUCAS: Is banishing people who have alternative views to your own a sign of a strong and unifying leader or a sign of someone who is not open to scrutiny? The BCC needs to make itself an open council; people need to be able to watch it and make their own judgements. Robust debate is expected, but you beat opponents by arguments, not by kicking them out. There is a very disturbing trend in the LNP—which was highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition just then—in its attitude to policy governance and debate. It should be of concern to all of us, including conservatives who value democracy.

MOTIONS

Health and Disabilities Committee, Referral


 **Hon. GJ WILSON** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Health) (9.56 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That the Health and Disabilities Committee conduct an inquiry and report on a model for the involuntary detoxification and rehabilitation of persons with severe substance dependence.
2. That, in undertaking this inquiry, the committee should:
 - Examine initiatives in other Australian and international jurisdictions;
 - Examine the impact on persons suffering from severe substance dependence and their families, health providers, government and non-government services and the community more generally;
 - Examine the potential benefits and costs of implementing a model for the involuntary medicated detoxification and rehabilitation of persons with severe substance dependence.
3. That the House note that to assist the committee in its deliberations, Queensland Health has prepared an issues paper that will be provided to the committee by the Minister for Health.
4. That the committee should take public submissions and consult with people who may be considered eligible, their families, non-government service providers, health and medical professionals (including professional bodies), and advocacy and peak bodies.
5. Further, that the committee report to the parliament by 12 April 2012.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Floods Commission of Inquiry

 **Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.58 am): I move—


That this House:

1. Notes that the Minister for Energy and Water Utilities, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and the former Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Sport, Hon. Terence Mackenroth, have produced to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry certain parliamentary papers that were prepared for the ministers and which are proceedings in parliament pursuant to s.9 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001.
2. Ratifies the production by the ministers and former minister of those papers.
3. Resolves that the ministers and former minister have not committed any contempt by producing the papers.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Valedictory, Speaking Times

 **Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.58 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


1. That the House notes on this last sitting day of the year its appreciation of all those persons who made the operation of this House possible in 2011; and
2. That speaking times be allocated for this valedictory motion as follows:
 - Premier and Leader of the Opposition—15 minutes
 - The member for Gladstone representing the crossbenchers—10 minutes
 - Members who have announced that they will not be contesting the next election—10 minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ETHICS COMMITTEE


Report

 **Mr MOORHEAD** (Waterford—ALP) (9.59 am): I table report No. 119 of the Ethics Committee titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 12 October 2011 relating to alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member*. I commend the report and the committee's recommendations to the House.

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 119—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 12 October 2011 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by a member [\[6098\]](#).

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr WENDT** (Ipswich West—ALP) (9.59 am): I lay upon the table of the House Report No. 9 of the Finance and Administration Committee.

Tabled paper: Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 9—Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming (Two-up) Amendment Bill 2011 and Criminal Code (Anzac Day Betting) Amendment Bill 2011 [[6099](#)].


This report presents the results of the committee's examination of the Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming (Two-up) Amendment Bill 2011 and the Criminal Code (Anzac Day Betting) Amendment Bill 2011. The Legislative Assembly has agreed to debate the bills cognately.

The committee found that the basic objective of both bills is to ensure that those participating in two-up games whilst celebrating Anzac Day are not at risk of prosecution. The two bills offer two alternatives for achieving that objective. After due consideration of both bills, the committee considered the government bill to be the better alternative. The committee made recommendations regarding the exclusion of Remembrance Day as one of the days on which two-up is allowed due to the more sombre nature of this day and the amendment of the definition of 'game' in the act.

On behalf of the committee, I want to thank all of those organisations that took the time to provide submissions and those who met with the committee during the course of the inquiry. In particular, I want to thank the officers from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for their prompt assistance during the course of the inquiry. I also want to thank the other members of the committee for their valuable contributions and continued support, and of course I would like to make special mention of the hardest working and the most efficient parliamentary research team of Deb, Peter, Jo, Marilyn and Lyn. I commend the report to the House.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Reports

 **Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (10.00 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 8 of the Community Affairs Committee.

Tabled paper: Community Affairs Committee: Report No. 8—Report on subordinate legislation tabled between 24 August 2011 and 10 November 2011 [[6100](#)].


This report covers the subordinate legislation tabled between 24 August 2011 and 10 November 2011 considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 1 December 2011. The committee did not identify any significant issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. I commend that report to the House. I also lay upon the table the Community Affairs Committee report No. 9 on its meeting with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian held on 26 October 2011.

Tabled paper: Community Affairs Committee: Report No. 9—Meeting with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian held on 26 October 2011 [[6101](#)].

I want to thank all of those who have assisted the committee with its report. The committee appreciates the effort involved for the commission in responding to questions on notice and appearing before the committee. Thanks also to my fellow committee members for their assistance and support. I also want to thank the committee staff for their assistance. I commend that report to the House.

NOTICE OF MOTION


Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (10.01 am): I give notice that I will move—

That the proclamation for the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011, subordinate legislation No. 238 of 2011, tabled in the House on 29 November 2011, be disallowed.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call question time, today we will be visited by a number of groups. They include residents of the Golden Downs Residential Resort Village in the electorate of Sandgate and students and teachers from the Whites Hill State College in the electorate of Chatsworth. I want to acknowledge in the public gallery during question time today members of the Queensland schools debating team who were runners-up in the national schools debating championships held in Perth in May. We will also be visited by students from the Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE from Logan City. Question time will end at 11.02.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cost of Living

Mr SEENEY (10.02 am): My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the increasing cost-of-living issues impacting Queensland families in the lead-up to the Christmas holiday season and to the Premier's broken election promises not to implement the \$370 million waste levy and not to implement a fuel tax, and I ask: which of the Premier's broken election promises will have the greatest effect on Queenslanders' cost of living this Christmas?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question. Before I take the opportunity to answer it, I rise with sadness to advise the House that this morning Queensland has lost one of its legends and one of its favoured sons with breaking news that Arthur Beetson has died. As members know, Arthur Beetson came from Roma. He was a great legend of rugby league. He was the captain of our first State of Origin team and went on to coach that team many times. He was a knockabout bloke from country Queensland. He loved his league. He loved his Queensland and his loss will be felt by many. I offer my sympathies, as I know the opposition does and all members of the parliament, to his loved ones and his family this morning.

I am very happy to have the opportunity to talk about the cost of living, because it was this government alone among all state governments in Australia that in this year's budget acted to bring down the cost of living for Queensland households. What did we do? Firstly, we abolished the Queensland ambulance levy which means that every Queensland household is paying \$113 less in their bills this year. What else did we do in this year's budget? We increased funding to the ClimateSmart Home Service which has now provided assistance to almost a quarter of a million Queensland homes, and they are bringing down their electricity bills as a result. Further, we are the government that put in place an assistance program for people to put solar panels on their roof. What is that doing? Bringing down their household electricity bills. So we stand proud this year with a record of bringing down the costs of living for Queenslanders.

What we know, however, is that those on the other side are led by someone who went to his first election saying that if he increased rates by more than CPI he would resign. He broke both promises! He did not keep them to CPI. In fact, he increased them by more than 42 per cent—unless you were a unit owner, because they increased by 300 per cent! Then of course he broke his promise to resign. Of course he did eventually after his city had been flooded and he walked away from it. So it is a Labor government here in Queensland that is giving more rebates and more assistance for vulnerable people than any other government in Australia. It is a Labor government that has brought down the cost of living. It was not the New South Wales Liberal government. It was not the Victorian government. It was not the Western Australian Liberal government. No! What we know is that Campbell Newman stands for increased costs with crazy schemes like his bike scheme and his failed promises on rates. Queenslanders know what he stands for.

Minister for Energy and Water Utilities

Mr SEENEY: My question without notice is to the Minister for Energy and Water Utilities. I could not help myself; it is a bit of a valedictory question!

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SEENEY: I note that I have asked the minister a large number of questions about a long list of ministerial bungalows across a number of portfolios.

Mr SPEAKER: Don't call relevance on this one, will you.

Mr SEENEY: Today on the final day that the minister will sit in the parliament I ask a final question to him as he contemplates retirement. Seriously, can the minister tell the House which of his legacies in his current portfolio—massive increases in electricity charges or doubling of water prices—will have the biggest impact on Queenslanders' cost of living this Christmas?

Mr ROBERTSON: Can I sincerely thank the Leader of the Opposition for this question and I do note that he and I over many, many years have gone into battle across a wide range of portfolios. The one thing that I will acknowledge is that we have always been able to have a bit of a smile and a bit of a laugh after it has all been over, and I thank him for that.

Mr SeeneY: It'll be over soon!

Mr ROBERTSON: I thank him for that. In relation to the question that he has asked, there are a range of legacies that I will be more than proud to outline in my valedictory speech tonight. But the one issue that I would highlight today is in fact the LNP's electricity policy, which has been discovered to be an absolute farce. Here we have Campbell Newman promising \$120 off electricity bills and supporting the changeover to a new tariff system from the middle of next year while failing to acknowledge that

electricity prices for 2011-12 have already been set. The question is: how is he able to promise a \$120 saving on electricity bills if elected? The simple fact is that he cannot. Then of course yesterday we saw the absolute dishonesty of the man when he put out in the electorate that he is running for a flyer that talks not about a \$120 energy saving but a saving of \$330. This is false advertising. It should be withdrawn immediately and Newman should be apologising to the people of Ashgrove for his deliberate untruth, because this is nothing short of a work of fiction.

Speaking about works of fiction, we also have that wonderful piece of work called the resources and energy strategy.

Mr Seeney: Show us. Hold it up.

Mr ROBERTSON: I am happy to, because what is most interesting about it is the foreword. Who is it endorsed by? It is endorsed by Campbell Newman, it is endorsed by Jeff Seeney and it is endorsed by Jack Dempsey, the shadow minister for resource management. But who is it not endorsed by? The shadow minister for energy. Nowhere in the resources and energy strategy does the shadow minister for energy appear.

This week we have seen 'Unhappy' Jann. Now we have seen the de-energised bunny. When it comes to the security of positions on the front bench of the LNP, nobody is safe. Jann Stuckey: gone. The shadow minister for energy: gone. He has been airbrushed out of the policy like Leon Trotsky. Every member opposite on the front bench should be going into Christmas unsure whether they are going to be coming back into that same position next year.

(Time expired)

National Disasters, Recovery

Mrs ATTWOOD: My question is to the Premier. As we move towards the first anniversary of the devastating natural disasters of last summer, can the Premier outline what has been achieved through the massive recovery efforts?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question and for her care and concern for her constituents who were so badly affected during our summer of disaster. This time last year I think we all knew that we were in for a very wet summer, but none of us could have foreseen the devastation that Mother Nature would bring our way. Many Queenslanders are still dealing with the effects of the disaster, but much has been achieved.

As we approach the anniversaries and another wet season, I think it is important to reflect on the size of what has been achieved. It is a great Queensland success story, with communities across the state coming together and putting their shoulder to the wheel. From the worst set of natural disasters in our history has come the largest reconstruction program that Australia has ever seen. It is at least \$6.8 billion worth of reconstruction work. In the 10 months since the disaster, we have seen all 411 of the schools that were damaged back on line, 97 per cent of the 9,000 kilometres of state roads back and trafficable, 96 per cent of the 5,000 kilometres of affected rail lines operational again and all but two of the 138 national parks that were closed now back open to the public.

It has been a terrific effort. Private homes and businesses, of course, are still being rebuilt. State-wide, we estimate that some 136,000 Queensland homes and businesses were affected and damaged. Of the 11,364 buildings in the Ipswich and Brisbane areas, more than 93 per cent have either been repaired or are being repaired now. Similarly, of the more than 2,500 buildings damaged by Cyclone Yasi, almost 90 per cent are either repaired or those repairs are underway. In the town of Grantham, which suffered so much of that devastation, construction of a whole new estate to effectively move the town is underway. We are still on track to see some residents in their new homes by Christmas. We celebrate the official opening of the new estate with a community day in coming weeks when the community can acknowledge that they have come from devastation to restoration.

I table the monthly report of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority for the benefit of members.

Tabled paper: Queensland Reconstruction Authority Monthly Report—November 2011 [\[6102\]](#).

This morning, I take the opportunity to thank MPs on all sides of the chamber whose electorates required their leadership. I thank the mayors and the councils of those local government areas that were affected and I pay tribute to the political maturity that has allowed us across different levels of government, across different political persuasions to get on and get the job done.

I thank the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, particularly Major General Mick Slater and his successor Major General Dick Wilson and Graeme Newton, their CEO. I also thank all the industry and corporate partners who have continued to put effort into the recovery work. Above all, I thank Queenslanders for their patience, their strength and their fighting spirit.

Cost of Living

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Will the Treasurer nominate which of his actions has had the most impact on increasing the cost of living for Queenslanders this Christmas? His loss of the AAA credit rating or his plan to rack up \$85 billion in debt? Could Queenslanders rightfully conclude that the Treasurer is the Grinch who stole Christmas?

Mr Rickuss: Loss of the AAA. That's the one.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier has not even begun, member for Lockyer. You are ruining the spirit of Christmas.

Mr FRASER: I thank the shadow Treasurer for turning up today to ask a question. It is always a good way to finish off the year. I think it is important to emphasise that what this government has done through this term of this parliament and through this year is again make the difficult decisions to chart a course for renewal for this economy. What have we delivered to Queenslanders? Jobs—90,000 jobs this term. What have we done to help out Queenslanders? We have given them the best thing that you could ever give anybody. We have given them the one thing that makes a difference to people's lives and that is the chance to work, the dignity of work, the ability to raise a family, the dignity to be able to go and forge a life. This is a government that has made those decisions, because it was determined to deliver jobs, to keep an infrastructure program going that was at the forefront of the country. Why? To deliver jobs, to support regional economies and to deliver jobs in those regional economies.

What has this government done? It has been jobs, more jobs and more jobs in the future. That is why we have put forward our plans to support an LNG industry—a whole new export industry that is going to provide a generation of wealth and a generation of employment and secure our future economic prosperity. This government has been at the forefront of looking to the future this term and delivering on what matters. When it comes to the cost of living, as the Premier said this morning, this government took more decisions in this budget to make sure that we delivered the abolition of the ambulance levy to cut \$113 off Queenslanders' electricity bills. We increased the pensioner rate subsidy by another \$20 to overcome the rate rise—the sort of rate rises that have been seen by the opposition's mates in local government; people like Campbell Newman who went to an election and said, 'I will keep rates to inflation or I will resign.' What did he do? In truth, he did neither.

We have seen the opposition's promises in relation to cost of living. They are out there misleading the voters of Ashgrove and in other electorates by saying that they are going to cut \$330 when now they say that it is only \$120. But, in fact, it is zero, because they do not have a way to support it. Queenslanders may as well write to Santa and hope for their electricity bills to be reduced if they are going to wait for the LNP. This government has taken the action to reduce the bills by \$113. What we see on the other side is a group of people who want to see someone lead this state who has presided over a tunnel that has gone bankrupt and who believes that something like the town bike scheme is something that is worth promoting. They are forever defending the dishonesty about the 42 per cent rate rise.

When it comes to the cost of living, this government has a track record of delivering cuts to the cost of living. When it comes to the other side, the Campbell Newman LNP has a record of not telling the truth about rates. They know that that is exactly what he will do if he was ever in this place.

Investment

Mr HOOLIHAN: My question without notice is to the Premier. In relation to the massive interest in Abbot Point, could the Premier outline what message this sends about investment in Queensland and how does that contrast with the investment philosophy of others?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for his question. As I outlined to the House this morning, we have seen a massive lift in private investment in Queensland and no more so than in the interest in the export chain infrastructure at Abbot Point. You do not put \$9 billion on the table unless you are in a place that you think has a very bright future. That is what business and the private sector have delivered as a judgement on Queensland—\$9 billion worth of investment into one port. The message is very clear: when it comes to Australian opportunities Queensland is the place to do business.

Earlier this year when we went out to the market I was being asked by financial journalists about what we would do if we did not get enough private sector interest. I said at the time that I expected to see people knocking on our door and a lack of interest would not be the problem. We were right. We have been oversubscribed in private sector interest. What we are seeing is that, instead of four new terminals, it will be six new terminals. This will be the largest construction of any port infrastructure in Australia. That is because this government goes out aggressively looking for opportunities, aggressively pursuing business across all industry sectors.

This is in stark contrast to the LNP and their leader, Mr Newman. They only want to talk about four parts of the Queensland economy. Those four—construction, tourism, agriculture and resources—account for 25 per cent of the Queensland economy. What about the other 75 per cent? What is wrong with aviation, IT, retail, manufacturing, financial services and education services which are, in fact, our third biggest export?

Let us have a little look at the four and what might Mr Campbell Newman's interests in them be. Let us look at construction. Well, of course, he has a \$25 million development in Spring Hill—plush inner-city apartments. He did not declare them and we had to drag it out of him, but there it is: Campbell looking after Campbell. What about in tourism? Well, of course, he has two luxury units in Port Douglas at \$500 a night, and he forgot he owned them, with an ecotourism facility here in Brisbane. When it comes to agriculture, he has shares in Elders. When it comes to resources he owns shares in Oil Search Ltd.

So in each of the four pillars it is not about Queensland; it is about Campbell. Campbell Newman does not put Queensland first. Campbell Newman puts Campbell Newman first. He has a financial interest—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BLIGH: Listen to them mock the idea that we should separate ourselves from financial interests.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

Ms BLIGH: The same old National Party, the same old Liberal Party: snouts in the public trough, conflict of interest, do not know where the line is between public and private.

Health

Mr McARDLE: My question is to the Minister for Health. In the Health portfolio this term, which failure has had the greatest impact on Queenslanders: the Health payroll debacle or leaving over 218,000 patients on the waiting list for the waiting list?

Mr WILSON: I thank the honourable member for the question, and I thank him for turning up today. The question the good folk of Caloundra want to know the answer to is: which school in the electorate of Caloundra will become second-class under Campbell Newman's Leading Schools education policy?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable the minister has the call.

Mr WILSON: I thank the Speaker for his assistance. That is what the good folk of Caloundra want to know. The other thing they want to know is: why are the LNP cutting \$400 million from the Health budget? That is what they want to know. There are a few voters in the other four LNP electorates on the Sunshine Coast who want to know why the LNP are going to cut \$400 million from the Health budget and, more particularly, from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital budget. They want to know why those opposite are cutting \$400 million from the spending that we have guaranteed for the building of a world-class university hospital on the Sunshine Coast. That is what they want to know.

I will tell members a few other things they want to know. Under the LNP infrastructure plan—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Just before I call the minister, as I understood it the question had a political element to it in its introduction, and therefore I have allowed latitude. It is very hard to enforce relevance on that. I know that there is a bit of commentary from the minister and I have tolerated a bit back, but I think it is getting a bit over the top.

Mr WILSON: Another thing the voters of Caloundra and across Queensland want to know is why, in the LNP's infrastructure plan for Queensland, there is not one new bed, not one new ward, not one new hospital provided for Queensland.

I will tell members a third thing the voters of Queensland want to know. Two years ago the opposition commenced with great fanfare a discussion paper about improving hospital service and performance—not one plan, not one idea, not one vision for any improvement in the Queensland health system. Why? Because they are the laziest, most overfunded opposition in the country. Yesterday we announced how fantastically Queensland Health is doing on elective surgery rates.

(Time expired)

Companies

Ms van LITSENBURG: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade. Can the Deputy Premier inform the House of any recent major business investment in Queensland and the successes of those companies, and can he advise the House of any other companies that are also currently doing well?

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Redcliffe for her question. Given it is the season to be jolly, I am happy to inform the House that last week I had the very important task of assisting at the opening of the new Barrett Burston Malting facility out at Pinkenba. The Barrett Burston Malting facility is going to supply half of the malt that is required for the Yatala Brewery. The other half will go to a new export activity in Queensland—that is, the export of malt into the regions.

Last week we saw an advance in exports, we saw an advance in investment and we also struck a blow for beer security in Queensland in the lead-up to the Christmas season. Never again do the people of Queensland have to contemplate the complete misfortune and the idea that they might be forced to drink Southwark should the same set of circumstances ever arise. We know that Barrett Burston, for those who know their corporate structures, is in fact the parent company of Grainco, a company that has been doing exceptionally well ever since a certain Campbell Newman left its employ.

Other companies that have been doing well recently are, in fact, the private companies associated with a number of LNP officials. What we see from information that is in the public arena now, and which I am happy to table for the benefit of parliament, is that a number of LNP private companies have made a fortune out of the LNP in recent times. This may well be legal, but it may well also be artfully dodgy.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Forward Brisbane Leadership payments' [\[6103\]](#).

Since 2009 Michael O'Dwyer, famous for commissioning the 'dirt files', has been paid \$570,000 by the LNP. Greg Bowden has been paid \$400,000 by the LNP fundraising vehicle Forward Leadership, set up by Campbell Newman of course. Others have been in the act such as Dennis Quick and, of course, Barry O'Sullivan, a man who said that he does not like to miss out on a feed. It turns out he has been at the trough again.

Of course, there is another company on that list and that is Campbell Newman's private company Ultrex. The tax laws on personal services income are very clear. They raise this question: if Mr Newman's only work is for the LNP then he should be being paid as a PAYG employee. It is only if he is doing work for someone else that he should be able to rightfully have his income channelled through his private corporate vehicle. It raises this question: is this a tax dodge? Is this a way of avoiding paying the flood levy that every other Queenslanders is paying or is it, in fact, to hide the fact that someone else is paying Campbell Newman through the corporate vehicle of Ultrex—someone he does not want to tell Queenslanders about?

It seems once again that, as we continue to learn more and more about him, Campbell Newman owes Queenslanders an explanation. He owes them an explanation of where the money is coming from, why this corporate vehicle has been set up in this way and what it is that, once again, he is trying to hide. He can run and hide and dodge the cameras, but in the end, day by day, Queenslanders are finding out who Campbell Newman really is and increasingly they do not like it.

Police Service

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services. Which of the following under the minister's administration of the police portfolio has had the greater impact on Queenslanders' safety: his government's broken promise of failing to deliver 200 extra police on the beat each year or allowing crime on the Gold Coast to increase massively?

Mr ROBERTS: I thank the member for the question and thank him for turning up today. What an embarrassment. This member had two bills two days ago that are significant to his shadow portfolio. One was the Commonwealth Games Arrangements Bill—he was recently appointed as the shadow minister for the Commonwealth Games—and he failed to turn up to debate that. With another critically important bill for law and order, whether it be on the Gold Coast or in other parts of Queensland, the Criminal Organisation Bill, he failed to turn up to debate as well. Campbell Newman had the hide to say in the public arena that those opposite were going to support that bill. The opposition has opposed the Criminal Organisation Bill from day one so Campbell Newman is speaking absolute rubbish.

I am pleased to speak about the record of this government in law and order, as I have done on many occasions. Under the National Party government we had low police numbers and high crime rates. What has happened under this government? We have significantly increased the number of police and overall crime rates have come down by 30 per cent over the last 11 years from 2000-01—they are down 25 per cent for crimes against the person and 46 per cent for property offences. They are coming down.

Yes, there have been some issues on the Gold Coast. That has been in the news for some time. The member for Surfers Paradise gets his media releases of the day out based on what he reads in the newspaper. We all know that there have been issues on the Gold Coast. What have the government and the Police Service been doing about this? Putting extra resources into the Gold Coast.

The commissioner announced in March an additional 22 officers for the Gold Coast and 14 for Coomera. In August this year an additional 20 officers on the Gold Coast and 15 officers for Coomera, including the start of a tactical crime squad and a dog squad, were announced. This government has invested heavily in police resources right across Queensland.

I will talk about the south-east region which includes the Gold Coast, Coomera and Logan. Yes, there have been some increases. As I have said every year that I have released the statistical review, there will be increases and decreases from year to year. We had a spike in armed robberies in particular on the Gold Coast earlier this year. The numbers have actually declined significantly. In fact, the rate of armed robberies across the south-east region is the same as it was last year.

Let us look at some of the other areas where crime rates have actually come down on the Gold Coast because these are the things the member for Surfers Paradise does not want to talk about. In terms of personal safety, whether it is for local residents or visitors—the many hundreds of thousands of tourists who are absolutely critical to the Gold Coast—let us look at the figures across the region which includes the Gold Coast, Coomera and Logan. Assault rates are down nine per cent year on year. Offences against the person, which is the total category of personal safety offences, right across the south-east region are down 11 per cent.

The member for Surfers Paradise has dishonestly talked about the number of police officers. There are 199 extra police officers plus 350 extra recruits—90 of them graduated two months after—

(Time expired)

State Election, Voting

Mr RYAN: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State. Can the minister please inform the House of penalties for failing to vote in state government elections and any views on the importance of voting?

Mr LUCAS: I thank the honourable member for the question. We have voting—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

Mr LUCAS: We have had compulsory voting in Queensland since 1915. It is important that everyone has a say in democracy. Of course, it is not compulsory to vote in the Queensland parliament, and those in the opposition exercised their right to do that earlier this week when they did not turn up at all. Indeed, those who ambled in a bit later on, like the member for Kawana, sat there while everyone else's bills went through without getting to his feet and doing anything.

Of course we actually do have a choice next year. We have a choice between a government that has delivered jobs, economic opportunity, infrastructure and reform of the education system and an opposition that blunders from crisis to crisis. We have seen nothing but terrible things on the conservative side of politics since Freddy Krueger got on the bus. It is like when you go to the video store—you think you are getting something but they put the wrong DVD in. Those opposite have put the DVD in thinking it was going to be the *Sound of Music* and they got Freddy Krueger instead.

What have we seen more recently in the Freddy Krueger instalments? On 30 October the member for Dalrymple defected to Bob Katter. On 21 November the member Condamine said, 'The LNP gas policy needs more work.' On 22 November the member for Callide said that he will not seek the opposition leader's job if they do not win government, but he still will not reveal who will be the Premier if Campbell Newman loses Ashgrove. On 24 November Campbell Newman was forced to announce a cynical policy to buy off the votes of women following Gavin King's outrageous comments. Also on 24 November the member for Noosa said that he would have supported civil unions if he was allowed a conscience vote. On 27 November the LNP was caught out using pictures of Mexico and overseas destinations in policy material.

Like any good horror movie, towards the end the other side start to get their own. They start to turn the tables on Freddy Krueger. What did they do this week to turn the tables on Freddy Krueger? What they did first of all was announce an electricity policy that made him look like a total fool in Ashgrove. Secondly, they were not bothered to turn up to parliament. So the tables were turned on Freddy Krueger by the people opposite.

What will we see next year with the next sequel? We will see 'A Nightmare on George Street' or we might see 'Freddy Meets Mad Bob'. One thing is for sure: this is a horror movie on the other side that, like any good horror movie franchise, just keeps on, keeps on, keeps on. Whenever you think you can go to sleep or close your eyes, it just happens again.

Education Reform

Dr FLEGG: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Industrial Relations. Would the minister tell the House which of the following has the greatest impact on Queensland students: the fact that literacy and numeracy rates are still in the bottom half of national results or the failed promise to get attendance rates of students in Queensland to an acceptable level?

Mr DICK: I am looking forward to Christmas. I thank the honourable member for his question. I thank him for turning up. I thank him for speaking today because none of them spoke last night. Not one member of the Liberal Party had the courage of their convictions to speak. We know that the member for Moggill is a former Liberal Party leader. Not one of the Liberals—the member for Moggill, the member for Indooroopilly, the member for Mermaid Beach, the member for Caloundra, the member Surfers Paradise—came in to speak from their hearts and to speak from their conscience.

The most divisive possibility for Queensland schools is the policy ripped off by Campbell Newman—the throwback to the past, the throwback that Leading Schools mark 2—will be their so-called education policy of independent public schools. It will pit one school against another. It will have a set of schools that will be haves and a set of schools that will be have-nots.

Those opposite have to go to their own electorates and ask which of their schools will miss out as part of this divisive policy. Will it be Kenmore High? Will it be schools out west—small schools in electorates like Gregory or Warrego? We have 140 schools or thereabouts with one teacher. How will they go when money is taken away from them to fund the elite schools—that 10 per cent of schools that they want to carve out from our state education system?

Labor stands for education for all, opportunity for all—not just a select few, not just a minority. Our attendance rates, as I said in parliament yesterday, are down 0.1 per cent after the year of the greatest disasters in living memory in Queensland. What a fantastic contribution our school communities, our parents, our local communities have made to getting schools back together, putting them back together and getting kids back in classrooms at a very difficult time.

What else have we heard from the LNP? Tasers for teachers, an 85 per cent capacity program for schools—and where did that come from? Again that was a direct rip-off from their 85 per cent hospitals policy when the member for Moggill was the shadow minister for health. He could not even think up a new policy for education. He did a cut and paste, deleted all references to 'health' and 'hospitals' and inserted 'schools' and 'education'. That was his contribution. This is not a party that takes education seriously. It is not a party that believes in the transformative power of education. It is not a party that carries education in its heart. Queenslanders will suffer if the LNP ever gains the treasury benches again.

Schools, Security

Mr KILBURN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education and Industrial Relations. Could the minister please outline what steps have been taken with regard to school security over the coming Christmas holidays and any advice the minister may have for staying vigilant during the festive season?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Chatsworth for his question. He is a great champion of education in his electorate. It was great to see students from Whites Hill State College, which is in the member's electorate, here this morning. The school holidays are upon us with the last day of the 2011 school year coming up very soon, on Friday, 9 December—the end of next week. Sadly, school holidays are a time when we sometimes see damage to Queensland schools. I am asking all Queenslanders to stay vigilant at this important time of the year. So far in 2011-12, out of 1,237 schools, we have seen 90 instances of break-ins and damage, costing the state \$83,221, and 31 arson incidents, which so far this financial year has cost the state a little over \$910,000. I do not want any more of that to occur. We have a number of strategies in place such as school alarms, fire alarms, burglar alarms and 24-hour security patrols for high-risk schools. I am asking school communities to look out for local schools and call the School Watch Hotline on 131788 if they see anything of concern.

I am asking Queenslanders to be vigilant, to look out for Queensland schools over the holidays. I am asking them to look up, too, during the holidays. When they look up they might see a sleigh travelling through the sky. Who will be out the front? There will be eight unusual creatures pulling that sleigh, the LNP sleigh. We will have 'Dasher', the member for Dalrymple, who dashed up the back to be in Katter's corner. We will have 'Dancer', the member for Callide—and hasn't he developed a perfect sidestep, sidestepping any form of leadership responsibility? We will have 'Comet', the member for Surfers Paradise. He burned brightly in the sky, fizzled out and crashed to the earth. Then of course there is 'Cupid', the member for Southern Downs, the only person in Queensland who thought the marriage of the Liberal Party and the National Party was a good idea.

Who will they be dragging along in the sleigh? It will be Santa 'Campbell Newman' Claus. He will be up the back with his Christmas presents in the bag. We will look in there and what will we see? A few tarnished policies, ripped-off policies, a lot of hot air and a tarnished slogan. What has he left? What are the leftover presents for Brisbane? A tunnel that nobody uses, a 42 per cent rate rise and, of course, a bike scheme that is a complete joke. We have the advertisements in the Greenslopes electorate but no bicycles. Campbell Newman is like a cheap Christmas cracker: it looks attractive and shiny on the outside but put a bit of pressure on it and what do you get? A little bit of noise and a whole lot of disappointment! So merry Christmas, Campbell Newman and the LNP. There is a whole lot of pressure coming your way soon.

Workers Compensation

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is also to the Minister for Education and Industrial Relations. With respect to significant noncompliance with workers compensation payments required under state legislation in the construction industry in Queensland, I ask: will the minister support my calls for operators in the construction industry to be eligible for a workers compensation amnesty on payments that are due and owing if the operators contact the workers compensation board and put their affairs in order?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Nicklin for his question. He is a man who is always in the parliament and is never absent but speaks on issues important to his electorate. As a matter of principle, although I am a generous man at Christmas time, I am not generally inclined to the proposition that there should be an amnesty for workers compensation payments. Our workers compensation scheme in Queensland is one of the best in the nation. It is one of the most financially sound and stable workers compensation schemes. That is predicated on the fact that everybody contributes. It is an insurance scheme, and the more businesses and employers who contribute the better the scheme is for everyone.

Premiums are, of course, based on an individual business's claims history. Those with a good claims history are likely to have a lower premium under the scheme. So it is important that everyone who is in the scheme stays in the scheme and contributes to the scheme. In Queensland, our average workers compensation payment per \$100 of wages is \$1.42, the second lowest in the nation. It is a scheme that is solvent, with an solvency rate of more than 100 per cent. It is one of the best in the nation. The average premium rate is significantly lower now than when Labor came into power in 1998. What was the premium in 1998? On average, the premium today is \$1.42 per \$100 of wages. What was it in 1998? It was \$2.14. If Labor had not lowered premiums, if Labor had not been prudent in its management of the workers compensation scheme, if Labor had not kept a close eye on the workers compensation scheme, businesses in Queensland would have paid an extra \$4.7 billion in premiums over the past 13 years, using the LNP premium of \$2.14. That is their legacy. That is what they would have left for Queensland business.

Members opposite go on about red-tape reduction. They go on about taking the burden off business. It is only Labor that took the burden off business when it came to workers compensation premiums. Businesses would have paid \$4.7 billion over the past 13 years. What a shameful legacy, and that is exactly what the Queensland community will face if the opposition ever gets back onto the treasury benches. They will put the burden back on to business, unlike Labor, which has let business get on with the job, keeping a financially sound and secure workers compensation scheme, paying workers what they deserve, keeping open access to common law and great statutory entitlements and keeping an open scheme for all. That is beneficial for business.

(Time expired)

Youth Crime

Ms BOYLE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women. I ask: will the minister please outline what the Bligh government is doing to reduce youth crime and outline different ways to engage with Queensland youth?

Ms STRUTHERS: I thank the member for Cairns for the question. She is part of a government that is determined to drive down youth crime, and it is working. The police data yesterday showed offences committed by youth are down six per cent and offences against the person are down 13.5 per cent. We are taking action to make sure young people, young offenders, are learning or earning, not offending. That is why I recently announced the youth offender blitz for Cairns, Caboolture, the Gold Coast and other parts of the state including Rockhampton, where we are getting some great results. In Cairns, programs like the Youth Opportunity Program have seen a 50 per cent reduction in youth offending. The blitz in Cairns will build on these great results.

Sport is another way in which we can engage youth and get them back on track. In Cairns we have the Northern Outlook, and the PCYCs all around the state are doing a great job. The LNP candidate in Cairns is a bit of a sports fan. In fact, he went to a boxing match in Cairns—not to help young people; he was on the lookout for what he called 'A-grade dorks'. He said—

So in my quest to—
find—

some A-grade dorks, I turned to the one place I was guaranteed to find them—the Liberal National Party.

Yes, I was wasting my time scouting for talent at the bloody boxing.

They are his words. They are unparliamentary, I know, but that is what he said. He went on—

Take, for example, this week's incident dubbed "Fettagate" involving the LNP's Ray Stevens—

these are Mr King's words—

and another MP, who were chased down Grafton St by a waiter after they took off without paying their share of a drinks bill.

The following night Mr Stevens and colleague Ray Hopper were seen arguing outside an Esplanade restaurant over a disputed bill.

Only bogans act this way in public.

Gavin King then went on to describe his colleagues saying that they were a bunch of bogans who would be better off as actors on the small screen where we can laugh with them instead of at them. In his own words, Gavin King said the LNP—

could all run a farm better than most people.

I'm just not sure we want them running the state.

Queenslanders, like Gavin King, are rightly concerned that this mob cannot run the state, that they could be a risk to Queenslanders. Gavin King knows they are a bunch of bogans. In fact, they are a bunch of bogans with a bunch of slogans. I table that article.

Tabled paper: Article, dated 15 November 2008, titled 'The king—Out boxing the bogans' [\[6104\]](#).

CSG Industry

Mr McLINDON: My question without notice is to the Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining. A report brought down yesterday by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural Affairs and Transport on the coal seam gas industry highlighted the uncertainty about the long-term impact of CSG extraction on the water resources on the Great Artesian Basin and recommended that the Commonwealth withhold further mining approvals in parts of the Murray-Darling overlaying the aquifer. Will the minister now reconsider a moratorium on this dangerously flawed industry which is damaging Queensland?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for Beaudesert for his question because it is clear that he is at least consistent on this issue. I have had a chance to look at the Senate committee report. I was very interested in some of its recommendations. I think a significant number of its recommendations are overblown and unnecessary, but we will review this report very seriously. We will of course work with the Commonwealth government on the way these issues are looked at and managed into the future.

It is important for everyone to note that the Commonwealth government has played a significant role in the assessment and approval of the coal seam gas to liquefied natural gas projects that we are seeing developed here in this state. While I am talking about the coal seam gas industry, I want to make it very clear in answering the member's question that this government will not be going down the track of a moratorium on this terrific sunrise industry, delivering a bright future for the state of Queensland.

This is an industry that is delivering, frankly, a trifecta of great big winners—three terrific outcomes for Queensland: \$45 billion in private sector investment in LNG projects, 18,000 jobs for Queenslanders, real and tangible benefits flowing to businesses, particularly in rural and regional Queensland—

Mr Hobbs: All you are talking about is money.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Businesses on the western downs, member for Warrego, and businesses on the Darling Downs—businesses like Easternwell in Toowoomba, which was awarded a \$102 million contract to build new rigs. That means jobs for 100 workers in Toowoomba. That company's top 10 suppliers in food, fuel, transportation, equipment and services are all based on the Downs. There are also examples like Iplex Pipelines, which won a \$120 million contract to manufacture and supply pipes for QGC.

Mr Lucas: A future for kids in regional towns.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: That is right. This is about a future for people in towns like Dalby, Bell and Roma. These are all great opportunities for Queensland and we need to work together to make sure we continue to get the balance right—a balance that protects our environment and the social elements of our communities but delivers terrific economic benefits now and for many decades into the future.

Brisbane City Council, Cycle Strategy

Ms JONES: My question is to the Minister for Transport. I note the release this week of some details of the Brisbane City Council's cycle plan. Can the minister advise the House how this will work with the government's Cycle Strategy?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the minister for Ashgrove for the question. Before addressing the main substance of her question, I would like to report that we all know Brisbane City Council has failed to meet the on-time running target for its cycle scheme this year. I do have some good news: rail on-time running this year has again exceeded our benchmarks, with 93 per cent of our services running on time. That is a great achievement. Not only that, our bus on-time running has also exceeded benchmarks, with 98.09 per cent of services running on time against a benchmark of 90 per cent. That is more good news.

However, I am very upset to announce to the House today that the opposition has failed to meet its on-time running target for this year. In fact, on Tuesday they received a record zero per cent on-time running. They have failed dismally. Apparently the member for Hervey Bay did turn up for a short period of time so I think they made four per cent at that particular time.

Mr Hinchliffe: It had an 'out of service' sign on the bus.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, 'out of service'. Maybe he was stuck at the station or missed the train completely.

Return to the issue of cycling, I am pleased to see that the Brisbane City Council released a cycle strategy yesterday. But as I started looking at it closely a sense of déjà vu came over me. Why did it sound so familiar? Well, it is largely because they have copied our Cycle Strategy that we released a few months ago. So what is in it? We promised to pilot and deliver nationally accredited bicycle education programs. What a surprise—so has the Brisbane City Council. We promised to continue to promote cycling messages to support safer interaction between cyclists and motorists. Guess what? The Brisbane strategy has done the same. We promised to investigate using technology such as applications to be used with mobile phones and GPS devices. You guessed it: it was copied again.

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but it seems plagiarism is also occurring in the LNP council. They did offer one new idea about expanding their CityCycle scheme; that is, they are going to have bike pumps and maintenance stations across the city. This is the same council that recently lost 250 out of the 400 helmets they supplied for the cycling scheme. Who came up with the cycling scheme? Whose great vision was this for Brisbane? It was Campbell Newman's. How can you possibly think about Campbell Newman looking after transport for Queensland when he cannot even get a cycling scheme to operate in Brisbane?

(Time expired)

Bligh Labor Government

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State. On what could be his last day in this chamber, can the minister answer which failed project of this long-term Labor government has had the most negative impact on the people of Queensland: the \$338 million waste tax slug on local governments or the \$700 million blow-out in unrecovered fines—or do these pale into insignificance compared to his previous mishandling of the Health payroll disaster?

Mr LUCAS: I am looking forward to the question from the honourable member today.

Mr SPEAKER: And I am looking forward to the answer.

Mr LUCAS: Thank you for turning up. I will say this about the honourable member: he is a good-looking young lad. In fact, I had a look on Facebook and I noticed a lovely *Miami Vice* shot of him. There it is. There are a few little notes. From his mate Tim Nicholls—'I'm Tim from Clayfield'—'Mate, what's with the pic? Are you campaigning or what?' It is very interesting on Facebook: 'Hi, I'm Jarrod, I've got a university degree. Hi, I'm Jarrod, I'm in a relationship with myself. Hi, I'm Jarrod, my interests are social walks with myself. Friends: Jeff from Monto, Vaughan from Quilpie, Howard from Tambo,' but certainly we would not see 'John-Paul from Surfers Paradise' because, as any dentist, he has crooked teeth.

Tabled paper: Picture of the member for Kawana [\[6122\]](#).

I took the opportunity this morning to jot down a few notes about achievements. I wrote them down but I want to give that sheet a miss, and we will just say them anyway. We will talk about a telehealth network. We will talk about funding for persistent pain. We will talk about doubling cochlea funding. We will talk about the Gateway Upgrade Project. We will talk about the Tugun bypass. We will talk about Airport Link. We will talk about the east-west interconnector, the Forgan bridge, the Hospital Bridge, the Mulligan Highway, the duplication of the railway line on the Gold Coast and the extension to Varsity Lakes.

We will talk about triplication of Salisbury to Kuraby. We will talk about the King George Square busway. We will talk about the busway that goes to Roma Street. We will talk about the busways in two parts as part of Airport Link. We will talk about a railway extension to Richlands. We will talk about

duplication for Mitchelton to Keperra. We will talk about the largest integrated ticketing area in the world. We will talk about massive increases in patronage—when no other state can do it. We will talk about signing up for national health practitioner legislation. We will talk about the South East Queensland Regional Plan. We will talk about regional plans in other parts of Queensland.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think my question was quite specific in relation to three issues and I feel the Attorney is going all over the place. He is getting carried away. Mr Speaker, I ask you to bring him to relevance.

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order! I listened very carefully to the question. The minister is being very, very relevant.

Mr LUCAS: We will talk about eliminating the long waits of over a year. We will talk about the shortest elective surgery waiting lists in Australia. We will talk about a regional planning process that opposition members initially criticised and now have discovered. We will talk about the Bruce Highway strategy. We will talk about dragging John Howard kicking and screaming into the Ipswich Motorway funding. We will talk about people like Ros Bates who for years were missing in action when it came to funding of the Pacific Motorway, the M1. We will talk about the Sunshine Coast Motorway, including the Maroochydore bridge. We will talk about the east-west roads on the Maroochydore bridge. We will talk about the Mulgrave Bridge upgrade. There are many, many things we can talk about, and I can go on and on and on about them.

Mr SPEAKER: My stars said I was in for a great day today, and I was determined none of you were going to upset it! The time for question time has ended.


PRIVILEGE

Ethics Committee Report No. 119

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.02 am): I refer to Ethics Committee report No. 119. I respect the institution of parliament and its established processes in relation to dealing with matters of privilege. Therefore, I accept the committee's findings and, accordingly, I apologise unreservedly to the House.

LAW REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (11.03 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008, Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003, Child Employment Act 2006, Child Employment Regulation 2009, Classification of Films Act 1991, Corrective Services Act 2006, Criminal Code, Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986, Dispute Resolution Centres Act 1990, District Court of Queensland Act 1967, Evidence Act 1977, Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009, Jury Act 1995, Justices Act 1886, Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991, Land Court Act 2000, Legal Profession Act 2007, Magistrates Act 1991, Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, Peaceful Assembly Act 1992, Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, Recording of Evidence Act 1962, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 and Trustee Companies Act 1968 for particular purposes, and to make minor amendments of the legislation stated in the schedule. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Law Reform Amendment Bill 2011 [\[6105\]](#).

Tabled paper: Law Reform Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [\[6106\]](#).

The administration of justice is fundamental to ensuring that our democracy is fair. The justice system, including legislation such as the Criminal Code and the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, must be reviewed regularly to ensure it is modern, up to date and responsive to the needs of our society. The Queensland government has a strong record of being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. Our crime rates are going down. The overall crime rate has dropped by 28 per cent in the last 10 years. Statistics show that the rate of imprisonment in Queensland is 161.6 per 100,000 adults compared with Victoria, where the rate of imprisonment is 105.5 per 100,000 adults. We also have more police on the beat. There are now over 10,000 police in Queensland, up from 6,808 when we took government in 1998.

Despite these achievements, there remains significant concern in the community that the actual time being served by prisoners must be substantial enough to be seen as a deterrent. The Sentencing Advisory Council was set up to give the community a greater say in the state's sentencing regime. Its members include victims of crime representatives and people from our communities. Since the establishment of the council in 2010, the government has made a number of significant referrals:

- minimum standard non-parole periods;
- review of sentences imposed on child sex offenders; and
- sentencing of offenders convicted of armed robbery.

Minimum standard non-parole periods

One of the more significant amendments in the bill is the amendment to the Penalties and Sentences Act to insert a new sentencing regime of minimum standard non-parole periods. On 25 October 2010, the government announced its intention to introduce a tough new scheme of minimum standard non-parole periods for certain serious violent offences and sexual offences. The government also committed to introducing legislation into parliament by the end of this year that will establish such a scheme. A standard non-parole period is the minimum amount of time an offender should spend in jail if found guilty of a crime. The government asked the council to explore:

- what offences the scheme should apply to; and
- how long the standard non-parole period should be for each offence.

The council consulted widely and provided its report to me on 30 September 2011. The opposition has indicated its support of the Sentencing Advisory Council report. These amendments are being made in recognition of the general expectation of the community that people who commit violent and sexual offences will spend appropriate periods in prison before being released on parole. The introduction of this new sentencing regime in Queensland also aims to promote consistency and transparency in sentencing.

I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I will briefly address the specific amendments.

The Penalties and Sentences Act sets the sentencing framework in Queensland. It includes the sentencing options and principles that the court must have regard to when sentencing criminal offenders.

The Bill inserts a new sentencing regime of minimum standard non-parole periods into Part 9A of the Penalties and Sentences Act.

The Bill provides for a standard percentage scheme of minimum standard non-parole periods where an offender convicted of a serious offence and sentenced to imprisonment of five or more, but less than 10, years must serve 65 per cent of the term of imprisonment before being eligible to apply for parole, unless the court is of the opinion that it would be unjust to do so.

The Bill adopts the scheme recommended by the Sentencing Advisory Council in its 2011 report titled, 'Minimum standard non-parole periods' with the exception of its application to 17 year old offenders. In its report the Council recommended that the scheme not apply to 17 year old offenders. However, this would in effect create three different sentencing regimes for persons aged 16 years and under, 17 year olds, and then persons aged 18 years and over.

The Government appreciates that there are quite divergent views on how 17 year olds are dealt with in the justice system but points out that this legislation is not the appropriate forum to resolve that issue either way.

The scheme interfaces with the existing serious violent offence regime in Part 9A of the Penalties and Sentences Act which already applies to offenders sentenced to 10 or more years imprisonment or where the court makes a serious violent offence declaration. Under that scheme, the offender is required to serve 80 per cent of the term of imprisonment before they are eligible for parole.

The new scheme will apply to the offences listed in Schedule 1 of the Penalties and Sentences Act with some necessary additions to ensure that a comprehensive range of sex-related and child exploitation material offences are captured by the scheme.

The drafting of any schemes that potentially impact on the courts is scrutinised closely by the courts themselves and, in particular, the High Court. Careful drafting of other Queensland schemes, such as that provided for in the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, has successfully withstood High Court challenges where other states have failed.

A key aspect of this scheme is that it appropriately retains judicial discretion and independence, a fundamental element of our Westminster system of democracy. The sentencing court can depart from the 65% minimum standard non-parole period where the court is of the opinion that it would be 'unjust' for it to apply. In those circumstances, the court can set either a shorter or longer non-parole period.

This discretion is designed to avoid the potential for injustice in the practical application of the new scheme. Where a court decides to depart from the minimum standard non-parole period, the court must state and record its reasons. This will help to ensure transparency.

Importantly, this amendment enshrines in legislation the community's views on these matters as expressed through their elected representatives.

Dangerous management of a dog

There has been significant public concern about recent publicised cases of death and serious injuries inflicted during dog attacks.

While there are current provisions in the Queensland Criminal Code such as manslaughter through criminal negligence that could arguably cover this type of situation, a specific provision would remove any doubt at all. This is similar to what occurred many years ago when a specific provision for dangerous driving was provided so that the courts did not need to rely on manslaughter.

The Bill amends the Criminal Code to insert the new offence of 'dangerous management of a dog'. The new offence will apply to a person responsible for a dog who manages the dog in a way that is dangerous, having regard to all the circumstances, and where such dangerous management causes the death or grievous bodily harm to another person through an attack. This offence will carry a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment.

The offence will bridge the gap that exists between the high-level criminal negligence offences, such as manslaughter, and the lower tier offences contained in the Animal Management (Cats and Dog) Act 2008.

The maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment is the same as the maximum penalty for the offence of dangerous operation of a vehicle causing death or grievous bodily harm.

The Government acknowledges the legitimate use of guard dogs for personal and property protection. This is provided for in the definition of the term 'manages the dog dangerously' which means managing the dog in a way that is dangerous having regard to all the circumstances. Where a dog is used to protect persons or premises, consideration will be given to whether the use of the dog was appropriate in the circumstances. This will be a matter of fact for the jury to determine.

Increased use of technology in the Magistrates Court

For some time now, the Magistrates Courts have been, by the consent of the parties, conducting matters such as chamber applications, appearances, and the like via video link. Due to existing requirements about the need for Magistrates Court matters to be dealt with in the district or division in which they commence, the Magistrate dealing with a matter via video link must be physically present somewhere within the particular district. This is nonsensical. If it is appropriate to hear them via video link 10 kilometres away it is just as appropriate 1,000 kilometres away.

The Bill includes an amendment that authorises a Magistrates Court to order that proceedings may be conducted using audio link or audio visual link facilities, where the Chief Magistrate has permitted this to occur by issuing a practice direction, and where the type of proceeding is authorised to occur using such a link. The proposed provision will apply even if the Magistrates Court is constituted for a district or division outside the district or division in which the proceeding would otherwise be required to be heard.

The amendment will be of particular benefit to people in remote and regional communities. It will encourage greater use of technology and enable cases to be heard and finalised more quickly.

Importantly, this amendment does not take away from any existing requirements for the consent of the parties to have their hearing conducted in this way. This is because the use of video technology in the courts is hampered by issues such as bandwidth (pre the NBN roll-out) still not being mature. I look forward to the day where in many instances parties demand video hearings rather than accepting them as a necessary evil.

Removing the limit on reserve jurors

The Bill also includes an amendment to section 34 of the Jury Act 1995 to remove the limit on the number of persons who can be chosen and sworn as reserve jurors in a criminal or civil trial.

Trial judges currently have discretion to appoint reserve jurors, limited to no more than three reserves in addition to the 12 substantive jurors on a criminal trial and four jurors on a civil trial. Reserve jurors may be called upon to take the place of jurors who are discharged for whatever reason prior to verdict. In a criminal trial, a jury of at least 10 must determine the verdict. Therefore, a trial with the maximum number of reserve jurors (three) would have to be aborted if more than five jurors were discharged during the course of the trial.

The amendment is intended to avoid lengthy trials needing to be aborted, with the associated delay, expense and inconvenience.

Other amendments relating to Courts and QCAT

The Bill includes a number of other measures directed to improving the administration of the courts and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal and justice system.

The Bill amends the District Court of Queensland Act 1967 to:

- clarify the Court's jurisdiction on appeal by stating the Court's powers on appeal rather than describing them with reference to the powers of the Supreme Court immediately before the commencement of the District Court Act 1958; and
- repeal provisions concerning prerogative writs which have become obsolete following the enactment of the Judicial Review Act 1991.

Amendments to the Land Court Act 2000 in the Bill are intended to:

- clarify that the Land Court has all the powers of the Supreme Court for exercising jurisdiction conferred under the Land Court Act and other Acts;
- provide time limits on rehearing of a judicial registrar's decision in a proceeding;
- provide that the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999 will apply to record management procedures and policies in the Land Court; and
- provide that the Land Court Registrar is appointed by the Chief Executive Officer rather than the Governor in Council.

The Bill amends the Magistrates Act 1991 to:

- clarify that the powers of the Chief Magistrate under section 12 extend to magistrates, acting magistrates and judicial registrars;
- provide that the Chief Magistrate is responsible for directing the professional development and training of magistrates and judicial registrars;
- expand the Chief Magistrate's powers to allow for the allocation of functions to a particular magistrate and the nomination of a magistrate to be a supervising magistrate or a coordinating magistrate;
- provide the Chief Magistrate with the power to issue directions about the exercise of jurisdiction in specified matters or a class of matter; and
- allow for the appointment by the Governor in Council under section 5 of more than one Deputy Chief Magistrate; and provide the Chief Magistrate with the power to appoint more than one Acting Deputy Chief Magistrate under section 5A.

The Bill amends the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009 to:

- expand the definition of 'judicial member' to enable former judges who are senior or ordinary members to sit as a judicial member on a broader range of matters;
- remove some restrictions on which tribunal members can exercise stated tribunal's powers;
- provide a discretion for the provision of written reasons for interlocutory or procedural decisions; and
- ensure that costs assessors and conciliators have appropriate protection and immunity.

The Bill amends the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to:

- specifically enable the court to refer a person convicted of a minor breach of the alcohol restrictions in Indigenous communities to attend an approved alcohol information and education session as part of a court order; and
- make explicit that the court can make a recognisance order for an eligible offender who is convicted of breaching the alcohol restrictions on the conditions they be of good behaviour and attend an alcohol information and education session.

The Bill amends the Recording of Evidence Act 1962 to recognise the Queensland Sentencing Information System (QGIS), an internet based research tool for information relating to criminal practice and procedure developed in conjunction with the Judicial Commission of New South Wales. QGIS will provide relevant information to parties and sentencing courts to promote greater consistency in sentencing.

Because of issues relating to the disclosure of personal information most frequently found in sentencing remarks, access to QGIS has been restricted. The amendments in the Bill will authorise the chief executive to make arrangements with prosecuting agencies such as the Queensland Police Service and defence lawyers, including Legal Aid Queensland, and other relevant agencies, for access to QGIS and ensure the protection of any personal information in the database.

Other significant amendments to legislation not in the Justice Portfolio

The Bill also includes some significant amendments to legislation that is not within the justice portfolio. These amendments have been included at the request of the Ministers responsible for the disability services, housing and industrial relations portfolios.

Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2006

The first of these amendments is to the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2006 to make it an offence for a person in control of accommodation offered to the public to deny accommodation to a person with a certified guide, hearing or assistance dog. A breach of the offence would incur a maximum penalty of 100 penalty units. This is the same penalty as the similar existing offence under the Act for denying access to a public place to person with a certified guide, hearing or assistance dog. This will further promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in the community consistent with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

There is an existing obligation under Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 not to discriminate by refusing to provide accommodation to a person who has an impairment and is accompanied by a guide, hearing or assistance dog. However, the new offence will provide an alternative avenue for redress that is likely to be less complex, expensive and time consuming for a complainant.

Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003

The Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 (the Act) regulates the arrangement where a manufactured home owner enters into a site agreement with a residential park owner to position their home in a residential park.

In March 2011, a new section 99A of the Act commenced to provide a clear framework for the way a park owner may recoup the costs for the on-supply of a utility. The provision was developed with the intention of prohibiting residential park owners from charging manufactured home owners more than the supply price for utilities and to prohibit additional charges for the on-supply of utilities, such as electricity. However, its operation has proved unclear as to its interpretation. The Bill seeks to ensure the section gives effect to its original policy intent, balancing park owners' commercial needs and consumer protections for generally low-income manufactured home owners.

Child Employment Act 2006

The Bill also amends the Child Employment Act 2006 and Child Employment Regulation 2006.

A gap was identified in existing legislation, whereby children aged 16 and 17 years are not prohibited from being employed in adult entertainment type activities in some circumstances.

The Criminal Code prohibits the employment of children under 16 years in performing any indecent act such as adult entertainment type activities.

Under the Liquor Act 1992, persons under 18 years of age are completely prohibited from being in an area in a licensed venue where adult entertainment is being provided. Children are expressly prohibited from working as an adult entertainer and their employment in other non-sexual roles such as a waitress, glass collector, or disc jockey is also prohibited in such areas.

A gap exists, therefore, in that employment of children of the ages of 16 and 17 years in the adult entertainment industry is not prohibited in unlicensed venues, that is, in the unregulated adult entertainment industry.

This Bill amends the Child Employment Act 2006 to prohibit an employer from requiring or permitting a child up to the age of 18 years to work in inappropriate roles and situations. This includes performing acts of a sexually explicit nature or being present in an area while such acts are performed by another person. The proposed approach ensures that all children, including those aged 16 and 17 years, are protected while working in any industry, in any role.

Other justice portfolio amendments

The Bill amends the Evidence Act 1977 to clarify that husbands and wives are competent and compellable in all non-criminal proceedings, whether or not both or either of them is a party to the proceedings.

In 2004, amendments were made to the Evidence Act to ensure that the husband or wife of a party to any proceeding were both competent and compellable to give evidence in criminal or non-criminal proceedings in any court. The subsequent finding by the Court of Appeal in *Callanan v B* [2004] QCA 478 cast doubt on whether the current provisions in the Evidence Act were effective for making husbands and wives compellable to give evidence in any criminal proceeding against one of them.

This amendment will ensure spouse witnesses do not have any greater rights and privileges than other witnesses.

The Bill includes a range of amendments for improving the administration of justice and justice portfolio legislation:

- The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 will be amended to improve complaint handling processes and provide the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland with additional discretionary grounds for the rejection or lapsing of complaints.
- Appointment processes are proposed to be streamlined under the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 by providing for the Registrar and Deputy Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages to be appointed by the chief executive of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, rather than the Governor in Council.
- Administrative efficiencies are to be facilitated through amendments to the Classification of Films Act 1991 to enable the Commonwealth Classification Board to consider exemptions to screen unclassified films at film festivals as in other states. This will relieve Queensland from assessing hundreds of film applications each year.
- The Bill provides for the abolition of the Dispute Resolution Centres Council under the Dispute Resolution Centres Act 1990, as recommended by the Independent Review of Government Boards, Committees and Statutory Bodies.
- An amendment to the Evidence Act 1977 also promotes efficiency by requiring a DNA analyst for a party to attend court to give evidence only if the other party, by notice in writing, indicates the analyst is required to give evidence.
- Flexibility is to be provided under the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 to allow for the appointment of community visitors on a casual basis.
- The Bill amends the Justices Act 1886 to allow the Minister to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer a decision to release copies of records in certain proceedings.
- Amendments to the Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991 will allow for the register of justices of the peace and commissioners for declarations to be maintained in electronic form and the registrar to exempt appointees from gazettal in appropriate cases.
- The Bill amends the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992 to allow the Police Commissioner to delegate his functions under the Act to a police officer of the rank of sergeant or higher which reflects the rank that usually performs the role of Superintendent of Traffic.
- The Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 is proposed to be amended to exempt court registry and State Reporting Bureau staff from criminal liability under the non-disclosure provision when performing a function of their employment.
- The Bill amends the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 to clarify, with retrospective operation that, if a corporation defaults in paying fines, penalties or other amounts under a court order, the amount can be registered with the State Penalties Enforcement Registry. The Bill also ensures officers of shared service agencies are protected from liability when performing functions on behalf of the State Penalties Enforcement Registry.
- The Bill amends the Trustee Companies Act 1968 to facilitate the voluntary transfer of trustee company business from one trustee company to another under the new voluntary transfer regime in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cwth). In addition, it facilitates the transfer of trustee company business to the Public Trustee (if agreed by the Public Trustee) where the licence of the trustee company has been cancelled.

Minor amendments

Finally, the Bill also includes minor and technical amendments to justice portfolio legislation identified as desirable by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel.

Conclusion

The Bill provides for a range of substantial reforms to the criminal law through the introduction of minimum standard non-parole periods and the introduction of the offence of dangerous management of a dog.

It includes measures to modernise, streamline, clarify and improve the administration of justice and justice portfolio legislation, including through the expanded use of audio and visual link facilities.

I commend this Bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (11.07 am): 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.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee.

STRATEGIC CROPPING LAND BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 30 November (see p. 3974), on motion of Ms Nolan—


That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (11.07 am): I resume my speech in support of the Strategic Cropping Land Bill which I almost completed last night. For development under the Sustainable Planning Act, fees will range from \$500 for small developments to \$9,035 for mid-sized developments to \$27,254 for large developments. For resource developments, the fees will range from \$9,806 for developments which meet a standard conditions code to \$27,254 for all other types of developments.

The final step in the Queensland government's extensive consultation process was the release of a draft state planning policy on 5 August 2011. The draft state planning policy was released to seek public feedback on the Queensland government's planning policy and development assessment framework for protecting strategic cropping land under the Sustainable Planning Act 2009. The new state planning policy will operate in tandem with State planning policy 1/92: Development and the conservation of agricultural land, which applies to a broader range of agricultural lands.

Submissions closed on 30 September 2011 and 67 submissions were received. The draft state planning policy is being reviewed based on the feedback received during consultation. It is intended that the finalised state planning policy will commence at the same time as the legislation. The government considered the feedback received on the draft state planning policy and will ensure that the final state planning policy will better account for developments that present a low risk to the protection of strategic cropping land resources.

Further, changes have been made to exempt small developments with a footprint less than 750 square metres, key resource areas and certain types of developments such as building structures or activities supporting cropping. This means that farmers on strategic cropping land will be able to diversify their business in many ways without being affected by this legislation. Consultation with key stakeholders and the public was the fundamental basis for the development of the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. The consultation undertaken has been extensive, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McLINDON** (Beaudesert—KAP) (11.09 am): I rise to make a contribution to the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. I must say from the outset that I see this as reactive legislation. However, it is a step in the right direction—a very small step. Some 10 years ago, if not 15 or 20 years ago, the bill could well have been titled the 'Strategic Mining Land Bill'. That would have been far more beneficial in terms of looking at the strategy of where mining can and cannot take place within Queensland. What we are seeing here now is a rushed piece of legislation given that a lot of approvals have already been steamrolled across many parts of rural and regional Queensland which cannot be undone very easily given that there are contractual agreements in place. This bill should be looking at the future of Queensland—the next 50 or 100 years—in terms of where mining can and cannot take place. The terminology of calling this legislation the Strategic Cropping Land Bill which determines where one can and cannot have cropping land almost gives an advantage to the mining companies which have steamrolled Queensland communities week after week.

The Australian Party's position is very clear and very black and white. Given that many approvals have already been given, we are unreservedly calling for a 12-month moratorium and the right for landholders to be able to refuse entry to mining companies as well as making no-go zones from the Scenic Rim right through to the Ipswich region and right out to Oakey, Dalby and in fact many parts—if not all—of South-East Queensland. In the past what we have seen with the fracking process involved in coal seam extraction is that many countries have actually banned that fracking process from taking place—France and Africa—but Queensland and Australia are not only just adopting but also endorsing these practices which are highly questionable in terms of their impact both socially and environmentally into the future for Queensland. I also note that in many areas of Queensland I have had the privilege to visit in the last few months, particularly in relation to the mining boom that we are having at the moment, there have been concerns about not only where mining companies can go and where cropping land is but also the two-speed economy, which is a very serious issue in terms of the financial future viability particularly of small businesses and agriculture in Queensland.

One such letter that many members would have received was from John Dalton, the Secretary of the Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group. Throughout his very considered two- or three-page letter to members of parliament he calls for the slope percentage of five per cent to be increased to eight per cent to protect many areas of the South Burnett. He said that the 67,000 hectares or three-quarters of all of the cropped areas in the South Burnett fell within the five per cent slope threshold and he wants to increase that threshold to eight per cent in order to increase the area protected by approximately 11,500 hectares. This percentage increase was also something that the member for Hinchinbrook alluded to in his contribution to the House.

I will be putting forward an amendment in the consideration in detail stage under schedule 1 relating to the zonal criteria for original zones, and I will have that amendment circulated in the House well in advance so that members can consider this possible amendment to the schedule relating to page 179 at line 8 to omit five per cent and insert eight per cent so that the bill will state that the slope is eight per cent or less. That would certainly be beneficial and would be a small win within this bill in terms of heading in the right direction to ensure that the strategic cropping land in the South Burnett is considered. This would also have a great impact across the state. The South Burnett should be petitioned from the coastal zone in that the maximum slope should be lifted to eight per cent. This would be in the same manner as the Granite Belt, which has been petitioned from other SCL zones due to its unique features. That minor amendment would certainly have a huge impact and be of great benefit to those regions.

In the last 24 hours we have seen the tabling of the Senate rural affairs and transport references committee report relating to the management of the Murray-Darling Basin. It is very interesting to note that the 24 recommendations—something that the Australian Party has been fighting long and hard for now—are starting to resonate from within the document of this Senate inquiry. The report stated that, given the uncertainty about the long-term impact of CSG extraction on the water resources of the Great Artesian Basin, the inquiry recommended that the Commonwealth withhold further mining approvals in parts of the Murray-Darling overlaying the aquifer. These are fairly significant and firm words from the Senate committee, and I also want to add a few quotes from veteran Senator Bill Heffernan. He said—

It seems to me that the industry's got well ahead of the knowledge of the long term impacts and certainly the long term legal and financial liabilities of any damage that's done.

He goes on further to say—

It's obvious to people that have put millions of dollars and to governments that have put millions of dollars into the capping and piping system for the Great Artesian Basin to repressurise it in some areas, that it's almost an insult.

I have very grave concerns, as does Alan Jones, who delivered a fantastic speech to the Press Club in Canberra. I look forward to his support in the lead-up to the election for the Australian Party's position on the flawed coal seam gas industry.

Some of the impacts that the coal seam gas industry are having on communities and the welfare of those communities will not just be a problem for a year or two but for hundreds of years. Some of the studies that have been done say that land that has been used for coal seam extractions will not be able to be used for agricultural purposes into the future for anywhere between 500 years to 1,000 years. This is a very short-term gain for long-term pain, especially given that much of this revenue will be channelled overseas, in particular to British Gas, which has a very big finger in the pie. We may have jobs that will come and go, but the decimation and damage it will do to the environment, the agricultural industry and food security in Queensland is of grave concern. Each and every one of us need to unreservedly be able to put these people's wishes to the parliament. It has certainly gained a lot of traction in the public now. There is widespread concern.


These minerals will not go away and, therefore, I do not see the harm in a 12-month moratorium. I can understand that we are fast approaching \$85 billion worth of debt in Queensland and there is obviously a rush to ensure that that debt can be brought under control, but at what cost? I have very grave concerns. In as little as 10 or 20 years from now most of us will not be in this parliament and we are going to look back and wonder why we did not call for that moratorium to get the science right and to ensure that there were vast no-go zones for coal seam gas and to ban the fracking process from taking place. This is something about which we have a duty and an obligation—not to just the existing generation but generations to come.

Many good soldiers—men and women—died for this country in World Wars I and II to protect this great land. What we have seen, particularly over the last three to five years, is a fire sale of state assets and the very land underneath our feet. I think that is a huge insult to this generation and the generations to come and particularly to those that have gone before us to protect our sovereignty. This will undoubtedly be a key election issue for the state election. I am proud to say that we have the strongest and most definitive position in this parliament. The Australian Party will be advocating a 12-month moratorium along with the no-go zones and for landholders to have the right to say no. As we have seen in that great movie *The Castle*, a man's home is his castle, particularly our land. If we cannot protect the land that has been given to us by our forebears, then something is drastically wrong.

I do appreciate the time the minister has given to the bill and some of the advances it has made. As I have said, it is a reactive piece of legislation. It should have been the 'Strategic Mining Land Bill' so that we could have a very clear vision for the next 100 years rather than this two-year political cycle in which we have gone into more and more debt.

I am proud that the member for Dalrymple and I will be fighting this issue tooth and nail going into the state election to make sure that a bit of reason is given to this industry, because putting the handbrake on for 12 months is not the end of the world. We need to do this so that we can get a bit of science behind it and so that we can make sure this industry is carried out properly and is not slaphappy and ad hoc.

I also look forward to protecting the Scenic Rim. We saw the LNP leader come out and say that he will not let any inappropriate coal seam gas extraction occur in the Scenic Rim. My message to the LNP leader is that there is no such thing as appropriate coal seam gas extraction in the Scenic Rim.

 **Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.19 am): The Strategic Cropping Land Bill provides an entirely new paradigm in land management. As such, it is an extremely important piece of legislation. Because it is such important legislation, particularly to the many stakeholders, it is extremely disappointing that it has been rushed through the committee process. The bill was introduced into this parliament on 25 October and the committee was requested by the government to report back on it by

25 November. From the large number of submissions that were put to the committee from stakeholder groups and community members, the potential impact of this legislation and its importance to Queensland's future was very obvious. This rushed time frame must have put a great deal of pressure on the committee members in fully reviewing those submissions. It is very disappointing that this government has ignored the new committee processes yet again for its own political gain. But in saying that, I commend the committee for the excellent report that it has put out in the very short time frame that it had.

The aim of the Strategic Cropping Land Bill is to implement a legislative framework for the protection of prime agricultural land or, as it is now described, strategic cropping land. The bill acknowledges that agricultural land has come under increasing pressure from competing interests, particularly the resources sector. There is great community concern about this issue, particularly from landholders, who are feeling very anxious about their security of tenure. Although this bill attempts to address some of those issues, there are still some serious flaws in it.

For several years the LNP has been leading the call for the protection of strategic cropping land and, very belatedly, the Labor government has finally put this bill forward. Although the intent of this bill is what is being called for across the community, there are several concerns about it. Labor's bill does not apply to coal seam gas developments. The LNP's policy will ensure there will be no open-cut mining, coal seam gas activity or other development on strategic cropping land if it is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the capacity of that land to produce food and fibre.

For several years the LNP has called for the protection of prime agricultural land and it has been an issue of great importance for the party. One of the biggest concerns and fears across the community is what impact mining and coal seam gas developments are having and potentially could have in the future, particularly for the landholders who are being affected. The real fears in the community about CSG extraction and other resource activity relate to the inability of this government to give the community any confidence that it is sufficiently monitoring and managing the environmental land impacts that may potentially occur.

It is becoming obvious that there are land-use conflicts across the state between the resources and agricultural industries. But the government has sat on its hands and has taken years to recognise the problems facing landholders. The agriculture industry is an enormously important industry. It is essential for Queensland's future food and fibre production which, under an LNP government, will certainly be increased. Just as important, though, is the booming resources industry. We accept that that industry is a central pillar of the economy of Queensland and it is one upon which Queensland relies. Both industries are essential to Queensland's economy and the LNP believes that they can co-exist along with the protection of the environment.

This government has lost the confidence of Queenslanders that it has the ability to protect against the inappropriate use of land. As I said, there are several areas of concern in this bill and the committee, even in the short time that was made available to it, has identified quite specifically several of these areas of concern in its report. Under the guise of protecting agricultural land, this bill has created a huge bureaucratic jungle for farmers to wade through when they may wish to develop their business or supplement their existing business to value-add—and this relates to not just farmers but also people living within a strategic cropping land area.

The Burdekin Shire Council, which encompasses some of the most valuable cropping land in Queensland, has expressed some very grave concerns about the impact of this legislation on its area, particularly on future developments that could occur in the shire. The Burdekin is the largest cane-growing district in Australia and its copious water supply from the underground aquifer and the Burdekin River really makes it an extraordinarily valuable farming area. Mayor Lyn McLaughlin and her council have identified eight specific areas of this bill that they believe will seriously impact on the Burdekin. The member for Hinchinbrook in the briefings with DERM addressed these questions and some, but maybe not all, of the council's concerns have been clarified.

The bill suggests that it was a rare circumstance that a town was completely surrounded by SCL. The council rightly believes that this suggestion is unacceptable. All the towns within the Burdekin shire—Ayr, Home Hill, Brandon, Giru, Clare, Millaroo and Dalbeg—are surrounded by very viable farming land, mainly growing sugar cane. These towns would not be the only towns in Queensland that are surrounded by such an area. Statements such as that contained in the bill do not build confidence in the rest of the bill.


The Burdekin Shire Council also raised a concern about the proposed assessment fees payable to DERM for landholders wishing to lodge a development application within an SCL area. It has suggested that these fees are prohibitive. The government has announced some changes to the fee structure; however, developments above 9,000 square metres in size will still attract the fee of \$27,254. There are other fees as well, including a \$46,253 fee for applications that may need to meet the exceptional circumstances test in an SCL protection area. The council is right to be concerned about these fees. They will affect people who are considering developing.

As well, the council believes that some usual farming practices could become assessable development. The current practices that are exempt are outlined in the schedule; however, certain activities such as laser levelling, which is an essential and common practice for farming, is not in the schedule. It is certainly an essential practice in the Burdekin area. Ancillary businesses to supplement income built on farmers' freehold land could become assessable developments as well. The Burdekin Shire Council supports industries that have the capacity to capitalise on synergies with the sugar industry through the value-adding of by-products. It is concerned—and rightly concerned—that the development of some of those industries could now trigger provisions in the state planning policy as a result of this bill.

The bill has outlined eight soil criteria to identify strategic cropping land. They seem technically sound but the LNP believes that there are other factors that should be taken into consideration in determining the strategic nature of land. The LNP has put forward its plan and is committed to implementing its plan should it be elected to government. An LNP government will give local people a greater say in regional planning processes so that local communities have more input. The LNP will put the identification of SCL as a core part of the statutory regional planning process.

As the shadow minister has outlined very concisely in his contribution, the LNP will be supporting this legislation because stakeholders are crying out for some form of security. However, this legislation is seriously flawed, as the many submitters to the committee have flagged. I also must commend the shadow minister for his extensive research into this very important bill, which, as I said, is an entirely new paradigm for Queensland.

I note that the protection of prime agricultural land is a very important part of the LNP's excellent agriculture policy, which has been brought out very recently by the shadow minister. I certainly congratulate the shadow minister for that tremendous policy. I would advise those members on the other side of the House to read it. The LNP understands rural and regional Queensland and is committed to implementing that policy on protecting prime agricultural land when in government.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.30 am): I, too, rise to address the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. I would like to pick up where the member for Burdekin left off, and that is in congratulating the shadow minister, the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, on his sterling effort in researching, debating and presenting the issues that this bill has raised. In some respects the LNP welcomes this bill, as the member for Burdekin just said. Indeed, we would state that it is long overdue. The LNP has long been calling for the protection of Queensland's strategic cropping land. It is only belatedly that this tired Labor government has reacted to the LNP's calls and to the outcry from landholders concerned at the encroachment of development and mining onto the state's best agricultural land. Whilst this is not what the LNP had outlined as our policy to protect strategic cropping land, it is important that this bill be passed as soon as possible to ensure some level of protection and to inform the decision-making process for new development applications.

Having said that, and whilst we want to see this bill passed, we again raise concerns over the truncated committee process. As a member of the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee, I am again disappointed to say that this committee is starting to be treated with disdain. Those bills that need and deserve significant consideration are being rammed through the committee. In this instance the committee was given a mere month to report—a mere month to receive, process, contemplate, discuss and report on 56 detailed written submissions and the evidence provided through the public hearing; a month to consider one of the most significant pieces of legislation presented before this House—not unlike the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill before it. It is a disturbing practice and trend.

Mr Rickuss: How many of those 56 support it?

Mr POWELL: Very few gave it a full tick, member for Lockyer. There were certainly a lot of issues raised, and it is those issues that we need to debate today. As I was saying, not unlike what happened with the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill, it is a disturbing practice and trend and one that makes a mockery of the brave new world of the parliamentary committee system.

Turning to the bill itself, its purposes are to (a) protect land that is highly suitable for cropping, (b) manage the impacts of development on that land and (c) preserve the productive capacity of that land for future generations. It was very helpful that the explanatory notes set up what the bill specifically provides for and did so in a way that the committee then adopted in its report. We note that the bill specifically provides for the identification of strategic cropping land, for validating whether or not land is strategic cropping land, the assessment of the development impacts on the land, projects to be approved in exceptional circumstances, mitigation, developments that are exempt from the bill, an appeals process, transitional project arrangements and the Strategic Cropping Land Science and Technical Implementation Committee. It also discusses enforcement, offences and that no compensation will be payable under the act. The structuring of the bill in this way has assisted the EAREC in consolidating the input provided by both written and verbal submissions.

Despite widespread support for the bill to proceed, as the member for Lockyer and I mentioned and as the shadow minister identified, there is not a single section, chapter or clause that has not drawn comment. To share each concern is not possible in the time allotted for this debate so I, too, draw to the attention of members of this House and members of the public more broadly the EAREC report on this bill and the transcripts of the public hearing. Even within the time constraints imposed on the committee, I acknowledge the fantastic efforts of the committee secretariat. They should be commended for their facilitation and efforts in preparing this report. As per the statement of reservation of the LNP members of the committee, the report accurately identifies the most contentious issues raised by public submissions and in the evidence given to the committee during the public briefing and hearing.

The report also demonstrates lucidly that there is a wealth of additional material that shows that the bill is significantly flawed. In the time remaining I want to draw the attention of the House to some of these flaws. Again I will use the way in which the explanatory notes have broken up the bill. Starting with the identification of strategic cropping land, the concern here is with the distinction between strategic cropping land areas and the strategic cropping land management area. I refer to page 3 of the transcript of the public hearing and to the comments made by Mr Michael Murray of Cotton Australia who said—

There is really no justification for the differentiation between the protected and the management zones. Either this country is worth protecting or it is not. Unfortunately, the management and the rules around that, as we understand them, really allow people to buy their way out of this process and there is no guarantee that they will actually be able to maintain the standard of the soil, so I think we need to move to the fully protected area.

We in the LNP picked up these concerns in our statement of reservation. That statement reads—

Notwithstanding that the explanatory notes accompanying the bill claim that it provides for a consistent process for assessing and determining whether developments are able to proceed on SCL12, this is clearly inaccurate. There are no technical differences between the quality of the soils on SCL in the two protection areas, compared to the quality of the soils on SCL in the management area.

As such, while the bill claims to establish a scientifically based process for identifying SCL in Queensland, it does no such thing. It proposes to create a two tier system distinguishing SCL in the two protection areas from SCL in the management area based only on its location, not its productive capacity. Nothing in the bill's explanatory notes or in the information provided by DERM, justifies this distinction.

That the bill creates this arbitrary distinction is a legitimate criticism of its provisions. This arbitrary provision has been included without any explanation and must therefore be considered a policy decision of the government. This policy decision appears to undermine the stated purpose of the bill. It is reasonable therefore, to question if the public can have confidence in the balance of the provisions in the bill.

Moving to the area of validating whether or not land is strategic cropping land, again our statement of reservation reads—

While the eight physical soil criteria are considered to be relevant tests to legitimately determine the quality of cropping soils, the thresholds set for each of these criteria have been criticised for excluding highly productive land that has been successfully growing high value crops for extended periods. Notwithstanding zonal adjustments allowing for regional differences, the eight soil criteria are considered to be flawed.

I would also like to refer to some of the statements made by Mr Dan Galligan, CEO of Queensland Farmers Federation, and Mr Drew Wagner of AgForce, again as reported in the transcript of the public hearing. Mr Galligan said—

We are very disappointed in some respects with the criteria being solely focused on soils. We represent a number of intensive industries, particularly the irrigation industry. Consideration for the importance of irrigation infrastructure associated with land is one key criteria. We have always felt it important to at least acknowledge in strategic cropping land in that, essentially, it would be crazy for us to be suggesting that we are going to alienate irrigation schemes in Queensland if they want strategic cropping land. So access to water is certainly one of the issues that we will be looking at in the two-year review as well.

Mr Galligan continues—

We have always been disappointed and are still disappointed about the fact that there are 10 criteria and not eight. There is the soil criteria, then the minimum area requirements and the cropping history. The minimum area requirements I think are going to pose significant problems in the validation of SCL, because there will be lands that people have a common understanding would be good cropping lands which will be knocked out, and horticulture and cane are both concerned about that.

Representing the large horticulturally based electorate of Glass House, I echo the sentiments raised by Mr Galligan. He continues—

The cropping history test I will be more scathing of. It is quite ridiculous, to be honest. It is going to impose a bizarre administrative burden—a final hurdle. Really, if you look at the criteria in the bill closely, it would be very rare for anything that was satisfactory cropping land to have not been cropped within that period. It is quite pointless how it has ended up and I never understood the point in the first place. I would also reinforce that by saying that the trigger maps that are referenced in the bill are built on data that includes whether the land that those maps are based on was ever cropped.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr POWELL: Exactly. He continues—

So validating on the trigger maps that land has been cropped has already been done via the trigger map.

I take the interjection from the member for Gregory. He is exactly right. The member for Hinchinbrook raised an opposing view in his speech—that is, that, in some instances, it is impossible under the cropping test for good cropping land to actually meet that threshold through such things as drought. Mr Drew Wagner from AgForce also made comments about this matter. This is indicative of the fact that there are many concerns around the validation of whether land is strategic cropping land or not.

I now turn to projects to be approved in exceptional circumstances. I note the explanatory notes on page 4 go into some detail about how this will occur. They state—

... where a project is likely to have permanent impacts on SCL in a Protection Area, the project cannot proceed unless it demonstrates exceptional circumstances.

To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, the project must satisfy the two-pronged test which requires evidence that on a state wide basis there are no alternative sites for the project and that the project presents an overwhelming and significant community benefit to the State.

Many concerns were raised regarding this matter, but the primary one is that the definition of what constitutes exceptional circumstances is unacceptably vague. The criteria for exceptional circumstances are that there are, as I said, no alternative sites for the development or the project has overwhelming and significant benefit. That benefit is simply not quantified. We raised in our statement of reservation—

Approving a development in a Protection Area under the exceptional circumstances clause, which will have a permanent impact on the SCL in question, is clearly inconsistent with the stated purpose of the bill to protect land highly suitable for cropping, manage the impacts of development on that land and preserve the productive capacity of that land for future generations. The contradiction is plain.

Then there is the issue of mitigation. The long and short of the concern regarding the mitigation clauses is the lack of scientific and technical legitimacy of the proposed measures to achieve the productive restoration of strategic cropping land after a development activity has ceased. I refer again to a question asked by the honourable member for Hinchinbrook and the subsequent response by Mr Galligan at that public hearing. The member for Hinchinbrook asked—

A submission from Growcom raised this issue—

Restoration of cropping land to its original productive state is not something that has ever successfully been undertaken, therefore we question the whole concept of mitigation as it is defined in this Bill.

There is not a representative of Growcom here but Growcom is affiliated with the Queensland Farmers Federation so I suppose I will direct this question to Mr Galligan. Would you as a peak representative body like to offer an opinion to the committee about the science of rehabilitating strategic cropping land? What is able to be demonstrated at this time?


Mr Galligan's response is rather telling—

Thank you for your question. I think what Growcom has raised and a number of submissions have raised is that people have seen no evidence that gives them any confidence that restoration can happen, particularly in higher value cropping areas. I guess the risk is borne out in how well the bill portrays the appropriate precautionary principle in terms of making planning decisions, and that is what we are relying on. The uncertainty is there. Once a decision is made to allow resource development to occur, nobody has given me or any of my members any information that demonstrates that rehabilitation would come back to a level that would be satisfactory.

In relation to a technical point on the bill in terms of mitigation, the bill does not actually outline what standard of rehabilitation will be required so there has always been quite a bit of debate—and it is still not cleared up in the drafting of the bill—as to whether or not rehabilitation or restoration would be required back to any level of SCL. Does that land just have to get back to be able to meet the SCL criteria, or does it have to get back to the productive state given loss of productivity is now one of the effects under the bill? Will there need to be a measure of the productivity of the land before it is alienated and therefore it needs to be brought back to that productive state? Or is it just a matter of getting the soil back to a status that would meet the criteria under any assessment or the level at which it met the assessment prior to development? None of those questions are clear to be honest, let alone the uncertainty over whether or not it could be restored at all.

As raised by the shadow minister, there are significant concerns also regarding the bill's transitional arrangements. In particular, the primary concerns pertain to the unique transitional arrangements for the Springsure Creek coal project. As detailed by the shadow minister, the unusual nature of these arrangements has undermined public confidence in the government's SCL policy. The Springsure Creek coal project is in a regulatory twilight zone, not subject to the processes that governed applications prior to 31 May, but equally not subject to the processes that have governed applications since 31 May. This situation has implications for the integrity of chapter 9 of this bill. Given these flaws, the bill is inferior to the alternative presented by the LNP. I do draw the attention of members of the House and members of the public to our policy as described in detail by the shadow minister.

In conclusion, I return to my opening remarks. In the absence of our approach, and no other imminent means of protection, the LNP will not be opposing this bill. This bill is overdue. As the committee identified, 'It is flawed but should proceed.' The LNP will be seeking from the minister in her summing-up and during the consideration in detail stage clear and unambiguous advice about these substantive flaws.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.45 am): The Strategic Cropping Land Bill seeks to implement the legislative framework that recognises the state's strategic cropping land as a finite resource that must be protected against the impacts of development and preserved for future generations. The bill proposes to use planning and development powers to maintain development impacts. The bill before the House is long overdue and, in the case of the coal seam gas invasion across Central Queensland, is too late. However, I welcome any move to protect land that is essential to our food security. But it does not go far enough. I believe that the horse has already bolted.

It is important not to make the mistake of thinking that this is a purely economic argument. Global food production must increase to be able to feed our growing population both here and globally. It is dangerously short-sighted to think that our salvation is in the resource sector alone when the United Nations is warning that farmers must increase food production by 100 per cent in the next 40 years. We need to protect this \$14 billion industry. We have seen the reduction of the dairy industry because of deregulation, our potato industry wiped out because of the duopoly of Coles and Woolworths. Now we are seeing the growing threat to our food bowl due to mining.

There is a serious question regarding how much the proposed legislation actually protects farmers and how much it intrudes on the land rights of farmers. One has to question the validity of the government's claim that this is about protecting farm land when the Treasurer steps in to fast-track mining development approvals so he is not subject to this legislation. An article in one of our papers stated—

Queensland mining industry plays down farmland development restrictions.

The resource industry says farm groups should keep the cork in their champagne bottles because many mining projects will still go ahead, despite the declaration in Queensland of areas of strategic cropping land.

The State Government says it is moving to protect the most valuable food producing areas by banning activity which would permanently render the land unusable.

Michael Roche from the Queensland Resources Council says that he does not rule out all projects. He says that two important categories of mining projects that fall within the boundary of the strategic cropping lands will be able to proceed. Those are projects which have the terms of reference for their environmental impact statements finalised and some expansion of existing operations. He says that miners may look at underground mining rather than open-cut mining.

Across Queensland farmers who once thought they owned the land they paid for are living in fear. From the black soils of the Darling Downs to the rich volcanic soil of the Atherton Tablelands, farmers watch in apprehension as the maps increasingly resemble a shop front for foreign mining investment. The eligibility criteria for strategic cropping land, as outlined in the regulatory assessment statement, indicate farmers will be charged the same as mining companies to find out if their land is protected.

The \$17,000 that farmers are required to pay just to find out if their land is strategic cropping land is an expense that most will be unable to pay. So there is a sense in the farming community of just waiting until a mining company makes a claim on their land to see if they are protected. Farmers should not have to pay such exorbitant fees to find out if the land they own is protected by the government that collects their taxes.

This has been a pressing issue over the last few years in relation to the expansion of coal seam gas. An article in the *Australian* newspaper yesterday states—

Senate inquiry calls for halt to coal-seam gas projects in Murray-Darling Basin.

THE federal government should impose a moratorium on further coal-seam gas projects in the Murray-Darling food bowl that overlay the great artesian basin, according to a parliamentary inquiry into the social and environmental impact of the controversial industry.

In relation to this controversial issue, all the lobby groups across Queensland are crying out for a moratorium so that we can slow coal seam gas down, so we can get the facts right, so we are able to get the knowledge and get the farmers working with the mining companies. At the same time, we want to protect our Great Artesian Basin. This is why this issue is so important. While I welcome the introduction of legislation that protects strategic cropping land, which is very important, we need to get this right. It is going too fast. Farmers are crying out for support on this one. That is why it is important that a moratorium is put in place so that we get it right. Whoa it up; slow it down. Many interest groups are out there calling for a moratorium. The only groups who are opposing it are the Labor Party and the LNP. It is important that we protect our Great Artesian Basin. We in the Australian Party are committed to prohibiting hydraulic fracking three kilometres in any direction from aquifers, groundwater source or groundwater supply points. We will also prohibit drilling through the Great Artesian Basin, which will protect the Great Artesian Basin.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! If the Attorney-General wants to take part, he should move to his own seat.

Mr KNUTH: We will also restore property rights. They need to be restored because we have lost property rights. We will promote and support property rights legislation that will restore negotiating powers to landowners. No mining or exploration activity will be permitted on the landowner's property without the landowner's explicit consent, nor will the exploration permits for a mining lease be granted without the landowner's consent. A landowner retains the absolute right to withhold consent. Any consent given must be a written agreement based on the terms that are deemed by the landowner to be fair and reasonable to recognise the landowner's rights. This is far better than this legislation. I wanted to bring this information to the attention of the House.

Ms FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (11.52 am): I rise to support the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. From the outset I want to say how proud I am that yet again the Bligh Labor government is showing leadership on an important policy issue. If ever there was an example of a government not sitting on its laurels, of a government full of fresh ideas, a government responsive to changing circumstances and

thinking of the future, of a government with vision and enthusiasm, it is this government. Here in the Strategic Cropping Land Bill we have legislation that has not been attempted by any other government. Despite the fact that conservative governments in other states are faced with the same complex issues that we face in Queensland—and that is the potential for quality farmland to be mined—it is in those states with conservative governments that that quality farmland will now be threatened. Not long from now, for instance, there is likely to be an open-cut coalmine very close to Arrowfield thoroughbred stud in the wine producing Hunter Valley because of the failure of the New South Wales government to act. One wonders what the future of places like the Margaret River region in Western Australia will be if that government fails to recognise that there are hard decisions to be made about the balance between mining and farming.

In 2009-10 mining contributed 10.5 per cent of gross state product and agriculture contributed 2.9 per cent. If we were thinking just of economics then we would not have introduced this bill. However, this is a government with a strong record on sustainability as well as on sound economic management. That is why we are doing what we are doing with the Strategic Cropping Land Bill.

In participating in the debate on this bill, I would like to address the history of, and the science underpinning, the strategic cropping land framework and the latter, in particular, as this was an issue that was raised particularly by a number of stakeholders who attended public hearings of the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee of which I am privileged to be a member. It is also an issue on which the LNP has failed to acknowledge some of the efforts that have been made.

We know that land-use conflict in agricultural areas has increased in recent times as the demand for resources, including energy, food and fibre, increases with growing population demands. We know that community concern has increased in relation to the encroachment and detrimental effects of development occurring on Queensland's prime agricultural land. This is why the Queensland government released a discussion paper in February 2010 about protecting the state's most valuable cropping resources—that is, strategic cropping land for the long term. The government further outlined its intent to protect Queensland strategic cropping land in its August 2010 framework paper. That paper contained trigger maps of where strategic cropping land is likely to exist and outlined the fact that the criteria for identifying strategic cropping land on the ground would be refined in the development of the policy. A robust scientific approach has been necessary in order to produce those maps, to confidently and reliably identify the state's best cropping land resources on the ground. An on-ground assessment against specific criteria is required to confirm whether a parcel of land is or is not strategic cropping land, and those maps are based on the best soil, land and climate information currently available.

In order for land to be confirmed as strategic cropping land in strategic cropping protection areas the requirement is that it meets the on-ground assessment against the eight scientific criteria. In the strategic cropping management area land will also need to demonstrate a history of cropping. The history of cropping test has been designed to reflect the production cycle of different types of crops. It spans a period of both drought and exceptional rainfall, the broadest range of common seasonal conditions. Cropping history will be predominantly assessed using time series high-resolution satellite imagery to identify if cropping or cultivation has been undertaken on a property.

The criteria for identifying strategic cropping land were developed by Queensland government soil scientists and agronomists as well as independent soil experts. That group has over 100 years of collective soil science experience in the state's key cropping areas. The criteria also benefited from extensive stakeholder feedback as part of the strategic cropping land stakeholder advisory committee established in February of 2010 and underwent an independent expert review conducted by eminent soil scientist Dr Roger Shaw. A technical assessment of the criteria was conducted to ensure they were robust at identifying the state's best cropping land. The technical assessment assessed 128 sites against the criteria and covered a broad range of landscapes and soil types across Queensland. This has provided the confidence that the criteria are scientifically robust and will accurately identify the state's best cropping land.


However, to provide further confidence in the scientific basis for this bill, a science and technical implementation committee will be established. That committee will be made up of four professional soil scientists comprising two members from the Australian Society of Soil Science, one from the Queensland Farmers Federation and one from the Queensland Resources Council—stakeholders who all gave considerable and considered submissions to the parliamentary review. The committee will oversee the application of the soil science as the policy is rolled out and provide advice on scientific and technical matters associated with the implementation of the criteria. The committee will also be required to report on scientific and technical matters as part of the announced two-year review of the new legislation. This whole process will ensure a transparent, robust, scientific approach to the implementation of this landmark strategic cropping land legislation.

This sort of approach is critical to the success of this legislation. The Queensland government is confident that the science underpinning this legislation will accurately and consistently identify Queensland's strategic cropping land. But provisions contained within the bill, such as the science and technical implementation committee and the requirement for a two-year review of the legislation, will ensure the criteria are achieving the intent of the legislation to protect that cropping land.

I note the claims from the members opposite that somehow we stole their ideas on this issue, and I am completely bemused. Although they say that they have been asking for solutions for years, we have heard no proposals from them in that time for private members' bills to try to address the dilemma of balancing mining and agricultural interests. Farming interests are supposedly their heartland, yet they have put no salient proposal forward. One might think that is just because they are lazy. However, we now know—thank you, Campbell Newman—that it is because they do not consider that parliamentary debate is important, that it does not matter whether they are here or not, whether laws should be subject to debate, such is their confidence in their mandate to rule. That is not the way we, as the Labor government, like to do things. This is a complex issue. It needs to be addressed head-on. It needs to be developed in close consultation with stakeholders and monitored closely, and that is what is going to happen.

Our parliamentary committee submitted a range of concerns to the minister after hearing the public submissions on this bill, and these included a concern about the provision of a clear and unambiguous definition of strategic cropping land, a term which is central to the operation of the act. I thank the minister for her response on this issue. She has responded in the way that I have just outlined. The identification of land that is potentially SCL on trigger maps is based on the best available soils mapping available, determined in consultation with stakeholders and technical experts as those areas of Queensland that contain areas of land that are highly suitable for cropping. This map represents a starting point for the identification of SCL and assists with regulatory certainty.

This is an important bill and one which is a well-discussed and researched proposal from the Queensland government to address a policy dilemma. It may surprise many in this House to know that it is something that has been raised with me reasonably frequently by my constituents of my inner-city electorate of Bulimba, and I have been delighted to be able to discuss what is a real attempt at a real solution. I congratulate the minister for her carriage of this bill and her commitment to making it work. I commend the research team, led by Rob Hansen, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.01 pm): I rise to briefly contribute to the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. This is an important bill. It is important to ensure that we have reliable farming land. I draw the minister's attention to areas like the Euphrates in Egypt and some of the big Chinese rivers. Even the Bunya Mountains, where the—

Mr Lawlor: The Euphrates isn't in Egypt.

Mr RICKUSS: Well, where is it?

Mr Lawlor: You idiot.

Mr RICKUSS: It is in the Middle East.

Mr Lawlor: Oh, really?

Mr RICKUSS: Well, where is it then?

Mr Lawlor: It is not in Egypt.

Mr RICKUSS: Well, come on, Peter, inform us of your information.

Mr Lawlor: Is this 20 questions?

Mr RICKUSS: The member for South Brisbane said Egypt.

Mr Lawlor: It is in Iraq.

Mr RICKUSS: Iraq; there you go.

Mr Lawlor: It is a long way from Egypt.

Mr RICKUSS: That is all right; it is in the Middle East.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Now that the geography lesson is over, it might be helpful if comments were made through the chair. The member for Southport will cease helping the member for Lockyer.

Mr RICKUSS: He is harassing me, Mr Deputy Speaker. Some of the Chinese deltas and deltas in areas such as Bangladesh and India that have been farmed for thousands of years are strategic cropping lands.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr RICKUSS: They are trying to dam the Euphrates, too, I think, Paul, so it is a bit of a worry. The Bunya Mountains were held in very high regard by the Indigenous population simply because they would go up there every year for the Bunya nut crop. I spoke to some of the residents and they said that it only became an issue when the white settlers moved in and started cutting down some of the big Bunya trees. Until then it was quite a harmonious relationship. That is strategic cropping land as far as Indigenous people are concerned.

This bill requires some more thought. As I have said before, soil is important but water, particularly to horticultural farmers, is probably more important. I have often said in this place that I cannot make a living off a thousand acres of land with no water, but I can make a living off five acres of land with plenty of water. Water is a very important part of strategic cropping land. I am sure Growcom, which represents horticultural farmers, would have raised these matters and brought this to the attention of the committee. All the melon crops are desert crops so they grow in sand. They actually grow better in sand. Even some of the grapes grow better in sand than in high-quality soil. You grow a lot of bush in high-quality soil. I live on blacksoil river flats in the Lockyer Valley—70-foot of blacksoil—and you virtually do not grow crops on the blacksoil as you do on the sandy ridges for melons and grapes because there is too much nutrition there. They just grow leaves and not crop.

I want to talk about the slope of land. I think an amendment is to be moved regarding the grades of land. Some of the banana crops around Tully are grown on very steep land. Some of the terraced land around Gympie has been very viable for a hundred years growing beans and pines. We have to be careful when we start putting in regulations about specific areas. I think it was Confucius who said that the best fertiliser in the paddock is a farmer's footprints. It is about how farmers manage these lands. Good farmers will manage land appropriately. They will make sure they get real value out of it.

There were 56 submissions to the Strategic Cropping Land Bill and I do not think any of them agreed with any other. It is going to be really difficult to get this right. We are supporting this legislation. We are supporting it for the fact that something is better than nothing. That is what we had before—nothing. This government is five years late in introducing this.


Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr RICKUSS: In the 1990s, when Mackenroth was here, I raised with him the fact that we should have right-to-farm legislation. That is how far it goes back. When Henry Palaszczuk was in opposition as the DPI spokesman I raised issues about right-to-farm legislation.

I turn to the issue of exploration permits. It is almost like the gold rush days where everyone has gone out and staked a claim. There are exploration permits over most of Queensland now, even in areas such as the Scenic Rim and Lockyer Valley—high-quality agricultural country. They have applied for exploration permits over those areas just to make sure they have a peg in the ground. As I say, it is like the old gold rush days where you go out and stake a claim and just hope. Unfortunately, that has not been good for Queensland. Hopefully this strategic cropping land legislation will stop people just staking claims for the sake of staking a claim. It is really important that we get this right. I am sure this bill will come back to parliament many times before it is right. I cannot see how the legislation as it is being passed will do exactly what we want.

The legislation splits areas into two categories. It creates a protection area around the Darling Downs, the Lockyer Valley and the golden triangle and also creates management areas. I am glad that the minister has included the Lockyer Valley because it is a prime area of agricultural land.

Again I reiterate that water is a very important issue. If there is mining even in areas near some of this strategic cropping land they need to look after and manage the aquifers well. It is vitally important that we manage the aquifers well because that is going to be the long-term goal of this strategic cropping land legislation—to make sure that in 3,000 years we can be like the Euphrates River and some of the Chinese deltas and say that this area has been farmed for 3,000 years.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (12.08 pm): I rise to support the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. I believe it addresses in some measure the concerns of many people in Queensland in relation to protection of our production areas. The minister's second reading speech states—

We believe that Queensland's best farm land is a precious resource that must be protected for future generations.

I believe that is a statement that 100 per cent of Queenslanders would support. How they interpret that differs depending on their perspective of how they look at our cropping land. If they are miners, certainly they would see the amount of precious resource as less than those who have worked the soil.

I have listened to a number of the contributions to date. I note that there are several protection areas where open-cut mining and other developments which would permanently alienate the land will be banned. It says 'effectively' banned, but I hope it does mean banned because while we are moving from animal production as our primary income to resources—which is coal, other minerals and gases—the fact is we still have a population that must be fed.

One of the concerns that has been expressed to me with the diminishing amount of locally produced food and product is that we are forced to import food from countries where their animal husbandry and health regulations are much more lax than ours. If we do not protect these valuable areas of production, we are forcing the community to purchase products that would not be acceptable in Australia in terms of their production and processing. We need to greatly value the environment where our animal husbandry is carried on as well as the environment where our products are grown and processed. I certainly do. I think most of us in this chamber are in a position where we can actively promote and support locally grown and produced food and fibre, but there are a lot of families who cannot do that; they just have to go by price.

The other area of concern that this bill addresses in measure is urban encroachment. I note that local government was included in the consultation process. Applications for development largely go to councils in relation to the administration of these parts of the legislation, and I seek clarification on whether there is any intention to financially assist the local councils in their role of administering this legislation. It is onerous and I know that councils are finding it extremely difficult to get staff—such as planning officers and appropriately qualified people—to administer legislation that is pushed down to them from the state government.

There has been some contradiction between what some members said and my understanding of what the minister stated the bill was about. The minister said—

The bill also ensures that costs associated with applications for development, including having strategic cropping land confirmed by government, are to be borne by the development proponent, not the party seeking to protect their land.


I take it that, if an application comes in, the proponent is required to cover the cost—that makes sense—but if a farm owner proactively wishes to find out whether their land is strategic cropping land, there is a huge cost associated with having that information provided; it is \$17,000. Can I say that there would be very few farmers in Queensland at the moment who would have that sort of cash laying around. If farmers knew that their properties were designated as strategic cropping land, they would have great peace of mind in relation to planning for the future and knowing that their security of tenure is stronger.

So I ask the minister this question: if there is to be some mapping done and if this strategic cropping land is to be clearly defined, can those maps be made available to those landowners, with some authority and accuracy, so the landowners can avoid having to fork out so much money? Many of these cropping and production areas have been hit hard in the last 12 months by flooding, and in years gone by they have been hit by drought. They really are struggling, so I put that question to the minister.

This bill protects strategic cropping land but I believe there are other areas which we as a state and a nation need to work together to protect. We have a great deal of constraint in the area of fisheries, with no-take zones and protection zones. Over the last 10 years, fishermen have been bashed about the ear with new requirements, new legislation, exclusion areas and obligations that they need to fulfil to even hold their licence, if indeed the licence is not taken off them arbitrarily. Fishing is also a very important area of food production. In my own electorate, we have the destruction of the harbour where the fish product that is caught is diseased in the main. The scallops, which have been export quality in the past years, are yet to be proven to be suitable for harvesting. A great number of the crustacean nursery areas up around the Anabranth and the Calliope River have been destroyed, so this is another food product that definitely needs to be protected.

The bill also provides a review of the legislation after two years, and I always believe that that is a sound approach to take. New legislation brings with it unforeseen implications, both positive and negative, and I commend the minister for having that review in enough time for it to take effect but not so far down the track that opportunities are lost or inadvertent oversights cannot be identified and addressed.

I commend the bill to the House. I know there are those who feel that the bill does not go far enough, but we do have to make a start and I certainly commend the minister for that. I also note the amendment by the member for Beaudesert that has been circulated increasing the criteria from five per cent to eight per cent. I support that amendment also.

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (12.16 pm): It is with pleasure that I speak to the Strategic Cropping Land Bill 2011. It is a bill that we have been waiting for for a long, long time. I can assure the members of the House that there are many people across Queensland who are waiting for this bill to be passed; more importantly, they are waiting for it to be revisited shortly so as to include more land that I believe is not under the footprint of strategic cropping land. The regional planning process is the most accommodating policy to cover land that falls into the category of strategic cropping land. There is still valuable and integral cropping land that does not fall into the SCL footprint, as I just stated.

This legislation does not go far enough. It does not cover all aspects to be inclusive of coal seam gas, open-cut mining and underground coal mining, or any sort of mining for that matter. In the minister's speech, she mentioned 12 years of cropping. I think that is a very tough call and I know the

shadow minister has made reference to this. She said three years in a row, but I have seen farmers who have not even had a crop in that time. Thank the Lord we are getting a season at the moment. For those of you who have visited the Darling Downs, the Central Highlands or the golden triangle, which I represent, you will see exactly how valuable this land is.

The member for Toowoomba South made a point yesterday which was probably the most valid point of all—there is the potential not only to grow food and fibre for our nation but also to make export earnings from these magnificent farming lands in question. As the honourable shadow minister said in his fine and responsible contribution a couple of evenings ago—

There were considerable concerns expressed in relation to the scientific and technical legitimacy of proposed measures in the bill to facilitate the restoration of the productivity of SCL after a development activity has ceased.

This is a very valid point. I draw the House's attention to a question I asked the Minister for Environment. I asked—

Will the Minister detail (a) the locality and size of all completed mining rehabilitations in Queensland and the time spans from start to finish for these rehabilitation projects and whether the rehabilitation has restored the land to its original use, and (b) the locality, size and commencement dates of all ongoing mining rehabilitation in Queensland?

The answer was not an answer. It was not a defined no and it was not a defined yes. It was just jargon from a department that knows full well that the answer is no.

In speaking to this legislation, I want to centre much of my contribution on the golden triangle in the Central Highlands region. Just last week the member for Warrego, the member for Condamine, the member for Southern Downs and I visited farms in the Darling Downs area. I have to tell all members of this House that as you fly over that haystack area of Jimna plain you get a really good view of just how magnificent that farming land is, why it is the best farming land in the world and why the Central Highlands, the golden triangle and a lot of that country north of Clermont—country they call Kilcummin—should be falling into that footprint of strategic farming land. Given that these are large spans of black soil plains with the potential to grow huge crops or sorghum, wheat or some other type of grain, the government needs to revisit this legislation in order to be accurate in identifying the footprint that is going to protect this land indefinitely for future generations for food and fibre growing.

I turn now to the Springsure Creek coal project, the EPC 891. This should not be excluded from strategic cropping land legislation. Clauses 282 and 283 should be deleted from this bill. This country covers some 33,646 hectares of strategic cropping land—that is, 79 per cent of the area in that region. This comprises greater than 10 per cent of the total central protection area where strategic cropping land may exist within Central Queensland. The current minister has clearly outlined that the expectations of the policy are narrow—they are narrow all right—and that it had reached the stage of approval of the terms of reference of the EIS by 31 May and that there was also a certificate of application for a mining development lease under section 252 of the Mineral Resources Act 1989. That can demonstrate exceptional circumstances such as the development of strong public significance where a resource or development site cannot be found anywhere else in the state, and Bandanna Energy has been let in through the back door. I again say that people like Dr Ray Shaw and his company should examine their conscience in relation to what they have subjected the people in the golden triangle area to—the mental trauma and the torture that they have been through and endured over recent months as they wonder about the future of their farming operations and the future of their families.

I do applaud the government for bringing this legislation forward, but because there is no defined cut-off period like 31 May means that it is not fair dinkum to the argument. I am gravely concerned about the wellbeing and the health of many people out there, and I am concerned that this bill is still not going to protect them. Given that there is talk about Springsure Creek being an underground coalmine, nobody can prove that there will not be subsidence. Look at Gordon Downs—a magnificent farming property that is absolutely ruined, and you know that country, Mr Deputy Speaker Elmes, as well as I do. You cannot pull a tractor and plough over that anymore because of the subsidence, ranging anywhere from one to three metres. Springsure Creek is a prime piece of agricultural land and a prime piece of land.

Government members interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: Those opposite can say all they like about how they are going to stop it from caving in, but Springsure Creek and the golden triangle area are amongst some of the best farming country in Australia, as is the Darling Downs. Today the director of environmental impact assessments from the Department of Environment and Resource Management has advised in writing to the golden triangle community that the discussions and correspondence between Bandanna and the government took place at a ministerial level and not through the DERM office. I hope that the minister is not covering something up from those people in the golden triangle—something that they should know. You only have to go and see what has happened at Ipswich after all of that coalmining there over a long period of time. They are deep underground mines and, given the subsidence we see there now, the ground is

cracking, houses are crumbling and people had to be moved. We will see the same situation with Springsure Creek. Once that underground mining takes place, if it is allowed to be done—and, please God, we will have a change of government to ensure that it does not happen—the real fact—

Ms Nolan: Is that your position? Are you really going to stop it in government? Campbell Newman ruled that out.

Mr JOHNSON: This minister knows full well that she has let Bandanna in through the back door.


Ms Nolan: There's the split in your party. Campbell Newman ruled that out.

Mr JOHNSON: You can point at me all you like.

Ms Nolan: There's your split.

Mr JOHNSON: You can scream all you like, but I am not going to take any notice of you because your word is not worth two bob, and the people out there know that. It is about time that we see some credibility put into this debate in order to ensure that we protect this strategic cropping land, whether it is in the golden triangle or anywhere else. We also have to start looking at the welfare and the wellbeing of some of these people. What this government has subjected these people to is nothing short of criminal. I can assure you that it will be over my dead body that we will see underground mining at Springsure Creek.

(Time expired)

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (12.26 pm): It is a pleasure to rise to follow the contribution made by the member for Gregory. At the outset I say that I believe that the minister, the government and the previous minister in this portfolio have been genuinely trying to respond to the real pressures that we see in many parts of Queensland—the challenges between our mining industry and our farming and grazing communities. The real concern I have is that we seem to be in an almighty rush to take whatever we can out of the ground to reap the almighty dollar. My view is that the mineral resources have been in the ground for a long time and there is no doubt that, if they are not taken, they will continue to be there for some time in the future. Unless the science is right, there is no need for us to rush in with unforeseen haste.

I note that in the bill the government is proposing there will be two categories of identified land. One is in relation to very clearly protected areas around the Darling Downs, Lockyer Valley and the golden triangle, as the member for Gregory just referred to in a passionate way, as well as the management area that includes much of the Queensland coastal farm areas. It is this management area that I have referred to on many occasions in the past when I have spoken about trying to ensure that the Strategic Cropping Land Bill provides greater protection to much of that good farming land. In the Mary Valley a lot of that land was purchased by the government for the former proposed Traveston Dam. That land is still owned by the state government. There is a lot of land that is caught up in this definition and this category of a management area, and I believe that this needs to be raised given its importance in the future in ensuring that good agricultural land can be protected forever.

I note that the member for Beaudesert is going to move an amendment which will support the view of the member for Nanango and many people in Queensland that there be an additional category—that is, not just a five per cent slope but an eight per cent slope, because we all know that the reality is that eight per cent—

Mr Rickuss: Why have a figure?

Government members interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: The amendment will be put forward for a proposed increase to eight per cent so that there can be some degree of certainty. We are all aware that there is good agricultural land that falls outside the five per cent slope and hopefully common sense will prevail. Should it be the case that the government changes at the next state election, it will be interesting to see what commitment there will be.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! The member for Nicklin is making his point. He will be heard in silence.

Mr WELLINGTON: As I was indicating, should it be the case that this bill is passed and the government changes after the next state election, we will all be very interested to see what commitment there is from an alternative state government in relation to trying to really protect the good agricultural land in Queensland. I suppose we are in the silly season: a lot of hot air is blowing around this chamber. Hopefully, common sense will prevail.

I will come back to the Mary Valley. I simply put on the record again that I urge the government to see if there are some ways to fast-track things and really make sure the good farming land in not just the Mary Valley but also the Sunshine Coast region is protected. I cast my mind back to when I was a member of the former Maroochy council. At that time the farming community railed against proposed applications for residential development right on their boundaries. The council said, 'We know best. We're going to have these buffers.' So there will be a buffer between the residential area and the farming property. The reality is that those buffers have not worked. The developers got everything they wanted.

Those farmers are unable to genuinely and realistically continue to farm their properties and spray their avocados and custard apples without receiving constant complaints from the neighbours about spray drift. We need to ensure the farming lands in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast are protected for the future. I urge this government—and, if the government should change in the future, I urge the alternative government—to genuinely look at reviewing this legislation to provide greater protection and not just roll over to the developers, who seem to have the ear of the government and the alternative government. I reflect on the issue of the Caloundra South disaster.

I look forward to the debate proceeding to the consideration in detail stage and, more importantly, to hearing the debate on the amendment to be moved by the member for Beaudesert.

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining) (12.31 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this debate on the Strategic Cropping Land Bill and draw members' attention—as they should be looking towards you, Madam Deputy Speaker—to the dais and to the coat of arms of the state of Queensland, which includes—

Mr Lucas: What? The red deer?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I say to the Attorney-General that we will leave the red deer aside, we will leave the brolga aside—we will leave the supporters aside—and we will look at the bottom half of the shield and see side by side on the coat of arms of Queensland a sheath of wheat and a mine. The reality is that this state has been built upon agriculture and the resources industry being side by side. They have been a part of this great state's development for 150 years and they will continue to be. This legislation is about ensuring we have that balance right, that we support those two great industries being side by side.

We all know—we hear it a lot in this chamber—that the resources sector is one of the key engine rooms of the state's economy. It is indeed a driving force and we are indeed on the threshold of an exciting new era of economic prosperity that will deliver decades of jobs for Queenslanders. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get the balance of all of these things correct in the context of global economic circumstances. That is as important as it ever would be, because there is a lot at stake: \$100 billion in private sector investment at the moment and 40,000 jobs for Queenslanders over the next few years. But what is also important is the best of the best land, and that is what we have been about as a government in introducing this legislation to protect the best of the best agricultural land in this state.

As a government we have planned for the future. We have brought in policies in the broadest of ways, as highlighted by this bill, that are sensible and workable solutions and that strike the right balance between safeguarding jobs and giving industry the certainty that it needs while protecting the rich agricultural lands in our resource-rich regions.

Our policies are sound and solid because they are based on science. I am reminded of that old television program that went to air in Australian homes in the 1970s—

Mr Lucas: *Class of '75?*

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Not that one. I am reminded of Professor Julius Sumner Miller's *Why is it so?* The LNP could do with a little bit of Professor Sumner Miller right now, because its policies are in no way based upon science. Why is it so? Because the LNP does not support science deciding what is the best of the best when it comes to farmland. The LNP believes that it is not about the soil, that it is not about science; it thinks it is about the visual amenity of the land. That is right: it thinks it is about how the land looks—not whether it is the best of the best but if it looks nice.

The Leader of the Opposition in this House is on record as saying—and I have seen the video of him out in the countryside talking to people—that it is not about the soil; it is about the district, about the community and about whether this is an appropriate place. It does not matter if you go up the hill or on the flat, it is the same: it is about the community. It is about the settlement patterns—the visual amenity of the place. If it is up there on the hill, it still buggers up the district. I pardon that expression, but that is what he said.

I understand that that is not what he has been saying in the boardrooms. Under the LNP's visual amenity policy, we could see the Swiss Alps becoming strategic cropping land because they just look nice. Under the LNP's visual amenity policy, we could see \$100 billion in projects at risk of going down the gurgler and tens of thousands of jobs at risk. When it comes to visual amenity, the LNP has its eyes wide shut. The tragedy for industry, for Queensland workers and for regional communities and

local businesses is that their fate will not be determined by science; under the LNP it will be determined by its whims—a whim that the LNP members think, in their naivety, would protect their collective political hides from the likes of Bob Katter and the threatening menace of his Australian Party. Time after time the LNP members stand up in front of people on the land and tell them what they think they want to hear, what they think will get their vote, what will keep the Katter party at bay. They say that they will stop the mines, they will stop CSG, they will stand up for the man on the land. But it is a different story when they are in the boardrooms in Brisbane.

The hypocrisy of those opposite never ceases to amaze me. We have had members opposite making speech after speech embracing regional planning as the new way forward. Their passion and fervour for regional planning has been a revelation to me. What makes this conversion on the road to Dalby so remarkable is the fact that they have consistently voted against every regional plan that this government has brought to the House.

A government member: Is that right?


Mr HINCHLIFFE: That is right. Not once have the members opposite supported regional plans brought to this House—not once. So much for their commitment to regional planning to be the policy driver to solve issues arising in the future. Suddenly now, when the Katter party is attacking their heartland, the members opposite have seen the light. Now they are rushing to embrace regional plans with a fervour that I have not seen before. No wonder no-one knows what they really stand for. They have an unelected leader who says one thing in the bush and another thing in the boardrooms. The Campbell Newman experiment is like a reincarnation of the 'Joh for Canberra' campaign. For the second time in Australian history we have seen a political party leader seeking power from outside the parliament. The 'Joh for Canberra' campaign was a disaster and we are seeing it again now. The LNP members are so focused on handing dictatorial powers to Campbell Newman that this week they could not even turn up in parliament to debate important bills. It was unprecedented and it was unprincipled.

I have said it before and I will say it again: we have in Queensland with our mining and gas industries great opportunities for decades of jobs, boosting regional and rural economies and putting Queensland on the map to deliver a bright future. This legislation is about getting that balance right—protecting traditional, strong, great industries like our agricultural industry with prime, top-quality agricultural land but allowing for and supporting the science to determine where that land is, not on a whim. This process is transparent. The members opposite are clueless. Our strategic cropping land policy is open and transparent and allows us to identify and protect strategic cropping land based on well-established and scientifically proven data.

The Queensland Resources Council is on the record as supporting a science based model, as is AgForce. Sadly, the LNP policy is not based on science. It is based on the Dennis Denuto model—'It's the Constitution, it's Mabo, it's justice, the law, er, er, it's the vibe.' So keen, so determined are they, to capture the disillusioned voters turning towards the Katter camp that they are prepared to sacrifice the future economic prosperity of every single Queenslander. That is why they are so willing to give up on science, to reject science. Of course, this is nothing new. Rejecting science is in the grand traditions of the Liberal National Party here in this state. Those opposite will not need to be putting people like Rona Joyner in charge of their science education policies.

Mr Shine: She is too liberal for them.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. She is way too liberal for this group. We have seen protestations and positions on this policy. While speaking in the chamber in support, it would seem—members opposite have got up and said that they are supporting this bill—they have then gone into a whole lot of reasons why it is no good and why they would do things differently. In essence, one of their key arguments is that the minister for mines has the power, using the public interest test, to do these sorts of things so that it will become the whim of an individual minister, not science. It will be based upon whose mate owns what land, what it is next to, whether—as it was once upon a time in this state—a brown paper bag was involved in that particular project or not. This is not the sort of Queensland that is the modern Queensland that has a bright future, a modern Queensland progressing towards a great continued balance between the terrific industry of agriculture and the great industry of resources. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and the Arts) (12.41 pm), in reply: What a grand capitulation we have seen from the LNP here today. The protection of best quality agricultural land is, for members of the Liberal and National parties, an absolutely heartland issue. What is the National Party at its absolute core about if it is not about the furtherance and the betterment of agriculture? Who is introducing this bill? It is a Labor government, which is still full of progress and still full of ideas. The fact that after years of debate it is a Labor government that carries this legislation, that brings together the parties, that manages its complexity and that brings this groundbreaking legislation—the first legislation in the country to protect best quality agriculture land—says it all.

If the National Party cannot take leadership on protecting the future of agriculture, then what is it that it can do? But it cannot. For three days now this parliament has heard debate in which National Party member after National Party member has stood up in this place and lamented elements of the bill before telling us that they are meekly going to vote yes. The land that we protect with this legislation is almost exclusively in LNP seats. For years where have these members—the member for Warrego, the member for Darling Downs, the member for Southern Downs, the member for Callide, the member for Gregory, the member for Burdekin and the member for Hinchinbrook—been? This legislation is Labor legislation. It is a Labor government that will find a balance between mining and agriculture. It is a Labor government that manages these complexities. It is a Labor government that decides where the economic balance and the environmental balance should lie. It is a Labor government that takes the lead.

It is my great privilege to reflect on this debate. Let us see just where it started. The first notable point in this debate is with the first member who stood up on the other side. I ask members whether they know who the shadow minister for natural resources is. This is legislation that falls within the natural resources portfolio. It is carried by the natural resources minister and developed by the Department of Environment and Resource Management. This is a natural resources bill. Carriage of it on the other side of the House, it turns out, does not lie with the shadow minister for natural resources at all. Indeed, the first thing that they did in this debate on the other side was to kill off the poor, hapless member for Bundaberg. Poor Jack got the knife before the debate had even started. It was instead the shadow minister for agriculture. Notwithstanding that this does not lie in an agricultural portfolio, it was the shadow minister for agriculture who took carriage of this bill.

There has been a bit of that lately on the LNP side of the House. What else have we seen in recent times? Since Campbell Newman became the leader of the LNP we have seen poor old Mr Hopper move from the front to the back. We have seen the member for Warrego, who thinks that he has something to contribute as a frontbencher, make his way down to the back of the chamber. Just last week we saw the poor shadow minister for tourism suffer the terrible humiliation of standing next to Campbell Newman as he was asked who would be the tourism minister should there be an LNP government. Jann Stuckey had to stand behind Campbell Newman—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Will the minister use her correct title.

Ms NOLAN: The member for Currumbin had to stand mute beside Campbell Newman while, in response to a question about who would be the tourism minister in a LNP government, he said, 'Well, there are no guarantees. Sorry, Jann.' I see something of a trend. 'Sorry, Jann.' 'Sorry, Jack.' How do you reckon the member for Kawana would go if Ian Walker came into this House? Do you think he would feel very secure about his role as a future Attorney-General? It is hard to see it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the minister speak through the chair.

Ms NOLAN: On the other side of the House they are getting knifed before the debate has even begun. I do not know what it is that they have got against mild mannered Catholic people from Ipswich, but it was not a good day for Jack Dempsey today.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the minister use the member's correct title.

Mr Rickuss: What's his correct title?

Ms NOLAN: His correct title is shadow minister for natural resources, oddly enough, but he does not seem to get that gig.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the minister speak through the chair.

Ms NOLAN: Three arguments were put forward by the LNP to explain the position that they would ultimately take on this bill. The arguments were that the legislation was all their idea; that they supported it, although reluctantly, because they would like to see more protection for agriculture; and ultimately the LNP argued that it had a better idea and that in government it would protect agricultural land through the development of regional plans.

I would like to address those three ideas in turn. When he responded on behalf of the opposition, the member for Hinchinbrook, the shadow minister for agriculture, advanced the argument that it was all their idea. What he said was that at the regional sitting of parliament in Cairns in 2008 the member for Callide came up with this idea for the first time and suggested that agricultural land should be protected through the public interest test of the Mineral Resources Act. While we know that self-praise is perhaps no praise indeed, the member for Callide made that assertion when he made his own contribution to the bill. So if we listen to those in the LNP we would believe that four years ago they came up with this idea and they had been the champions of it ever since.

I have been here for four years. I have sat here every Wednesday night—and the member for Toowoomba North pointed this out in his contribution—and never ever on a Wednesday night have we debated a private member's bill around the protection of best quality agricultural land. I have been here for the last four years and I have sat through question time and I have sat through the introduction of new bills, and they have not taken the initiative, despite identifying what they still claim would have been a simple process four long years ago, to protect their very own heartland with legislation such as this.

That is ultimately the measure of their absolute failure. The proposition that they have put to us—and they have taken great credit for it, both the member for Hinchinbrook and the member for Callide—is that four years ago they came up with this idea that the government could have done this quite simply exercising an existing power. Never ever—not once—did they come into this place and seek to actually make it happen. They did that zero times. What greater mark of laziness and failure is there than to come in here for four years, having decided that there is an issue in their very heartland, and do nothing about it.

On Tuesday of this week the LNP could not bother to come to the parliament. On Wednesday of this week they came in here and they could not speak. On Thursday of this week their ultimate failure comes because it becomes clear that even in their heartland they cannot be bothered to seek to make change. What a failure. What a terrible embarrassment.

The second prong of the LNP's argument through this debate has been this: they have suggested that they support the bill but they do it reluctantly. They do it with a sense of sadness. They feel that the legislation is fundamentally flawed. When setting out the LNP's response the member for Hinchinbrook repeated a number of concerns that had been raised with the committee.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Ms NOLAN: He talked about Mr Michael Murray from Cotton Australia who did not want to see a separation between protection areas and management areas. He echoed the concerns of Dan Galligan from the Queensland Farmers Federation. He talked about what it was that AgForce had had to say around slope. He talked about what it was that Growcom had had to say.

In quite a detailed presentation, which took an hour, the member for Hinchinbrook, on behalf of the opposition, repeated a number of points that had been made to the committee. In fact, he repeated 12 specific concerns that had gone to the committee. Of those, all 12 were concerns that came from agriculture. That is telling in itself because what does this bill do? At its heart this bill is about finding the right balance. It is about saying that on agricultural land there is now an increasing pressure in this state coming from mining.

What this bill does is says that we define the best quality agricultural land and we protect that land from mining. It says specifically through eight detailed soil science criteria that this is how we do it and this is where we think the line should be drawn. It is about, at its very heart, the establishment of a scientific balance.

I come now to the point about which the member for Lockyer has been interjecting. He has been saying, 'Who completely supported the bill? There were dozens of submissions and no party completely supported the bill.' That is precisely the point. This bill at its very heart takes two divergent competing interests and seeks to draw a line. It seeks to find a balance. So of course the farmers are not overwhelmingly happy and of course the miners are not either. We say that this is the point where we believe the line should be drawn.

What did he do in his response on behalf of the opposition? The member for Hinchinbrook repeated different concerns. Every one of them was a concern that came from agriculture. He gave no voice on behalf of the opposition to the interests of mining at all. That is exactly the point. This bill seeks to find a balance, and the government can look both the mining sector and the agricultural sector in the eye and tell them that in science, and shortly it is our expectation in law, this is where we feel this line should be drawn. But the opposition cannot do that. What they have done through this debate is say, 'We support the bill but we do not think it goes far enough. We support the bill but we voice the concern of every agricultural group in the state. We think that there should be more land locked up.' That is very much the point.

When Campbell Newman goes down to the boardroom at Rio Tinto or BMA or goes off to speak at a QRC lunch he needs to tell them whether he does or does not seek to lock up more land. From every speaker on the opposition bench we get the very clear idea that the view of the LNP is that there should be more land locked up. That should be of grave concern to Queensland's resources industry.

Right now there will be people from the resources industry listening to this debate. They will be thinking to themselves, 'It is okay, we know that the old National Party would like to stop mining in many areas. We know that the old National Party would like to lock up the state, but Campbell Newman has looked us in the eye and given us an assurance that he is on our side.' Can they believe that assurance? I would put to members that they cannot.

The reason that I would put to the resources industry that Campbell Newman cannot assure them that more land will not be locked up is this. We know from experience that Campbell Newman cannot control the LNP. We know that he could not control dissent at the Brisbane City Council. We know that the chamber became a shambles when they could not manage the dissent of Nicole Johnston. We know that Campbell Newman cannot control the parliamentary party sufficiently that they even show up. We know already that should he lead this party in here it would be the rural rump—the people who have spoken in this debate, the people who have stood up one after the other to say they want to protect more land—who would be the tail wagging the dog.


We know Campbell Newman cannot control them. That is the record. That is his record at the BCC. It is the record of the LNP when it comes to Peter Slipper. It is the record of Campbell Newman as leader who cannot control Barry O'Sullivan and cannot control whether these blokes here even show up. We know that it would be the rural rump in control. We know absolutely as a matter of fact that the LNP in government would be shaken by that rural rump and would seek to lock up more land.

Debate, on motion of Ms Nolan, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS


Queensland Rail

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (2.30 pm): The LNP revealed today that not a single person has been detained under new public transport detention powers introduced more than a year ago despite the Bligh Labor government claiming they were vital to help protect train and bus passengers. The transport minister had claimed that the new powers for senior network officers to detain people, introduced in 2010, were needed to protect customers and crack down on crime and antisocial behaviour. But in a response to a question on notice by the LNP, the transport minister this week admitted that not a single person had been detained, defending the failure by claiming there had been no requirement for action to be taken to date. That was despite Queensland Rail's own figures, reported last week, showing that there had been a jump in indecent and disorderly behaviour from 1,122 to 1,379 incidents in 2009-10. This failed Bligh government has repeatedly let public transport users down when it comes to passenger safety.

Just last month the transport minister wanted to strip staff from train stations and leave 16 stations unmanned. The minister only reversed the decision in the face of a public outcry led by the LNP. A stronger staff presence makes commuters feel safer and deters criminals. So it is astonishing that, in the face of increasing crime, the minister still wanted to cut staff. Now the minister has been forced to admit that she has failed to ensure new powers to stop antisocial behaviour on our public transport networks are being used. Public transport fares have skyrocketed under the ALP and they have let down public transport users.

(Time expired)

Civil Partnerships Bill; Q Society

 **Hon. AP FRASER** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade) (2.32 pm): Last night in this parliament we made history. Together we passed the Civil Partnerships Bill, removing a form of prejudice from our society, the prejudice that says that one kind of loving relationship is more valid or more recognised than another. Unfortunately for this parliament, those opposite hid behind process and politics. They followed the direction of Bruce McIver and Barry O'Sullivan and denied their conscience. I know many of those opposite support equality and oppose prejudice; they just did not have the fortitude to stand up and do so publicly and in this chamber.

A constituent has recently brought to my attention a campaign of hate and prejudice that has come to my electorate. It is a campaign that must be condemned and disavowed by each and every member of this parliament. An organisation called Q Society has letterboxed my electorate with extreme propaganda attacking Islamic Australians, and I table a copy for the House.


Tabled paper: Copy of flyer by the Q Society of Australia Inc. titled 'It's time to say No' [\[6107\]](#).

The flyer makes a number of outrageous and false claims that the practice of Islam by many Australians threatens our food production, academic integrity in our schools, and equal access to public places.

Today I am calling upon all political parties represented in this chamber to condemn this material. I hope that Campbell Newman, Jeff Seeney, Bruce McIver—or whoever it is running the show over there these days—can disavow this material and oppose this campaign. I call upon the Independents of this chamber, and Katter's Australian Party to all unambiguously disavow this material.

I believe it is a credit to this House and our democracy that we can debate a sensitive issue such as civil partnerships with civility. It is a credit to all my Labor colleagues and to the Independents that all voted on this bill according to our conscience. Perhaps today the LNP can overcome their moral timidity to join with me in distancing themselves from hateful and hurtful prejudice propagated by Q Society, and condemn it in the most unambiguous terms, as I do on behalf of the Labor government. To not do so would be an act of complicity. The interests of decency require us all to condemn this prejudice.

Redlands Electorate

 **Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (2.34 pm): Christmas is nearly here and I wish to speak to 2011, the year in review. In Redlands we have had two major intersections delivered, both 10 years late, but I recognise and acknowledge the contribution to Redlands citizens. We have had some roads resealed—again late and long overdue. However, being the 'glass half full' kind of guy, I recognise and thank the government.

Two extra police officers were promised but only one has arrived on SMBI. The second has not been posted. We are still waiting for an upgrade to the intersection at Anita Street. We have dredging to be done. The Victoria Point jetty and the corresponding jetty on Coochiemudlo Island will finally, after years and years of promise, have disabled access sometime during the next two years.


What is still to be done? Inclusion in the TransLink network, which has been much promised, has not been rolled out for southern Moreton Bay islands ferry users. What is still unresolved? This government has not recognised the parking issues at Weinam Creek. They are still unresolved. Managing the barge services of Moreton Bay is still unresolved.

What has been the most challenging issue of 2011? It has been cost-of-living pressure—cost-of-living pressure on every Queenslander trying to make ends meet. There has been cost-of-living pressure from transport fare increases—and they continue to rise—stamp duty being introduced onto the family home, electricity prices going through the roof. Not only have they increased, but there is promise of more to come. The price of water has increased and continues to rise.

Today is the first day of a new tax, a new Labor antibusiness tax, the waste levy. It is called a levy because it sounds better. I can tell honourable members that whether it is called a levy, a fee, a charge or a tax, it does not make it the least bit easier for struggling families and struggling Queenslanders to make ends meet and to pay those costs.

(Time expired)

Newman, Mr C

 **Mr LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (2.36 pm): We know about Campbell Newman's experience that he claims to qualify him to run the state. Certainly we know about his council experience. The tunnel went broke and every single investor lost every single cent. Rates had to go up by 42 per cent to pay for the mismanagement. There was a bike scheme that was supposed to return a profit but instead is a cost of \$30,000 a week to the ratepayers. Then there is the great dedication to the people of Brisbane—King George Square. People only go there on a summer's day if they want to fry an egg on the pavement.

Campbell Newman boasts about his connection with the regions and his time at Grainco. How did he leave his shareholders? The *Courier-Mail* on 24 May said—

I was then in Grainco, knee-deep in money ...

He claimed a profit of \$25 million a year. I table page 32 from the GrainCorp Ltd prospectus.


Tabled paper: Copy of page 32 from section 5 of the GrainCorp Ltd prospectus titled 'Information about the Merger with Grainco' [6108].

It claims that he had responsibility for the operation of the entire state. Never did it make \$25 million net profit. He took a company from making a net profit of \$11.8 million in 1998 to making a loss in the half year of 2003 of \$15 million. Shareholders' dividends went from 5c to zero—nothing. Also the ABS said that during these years the crops were the near biggest crops in the previous 10 years. Brian Littleproud, the National Party member for Western Downs, said in *Hansard*—

Whereas once all the assets were owned by the grain growers, we now have Grainco as an entity that is supposed to be looking after the interests of the grain growers. Yet it is spending money in Victoria and New South Wales—quite a way away ... it, too, should be brought into line in some way.

When the company was taken over by GrainCorp in 2003 it had receivables of \$52.6 million and payables and debt of \$88.4 million. If this is what he can do to the grain company during a bumper crop year, imagine what he is going to do to the state if he ever gets on the treasury benches.

Lockyer Valley Flood Relief

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.38 pm): I rise to pay tribute to two of the real heroes of the Grantham floods, local residents Derek and Chris Pingel, and Chris is in the gallery today. Derek is well known throughout the building industry as a multi-award winning builder and also in his current role as the President of the Queensland Master Builders Association. He is both an industry leader and a community leader.

Last week Derek and his wife, Chris, were awarded the Community Spirit Award as part of the National Pride of Australia Awards. In the wake of the floods, Derek and his wife, Chris, who have been together for 33 years, took on the monumental task of coordinating the Lockyer Valley flood relief effort. Derek and Chris voluntarily took on one of the toughest jobs imaginable after the horror floods, regularly working from sunrise to past midnight. As coordinators of the Lockyer Valley flood relief effort, they managed the massive task of collecting and distributing much needed donations to flood affected residents. They successfully ran five large storage facilities, two distribution centres and a workforce of hundreds of volunteers. It was a very emotional time for the couple as they are also local residents who were scarred by the tragic events in January.


I recently visited Grantham and was privileged enough to be accompanied by Derek, and I was struck by the sheer resilience and determination of the hard-pressed locals. I am reminded of the inspirational words from my colleague the member for Lockyer, who earlier this year said in this place—

I remain humble and in awe of the people of the Lockyer and surrounding areas. Their resilience, their courage, their composure, their generosity and their compassion are to be admired.

Derek and Chris Pingel are the personification of those values—resilience, courage, generosity and compassion. Furthermore, Derek is not one to rest on his laurels. Since the floods, he and the Master Builders have been helping coordinate a \$2.5 million Lockyer Valley community futures project in conjunction with Skills Queensland and the local council. This important project is helping to employ contractors and apprentices to help flood victims relocate to higher ground. Derek and Chris Pingel are not only ridgy-didge Queensland heroes but also officially Pride of Australia award winners, and we owe them a giant debt of gratitude.

(Time expired)


Katter's Australian Party

 **Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (2.40 pm): It has probably not escaped the notice of Queenslanders that there will be an election in the first half of 2012. What has probably escaped notice is the emergence of so-called experts who claim to be the saviours of the state and running under the banner of the Katter party. Last week a candidate for the Katter party was named in Keppel and claimed in the media to be an 'environmental activist' on the basis of some claims—only claims that supported his own commercial interests—about Gladstone Harbour.

Many people in Gladstone and on the Capricorn Coast, including me, have environmental concerns and have acted on them, but where has he been until now? I am sure that the environmental movement in Keppel and on the coast will scratch their heads at the sudden emergence of this environmental warrior. Let us all hear right from the start what this candidate and others of his party offer the seat of Keppel, Central Queensland and Queensland on those matters which are claimed to require attention. What will be spent to rectify or advance those issues? And how will the cost of those promises be financed? All we have heard from the KAP is motherhood statements which are equivalent to the aims of One Nation.

Talk is cheap, and that is all we have heard from Katter's Australian Party. After the episode earlier this week when the LNP did not want to front for work on behalf of the people who pay them, voters right across Queensland need to reconsider any flirtation with the opposition, which cannot even manage themselves, or with Katter's party, which promises the world and does not tell us how it is going to deliver it. In terms of policy, Independents—with some small exceptions in this House—are usually a vacuum or a wasteland. Why do these Johnny-come-latelies come out of the woodwork at election time when they take very little part in the work of the community at other times? It is to be hoped that all Queenslanders recognise that every Labor member of this House will be working, as they have done for years, to advance the conditions and welfare of all.

Lockyer Valley, Public Holiday; Morrison, Mr P

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.42 pm): I have had a lot of complaints about the 10 January holiday that has been declared for the Lockyer Valley Regional Council area. It is disappointing that no consultation was conducted about this issue. No-one consulted the committees that have been set up by Lockyer Valley Regional Council. No-one consulted the local business associations. I realise that 10

January is a significant day for a lot of people in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley, and people will reflect in different ways. As the impost of several extra holidays has already been gazetted, why not shift one of these days to 10 January?

Child care will be a problem for many people. Businesses that are based locally but work outside the area will find it difficult. These sorts of declarations should be thought through. A gesture by council to organise a community barbecue or picnic on the weekend, when everybody could have enjoyed themselves and remembered, might have been better. Clearly, Steve Jones and his council do not understand the significance and cost that is to be borne by the victims of the 11 January floods. I table a letter from one of my constituents.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 1 December 2011, containing statement by Colin Dorber regarding financial hardship suffered by employers within the Lockyer Valley [\[6109\]](#).


I have real concerns about a person known as Paul Joseph Morrison, who has traded as Kildare Pastoral Co. and Popazash Pty Ltd. The Lockyer Valley Regional Council encouraged a number of contractors to subcontract to Popazash Pty Ltd trading as Kildare Pastoral Co. and Paul Joseph Morrison. Unfortunately, Morrison is an undischarged bankrupt and has been bankrupt on two previous occasions.

Morrison is now sending out invoices to residents in Murphys Creek and surrounds who have had voluntary work done for them. I will table some documents shortly. Morrison is also using Platinum Drilling and Transport, which he is trying to get involved with as a cover for his deception, roguery and downright dishonesty. Some of the documents I will table show that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been ripped off good, hardworking Australians. I will be asking the Auditor-General to ensure that everything that should be done has been done in relation to this matter. It is really important that cretins such as Paul Joseph Morrison are brought to heel.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to works undertaken in the Lockyer Valley following the January 2011 floods [\[6110\]](#).

(Time expired)


Newman, Mr C; Ashgrove Electorate

 **Ms JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (2.44 pm): Today I am calling on Campbell Newman to do the right thing and shred this glossy brochure which he is letterboxing into the Ashgrove electorate when he has already broken his commitment. This week we have seen the *Courier-Mail* expose that Campbell Newman has already reneged on his commitment to cut power bills. So why is Campbell Newman continuing to letterbox a flyer into the homes of Ashgrove voters, claiming to fulfil a commitment he has already reneged on?

Today I am calling on Campbell Newman to shred the glossy brochures, stand up for what he is going to do—which is renege on his commitment—and shred these brochures. It took the *Courier-Mail* to expose the 'dirt files' that Campbell Newman was paying consultants to compile on Labor Party members including where our children go to school. It took the *Courier-Mail* to call on him to shred those documents. I am calling on Campbell Newman today to shred the glossy brochures that he is still letterboxing into the electorate, despite reneging two weeks ago on his commitment to save households \$330 off their power bills. I also call on Campbell Newman to send out another brochure apologising for continuing to mislead and not being honest with the people of Ashgrove.

I know that Mr Newman does not want to live amongst us or next door to us. He is too good for that. But why does he think it is acceptable to continue to not be honest with the people of Ashgrove? He is still letterboxing this brochure two weeks after he reneged on his commitment. Today I will be putting out a press release calling on him to shred this brochure and to put a new letter in letterboxes apologising for his lies.

Wind Farms

 **Mrs PRATT** (Nanango—Ind) (2.46 pm): I rise to mention an article that recently came to hand. It was printed in the *Australian* on 14 October 2011. It states—

A court challenge in South Australia could disrupt plans to develop wind farms across the country after AGL Energy conceded tests at its wind farm in the state's northeast detected a tonal noise above government-set limits.


The legal challenge by South Australian farmer Bill Quinn centres on an argument that turbines in AGL Energy's Hallett wind farm emit excessive noise that results in sleep deprivation of residents living within 3.5 kilometres. In a statement to the Supreme Court, Mr Quinn's counsel, Brian Hayes QC, said that noise testing conducted since the initial trial had resulted in AGL shutting down eight of its turbines and showed neither AGL's existing wind farm nor the proposed wind farm were capable of satisfying the Environmental Protection Authority's wind turbine noise level of 40 decibels. We are told that Queensland's limit is only 30. It is no wonder the people of Cooranga North have concerns. If AGL cannot comply with a higher South Australian 40-decibel noise limit, how can they prove they can comply with Queensland's lower decibel limit?

Amongst these grounds for appeal was a challenge to the EPA's South Australian wind farm noise guidelines, and specifically whether their limits take proper account of the impact on residents from the wind turbine noise. In other words, the appeal is questioning the ability of the guidelines as they are currently to adequately protect human health.

The Queensland government must ensure that what the South Australian government is now enduring with regard to appeals et cetera does not go ahead in Queensland. They are aware of the challenges being made down there and the impacts. This case has now been upheld and it is essential that the government, if there is to be a wind farm in any area in Queensland, get it right. It must not impact on the human quality of life. They must ensure AGL can comply with state regulations.

(Time expired)

Natural Disasters, Recovery


 **Mrs ATTWOOD** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.48 pm): This morning I asked the Premier to update the House in relation to disaster recovery in Queensland. I am pleased that, as well as a massive effort of recovery throughout Queensland, my local community is also getting back on its feet again. Recently I was able to join a number of community groups to celebrate the restoration of the long-term headquarters of the Centenary Meals on Wheels and the Centenary RSL subbranch underneath the Jindalee Bowls Club, which was engulfed by floodwaters almost 11 months ago. It was symbolic of Meals on Wheels that Kath Haynes was asked to cut the ribbon on that day. Kath and Jim Haynes were founding members nearly 23 years ago and continued to be involved until, sadly, Jim passed away recently.

Following the floods, the Meals on Wheels never missed a beat and continued to operate from a member's house and then a local shopfront. Every year they provide more than 6,000 meals in the Centenary suburbs—meals that enable frail, older people and young people with a disability to continue living in their own home. The state government provided \$30,000 in HACC funding to the Meals on Wheels and \$72,500 in sports funding to the Jindalee Bowls Club, as well as 20 willing workers under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, to help this community hub to recover.

The Green Army of another 11 workers also took to the Oxley Bowls Club and the Oxley Dog Obedience Club with great gusto to make the buildings look better than ever. The federal and state governments' \$83 million Queensland Natural Disasters Jobs and Skills Package also assisted BoysTown to provide work to local youth to restore and re-establish the Rocks Riverside Park. Project work, including restoring the community gardens, enhanced the employability of seven enthusiastic young people over a six-month period. They were so proud of not only the fantastic end result but also their very significant contribution to their local community and its recovery phase. It was a case of everyone in the community working together to ensure that services and recreation spaces can continue to be used and our lifestyle can be restored after the despair we all shared 11 months ago.

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Rugby 7s

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.50 pm): As I helpfully suggested on 21 May 2009 in this House, the Gold Coast Rugby 7s has been a terrific boon to the tourism landscape of Queensland, with the inaugural tournament being a fantastic launch pad to what I believe will be a successful sell-out carnival next year. It was my first attendance at a Rugby 7s tournament and I was genuinely amazed at the wonderful atmosphere, the international camaraderie and the just plain having fun attitude to what could become Queensland's biggest party. Skilled Park is the perfect venue, the glitzy Gold Coast is the perfect location and the non-stop rugby action is the perfect attraction to put people in the mood to party, party, party.

May I congratulate Mr Peter McGrath, Chairman of the Australian Rugby Union, Mr John O'Neill, CEO of the Australian Rugby Union, and Mr Murray d'Almeida of Gold Coast Rugby for committing to this exciting new event for Queensland. Many others contributed to the success of the event and to all of you I say: well done. I reiterate my original call to turn this weekend party into a full-blown week-long carnival, with the addition of horseracing and a golfing spectacular providing an irresistible temptation for tourists from all over the world to flock to Queensland for the Gold Coast Rugby 7s.

Queensland Events needs to hop on the bandwagon in a hurry to throw any entrepreneurial muscle it may have behind capitalising on future growth of this soon-to-be tourism icon for Queensland. Putting the Gold Coast name up there with Hong Kong, Dubai and Las Vegas as a world tourism destination is an opportunity not to be missed. I am happy to assist Tourism Queensland, Queensland Events and the Bligh Labor government on a bipartisan basis at any time now or into the future to get Queensland tourism back on track, because obviously the Labor Party does not have its own ideas to get these matters going forward.

Bruce Highway, Noise Barriers

Ms O'NEILL (Kallangur—ALP) (2.52 pm): The Bruce Highway is the eastern boundary of my electorate. The high use of this main arterial produces loud traffic noise and affects those residents who live along the highway. Many of these residents have lived there since Kallangur was first developed and they are suffering a real change to the quality of their lifestyle. Since being elected, I have been lobbying the federal minister for main roads to get consistent and robust noise attenuation barriers along the Bruce Highway for the whole length of the electorate of Kallangur.

While I have not yet been successful in achieving my goal of concrete noise barriers for my electorate—similar to those enjoyed on the south side or near Caboolture—there has been progress for a small area of Murrumba Downs. The residents of the Riverwood Estate at Murrumba Downs have long been asking for help regarding a section of the barrier that was constructed 50 centimetres lower than the rest of the existing barriers. The Minister for Main Roads, Craig Wallace, intervened on a dispute between council and a developer to provide government assistance to repair this fault. This project was due to start early this year but unfortunately the floods and our disastrous summer intervened. Since then I have been working closely with the minister's office and the department to get this project underway.

I am very pleased to advise the House that this \$700,000 project to upgrade this section of noise barrier fencing is underway. It involves removing a 150-metre section of the existing three-metre-high noise barriers and replacing them with 3.5-metre-high barriers. This new section will reduce traffic noise for nearby residents and the local community. This is great news for the residents of Riverwood Estate and they should be proud of their activism around this issue. I am ecstatic to see construction starting, having lobbied for the improvements for more than 18 months. Works are expected to be finished in mid-December, weather permitting.

EzyGreen

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (2.54 pm): I want to speak about a fantastic environmental initiative. Regarding this initiative, the then Acting Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability said in a media release on 6 June 2010—

... the Queensland Government was happy to be a major partner in the scheme which would help Queenslanders to access existing state Government incentives.

...

EzyGreen is another way to promote greener habits in Queensland ...

I table that media statement.

Tabled paper: Press release, dated 6 June 2010, by Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, titled 'Households to get \$20m energy reduction scheme' [\[6111\]](#).

The acting minister was on a roll and reiterated her statements on 13 July 2010, when she said—

... the Queensland Government was happy to get behind the program as major partner and make it even easier for Queenslanders to live a greener lifestyle.

I table that media statement.

Tabled paper: Press release, dated 13 July 2010, by Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, titled 'EzyGreen energy reduction scheme goes live' [\[6112\]](#).

When the initiative achieved its 30,000th sign-up on Tuesday, 7 September 2010, the Premier got on the bandwagon. The Premier said—

Queenslanders are to be congratulated for embracing this program so quickly and taking positive steps towards living a greener lifestyle.

I table that statement.

Tabled paper: Press release, dated 7 September 2010, by Hon. Anna Bligh MP, Premier and Minister for the Arts, titled '30,000 homes now signed up to EzyGreen' [\[6113\]](#).


As recently as last Thursday, 24 November 2011, even the director-general of the Department of Environment and Resource Management agreed in correspondence that 'our collaboration on this program has been a worthwhile enterprise', and I table that correspondence.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 24 November 2011, from Mr Jim Reeves, Director-General, Department of Environment and Resource Management, to Ms Megan Houghton, CEO, CitySmart Pty Ltd, relating to the sponsorship agreement for the EzyGreen program [\[6114\]](#).

So it came as some surprise when on Tuesday of this week the current Minister for Environment announced that her tired government was pulling out of the initiative because it had been 'a resounding disappointment'. Interestingly, she said the government had paid \$2 million of a promised \$3 million to date. Well, no, her department had paid \$1.5 million and its May payment of \$500,000 was six months overdue. Coincidentally, it was paid today.

Lord Mayor Quirk says this sends a major warning to all local governments that have funding agreements with the state government. He suspects the real reason is the state government is fast running out of money and it sees councils as an easy target. The EzyGreen model is successful because it leverages private sector support to bring a range of products that help Queenslanders reduce their energy bills and emissions to people's homes. The alternative, which is the ClimateSmart Home Service, relies solely on taxpayer funding which, under this government, is increasingly on the credit card, adding to the escalating \$85 billion worth of debt.

Female Genital Mutilation


 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (2.56 pm): When we welcome refugees to our community, we enjoy learning about their culture, including their music, art, dance, food and their stories, which can at times be very confronting, but this adds to our understanding and to how we relate to each other. However, there are some practices which simply have no place in this their new country. Such is the case with female genital mutilation, or female circumcision—a practice which has simply developed as a cultural rite with no basis within religious teaching. It is a horrendous practice.

It was recently my privilege to launch a number of new resources on behalf of the Women's Multicultural Health Project from Family Planning Queensland. Project coordinator Odette Tewfik has led her team in the development of new material, including a CD of individual women's experiences, a poster and an information booklet. This follows 15 years of development in various ways to help break down this practice. It has been informed by listening to community members and forming close partnerships between health workers, such as GPs and nurses, our hospitals and the many areas of Queensland Health; Education; Child Safety Services; youth workers; many multicultural groups; QCOS; the Police Service; the Department of Communities; and so many more.

Much has been accomplished in recent years through increased education of clinicians, increased publications in languages other than English and an emphasis on reaching communities where there is a high prevalence of members from the targeted communities, including services in regional centres around our state. Of great importance was the amendment to the Criminal Code in 2000 to make FGM a criminal offence, with mandated reporting required of workers. It is sadly the case that for young girls and women born into these cultures it can remain part of what they may consider most important and how they may be perceived for marriage. It is thus vital that we seek the males from these cultures to stand up against this practice, as we do on White Ribbon Day where our men wear a white ribbon and pledge to stand up against domestic violence.

(Time expired)

Carbon Tax


 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (2.58 pm): I asked three ministers of this current government separate questions on notice. I asked: what is the total yearly cost for electricity for their respective departments, how much will the carbon tax increase it by and how will it be paid for? They all referred me to the carbon price impacts in the Queensland section of last year's budget papers. Let me quote from those papers.

They said that this will increase the cost of these energy sources to the state government by about \$25 million. The largest electricity and gas consumers are in the policy and service delivery areas of Health, Education, Public Works, Transport, Main Roads and Community Safety. These agencies collectively account for over 80 per cent of these energy costs of the general government sector. In the report, the terms 'model', 'modelling' and 'modelled' are mentioned 107 times. Here is the get-out clause of the state government. I again quote—

In practice, the transformation of the economy, including investment and technology changes, is likely to be more 'lumpy'. As a result, there may be differences between the modelling results and the actual timing and/or short-term level of carbon pricing impacts.

They have not had a clue what the financial impacts are. Queenslanders want to know the dollar increase on government departments arising from the carbon tax in terms of the electricity they have to purchase and how it will be paid for. I asked three ministers the current total yearly cost of electricity for each of their departments. None of them answered that question. They either do not know or do not care and they are not going to tell the people of Queensland. I can understand this from the health minister. If Queensland Health pays its utility bills in the same slipshod fashion as it pays its staff, I would not be surprised if the member for Stretton cut the power off!


Trinity Bay Fishery

 **Mr WETTENHALL** (Barron River—ALP) (3.00 pm): Today I tabled a paper and e-petition with 2,978 signatures calling for restrictions on commercial net fishing in the Trinity Bay fishery. The petition was open for just four weeks. This fishery includes waters inshore of a line between False Cape and Taylor Point including the Barron River but excluding Trinity Inlet, which has previously been closed to

commercial netting, and it includes most of the popular and accessible inshore areas favoured by recreational fishers, particularly those targeting barramundi. The current arrangements permit commercial net fishing in the fishery for the lifetime of all but one of the nine operators. Whilst I make no criticism of the commercial net fishers, recreational fishers have been consistently telling me that catching a barramundi has become a rare event in the inshore waters of this fishery. Understandably, they see the solution in restricting the commercial fishing. The commercial net fishers, with whom I have met and discussed these issues, say that their catch has remained consistent over time which shows sustainable fishing practices in a productive fishery.

I have sponsored this petition to test what level of support restricting commercial netting might have in the community. The commercial net fishers who stand to be affected by any restriction are understandably concerned about their livelihoods. They disagree with the supporting arguments put forward by the principal petitioner and say that the petition should carry little, if any, weight. Whatever weight might be attached to the petition, I am of the view that the allocation of the resource in Trinity Bay needs to be rebalanced in favour of recreational fishers. That is why I will be asking the minister to adopt a compromise position which would close the inshore part of the fishery to commercial netters with fair and reasonable compensation but allow them to continue to operate elsewhere.

Social Housing

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.01 pm): When we talk about waste and red tape, we often think about overspends and difficulty with paperwork and approvals. There is also the waste of fixing up mistakes that this government brings upon itself. The brand-new units at 66-68 City Road at Beenleigh come to mind. These one-bedroom units are ideal for people with disabilities, but shortly after being housed new residents were forced to quickly vacate their abodes due to major defects in the drainage. So now there are 21 vacant units which, according to sources, were handed over to Housing in January 2011 but were still vacant as at Tuesday of this week. What does this mean? At a time when we have a chronic shortage of housing that is suitable for people with disabilities, these units have been vacant for months and months. A whole block of units can be built in the time that these units have so far been vacant in order to fix faults. People in the area will tell you that many days go by, if not weeks, without any attention to rectifying the faults. That is an inefficiency that is costing people a suitable place to live.

The minister will tell you that tenants were placed in other suitable accommodation elsewhere. That is fine. The problem, though, is that the other suitable accommodation was intended for someone else on the list. But until you put a human face on it, it does not mean very much. So I will tell you about Dorothy, who I met at the Eagleby shopping centre recently. Dorothy has been waiting for a housing department home for seven years, but it tells her that she is not a priority. Dorothy is 62 and on a disability pension. Her health is going downhill fast. She has bad knees and hips and now has problems with her back. She has a bedroom in her son's home and that is why she is not regarded as a priority, but the house is not set up for people with disabilities such as hers. For example, she finds it increasingly difficult to have a shower because she has to step over the edge of the bath to get into the shower, and then there is the matter of balance that this sort of shower facility does not afford. Some would argue that Dorothy is not the most needy of those who are on the waiting list. Dorothy would argue that she is. One thing is certain: there are 21 people with disabilities, just like Dorothy—


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kilburn): The member's time has expired.

Mr CRANDON:—who do not have appropriate accommodation because these units have been unoccupied—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member's time has expired!

(Time expired)

Shopping Centres, Paid Parking; Beetson, Mr A

 **Hon. PG REEVES** (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (3.03 pm): Residents of the south side of Brisbane have shopped at Westfield Garden City for decades. Over the years the shopping centre has grown and expanded, offering better and greater choice for shoppers. Locals not only do their shopping at Garden City but also go to the movies, the council library, the coffee shops and the post office. Some shoppers catch the bus to Garden City, including on the world-class South East Busway built by the Labor government which takes people right to the door of the shops. Many of course drive there. I want to ensure that shoppers do not have to pay for parking at Garden City like they do at Westfield Chermside and possibly at Carindale in the near future. Instead of paying for parking, many Chermside shoppers have elected to park on local streets, causing traffic congestion and problems for local residents.


I am campaigning in my local electorate to put pressure on the Brisbane City Council to force Westfield to rule out paid parking at Garden City. Westfield is currently applying for permission from the Brisbane City Council to further expand Garden City and the council will soon make a decision about this. Although this could be a positive development that is welcomed by shoppers, it should not be at the

cost to local residents by introducing paid parking. Local residents are supporting my campaign in overwhelming numbers. In the past two weeks I have had over 1,300 messages of support calling on the Brisbane City Council to take action now to ensure paid parking will not be introduced at Garden City. I have written to the LNP Lord Mayor of Brisbane calling on his council to only approve the development application with a condition imposed that paid parking will not be introduced to any present or future car park at the shopping centre. This is the LNP's chance to stand up to Westfield and protect the interests of its ratepayers. I call on all members of the LNP in this place—if there are any here today working—to put pressure on their council colleagues to have paid parking ruled out once and for all at Garden City.

I take the last 10 seconds left to me to recognise the death of a legend, Artie Beetson—the first Indigenous sportsperson to be named the captain of an Australian sporting team. I met Artie on a number of occasions, most recently in September. He will be greatly missed. He was a great Queenslander and I offer my condolences to his family.


(Time expired)

Bankwest

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (3.06 pm): This afternoon I rise to speak in relation to the despicable situation that some banks are subjecting pastoralists and landowners to in Far North Queensland and other parts of Queensland. One particular situation has been brought to my attention in the last 48 hours where Bankwest—and I name that bank, a second-tier bank—has no comprehension, no compassion and no understanding at all given the cold and callous way it has delivered the knock-out punch to a highly regarded and well-respected family in Far North Queensland. At this very moment cattle are being mustered on the property—cows heavy in calf and baby calves at foot. Members can appreciate the temperatures in Far North Queensland at the moment. You do not muster cattle at this time of the year and you do not truck that type of cattle at this time of the year. This type of behaviour is going to push down the price of properties in the Far North, especially at a time when people are trying to recover from the shutdown of the live cattle export industry and after ongoing droughts over a long period of time.

This is a cold and callous attack by a bank that has no regard for or understanding of this family and other families. All it will do is drive down the price of cattle. They will get a second-rate price for those cattle and they will not be able to attract the best money possible for their property. I appeal to the sanity of this parliament and the sanity of level-minded businesspeople across Queensland, especially in the banking industry, to witness firsthand what is going on here and to do something about retarding this irresponsible, gutless attack on these people who are trying to redeem their situation in a fair-minded way.


Volunteers

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (3.08 pm): This government knows how important volunteers are and we also know that the people who do the most are usually the people who think little of what they do and who can never work out why they are being recognised when they are. That is why we have some special awards programs in place to make sure that these remarkable volunteers are actually acknowledged for what they do, and I have been delighted in recent times to be present for the acknowledgement of some remarkable volunteers from the Bulimba electorate. One of these events was only two weeks ago, when I was privileged to attend the Queensland Australian of the Year awards and to see our very own Doug Hislop win in the Local Heroes category. I am sure that everyone in this House will remember the initiative that Doug took on the morning after the Brisbane floods when he saw a large portion of the Riverwalk heading along the raging torrent of a river towards the Gateway Bridge and instinctively took his tug boat out to stop it, and stop it he did! It was an incredibly dangerous but brave act and one for which I am sure Brisbane residents will always be grateful.

Two other significant events were the ministerial 2011 Valuing Volunteers in Sport and Recreation Awards. My local area was honoured to have finalists in both of these categories: Kevin Sinden from the Morningside Scouts for recreation and Desley Allen from Morningside AFL for sport. I have spoken previously in this House about the longstanding commitment that both of these people have to their respective activities and that their organisations would not be the same without them. I know how proud both organisations were to see Kevin and Desley recognised.

Then there was the opportunity to present our long-serving, selfless JPs with certificates of recognition for long years of service: 50 years for Cyril Gilbert; 40 years for Patrick Lindsay and Gino Zocchi; 28 years for Alan Snow; and 25 years for Georgina Pickers, Des Morris, Ray Grevell and Dante Ballerino. How amazing is all of that and their commitment to their local communities? I commend all of these volunteers and thank them for everything that they do to make our community a better place.

Ultralight Off-Road Vehicles

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.10 pm): This morning I tabled a petition of 339 signatures and an e-petition of 314 signatures requesting a change to the conditional registration category for the use of ultralight off-road vehicles on public dirt roads and lands. The petition calls on government to introduce a licensing endorsement condition so that public safety controls are met to replace the current police permit system, which is unworkable particularly for recreational quad users.


The use of quads has evolved so that they have become an indispensable asset on a farm, and demand for quads as a recreational vehicle almost equals that for a two-wheel trail bike. Quads are becoming increasingly important for natural disaster recovery and clean-up and rangers are now using them in national parks. Over the past 10 years off-road vehicles have underpinned the development of farm stays, feral animal control, remote-area fishing, remote-area camping, ecotourism, mapping and navigation sports.

Unfortunately, support teams were restricted in their use of off-road vehicles because of the confusion around licensing, registration and road use. The massive increase in sales and the use of these ultralight off-road vehicles has highlighted the redundancy of the current conditional registration category system, and this petition calls on the state government to recognise that off-road vehicles such as quads need a recreational licensing and registration system. Such a system would ensure that the users would receive appropriate training and would be able to demonstrate adequate skills to safely operate them as well as clearly define areas of use. Quad bikes need legal access to minor roads and public lands such as state forests and national parks to ensure safety and sustainable growth of a major tourism and recreational industry and to give users and local authorities clear, workable guidelines to enable successful integration.

The recreational water vehicle licensing and registration system was in response to a genuine need to regulate and educate users. Off-road vehicle groups have identified a similar need and it is urgent that the government responds to prevent—

(Time expired)

Ludwig, Mr W


 **Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.12 pm): Helen from Yeppoon rang me last Friday thanking me for using the most ancient democratic protection of the citizen's privilege to expose the man who hooked her son on drugs. Many people worry about the privilege members of parliament have to name people in this chamber before they are convicted of an offence, but I remind everyone that Tom Burns and Kev Hooper were attacked for naming individuals in relation to the issue of police corruption in this parliament long before the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry exposed the rot which saw the then Police Commissioner and others go to jail.

Drug dealers thrive on anonymity and often cover their tracks by pretending to be someone else—ask any police officer—and I hope that by exposing the activities of this individual somebody will have the courage to come forward and go to the police. Helen stated that Councillor Bill Ludwig sold her son drugs. She is afraid to go to the police and she is not alone. Many people have given me credible stories and I hope someone will now complain to the police.

The son of one of my best mates who, like Helen's son, was preyed upon by drug dealers and became hooked on marijuana was stabbed and nearly died two weeks ago in the ultimate drug crime. My conscience will not allow me to leave this stone unturned. Ludwig knows this is true. Those who dealt with him or for him know it is true and, what is more, he knows I know it is true.

Ludwig was caught out rorting support via SMS by WIN TV and he is at it again. I urge those who support him to publicly identify themselves with him. I also thank the *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin* for raising this matter publicly. It takes courage to do so. Privilege means nothing without publicity. I also call on the LNP to disassociate itself from this individual.

Queensland Health, Outpatient Waiting List

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.14 pm): On 1 March 2011 there were 218,000 Queenslanders waiting on the outpatient waiting list, or what is more commonly known as the 'waiting list for the waiting list', of which 8,300 made it Nambour Hospital. The hospital performance website shows that as of today that figure is static, which means that the data on that website has not been updated at all. I understand that the health minister may well update that data in March 2012, but one has to question whether that data will be accurate. I table a series of four letters. The first is dated 1 September 2011 to the Wide Bay Health Service District to a resident which states—

... not been able to provide Ophthalmology Services.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 September 2011, from Dr Tim Smart, Executive Director of Medical Services, Wide Bay Health Service District, regarding ophthalmology services at Fraser Coast Health Service [\[6115\]](#).

The next letter, dated 28 September 2011 and from the RBWH, states—

The length of the waiting list has meant we have not been able to provide this appointment for you.

Again, this letter refers to ophthalmology services.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 September 2011, from Dr David Alcorn, Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding outpatient appointment for a specialist ophthalmology surgeon [6116].

The next letter, dated 18 October 2011 and from the RBWH to a patient, states—

... the service is currently not available at this hospital.

Again, this letter refers to ophthalmology services.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 October 2011, from the Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding an outpatient appointment to see a specialist [6117].

Finally, a letter dated 1 November 2011 states—

... this service is currently not available at this hospital.

Again, this letter refers to ophthalmology services.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 November 2011, from the Executive Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, regarding an outpatient appointment to see a specialist [6118].

Those letters were tabled earlier, but I table them again to highlight the fact that this government is making the waiting list for the waiting list disappear. We cannot trust any data put out by this government to reflect the true position of the waiting list.

In my opinion this issue became quite clear when the director-general, Terry O'Connell, on ABC Radio referred to a patient who had been diagnosed as a category 2 patient in relation to cataracts and said—

Category 2 patients should normally be done in about three months, if she's walking around and can walk 5 kilometres a day it sounds like she's much less urgent than needing surgery done in 3 months and she could wait up to a year.

The director-general of Queensland Health verbally attacked a resident of this state in claiming that this woman does not require category 2 treatment even though she has been diagnosed—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kilburn): Order! The member's time has expired. I call the member for—

Mr McARDLE: This situation is abominable and cannot—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member's time has expired. Before you start, member for Greenslopes, these two-minute speeches are for two minutes. They are not two minutes for some and three minutes for others. There is not time for people to keep talking over the top of the chair, and the next person who does so I will report as being in contempt of the chair. I hope that is clear to everyone.

Shopping Centres, Paid Parking; Error in Answer to Question; Schools, Security



Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (3.16 pm): I rise this afternoon to speak about an issue of great concern to the people of the electorate of Greenslopes. In recent months we have seen shopping centres across Brisbane introduce paid parking in their car parks. Not only is this unfair and inconvenient for shoppers; it creates traffic chaos for local residents.

This practice must be stopped. Shopping centres are an important part of any modern community. They are more than just places for shopping; they house essential services like libraries, council offices, Medicare centres and banks. They have entertainment precincts with cinemas and restaurants and they are also public transport hubs. Paid parking makes it more difficult and more expensive for people accessing these services. This is why I am taking a stand for pensioners, students, seniors, people with disabilities—in fact, everyone in the electorate of Greenslopes.

The Minister for Local Government, Mr Paul Lucas, has already highlighted the fact that the Brisbane City Council has the ability to stop this practice. Crown law advice provided to the Brisbane City Council by the state government on 15 November 2011 explains that the council can introduce a temporary local planning instrument that would stop paid parking at existing shopping centres. The Moreton Bay Regional Council is doing this as a matter of priority but the Brisbane City Council refuses to act.

I call on Lord Mayor Graham Quirk to show some leadership on this issue and stand up for the people of Brisbane. For too long the Brisbane City Council has ducked and weaved on this issue, and the people of Brisbane are suffering. This week we have seen a complete absence of leadership from Campbell Newman and the LNP in the state political arena, and now we are seeing a similar failure of leadership by Graham Quirk and his LNP council colleagues.

The people of the Greenslopes electorate want a council that is prepared to stand up for them, but all they get is a council that is shirking its responsibility. That is why I am organising a petition to call on the council to implement a temporary local planning instrument to stop the spread of paid parking at

shopping centres. I will be providing households in my electorate with a copy of the petition. Alternatively, people can sign the petition or pick up a copy at my electorate office or at one of my mobile offices or they can email me directly. If the Lord Mayor thinks he can just stick his head in the sand and ignore the people of Brisbane, he is sadly mistaken.

While I am on my feet I want to correct an answer I gave in response to a question without notice from the member for Chatsworth earlier today when I inadvertently stated there had been 31 arson incidents at Queensland schools this financial year. There have in fact been only three arson incidents.

Child Safety

Ms DAVIS (Aspley—LNP) (3.18 pm): Today we heard the tragic and heartbreaking news that an eight-year-old girl who died in terrible circumstances was known to the department of child safety for more than a year before her death. Although there is a signal that this event will precipitate an internal review, there is real concern that this review will end up on top of a bundle of such reviews, unheeded by the minister. When there is a failing of the child safety system there needs to be action taken to fix the problem. But this government and this minister do nothing to fix problems that are repeatedly drawn to their attention.

Mr REEVES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those words offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn. The member should remember the rules of the House as well.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member has asked for the comments to be withdrawn.

Ms DAVIS: I would be happy to do it, but I am unsure what personal reflection I have made on the minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not want to speak for the minister, but I think he would be referring to the suggestion that he did nothing.

Ms DAVIS: I will withdraw. There needs to be an investigation not only into this new tragedy but into creating a real and effective improvement on how our child safety system is working. There are serious questions which I have raised in this House previously which need to be answered by the minister. We know staff are not given the support or resourcing they need for the difficult and vital work. When latest figures show 60 per cent of alleged abuse investigations are not being actioned in required time frames, there has to be an explanation of why the support and resources are still not forthcoming from the minister. When front-line services suffer because of a focus on bureaucracy and we have a minister who refuses to answer basic questions on notice in the House, there has to be an explanation from the Premier—

Mr REEVES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those words offensive and untrue and I ask them to be withdrawn.

Ms DAVIS: I will withdraw.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kilburn): Order! Member for Everton, we do not need a running commentary.

Mr Bleijie: They are a bit precious over there.

Ms DAVIS: I take that interjection. They are a bit precious across there today. In the annual report of the Child Death Case Review Committee delivered today, there are case studies which highlight systemic failures. The minister needs to heed these issues and do something to protect the vulnerable children who rely on the department for their wellbeing. We need a systemic review of the department of child safety. I will be writing to the commissioner for children calling for such a review. It is evident that the minister has no intention of undertaking such a process because it will expose too many failures under his stewardship.

Riverwalk; World AIDS Day


Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (3.20 pm): The events of last summer were certainly exceptional, causing more than \$2.7 billion worth of damage to local government infrastructure alone. That is why in February this year the Treasurer joined with the Deputy Prime Minister in announcing a package of exceptional circumstance payments to help local governments like the Brisbane City Council meet those costs over and above what is usually eligible under longstanding NDRRA arrangements. This package included a \$145 million allocation from state and federal governments for the fast-tracked reconstruction of Brisbane's CityCat terminals and the Brisbane Riverwalk.

As the member for Brisbane Central, I am concerned to learn from the Brisbane City Council Riverwalk website that it will take all of 2012 for preliminary and detailed design work on the preferred design concept B. Equally, I am concerned that it will take until mid to late 2014 for the council to complete the Riverwalk development. The Reconstruction Authority has nonetheless provided council

with an advance payment for Riverwalk, as it has done for the rest of council's NDRRA projects, in order to meet any costs incurred by the BCC to date as well as fund design and early construction costs for Riverwalk. Given that the state and federal governments have allocated all of the necessary funding for the Riverwalk project, it is now incumbent upon the council to advise their ratepayers why it will take up to three years—until the 2013-14 financial year—to complete such a significant project for Brisbane.


The Riverwalk was used by over 3,000 commuters, cyclists and pedestrians daily. My constituents are keen to have this infrastructure replaced as soon as possible. They are keen to know what insurance the council had on Riverwalk and whether it received any payment so that the funding can be reduced and allocated to other priority projects. This morning we heard from the Premier of excellent reconstruction work happening throughout the state, and I call on the Brisbane City Council to make the Riverwalk project a priority and get it done as soon as possible. I also acknowledge today World AIDS Day.

Rangeville State School, Sport and Recreation Funding

 **Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.22 pm): I want to speak today about the Rangeville State School P&C application to the Department of Sport and Recreation under the Active Inclusion Program grant system. This is the third time that the P&C has put this application in. I want to speak about the worthiness of this application. It is for an amount of \$40,000 which will employ a facilitator one day a week to assist African, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and other children who have special needs or who are seen as being at risk. It is to provide for them opportunities that they do not normally have to be involved in special sports camps and to be taught how to get involved in local club sport. They plan to teach them to swim and that is very important, not only for the children but their families as well. They plan to teach them, through local clubs and coaches, to be involved in tennis, cricket, netball, Auskick, futsal, basketball, rugby league and to be actively involved in camps at places like Currimundi.

Rangeville is a large school. It is a band 10 school. It is band 10 because of the complexity of the students at the school. There are significant numbers of African children there, and this will be a wonderful opportunity for them and for others to learn about being involved in club sport, to learn about the Australian healthy culture of sport and not only to learn how to be involved in clubs but for their parents to come along and learn how to be involved in our sporting culture as well. It gives them the opportunity to be coached and taught not only to play the particular sport competently but to join in, make friends and use the facilities well for the rest of their lives. In particular, learning to swim and the safety involved in that will be a wonderful thing. I ask the Minister for Sport and Recreation for every consideration can be given to this third application. It is a wonderful application for these young children at the Rangeville State School who need this opportunity.

Everton Electorate, Infrastructure

 **Mr WATT** (Everton—ALP) (3.24 pm): Since I was elected nearly three years ago, improving traffic and transport in the north-west has been my top priority. That is why I am so pleased with the congestion-busting initiatives this government has taken this year in Everton. Work is underway on stage 1 of a major upgrade to the intersection of Samford Road and Wardell Street at Enoggera. I understand that members have not heard very much about this project, so I am glad to have another opportunity to talk about it. Main Roads engineers are currently finalising the plan for stage 2. This total overhaul will reduce waiting times for commuters by up to 70 per cent. We are also making progress towards fixing the intersection of Stafford Road and South Pine Road at Everton Park.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr WATT: I am glad that the member for Kawana has pointed out that I talked about this last week. I am so excited that this is happening that I thought I would get up and talk about it again, because the people in my area care about this and I am here to serve. Main Roads has now released for public feedback designs for improvements to the intersection. All up, the proposed plan will result in time savings of up to 10 minutes each way for north-west residents. Coming on top of time savings at Samford Road and Wardell Street, this means that locals will have more time with their family every day.

Of course, our congestion problems will not be solved with roads alone. Good public transport is vital to getting people to where they want to go. This year we added new bus services between Eatons Hill and Albany Creek and the city, and I am working on getting more. We also continued the duplication of the Ferny Grove rail line from Mitchelton station to Ferny Grove.


Mr Wilson: Hear, hear!

Mr WATT: A project that I know the member for Ferny Grove is passionate about. In the last fortnight, Queensland Rail commenced consultation on a review of services on the Ferny Grove line. I am hopeful this will lead to improvements to services, security and comfort for train users in our area.

In contrast to the government's progress in reducing congestion in our area, there has been a deafening silence from the LNP. A fortnight ago I challenged my LNP opponent to show leadership on this issue. His name is Tim Mander, and I am still waiting for him to do anything about this issue. He has yet to announce whether he supports Campbell Newman's do-nothing plan to tinker with the Samford Road-Wardell Street intersection. He has not said anything at all about improving Stafford Road, South Pine Road or about public transport. I again ask: will he stand up for locals on this important issue?

(Time expired)


Gold Coast, Water

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (3.27 pm): At present 30 megalitres of water is being pumped north to Brisbane every day at a time when Brisbane water storage facilities are full and the Gold Coast's facilities are at 49 per cent. Fifty thousand-plus megalitres has been pumped north so far since the start of stage 3 of the Hinze Dam. This will continue at least through to the end of summer in 2012. On the Gold Coast we have water restrictions already and it might just get even tougher with stage 3 of the dam completed.

This ridiculous situation has parallels with 2008, when Wivenhoe was at 22 per cent water capacity and, along the old north-south pipeline, via Labor, Labor was allowing 20 megalitres of water a day to be pumped from Wivenhoe to the Gold Coast because it had what it believed was an unshakeable contract for 80c per kilolitre of water pumped and a payment to Logan each year of \$2.4 million. Even though water was desperately short in Brisbane, Brisbane insisted that that water be pumped to the Gold Coast when our dam was full. That was at the same time they were spending massive amounts of money on the desalination plant, the Traveston Dam and the western bypass—all now redundant. It even took the Gold Coast to court for \$2.4 million.

We are in the situation now where our dam is at 49 per cent and we desperately need the water, but the water is now going north. The ridiculous situation is that we have these pipes that go each way. This is reckless, wasteful and dangerous to Gold Coast water security. Never has the water flowed from south to north rather than north to south since the dam was completed. That was in 2008. The loss of 50,000 megalitres has taken us from 70 per cent full, which is where we should have been, to 49 per cent full, which is where we are now.

Pacific Motorway, Upgrade

 **Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (3.29 pm): I rise to inform the House that I support the campaign of the Albert and Logan *Quest* newspaper to have the upgrade of the Pacific Motorway in Logan brought forward and for this major infrastructure project to be regarded as urgent and be considered as part of the Commonwealth Games Gold Coast 2018 infrastructure needs. There is no doubt that there has been a huge amount of work done at the Winnetts Road and Loganlea Road interchange at Daisy Hill. \$420 million has been put into works in that area. In fact, when one drives through one can barely recognise this area because of the large amount of work that has been done and continues to be done.


I supported this section being done first because of safety concerns with cars being banked up on the M1 waiting to enter the Winnetts Road off ramp. Now this section is nearly completed it is time we put the effort into ensuring the funding is there for the next section to commence. I am extremely pleased that \$140 million has been allocated for the Gateway Motorway-Pacific Motorway M1 southbound merge at Eight Mile Plains. There is no doubt that this area is a safety concern. I know the RACQ has raised its concerns about this section of the M1 on many occasions.

I look forward to the work starting in this section. But I do not believe this is enough. If we want to really get a fix to the peak hour congestion we need to look beyond this merge and at further sections of the upgrade. I believe we should be getting on with the job of securing the funding for the section from Underwood Road to Springwood. We need it to be finalised and ready to commence as soon as possible—that is a business case to be prepared for this section and presented in the normal way to the federal government for its consideration and acquisition of the much needed funding for this project.

There is also another section of the upgrade that I believe will also need to be completed before the Commonwealth Games and that is the Loganholme section. There is no doubt that there will be a lot of visitors arriving into the Gold Coast, but there will be those who come into the Brisbane airports and travel on the Gateway Motorway southbound and the Pacific Motorway M1. I want those visitors to have the best first impression they can have of our great state. I want those transport needs looked at not just for these tourists but for the Springwood constituents.

(Time expired)

Carers

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (3.31 pm): I am receiving an ever-increasing number of phone calls for assistance from elderly carers and parents who are anxious about who will care for their elderly children when they die. I note that this afternoon when the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women entered the chamber I approached her and she took another submission calling for assistance. I hope she and her officers are able to resolve that situation to the satisfaction of this elderly woman.

Recently we heard about all the new money from the federal government for mental health and housing needs. I use this opportunity to remind the government that we need to at all times make sure that the funds are getting to the very people we desire them to benefit. I understand the bureaucratic jargon is that we need to have a cost-benefit analysis. Can I simply use this opportunity to call on the government to make sure that the federal funding that the state government has received actually gets to the people it was intended receive it.


Whilst I am on my feet, I use this opportunity to invite the Labor Party candidates and the Liberal National Party candidates in the lead-up to next year's state election to consider the needs of Queensland grandparent carers. I believe if we could have some pre-election commitments from the Labor Party and the Liberal National Party as to how they are going to better provide for our Queensland grandparent carers we may have some movement on this very important issue in our community.

I believe we can do better to better support our elderly carers, be they carers for their elderly children or grandparent carers who have taken on the role of caring for their grandchildren for a range of reasons. One of the most important issues is that these grandparent carers have taken on this role because they do not want to see their grandchildren become wards of the state, and, unfortunately, their children are unable to continue to provide the important care that is required. I urge the government and the alternative government to consider the issue of the Queensland grandparent carers. I hope we will see some pre-election commitments prior to the election.

Interruption.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY


Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.33 pm), by leave: I advise the House that, in accordance with standing order 136, the Committee of the Legislative Assembly has fixed the reporting date for the Law Reform Amendment Bill 2011 as 19 March 2012.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Resumed.


Sunnybank Electorate, Schools

 **Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (3.33 pm): Today I would like to congratulate the Warrigal Road State School choir that performed at Parliament House after question time this week. They did a beautiful Christmas presentation for us. Their teacher, Anne Pook, is the conductor of this choir. My children attended the Warrigal Road State School and Ms Pook was their teacher for violin and percussion. I know what a great history this school has of winning many eisteddfods under her leadership. I congratulate her and all the students of that school on their performance this week.

I am very fortunate in my electorate to have schools like Warrigal Road and Robertson primary schools and MacGregor primary and high schools which have incredibly high standards of performing arts in all aspects. When I go to their awards night ceremonies they are truly joyful occasions. I understand, although I do not watch the program, that this year the MacGregor State High School percussion students were semifinalists in *Australia's Got Talent*. They have been recognised by the nation as being stunning performers.

From that end of my electorate, which is quite affluent, to the other end of my electorate—only 10 minutes away—we have a number of other schools. One of them is Watson Road. It is in a much less affluent part of the world, but the students there are excelling to great heights. On Monday they had a wonderful day for the children. They had three hours of free breakfast and fun and games and activities followed by their own all stars competition. I take the opportunity of congratulating the principal and teachers of that school, just about all of whom are new this year. They have really turned that school around in terms of the expectations of the students and the standards that they are achieving. This is due to the change in philosophy of the school and the good work that is being done under that stewardship.

Pollett, Mr R


 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (3.35 pm): On 27 September this year young 25-year-old cyclist Richard Pollett was killed on Moggill Road at Chapel Hill. I met with Richard's devastated parents, both of whom are wonderful people and senior academics at the University of Queensland. Richard was a very talented musician, achieving world acclaim as a violinist, having studied in Switzerland. His orchestra, the Australian Youth Orchestra, with which members will be familiar, and his parents are establishing the Richard Pollett Memorial Award.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Dr FLEGG: I take those interjections. This award will be given to a young violinist who displays outstanding personal and musical attributes. This is a wonderful opportunity for people who love the arts, love music and love the delight that the Australian Youth Orchestra has given over the years to help support a struggling young musician to follow in the footsteps of Richard Pollett. I will circulate the details of this to all the electorate offices. I would appreciate members forwarding on the details to anyone who loves and appreciates this sort of classical music.

In relation to this terrible tragedy and as we approach Christmas I appeal to people to show tolerance on our roads. All road users, whether they are cyclists, trucks, cars or local residents, have a right to be on the road. We need to be careful and mindful that not everybody uses the road for the same purpose that we are using it. This particular stretch of road, Moggill Road at Kenmore, is particularly dangerous. That is an issue for another time. I will look at the report into this tragedy to see whether road conditions played a role in it.

Transit Oriented Development

 **Hon. SD FINN** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Government Services, Building Industry and Information and Communication Technology) (3.37 pm): The planning of transit oriented development is central to growth management as we plan housing density to develop around public transport nodes. Development of TODs, however, can only proceed in accordance with appropriate planning instruments, neighbourhood plans and community consultation.

The natural disasters of last summer have provided a new set of flood data for our city and this flood data will inform planning decisions and future developments. The Floods Commission of Inquiry is considering this data in developing its recommendations for the future planning of Brisbane suburbs.


My local area was hit hard during the floods. The suburbs of Yeeronga and Yeerongpilly were amongst those heavily affected. The former animal research centre in Yeerongpilly is being proposed for a TOD. This site was, however, substantially inundated during the floods. Whilst currently the Brisbane City Council is building a service centre on the high land of the site, I have advocated for the planned residential development on the flood prone areas of the site to not proceed.

Today I inform the House of two key decisions affecting the TOD development at Yeerongpilly. Firstly, the temporary planning instrument enabling the TOD development recently required renewal. This planning instrument has been amended to remove the early release sites—those that border Ortive Street—which were scheduled to go to market this year. Removal from the planning instrument means that these sites no longer have approval to go to market as planned.

Secondly, I advise that no residential development will be approved on the Yeerongpilly TOD site before the release of the Floods Commission of Inquiry report. Flooding of this site does not necessarily mean that there are no options for future use. There are many community facilities across the flood plains of the city that either withstand flood impacts or the community benefit outweighs the rare flooding risk and they are able to be readily rebuilt following a flood. I assure local residents that no residential development will be approved on the ARI site before the Floods Commission of Inquiry report, and any future development will include detailed community consultation. This is sensible planning and good news for local residents.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms O'Neill): Order! Before I call the member for Surfers Paradise, I would like to advise members that the state councillors for the ambulance division of United Voice are in the gallery this afternoon. I welcome them to the gallery.

Nerang River, Speed Limit

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.39 pm): This morning I tabled a petition from 692 signatories to have the maritime speed limit on the Nerang River between the Via Roma and Bermuda Street bridges lowered to six knots. The Nerang River is nothing more than a weekend speedway where people flout maritime laws and compromise safety. This is not 1968. Wooden speedboats no longer tow bikini-clad girls to the amusement of onlookers. This is the era of the wake boat and the personal watercraft, the jet ski. It is the era of the thunder boat and the jet boat. It is the era of boats designed to create maximum wash.


On the southern side of the Isle of Capri, boats travelling up to 40 knots, or 70 kilometres an hour, are confined to an average span of water not much longer than a school cricket pitch. In some places speeding vessels are restricted to less than 10 metres. As a result, maritime speed and distance rules are seldom adhered to and seldom enforced. It is physically impossible for passing vessels or boats towing skiers to stay within current speed and distance parameters. In fact, the river is so narrow on this section that personal watercraft have their own special rules. A PWC must transit the area in a straight line and stick as much as is practicable to the centre of the river. This is a rare occurrence indeed.

In July of this year a study was released by Transport and Main Roads into recreational boating safety. It found that the most prevalent type of PWC accident was between boats. From January 2012 yet another rule will be introduced. It states—

PWC driver to maintain a distance of 30 metres from other moving boats when travelling at more than 10 knots ...

Given that narrow width of the channel, the six knots within 30 metres of a wharf ruling and the ever-increasing boat traffic, it will therefore be impossible to operate a PWC on this section of the river without breaking maritime speed and distance laws. The Nerang River is part of our community. At present kayakers, paddle boaters, boarders, fishermen, hire boats and the wider rowing community are given little leeway. The river is there for the safe enjoyment of all who wish to travel on it. The speed needs to be set at a uniform six knots.


Coomera Police District

 **Hon. MM KEECH** (Albert—ALP) (3.41 pm): Honourable members will recall that earlier this year I informed the House that this Labor government is actively improving community safety on the northern Gold Coast by allocating an extra 14 police stations to the Coomera police district. Under Labor we have seen the number of police on the beat increase and the crime rates decrease considerably. As a government member representing Queensland's fastest growing region, I know we can always do more in improving community safety for families and businesses. That is why I have called on Minister Roberts to plan for a new police station to be built at Ormeau.

Last sitting week I tabled a massive e-petition and paper petition with a total of 1,510 signatures. I was very impressed with the tremendous show of support for my petition in working to build the new police station. I thank everyone who has signed the petition and especially members of the Neighbourhood Watch groups for working with me to help create—like the Neighbourhood Watch slogan says—a safer and more supportive community.

The petition draws the attention of the House to the need to purchase land and construct a new police station in Ormeau. A 24-hour police station is required to meet the increasing needs of the surrounding community and ease the pressure on the neighbouring police districts. The land has not yet been identified but, since the petition has now been tabled, I will continue my fight to ensure that we have the extra police services we deserve.

Labor Party


 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (3.43 pm): I note my good friend the Attorney-General will be delivering his valedictory speech in the House later today. I did not realise until this morning that the Hon. Attorney-General is such an admirer of mine. I thank him for taking the time to visit my Facebook page. What does concern me is that the Hon. Attorney would have the time to troll through my photos on Facebook, or perhaps Eamonn Fitzpatrick was doing it for him in the back room. I note also that last month the Attorney tabled the *Brisbane Legal* front page, which I was featured on. I did suggest that perhaps he would like to be 'Mr December'. I am looking forward to seeing if the Hon. Attorney took that opportunity to request the front page of *Brisbane Legal* for this coming month.

I thought I might look back at the history of the last couple of years in the Labor Party and the drama that has unfolded in Queensland. Let us start with none other than the Health payroll debacle. If governments cannot pay our nurses and allied health professionals then they do not deserve another term in government. We then had some \$700 million in outstanding fines which the government cannot seem to rein in. We have had electoral law changes and funding law changes which left the Electoral Commission scratching its head trying to interpret that legislation, which we warned about at the time.

The Labor legacy will be one of broken promises and failing our Queensland economy. We have seen it on the Sunshine Coast with the delay of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital by a few years. We need that hospital. We need it now. We need it urgently, and 30,000 people signed the petition calling for the hospital, which will help our ambulance officers who are ramping unnecessarily at Nambour. They need all the support they can get.

(Time expired)

World AIDS Day

 **Mrs SMITH** (Burleigh—ALP) (3.45 pm): The date of 1 December is recognised as World AIDS Day. This year's theme is that HIV is still here. World AIDS Day is one of the most globally recognised events of the year and is celebrated across Australia to raise awareness in the community about the issues surrounding HIV-AIDS. HIV is a virus that is transmittable through bodily fluids such as blood. With time, HIV causes AIDS, which is not communicable. HIV positive individuals need special health care and support from their community to live free from discrimination. These people continue to experience a range of health issues from minor to life threatening.


There are currently no vaccines available for HIV or AIDS and the treatments help with the symptoms but do not cure them. We now need to convince people all over again that AIDS poses a fatal threat. We need to understand HIV and what it means to be HIV positive to properly support those living with the virus. Through support, we can educate on how to prevent HIV transmission. The aim is to encourage all Australians to be aware of the prevalence of HIV-AIDS, to take action to reduce the transmission of HIV by promoting safe-sex practices and to accept individuals living with or affected by HIV-AIDS. This is not a moral or religious issue; it is a health and social issue.

HIV positive people need to be empowered to strengthen community spirit, feel included and educate about HIV and AIDS. They have the right to participate in the community, free from stigma and discrimination. HIV is increasing in Queensland, nationally and internationally. As a community, we need to talk about HIV-AIDS issues to improve support for people living with HIV and to prevent further infections. Queensland Positive People General Manager Simon O'Connor said—

... despite our achievements thus far, HIV is still here. Have we been able to render HIV curable? No, we have not. Can we afford to become complacent and loosen our grip on this insidious virus? No, we must not.

(Time expired)

North Stradbroke Island, Economy

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (3.47 pm): North Stradbroke Island is a beautiful and scenic island with enormous tourist potential and a great future. As I have said before, the 2,500 people are its greatest asset. I am privileged today to be the local member of parliament for Straddie residents.

Since June 2010, however, a cloud has formed over the island's future due to the rushed plans and political deals done by the Bligh Labor government. The government has dumped a huge economic problem on the island residents without consultation and without a clear economic strategy. Over 600 jobs, including mining, small business and other retail, will be lost at a cost of more than \$130 million per annum.


The government's response to the problem of creating a broad based economic future has been to set up a committee and to produce a spaghetti mess bureaucracy, but still there has been no real economic plan. The Premier's first plan was ecotourism alone—400 jobs were going to be created, putting all the eggs in one basket until the head of Brisbane Marketing said that that would need the equivalent of five Tangalooma resorts. Obviously that is something that was not going to happen. That would also take more than the 17 years that was originally planned. Now we only have eight.

Ecotourism is certainly a part of the bright future of North Stradbroke Island but not as a single solution. After almost 1½ years the economic transitional plan for the island has still not been released. There was no plan from the beginning and still no plan exists with any dollars. The latest economic plan is one without any money in it. It is Labor's empty piggybank plan for Straddie.

The government has continued to do nothing also about Toondah Harbour. I call on the Coordinator-General to step in and take a proactive role to driving this forward. Tourism also requires a better national park plan. The current one, with the next 30 per cent tranche to be set aside, includes sections of mine tailings—hardly ready for being set aside as national park in December. What a stuff up that is! Then there is the dual tenure problem that is unfolding. If there is one thing that the 2,500 residents would say to this Labor government it is this: 'Don't shut Straddie down as you are currently doing with your bad planning.'

(Time expired)

Cairns Chamber of Commerce

 **Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (3.49 pm): I am pleased to let members know that the chamber of commerce which sponsors the Cairns Business Leaders Alliance recently released a very important document in Cairns—that is, the action card for small business. I table a copy.

Tabled paper: Copy of document titled 'Topic 3: Small Business—There's No Business without Small Business' by the Cairns Business Leaders Alliance [\[6119\]](#).


This is an excellent seven-page document that is a tough and detailed plan for small business, which is the lifeblood of Cairns and Far North Queensland. It is a document which calls on government for some specific help. I wish to read into the record what these particular actions are that they require. I hope that all members will consider them. The document states—

Governments Can Help By:

- Building region wide inclusive strategies where all representatives agencies have the topic of Small Business built into their local strategic initiatives.
- Enabling collaborative leadership with local, grassroots Small Business owners to enable strong lobbying to occur.
- Looking at or creating the common ground between Government and Small Business.
- Ensuring that macro- and micro- economic and regional policies recognise the interconnection to Small Business.
- Focusing urgent attention on the urgent reform of costs, taxes and charges to competitive environments affecting Small Business with the help of big business heroes.

There is much in here for government to do, but it is also a balanced report card listing the things that businesses can do to help themselves and the ways in which organisations like the chamber of commerce can provide the support, information and coordination to get Cairns businesses really hopping in the years ahead. I support the action card and the calls for action by this government and will be pleased to bring it to the attention of relevant ministers.

SkillsTech Australia


 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (3.51 pm): It is good to see members of the ambulance officers union in the gallery today. More evidence has emerged of the Bligh Labor government's accountability failure in skills training, this time in the management of the SkillsTech Australia budget. The tired, 20-year-old Labor government and Minister Hinchliffe have been caught out again, this time trying to hide a \$10.27 million budget deficit. Minister Hinchliffe is clearly having trouble handling the truth. *Hansard* shows that he told the estimates budget hearing on Friday, 15 July that the projected net operating result for SkillsTech for 2010-11 was zero dollars when on Monday, 18 July—only three days later—the SkillsTech board reported a deficit of \$10.27 million.

Minister Hinchliffe has again been caught out trying to cover up the truth about SkillsTech and the management failure of his government in skills training. It is impossible to believe that he did not know the deficit was more than \$10 million. I reckon he has misled the parliament. Last week Minister Hinchliffe was forced to issue an embarrassing apology about his bloated claims of traineeship and apprenticeship completion rates in Queensland. Now he has been caught out again on something that goes to the very heart of government—honesty and accountability. This is a minister who has failed to properly manage the SkillsTech budget and has been caught out misleading the estimates hearing. This tired, 20-year-old Labor government is chock-full of ministers who are happy to preside over waste and budget failures but who then continually attempt to cover up and mislead.

The Labor led push to corporatise SkillsTech Australia can hardly proceed when the minister and the management cannot keep to even basic budgets. Perhaps they could all enrol in a basic accounting unit themselves and learn how to balance the books. Meanwhile, we have all been left wondering when the minister's \$400,000 report into TAFE training and its recommendations will finally be allowed to see the light of day.

(Time expired)

Poole, Mr G


 **Mr WENDT** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.53 pm): I want to advise the House today that Glenn Gordon Poole, the current Auditor-General of Queensland, will be retiring in the next week. Glenn and his wife, Sue, have two children and three grandchildren. Glenn completed a Bachelor of Economics in Commerce from James Cook University in 1986 and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from the Queensland University of Technology in 1980. Glenn is also an FCPA and a member of the advisory board for the QUT Centre of Philanthropy and Non-Profit Studies.

Glenn's career began in 1963 as a junior clerk with the records section of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in Townsville. He then progressed from 1976 to 1983 with the Treasury Department. From 1984 to 1988 he took four years to become the director of the Department of Administrative Services for the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia. Glenn continued his strong church relationship for some time.

From 1989 to 1990 Glenn came back to the public sector and became the director of finance and administration with the Queensland Treasury Corporation, and from 1990 to 2004 he joined Queensland Treasury. It was not until 2004 that Glenn became deputy director-general of the Department of Tourism. From there he progressed in December 2004 to the current position of Queensland Auditor-General, where he is responsible for all of the external audits of all agencies and activities across the wider Queensland public sector.

Over the last few days I have attended a number of functions for Glenn to see him off, and I can say that at some of those were some dignitaries such as Sir Leo Hielscher and Mal Grierson, the ex-DG of Public Works, who had some funny stories to tell. Glenn has always provided first-rate, fearless and professional advice to the Queensland government over many years. He is a man of the highest integrity, and his office has grown in stature since Glenn has been at the helm. The new Auditor-General, Andrew Greaves, will be commencing in the next few days. I can also tell you that Glenn said he is not retiring; he is only going on holidays. So we may see him at some stage in the future.

Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park, Fishing Huts


 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (3.56 pm): In March this year I tabled a petition supported by 1,151 petitioners in my electorate opposing the removal of fishing huts from the Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park in the Palm, Cattle and Orient Creek areas of the Herbert River district. I said that I would continue to strongly advocate on behalf of my constituents in relation to this issue. I have continued to support my local community, working alongside the Halifax Bay Recreation and Lifestyle Association.

I have also been pleased to work alongside the association in relation to the draft Hinchinbrook Area Island Management Plan, which is another seriously flawed policy of the Bligh Labor government. On 25 October a similar e-petition, supported by 491 individuals, was tabled. Another identical e-petition closed last week, supported by another 422 individuals. Today I tabled a further identical paper petition, supported by 3,324 people.

Taking the two paper petitions and the two e-petitions together, 5,388 people have supported the work of the association and me to seek a reconsideration by the Bligh Labor government of its plans to forcibly remove these fishing huts from within the national park. We have appealed to the Bligh Labor government to give consideration to a reasonable resolution by accommodating the fishing huts within the national park's yet-to-be-developed management plan. Fishing huts are a special part of our lifestyle in North Queensland. There was no consultation with the local community prior to the Bligh Labor government announcing the new national park in 2008.

I have been extremely disappointed by the bloody-mindedness of DERM and the Bligh Labor government on this issue. Both the department and the current government have continued to ignore the local community, despite its ongoing and sustained opposition to the plan. I will continue to support my local community, which has spoken out loudly about this issue. If the Bligh Labor government continues to ignore my community, it just reinforces its contempt for North Queensland.

Bana Yirriji Arts and Cultural Centre


 **Mr O'BRIEN** (Cook—ALP) (3.58 pm): Local Wujal Wujal artists had the opportunity to showcase their artistic talent at the official opening of a local arts and cultural centre recently. It was a great pleasure to be joined by the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Curtis Pitt, at the opening. The Bana Yirriji Arts and Cultural Centre is a great addition to the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council's existing arts and cultural services.

The Bana Yirriji Arts and Cultural Centre has hanging space for up to 60 paintings, cabinets for jewellery, artefacts and pottery, an air-conditioned artists space and a cafe. The centre also has meeting rooms which are leased out to government departments and community groups for workshops, training and government champions visits. The location of the new centre held cultural significance within the community. The site was chosen by a group of 15 traditional owners and has great spiritual significance due to its proximity to the spectacular Bloomfield River Falls.

The opening of the centre not only provides a wonderful opportunity for local artists to tell their personal stories through artworks but also is a place where the community can come together to celebrate their cultural heritage. Wujal Wujal should be extremely proud of their Yirriji and other local artists who showcase their work at this wonderful gallery. The gallery cost \$1.75 million. All money was provided by the Bligh Labor government except for about \$200,000.

This arts centre comes on top of other great work being achieved by the Bligh Labor government, such as a new police station, new water reticulation, a new sewerage system, new housing and better roads, and next year we will be building a new bridge across the Bloomfield River to make sure there is better access to this wonderful community which is nestled in the rainforests in Far North Queensland. It is fantastic to see Wujal Wujal going ahead in leaps and bounds.

Gladstone Harbour, Fish Health

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (3.59 pm): For many months now, fishermen in my electorate have been expressing concern about the impact of dredging on their fishing livelihoods. They claimed that in around March they started to see the impacts on their fish stocks and blamed dredging. The port authority repeatedly has stated that dredging in relation to the LNG site did not start until May 2011. I table a letter dated 15 October 2010 to Dan Mayer at Planning and Assessment Fisheries Queensland, PO Box 76, Deception Bay.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 15 October 2010, from Mark Greenaway, Project General Manager, Gladstone Ports Corporation, to Dan Mayer, Planning and Assessment, Fisheries Queensland, regarding early works dredging—revised notification of intention to commence dredging of Curtis Island Construction Dock [\[6120\]](#).

The letter states—

Re: ... Early Works Dredging—Revised Notification of Intention to Commence Dredging of Curtis Island Construction Dock

Dear Mr Mayer

We are writing to provide you formal revised notification of the intent to commence dredging the initial site access of the Curtis Island Construction Dock on Friday 22nd October 2010 with an estimated time for completion on 25th January 2011.


We will ensure to notify your department of any further significant changes from the dates mentioned.

If you have any questions regarding the above—

And it continued. That is on GPC letterhead. So there was dredging in the new area of the harbour prior to the May date, contrary to what has been cited repeatedly by the Gladstone Ports Corporation. It started last year and it was dredging in a new area. The channels have been dredged regularly. The material that is brought up and disposed of is drift material and other silt that comes into the main channel. This is a new area. It is untested, and fishermen have been saying since the beginning of the year that dredging is having an impact on fish stocks. That letter proves that dredging commenced in late 2010.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

World AIDS Day

 **Hon. GJ WILSON** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Health) (4.02 pm), by leave: I rise to make a short ministerial statement. Today is World AIDS Day. Government members are wearing World AIDS Day ribbons to demonstrate our support for the many worthy organisations fighting the spread of HIV both in Australia and around the world. Other members may be wearing the ribbons as well. I am proud to support this cause.

World AIDS Day is about constant vigilance in the fight to stop the spread of the deadly HIV virus. It is too easy to think HIV is a disease of the 1980s; it is not. It is too easy to think AIDS in this day and age is an African problem; it is not. Last year in Queensland alone there were 207 HIV notifications—that is 207 Queensland lives devastated by this illness. They are not strangers on the other side of the world; they are our brothers, sisters, colleagues, neighbours and friends. Today on World AIDS Day we stand with those people and the other many thousands of Queenslanders whose lives have been affected by HIV-AIDS.

This government believes in programs that prevent and treat HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. We believe in prevention, support and research. Education is the best tool in our kit for fighting the spread of HIV-AIDS, and this government is not afraid to spread the messages that saves lives—safe sex, contraception, the use of needle exchange programs, for example. Prevention is far better than the cure, and with HIV-AIDS we do not have one anyway. Programs that this government is funding or delivering are making a difference.

Earlier this year the Rip & Roll outdoor advertising campaign caused concern in some quarters for its allegedly graphic nature. The campaign was an initiative of the Association for Healthy Communities, which does wonderful work amongst the LGBT community—raising awareness, educating and working with people who may be at a heightened risk of HIV. This government was stout and proud in our defence of that campaign. It will save lives. I hope some good comes from the controversy. Perhaps it has meant the prevention and promotion message has been heard even louder.

The government also runs 16 sexual health clinics to provide outpatient services across Queensland. Our HIV, hepatitis C and STI strategy is funding prevention and promotion programs across the state. Across Queensland, we will spend in excess of \$100 million under the strategy over a five-year period. As a government, we fund services providing social work and counselling for the LGBT community generally and for other communities that are at heightened risk of HIV infection.


I am proud of Queensland Health for the work it does to support these initiatives but we always need to do more. On this World AIDS Day, the theme of the day is 'AIDS is still here'. It is a message of vigilance, caution and prevention but it is also a message of hope. With our help, HIV-positive people can feel empowered to spread the message of prevention. We want them to feel included in our community and we want them to remember that AIDS is still here in Queensland in this day and age. With more work on prevention and further research for a cure, we have hope that one day AIDS will not still be here.

STRATEGIC CROPPING LAND BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 4053, on motion of Ms Nolan—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and the Arts) (4.05 pm), continuing in reply: Before the lunch break, I was arguing that the LNP's response to this bill represented a grand capitulation. They killed off the shadow minister during the debate before our very eyes and then went on to argue that they would support this bill, but they made three key points. Firstly, in speaking as it turned out to the bill—although you would have had to have listened very carefully to understand that—they argued to the people of Queensland that the bill was all their idea, notwithstanding that in four years they have not introduced a private member's bill along similar lines. Then they argued that they liked it and they saw it as a good first step but that perhaps more needed to be done.

The point I was making before the lunch break was that in this debate this is the critical point because this bill at its heart uses science to create an appropriate balance between the needs of mining and the needs of farming. This bill establishes a rigorous soil science test, setting out eight specific criteria which apply across five different regions of the state in different ways, depending on the local circumstances in those areas, in order to determine just exactly what is the best quality agricultural land. The soil science test at the heart of this bill determines absolutely forever more, in an objective way that everyone can understand, just exactly which land should be protected. That is the heart of the bill and it is the critical point.

In this debate LNP members have raised a series of concerns. Some of them have said that they feel that the slope is too low. Some of them, including the shadow minister in response, have repeated the concern from groups like the Queensland Farmers Federation that there should not be two tiers of protection—a protection zone and a management zone—and in doing so they have reflected concerns of the Queensland Farmers Federation. At the heart of this, they have expressed a degree of concern about the fundamental balance in the bill, and that is the real point that the people of Queensland need to understand.

While they tell farmers in the bush that they would like to see more land protected, they also tell the Queensland Resources Council and the mining companies which form its paths that this is a balance and that they are for mining. While Campbell Newman may seek to give the miners the assurance that he sees mining as one of the four pillars of the state's economy, we know for sure from having listened to this debate that the sympathies of the LNP lie very much with the agricultural lobby. We know that in government Campbell Newman would not be able to control his rural rump, and therefore the resources industry should be very, very concerned about what they would do in government.

There has been a lot of talk recently about sovereign risk—that is, the risk that companies invest in resource developments only to have the goalposts changed—and the sovereign risk that exists in Queensland right now is Campbell Newman and the LNP, because what they want—and they all said it when they spoke in the debate—is more land locked up, and we know that in government the rural rump of the National Party would wag the tail of Campbell Newman and the LNP dog. How exactly would they propose to do it? The third argument that members put during this debate was that the mechanism they would use to protect strategic cropping land in government would be the mechanism of regional plans. There is a great irony of course in this, because it was a Labor government which developed the concept of regional planning—first with South-East Queensland and then in the Far North and now across very substantial areas of the state.

As we have developed regional plans since 2004, we know as well of course that members opposite have frequently opposed them. Lawrence Springborg when he was opposition leader stood in a club in Atherton and said of the Far North Queensland regional plan that he would rip it up. They have expressed grave reservations about regional planning because regional plans deliberately take a degree of planning control from councils and give it to the state. So having expressed grave concerns about regional plans for years, it now turns out that regional planning is for the LNP the mechanism it would use if it was going to save more land. What does that do? It moves the difficult decisions to another day. It is the mechanism through which those opposite can go to the country and they can say, 'We'll protect more land,' and in the city they can say to miners, 'We're with you.' The regional plan is the mechanism they propose to pull this trick, and that is again what the people of Queensland need to understand.

I turn now to the amendment proposed by the member for Beaudesert. It is notable that it is the Katter party and not the LNP which has actually sought to move an amendment to this bill to lock up more land. I think that traditional National Party voters might be interested to note that—that is, while the

LNP sat here mute and did nothing and proposed no amendments and moved no private member's bill in four years, it is the Katter party that responds to a call from the South Burnett for a technical change which would lock up more land. The government does not propose to support the amendment. As I have outlined right through my contribution, we believe that we have the balance right. But I think it will be very interesting to see which way it is that the LNP votes, because this afternoon for the first time it will have to front up and it will have to decide. One way or the other—whether it is to the miners or whether it is to the farmers—its lie will be revealed, because, boys, you have to decide which side you are on.

I turn now to a couple of issues which have been raised with me by the Queensland Resources Council just in the last few days. It has raised a couple of very specific technical issues with parts of the bill and I want to take this opportunity to address the concerns. The first concern it has raised is that in the normal operation of a mine it may be needed to lodge an application to amend existing environmental approvals. This is a normal operational issue for many mines that might seek to make minor changes to the location of a road or a pipeline. The QRC was concerned that the bill as drafted would trigger a strategic cropping land test for existing mines that make amendments to their EIS for operational purposes. For the assurance of the resources sector, clause 273 states—

To remove any doubt ... this Act does not affect—

- (a) a source authority in force before the commencement ...

That is, if you have an approval, you keep an approval. This means that any development approval, environmental authority or resource tenure, providing that it was granted before the commencement of the bill, will not be subject to the bill even upon the proponent requesting minor amendments. Further, I have previously tabled in the House an erratum to the explanatory notes that provides further clarity around that issue in the bill. The other issue the QRC raised with me recently was an issue regarding the application of the bill's transitional provisions to petroleum leases. I have already confirmed that the bill applies to coal seam gas projects—I did that in my response to the committee—but if there is any doubt I confirm that it applies to all types of petroleum and gas projects, as it does other projects under the resources acts affected by the bill. I can confirm that the mechanics of the SCL Bill provide the same treatment to mining leases as petroleum leases—that is, that the eligibility criteria for transitional provisions are identical for all kinds of resource projects. I would expect that that will clarify the concern which has been raised just in recent times which is about the technical understanding of the bill.

The government has worked enormously hard on this bill. It has been out in the public arena for public consultation for two years. There is no expectation that everyone will agree on this. It is the fundamental point that both miners and farmers want more. That is why we are here, that is why we are choosing a balance and that is why we are putting science at its heart. I very sincerely commend officers of the Department of Environment and Resource Management who have worked very hard to get the science around that balance absolutely right, but I believe that is what we do. It is a very significant day when Queensland becomes the first parliament in the country to fundamentally seek to change the land law of the state to protect the best quality agricultural land for future generations. It is a very significant agricultural, environmental, social and economic reform. This bill is about sustainability. It is about saying that a mining industry is a very good thing and that it creates enormous economic opportunities for all people in this state but that we do not believe that you should be able to mine anywhere and that, in addition to prohibitions which already exist on mining in sensitive environmental areas like national parks and in urban areas where people live, we now create prohibitions on mining of the best quality agricultural land because we believe that that land is necessary for all of our collective futures. This is significant legislation and I commend the bill to the House.


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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (4.18 pm): I rise to speak to clause 1 of the bill which establishes the short title of the bill, and it will be recognised as the Strategic Cropping Land Act. The short title identifying the act will of course be the opportunity for this act, when it comes into force, to replace the other legislative instruments that have previously been in place for the protection of what is now known as strategic cropping land in this state. Originally, going back decades, the state has mapped what has been known under its state planning policy as good-quality agricultural land, and good-quality agricultural land was tested against a range of criteria which identified its suitability for cropping.

Then, of course, as we have just heard from the minister, disavowing the fact that it has been the LNP that has drawn the government's attention to the fact that it had the capacity to protect strategic cropping land from incidents where it would be inappropriately coming into competition with mining or resource projects or urban development, it had the opportunity to exercise the public interest test through the Mineral Resources Act. But in terms of the good-quality agricultural land mapping and in relation to the public interest test provisions of the Mineral Resources Act, the government has chosen not to act, not to exercise its capacity to protect good-quality agricultural land through the original GQAL mapping or through its public interest test in the Mineral Resources Act. But the government has now chosen to come forward with the Strategic Cropping Land Bill. I acknowledge the minister's contribution—that the bill establishes a framework for the protection of strategic cropping land. It does so not only through the establishment of eight soil criteria; it does so also with two other provisions, that being the cropping history test and the minimum size test.

In her summing-up the minister stated that the provisions of this bill when it becomes an act will prohibit mining from certain areas. Of course, it will do that only in certain circumstances. The land will be mapped in management areas once it is triggered by the DA being submitted to a planning authority. In relation to protection areas, the legislation will prohibit mining and resources and urban development only insofar as it does not meet the exceptional circumstances test. So the Strategic Cropping Land Act—it being cited as that—replaces the instruments under which the government has previously chosen not to act. Let us hope that it will act in relation to the provisions in this bill once it is established as law in this state.

Ms NOLAN: It is the case that good-quality agricultural land has had some definition and some planning protection up until now. However, this bill substantially expands those protections and creates a more precise and more rigorous definition of what exactly is best quality agricultural land. As such, the government robustly defends the decision to go through an extremely rigorous scientific process in order to determine exactly what is the best quality agricultural land and to define it. This clause is quite rightly the provision that names the legislation. I note once again that the LNP repeats its assertion that it was all its idea, just as I note once again that it never did anything about it.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—



Mr CRIPPS (4.22 pm): Clause 3 establishes the purposes of the legislation. They are—

- (a) protect land that is highly suitable for cropping; and
- (b) manage the impacts of development on that land; and
- (c) preserve the productive capacity of that land for future generations.

My question to the minister is: how does chapter 5 of the bill, which provides for mitigation measures on SCL, comply with the purposes of the bill as outlined in clause 3, specifically in relation to (a), which states—

protect land that is highly suitable for cropping

and (c), which states—

preserve the productive capacity of that land for future generations.

If you have a bill and among its purposes is to protect land that is highly suitable for cropping and to preserve the productive capacity of that land for future generations, it seems somewhat inconsistent to establish an entire chapter of the bill dedicated to mitigation efforts which, by definition, occur after that strategic cropping land has been impacted in some way by a mining or resource project. I am just seeking some clarity from the minister about how chapter 5—and we will discuss the specific provisions of chapter 5 when we get to it—can stand as part of the bill when at the very start of the bill its purposes are established to protect that land that is highly suitable for cropping and to preserve its productive capacity for future generations.

Ms NOLAN: Chapter 5 relating to mitigation is entirely consistent with the objects of the bill for this reason. The bill at its heart, as we know, gives best quality agricultural land a level of protection that it has never had before. The bill then splits the state's best quality agricultural land into essentially two categories: what we call the protection zone, which is the area in which these pressures are most immediate, and the management area, where again we have good-quality agricultural land but you do not have quite the degree of immediate pressure that there is, for instance, on the Darling Downs right now.

In the management zone the bill establishes that you can only permanently alienate the land on the condition that you do three things. The first is that you prove that you have sought to avoid the best quality agricultural land—that is, if your coal is in one spot and some of it is under best quality agricultural land and some of it is not, then you have to build it in the place that it is not. So you must first


prove that you have avoided affecting that land. Secondly, if you have to go on that land, then you must prove that you have minimised any impact upon it. Thirdly, after you have got over those two very substantial hurdles, which do not exist now, and which are being moved by a Labor government, then you have to mitigate your impact on the productive capacity of lands in that region.

To come back to the member for Hinchinbrook's fundamental point, the objects of the bill were to first protect the land and then preserve the productive capacity. What does that mean? Let us say you have got over those first two hurdles and you are going to build a quarry because Mackay needs the rocks for new houses, or whatever it might be. You would then be required, to the value of the unimproved value of the land that is being mined, to undertake a mitigation project in that local area that would improve productive capacity of the district. For instance, if you were taking out a million dollars worth of land then you will need to spend a million dollars on irrigation, or on soil research, or on some project to be approved by the government that will improve the productive capacity of that district.

This has been a fundamental premise of the bill over a very extensive period of its consultation process. The mitigation project cannot be just anything; it would have to be approved by locals, including the local NRM group and the local government. It is not possible to rehabilitate best quality agricultural land once it has been mined to the same standard. That is why we have introduced the bill, and in those areas which in limited circumstances could still be mined then we create a requirement to mitigate. Those things in totality provide a very high level of protection both of land in the first instance and of productive capacity in the district in the second instance. That is why the objects are consistent with chapter 5 and that is why the government stands behind the bill.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (4.28 pm): Clause 4 lists the ways in which the purposes of the bill will be achieved. Among the list is subclause 4(1)(c), which establishes protection areas and management areas for strategic cropping land. My question to the minister is: what is the difference in the strategic cropping land contained in the two protection areas as opposed to the strategic cropping land that exists in the management areas? In her reply and in response to the committee's report on the bill, the minister has been at pains to stress that under this bill strategic cropping land will be mapped and established based on strict scientific criteria assessing the characteristics of the soil itself—the physical characteristics of the soil. So, according to the minister and the explanatory notes accompanying the bill, the quality of the soil establishing it as strategic cropping land will be strictly assessed by scientific criteria.


Subsequent to establishing that very, very clear principle, the bill then divides strategic cropping land into two distinct areas and affords them two different types of protection: the protection in the management area and the level of protection afforded to strategic cropping land in the protection areas. I cannot understand, as many submitters to the committee during its public hearing on the bill are unable to understand, how the government is able to establish the distinction between the quality of the strategic cropping land in the two areas, the protection areas and the management areas. It seems inconsistent for the minister to argue in the first instance that all of this land is only being assessed for its worthiness being classified as strategic cropping land against a strict scientifically based assessment of its physical characteristics and then establish two different levels of protection.

Ms NOLAN: As I touched on in our discussion on the earlier clause, the decision to split the state into two areas, the protection area and the management area, is a policy decision. It comes about because there is a higher level of more immediate pressure, particularly from mining, in the areas which have been defined as protection areas—that is, the Darling Downs and the golden triangle. It is the government's view that because this is such a very substantial reform in the land law of this state it makes some sense to give the highest priority to the areas that have the most pressure at this time and to give a different level—although still a very substantial one given the requirements to avoid, minimise and mitigate—in the other parts of the state. It is a policy decision. It is a decision that we stand behind. Dan Galligan from the QFF raised the question which the member for Hinchinbrook has asked and, indeed, I assume that if the LNP does not concur with the government's decision to create two levels of protection that it will, as these clauses progress, amend that provision to create only one zone right across the state.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

 **Ms NOLAN** (4.32 pm): I move the following amendment and I table the explanatory notes to my amendments—

1 Clause 6 (Exclusions from this Act)

Page 18, line 21, '(ii)'—

omit, insert—

'(iii)'.

Tabled paper: Strategic Cropping Land Bill, explanatory notes to Hon. Rachel Nolan's amendments [\[6121\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—



Mr CRIPPS (4.33 pm): Clause 11 establishes the principles for the bill against which strategic cropping land will be established in Queensland. Amongst the principles are protection, avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity. Clause 11(2) states—

The protection principle is to protect SCL and that, except in exceptional circumstances, doing so takes precedence over all development interests.

The principles are listed in (3), (4), (5) and (6) of clause 11, those principles being avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity. Once again it would appear to me that having established the proposition that strategic cropping land will be protected in principle, and its protection will take precedence over all development interests except in exceptional circumstances, the remainder of the clause then goes on to establish what the bill means in terms of avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity. It would appear that the protection principle which states that SCL is to be protected except in exceptional circumstances exists in isolation from and has no relationship to the principles of avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity because all of these principles—avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity and, I suppose, in terms of productivity it is the conservation of productivity—will be applied subsequent to the principle of protection not being observed by the bill, because all of those principles only apply once you have placed the principle of protection to one side and allowed a mining or resource project to occur on the land.

It would seem inconsistent to me to establish a definition for the protection principle except in exceptional circumstances and then go on to list the avoidance, minimisation, mitigation and productivity principles in the bill which will only come into force once you have set the protection principle to one side.

Ms NOLAN: I am sure that the listeners out there in internet land will be enthralled by the semantic debate that the member for Hinchinbrook and I are about to get into in that it is the member for Hinchinbrook's intention, and I will seek to reflect him accurately, that the other principles—avoid, minimise, mitigate—are contrary to the first principle around protection. I would argue that they are entirely complementary for this reason: the member for Hinchinbrook is quite right, the first principle here is that we protect best-quality agricultural land. The second principle is that in the management area it be a requirement that a proponent of a project seeks to avoid that land in the first instance and then minimise, mitigate et cetera. I would argue that the second principle, that you must avoid, does in itself create a protection for that land. So I would argue that the principles are entirely consistent and, indeed, complement one another as a package within this bill.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 and 13, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14—



Mr CRIPPS (4.37 pm): Clause 14 outlines when development has a permanent impact or temporary impact on strategic cropping land. I thank the minister for her response to the inquiry from the committee and the response from the minister in relation to the concern expressed by the committee about the justification for the 50-year time frame for permanent damage. I accept the clarifications that the minister has offered to the committee report in relation to 50 years being the maximum time that impediment can prevent cropping and still be considered to be a temporary impact.

The inquiry that I would like to make today is perhaps the corollary of that point and that is that the problem with the bill in this regard, in particular in relation to clause 14, is that it allows a temporary impact to go on for up to 50 years without this being recognised as an impact that effectively permanently alienates an agricultural business from access to a capital asset that is critical to the operation of that farm business, that being the land that is strategic cropping land in this instance. As far as for the purposes of that agricultural business are concerned, it depends on access to and the use of that land. If temporary impacts can go on for 50 years, that can effectively continue for the life of that agricultural business. I mentioned a number of other time frames that have been considered by some stakeholder groups—more appropriate time frames for temporary impacts or permanent impacts against which the bill may like to measure this effect. It is an awfully long time for an agricultural business to have temporary impacts on that land for up to 50 years.

As I said earlier, I take the point that the minister has made that if a permanent impact is recognised it can be immediately declared. But temporary impacts can last for up to 50 years. That is beyond other well-recognised time frames for the operation of agricultural businesses. A couple that have been nominated are the length of time that water resource plans are in operation. Many members

have pointed out the importance of access to reliable supplies of water for an agricultural business and also terms of lease renewals which is also a land tenure issue. They are much more relevant time frames to measure an impact or a denial of access to a resource for an agricultural business than up to 50 years for temporary impacts from resource or mining industry projects on strategic cropping land.

Ms NOLAN: The member for Hinchinbrook and I have both studied economics. One of the fundamental concepts of economics is that in the long run we are all dead. The issue here about whether 10 years or 20 years or 50 years is appropriate frankly relates to what exactly is the best means of determining what happens in the long run. This is a matter on which a judgement has had to be made. In 50 years neither of us are going to be dead. Fifty years, in the government's view, is a time that allows other productive activity other than agriculture to be undertaken but we can still imagine the end of that period.


I realise that there is a view in the agricultural sector that this relates entirely to coal seam gas. There are in fact two examples that I can think of which would be accommodated by this provision. As I said in my remarks in response to the committee report, 50 years would, for instance, allow a reasonably short-term timber project to go on without it being determined to permanently alienate the land. The other is that a coal seam gas project could be undertaken without a determination being made that that would permanently impact the land.

The government took the view that the shorter periods of time which have been suggested by some parties—10 years, 20 years, 30 years—are, frankly, too short. That may well preclude some things happening on strategic cropping land. This is ultimately a judgement. We will allow some activities to be undertaken without preventing them given the understanding that in 50 years we will not be dead. We simply regard this as a reasonable period.

Clause 14, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 27, as read, agreed to.

Clause 28—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (4.43 pm): Clause 28 establishes the protection areas and identifies the maps establishing those protection areas. A protection area is an area shown as a protection area on the protection area map to be specific and clear. I make the observation to the minister that the central protection area is surrounded by the strategic cropping land management area. The southern protection area is bordered by the strategic cropping land management area and the border of the states of Queensland and New South Wales.


Inevitably, when one creates a map and draws a line on the map there will be something on either side of that line. My question to the minister is: can the minister explain to the House how the maps were established for the southern and central protection areas?

Ms NOLAN: The government made a deliberate policy decision, as I touched on, that the areas in the golden triangle and the areas on the Darling Downs, including the Lockyer Valley and parts of the Scenic Rim, were the most pressing of areas which needed to be protected. Having given that direction to departmental officers, they then determined exactly where those areas should be.

This is not unlike a question that was considered, I envisage, by the shadow cabinet, given that the member for Callide earlier in the year indicated in the *Queensland Country Life*—there is no greater publication—that it would have been the LNP's intention to protect the Darling Downs in the first instance rather than the golden triangle. At a similar time both sides of this parliament were giving consideration to where exactly would be the best place to protect to the highest level first. That is the process through which this government went.

Clause 28, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 29 to 48—

 **Ms NOLAN** (4.46 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 41 (Who is an eligible person)

Page 36, line 21, 'tenure'—

omit, insert—

'resource authority'.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 29 to 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 49—



Mr CRIPPS (4.46 pm): Clause 49 of the bill deals with the cropping history test for the purposes of determining what is and what is not strategic cropping land in Queensland. The cropping history test is as follows—

A property has the **required cropping history** only if either of the following uses applied for any of the property and an exception under section 50 did not apply to the use—

- (a) it was cropped or cultivated ... at least 3 times from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2010;
- (b) for periods totalling 3 years or more from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2010, perennial crops or timber plantations existed on the property.

The bill claims, as I pointed out earlier, to establish a scientific framework for the identification of strategic cropping land. My question to the minister in relation to clause 49 is: can the minister explain how a cropping history test can be included as a scientific test to determine whether or not land is suitable to be identified as strategic cropping land? I put it to the minister that the cropping history test is simply a temporal measure of whether or not certain land has been used for cropping, not a measure of its productivity or even its suitability for cropping. In terms of the suitability for cropping, that phrase is actually used in establishing the purposes of the bill all the way back in clause 3.

The issue that I am trying to establish here and that I mentioned during my second reading debate contribution is that there is a range of circumstances in which a landowner may be prevented from cropping land that may not have anything to do with its lack of productivity or its suitability for cropping. This includes depressed prices, adverse weather conditions, such as drought, as was pointed out by member for Gregory in his contribution to the debate, or indeed if there was a fixed biosecurity declaration on that land. Once again, the member for Gregory would appreciate those circumstances in terms of the citrus canker outbreak in Central Queensland where a fixed-term biosecurity declaration was applied to land. I do not think anyone, including the government which is afforded that land protection area status, would argue that that is not strategic cropping land.

There is a range of circumstances in which a cropping history test may not be able to be met. I would seek the minister's guidance as to whether or not the cropping history test moves the strategic cropping land framework in this bill further away from a purely scientific assessment of soils for the purposes of establishing strategic cropping land in Queensland.

Ms NOLAN: Yes, I can respond to that. I will add a little further detail to my earlier answer first. As I indicated to you, government had made a decision about the Darling Downs, the Lockyer Valley, the Scenic Rim and the golden triangle. We then provided that direction to officers in the Department of Environment and Resource Management. I am further advised that they then sought to align that cabinet direction with things like local government boundaries and NRM districts in order to create a degree of logic around the issue which the member raises—that on the one side you are in and on the other side you are out.

To turn now to that matter of cropping history, I think it is entirely consistent with the fundamental premise of the bill to protect best quality strategic cropping land in that it would be a peculiar set of circumstances if we ended up providing substantial protections to areas which had not been cropped. The purpose of it is that it is the best land. How did we come to that period of time? The time period was determined because it was a substantial period which included both a period of drought and two very significant wet seasons which would have given growers the best opportunity to crop. There would be a legitimate criticism if it had only covered drought years, but it did not. It covered a pretty wide range of our variable seasons.

I note the member's point about biosecurity and, for instance, the citrus canker outbreak. I think it is a very legitimate point. However, I also think that such a long period of around 12 years covers that off in that you can have a biosecurity incident which prevents cropping but it does not go for 12 years.

Clause 49, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 50 to 112—



Ms NOLAN (4.51 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Ms NOLAN: I move the following amendments—

3 Clause 55 (Public notice of application)

Page 42, line 22, '44'—

omit, insert—

'48'.

4 After clause 89

Page 59, after line 24—

*insert—***'89A Power to prescribe particular concurrence agency application fees**

'A regulation may prescribe the application fee for the Minister, chief executive or Coordinator-General as a concurrence agency under IDAS for a development application for the development.

Notes—

1 For the requirement to pay the fee, see the Planning Act, section 272(1)(c)(i).

2 For the concurrence agency roles, see the *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*, schedule 7, table 3, items 27 to 30.'

5 After clause 112

Page 71, after line 18—

*insert—***'Part 5 Resource activities complying with standard conditions code****'Division 1 Preliminary****'112A Application of pt 5**

- '(1) This part applies for a resource activity on SCL or potential SCL if the carrying out of the activity under an environmental authority or resource authority complies with the standard conditions code.
- '(2) However, this part does not apply for a resource authority for which an SCL protection decision is required to be made under part 4 for the issuing of an environmental authority for the resource activity.
- '(3) To remove any doubt, it is declared that this part applies for an environmental authority or resource authority application even if—
- (a) when the application was made, the land was not SCL or potential SCL; but
 - (b) the land becomes SCL or potential SCL before the authority is granted.

'112B SCL compliance certificate required before environmental authority can be issued

'An environmental authority for the resource activity can not be issued until an SCL compliance certificate is given for the environmental authority and the resource authority for the resource activity.

'Division 2 Applying for SCL compliance certificate**'112C Who may apply**

'A person who has applied, or may apply, for an environmental authority or resource authority for the resource activity may apply for a certificate (an **SCL compliance certificate**) for the resource activity.

'112D Requirements for application

- '(1) The application must—
- (a) be made to the chief executive in the approved form; and
 - (b) describe the land on which the activity is to be carried out, and state the real property description of each lot that forms it; and
 - (c) describe the resource activity; and
 - (d) be accompanied by the fee prescribed under a regulation; and
 - (e) include, or be accompanied by, any other information prescribed under a regulation.
- '(2) Also, sections 84 and 85 apply for making the application as if—
- (a) the application were a development application for the land; and
 - (b) the footprint of the development under section 85 includes infrastructure or proposed infrastructure relating to the resource activity.

'112E Giving of SCL compliance certificate

'If the chief executive is satisfied the application complies with section 112D, the chief executive must give the person the SCL compliance certificate before, or at the same time as, the environmental authority is issued.


'Division 3 Application of standard conditions code**'112F Standard conditions code applies to particular authority**

- '(1) This section applies if a resource activity under an environmental authority or resource authority is carried out in compliance with the standard conditions code.
- '(2) The conditions under the standard conditions code for carrying out the resource activity are taken to be conditions of the environmental authority or resource authority.
- '(3) If there is any inconsistency between the standard conditions code and another condition of, or imposed on, the environmental authority or resource authority, the standard conditions code prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.'

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 50 to 112, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 113—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (4.52 pm): Clause 113 of the bill establishes powers to prescribe a type of development. One of the circumstances in which the bill affords the minister the opportunity to prescribe a certain development is in subclause (2)(ii) where the benefit outweighs the state's interest in protecting the land as strategic cropping land. I cannot locate a definition in schedule 2 of the bill of the state's interest in protecting land that is deemed to be SCL. That is separate and distinct from a test of

what SCL is, which is established by another part of the bill. I seek some guidance from the minister about what is the state's interest in protecting SCL, given that this threshold is a criterion for determining if a project in a protection area meets the exceptional circumstances test.

Ms NOLAN: I am not 100 per cent sure I have understood the member correctly, but I will endeavour to respond as best I can. The member's point is: what is the state's interest in protecting the land? In this instance it is a general interest as set out in the bill—that is, sometimes when we talk about state interests we talk about state interest checks such as, 'Does your driveway upset the functioning of our road?' That is a classic state interest. In this case, it is not a state interest in that sense that you are protecting an asset held by the state. It is an interest in that the state has determined by virtue of enacting this bill that it is in the interests of all Queenslanders that the land should be protected.

Mr Cripps: It is an interest.

Ms NOLAN: Exactly.

Mr Cripps: It is a bit amorphous because you can't really test it and there is no definition of it in the bill.

Ms NOLAN: I do not think that it would be a good thing, though, to seek to narrow it. If you sought to encode it you would, by definition, narrow it. It is, in my view, preferable that through the passage of the bill we establish that the state does have an interest in the protection of this land.

Mr JOHNSON: I rise in relation to clause 113 and particularly subclause (3), which states—
excluded type, of development, means any resource activity for a resource authority other than the following—

and then they are listed. I bring to the minister's attention that in the irrigation area adjacent to Emerald there is currently mining activity—drilling—on prime irrigation land. Will that come under this criterion? Will that also fall into strategic cropping land so that that activity cannot go ahead on the irrigation land itself?

Ms NOLAN: I am obviously not across the specifics. Am I correct in assuming that the current drilling is taking place under an exploration rather than a development permit?

Mr Johnson: Exploration.

Ms NOLAN: This bill does not preclude exploration activities. What it does at its heart is preclude any activity which permanently alienates the land. There has been public debate about this in that there were some people who would like to have seen the Strategic Cropping Land Bill create areas which were protected from, frankly, any form of mining activity. The government has made a deliberate decision not to go down that path in two ways. Firstly, it is the view of the government that it is in the interests of the people of Queensland that we know what is under the ground, that we know what our resources are. That is why we allow exploration to occur in many places which do not end up being mined. That is the way it has always been. We have always taken that view. That is why we have a degree of geological knowledge as a state.

Secondly, that drilling activity does not in itself create a permanent alienation. To make a third point—and, again, I touched on this in my response to the committee's report—there are people who would see this bill as being a vehicle to prevent any kind of mining, including underground mining, in areas where there is agricultural activity. This bill does not set out to stop mining—full stop. The test at the heart of the bill is: does it harm, does it permanently alienate, strategic cropping land? Obviously an open-cut coalmine does that.


Mr Johnson: Sorry, I missed the last bit.

Ms NOLAN: I said obviously an open-cut coalmine does permanently alienate strategic cropping land, but the test that lies at the heart of this bill is around permanent alienation, not just no mining for no mining's sake and it is not a prevention of exploration.

Clause 113, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 114 to 117, as read, agreed to.

Clause 118—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (5.00 pm): Clause 118 of the bill establishes what is a significant community benefit for the purposes of allowing the minister to approve a project in a protection area under the exceptional circumstances test. The clause states—

A *significant community benefit*, in carrying out the development on the land, means that—

- (a) the carrying out is an overwhelmingly significant opportunity of benefit to the State; and
- (b) the benefit outweighs the state's interest in protecting the land as SCL.

I thank the minister for her explanation of clause 113 in relation to the state's interest in protecting strategic cropping land. The minister confirmed that, when it boils down to it, it will be a value judgement on the part of the minister about whether or not the interests of the state in pursuing a particular resource or mining project are outweighed by the state's interest in protecting strategic cropping land.

I might just draw a parallel in the minister's answer to the contribution made by the Minister for Mines in the second reading debate when he criticised the LNP for saying that the provisions of the Mineral Resources Act where a public interest test could be applied at certain times in the processing of a mining tenement where a mining tenement is progressed was an inappropriate way of exercising some executive power to protect strategic cropping land. I put it to the minister that some inconsistency in the government's argument has been elucidated today.

Specifically in relation to the significant community benefit issue, once again I cannot locate a definition in schedule 2 in the bill that explains what a significant community benefit is or what an overwhelmingly significant community benefit is. The need for a clear and unambiguous understanding of what a significant or overwhelmingly significant opportunity to benefit the state is, given that it is a test applied for determining whether a project meets exceptional circumstances within a protection area, is great.

I note, in anticipation of what may be offered by the minister, that clause 128 proposes to give some explanation as to what the sole criterion for deciding significant community benefit is. But in terms of clause 128, anticipating the minister's response, once again, what is 'significant community benefit', 'public benefit', 'benefit to the state as a whole', 'significant adverse, economic, environmental or social impacts' of the development? It is a little bit poorly defined and no definition for those terms is located in schedule 2.

Ms NOLAN: The member makes two points which I will respond to in turn. The first point is that there is a contradiction between what the bill says and what the member for Hinchinbrook argues in that the exceptional circumstances test as set out in this bill is essentially the same as the public interest test in the Mineral Resources Act to which the minister referred in his contribution. That is not the case. The reason that it is not the case—and you know it is not—is that the public interest test in the Mineral Resources Act—

Mr Cripps: Is a value judgement.

Ms NOLAN: Let me finish—is a single test in and of itself which is quite broad. The exceptional circumstances test in this bill has two parts. Yes, it has a judgement around significant community benefit, which is set out in section 128, but it also has a test that the project could not have been located in another place. The public interest test in the Mineral Resources Act does not have that hurdle, which is an enormously significant hurdle to get over. Therefore, nice try, but these two things are not the same.


In relation to the member's second point that this matter could be more narrowly defined than currently exists in section 128, as I said on Tuesday, I note that the committee has made a similar point. I cannot, frankly, envisage a case in which this power would need to be exercised. I do not imagine what it is that we could not find anywhere else that was of overwhelming public benefit. That is why it is not, frankly, possible to define it narrowly. But I do think that it is reasonable that someone who is as accountable as a minister has that power, should the need in future arise. Unlike the public interest test, which applies to every development under the Mineral Resources Act, this exceptional circumstances provision would be exercised only in highly unusual circumstances, and it would apply under the full glare of public scrutiny because it has that first part that you could not find it anywhere else.

The government takes the view that it is not unreasonable that a minister should have the power to make decisions in highly unusual cases in the full glare of public scrutiny. That is why this test is here and why it is defined in the way that it is.

Clause 118, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 119 to 130, as read, agreed to.

Clause 131—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (5.07 pm): In response to the minister's previous answer, I would point out that, going back to the exceptional circumstances test and the two tests that are established to determine whether or not a project meets the exceptional circumstances test, the word 'and' appears between the two tests that are applied, that being that the carrying out of the development of the type is 'an overwhelming significantly opportunity of benefit to the state' and 'the benefit outweighs the state's interest in protecting the land as SCL'. I put it to the minister that those tests will not be applied in isolation. So a value judgement will be applied similar to the value judgement that is applied in the Mineral Resources Act about whether or not a project should occur on strategic cropping land. They will never be applied separately. A value judgement will be required to allow a project to go forward on strategic cropping land under the exceptional circumstances test.

I turn to clause 131 of the bill which deals with mitigation. The clause states—

Mitigation, for identified permanently impacted land, means that either of the following, or a combination of the following, has taken place for the land's mitigation value—

- (a) a payment to the mitigation fund;
- (b) the entering into of a mitigation deed.

The minister on several occasions has made the remark in her summing-up that the government has never made the claim that strategic cropping land can be rehabilitated to its pre project status after a resource or mining project has occurred on that. Yet in the minister's advice in response to the committee report the minister does establish that restoration of the productivity of land can be a condition placed on projects that are approved. The minister tabled a document in response to the committee's concerns about clause 14 which states—

The definition of pre development condition provides that land must be either restored to its condition before the development started or, if the condition cannot be worked out, the land can be restored to a condition consistent with contiguous SCL. Temporary impacts will be conditioned to ensure restoration to pre development conditions.

The minister recognises that work can be done to try to achieve the aim of restoring the productivity of the land. Mitigation, as it is defined in clause 131 of the bill, is an interesting proposition because it does not list reconditioning the soil to predevelopment condition as a definition of what can constitute mitigation under the bill. Can the minister please explain how clause 131 is not in direct conflict with the purpose of the bill as stated in clauses 3(a) and 3(c), when it does not provide an opportunity for mitigation purposes as restoration works? Clause 131 does not list restoration.

Ms NOLAN: First, to go back to the other clause that the member began his remarks with, I simply reiterate the point that you have to read clauses 127 and 128 together. The two together create the test for exceptional circumstances of significant public benefit and that you cannot do the project anywhere else.

To come to the mitigation requirements, I am the member for Ipswich and I have seen rehabilitated mine land. Ipswich is, at its heart, a mining town. It is possible for mine land to be rehabilitated after the mine is finished, and in the modern era the state requires it to be the case. Just outside Ipswich at a place called Ebenezer there is an enormous grazing area which is treed and grassed which was previously an open-cut coalmine. You drive past it on the Cunningham Highway and, frankly, you could look at it and not even know that it used to be an open-cut coalmine. That rehabilitation has come about because the state now requires land to be rehabilitated. The exact standard which is required is not a matter for this bill; it is a matter for the EIS and for all of our standard mining laws.

The mitigation requirements are not that the land in question be rehabilitated to a particular standard. The purpose of the mitigation requirements is to ensure that there is no net loss of productive capacity in that locale. That is, as I outlined earlier, if you are going to take out some strategic cropping land for your project, there is a requirement that, in order that there is no net loss of productive capacity in the area, you undertake some other complementary project not on the mine site but in the district which through other means, such as irrigation, improves the area's productive capacity. I hope that clarifies the relationship between rehabilitation and mitigation. The government has not at any point sought to pretend that they are the same thing.

Clause 131, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 132 to 281—



Ms NOLAN (5.13 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Ms NOLAN: I move the following amendments—

- 6 **Clause 143 (Payments from fund)**
Page 87, line 20, 'productivity principles'—
omit, insert—
'productivity principle'.
- 7 **Clause 192 (Application of div 1)**
Page 114, line 22, 'power'—
omit, insert—
'powers'.
- 8 **Clause 249 (Remotely sensed image reports)**
Page 146, lines 27 to 29—
omit, insert—
'(3) In this section—'.

9 Clause 281 (Existing mining lease and EP or MDL forming a contiguous area)

Page 160, lines 22 to 28—

omit, insert—

'(b) on or before 23 August 2012—

- (i) a mining lease application is or was made for any of the area of the EP or MDL; and
- (ii) a certificate of application is or was issued for the mining lease application; and


(c) on 23 August 2010, the applicant was—

- (i) the holder of the mining lease and also—
 - (A) the holder of the EP or MDL; or
 - (B) a party to a joint venture or partnership agreement with the holder of the EP or MDL about resource activities for the proposed mining lease the subject of the application; or
 - (C) a subsidiary of the holder of the EP or MDL, as defined under the Corporations Act, section 46; or
- (ii) the holder of the EP or MDL and also—
 - (A) a party to a joint venture or partnership agreement with the holder of the mining lease; or
 - (B) a subsidiary of the holder of the mining lease.'

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 132 to 281, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 282—

 **Mr CRIPPS** (5.15 pm): Clause 282 refers specifically to provisions relating to the future mining lease relating to EPC 891. It states—

- (1) Any environmental authority application and any related resource application for a mining lease relating to EPC 891 is excluded.
- (2) However, the exclusion only applies for resource activities under an EIS resulting from the finalised EIS TOR relating to EPC 891, published on 2 June 2011.

I thank the minister for her response to the committee's report that she tabled before the second reading debate. The explanation provided by the minister certainly addressed the question put by the committee—that is, the committee invited the minister to clarify whether the transitional arrangements provided to Bandanna Energy differ from the transitional arrangements available to other resource project applicants. The minister clarified that the bill provides specific transitional arrangements for Bandanna Energy's Springsure Creek coal project, termed EPC 891 in the bill. Will the minister please explain how the government can justify including a clause in this bill that specifically excludes EPC 891 from complying with several clauses contained in division 2 and division 3 of chapter 9 of the bill?

Ms NOLAN: There has been substantial public debate around this matter. The test that the government set down when we announced the framework for this bill back in May was that the terms of reference for the environmental impact statement were to have been finalised by 31 May for a project to qualify for the transitional provisions. The Springsure Creek project had met that test in that the Department of Environment and Resource Management had considered the terms of reference for the EIS by that date—and indeed the acting director-general of my department, DERM, stated that as a matter of public record in the natural resources estimates some months ago—but the terms of reference had not yet been advertised. As such, this project had met the test. There is, nonetheless, public debate about it.

These provisions in the bill create a higher standard than the ordinary transitional provisions which other transitional projects must meet. These clauses insist that if this project is to go ahead it must be underground—that is not the case for other transitional projects that had met the 31 May date—and it determines that rehabilitation activities must be undertaken, and the detail of those will be finalised through this project's EIS. It has been claimed that these provisions create a special level of privilege for this mine, and I note that that was some evidence given to the committee. In fact, these provisions create a higher standard than did ordinary transitional projects. Indeed, some of the evidence that was given to the committee and some of the views expressed by Bandanna were that in their view—and it is not a view that government accepts—some of the provisions are too high a requirement.

Mr JOHNSON: In relation to this clause, the minister made reference to Bandanna Energy, and that is certainly the topic that is contentious in my area, as the minister would know. With the EIS that Bandanna has to govern their lease in question and the rehabilitation, I hope that will not be allowed to go ahead. The point I want to make is that underground mines are designed to collapse. The minister would probably know about Gordon Downs just north of Emerald and that is a classic example of what will happen at Springsure Creek.

Springsure Creek is in the strategic cropping land area. I cannot for the life of me see how this EIS can be allowed to progress when mining engineers themselves will tell you repeatedly that underground mines are designed to collapse. As the minister is well aware, with the floods that we have

had this year and the amount of water that has come down that creek, that country is still very wet. That water will get into the underground mine and there will be a problem. It is destined to collapse; there is no doubt about it. I ask the question because it is of concern. We are talking here about some of the best, prime agricultural land in the country. At the same time, we are going against the advice and professionalism of mining engineers who tell us that this cannot happen and will not happen. I refer to the answer to a question on notice I asked the Minister for Environment on Tuesday, 11 October. Again, there is no defined answer in relation to rehabilitation of underground mines.

Ms NOLAN: As I have outlined in the House before—I am happy to outline it again for the member—the requirement is that Bandanna Energy must make all reasonable endeavours, including necessary contouring and laser levelling, to rehabilitate the effects of any impact of the underground coal project at Springsure Creek. Government has not at any time sought to give some kind of guarantee that there will not be subsidence after a longwall mine. The member is right: there are instances in which that does occur. But there is also a specific requirement written into the legislation that should that take place then rehabilitation is required. That is a higher standard of protection than would have been afforded if this project had transitioned ordinarily as one of the other transitional projects.

Division: Question put—That clause 282 stand part of the bill.

AYES, 48—Attwood, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Darling, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Fraser, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Jones, Kiernan, Kilburn, Lawlor, Lucas, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nolan, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Robertson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Stone, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Male

NOES, 37—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Foley, Gibson, Hobbs, Hopper, Horan, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Nicholls, Powell, Pratt, Robinson, Seeney, Simpson, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Wellington. Tellers: Rickuss, Sorensen

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 282, as read, agreed to.

Clause 283—

Mr CRIPPS (5.28 pm): Clause 283 of the bill establishes the SCL protection conditions imposed on EPC 891 subsequent to its being excluded from the normal regulatory arrangements for land deemed to be strategic cropping land in protection areas. Because we have been unsuccessful in having clause 282 excluded from the bill, if we were to exclude clause 283 from the bill at a subsequent division of the House we would effectively be excluding the conditions to which Bandanna Energy will be subject once this bill passes through the parliament. So obviously we will not be dividing on this clause. But I think it is worth pointing out in relation to the minister's response to my question on clause 282 of the bill that, once again, we have a situation where specific and unique arrangements were made for the Bandanna Energy project at Springsure Creek, termed EPC 891 in the bill. It is a fact, as I put forward during the second reading debate, that the provisions in the bill create a situation whereby EPC 891 is in a unique regulatory position. It is not subject to the regulatory framework that was in place prior to 31 May 2011; nor is it subject to the regulatory framework that is established for strategic cropping land subsequent to this bill being passed.

We know that this was another value judgement, another policy decision made by the government. During the committee briefing by the Department of Environment and Resource Management on the bill Mr Robson, in reply to a question from the member for Bulimba about the specific circumstances in relation to the consideration of the terms of reference for the EIS of the Bandanna Energy project, stated—

That is when, on consideration, it was accepted that they would fall in the transitional arrangements, but we had to make special provisions because they were clearly outside the clear intent.

So it was clearly established by the evidence of the department that they are in a regulatory no-man's-land. They are unique provisions provided for this project and they do undermine public confidence in the bill.

Ms NOLAN: They are unique in that they are stronger. They are unique in that these provisions, for the very reason the member points out for not opposing clause 283, create a stronger level of protection for the environment in that area than would have been the case if clause 282 and clause 283 were not in this bill. I understand that there are people in the area who would be happier if this project did not proceed at all. But these provisions create a circumstance in which the project can proceed only on the condition that it is underground and can proceed only on legislative standards around rehabilitation. These are strong provisions that allow farming to continue in that area. The area is protected by these provisions and that is the point that the LNP acknowledged by the very fact of not opposing the provisions.

Mr JOHNSON: In relation to Springsure Creek, the minister is quoted as saying—

Exceptions to the policy are narrow.

They only apply to projects in the protection zone which:

- Had reached the stage of approved terms of reference for the EIS by 31 May—

which is correct—and there was also a certificate of application for a mining development lease under section 252 of the Mineral Resources Act 1989—or—

- That can demonstrate exceptional circumstances such as a development of strong public significance, or
- Where a resource, or development site cannot be found anywhere else in the State.

I refer to the words 'Where a resource, or development site cannot be found anywhere else in the state'. We are talking about the best prime agricultural land. That mining resource certainly can be found elsewhere in the state and not far away on more inferior land. So I think that qualifies as to why the project should be not allowed.

Ms NOLAN: The member's argument would be logical if this project was proceeding under the exceptional circumstances test. But it is not. It is proceeding to create a higher standard because the terms of reference for the EIS had, in fact, been established by that date.

Mr HOBBS: In relation to clause 283, I understand what the minister is saying. She is saying that, if mining causes subsidence, contouring and laser levelling is what can be done. In some instances that can be done, particularly in relation to the rehabilitation of grazing land. But one of the examples that I can give is where a lot of pipelines have been put in over time. Even though those pipelines were put in 10 years or 15 years ago, you can still see that that country has not been rehabilitated. I am saying that you can laser level—and country is often laser levelled to make it nice and flat—but only a certain amount of topsoil is taken to do that. But if the ground subsides between a metre and three metres, which has occurred at Gordon Downs, if you try to get all of that soil across you will find that you will have subsoils in there as well. That reduces the ability of that land to produce. There is no way in the world—and there is no science to say that you can—that you can rehabilitate it back to full strategic cropping land standard. That is the problem we have. There is no proof that it can be done. I do not believe that it can be done. You can do it if there is small subsidence but, in an area where the subsidence is up to three metres, it will be very difficult to get that land back to that high standard that the minister is talking about.

Ms NOLAN: I think we have gone around on this issue. It requires first that the project be underground. It may well have otherwise been open-cut and it requires a high level of rehabilitation. That is a pretty high standard of protection for an area which had met the transitional provision.

Clause 283, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 284 to 290, as read, agreed to.

Clause 291—



Ms NOLAN (5.37 pm): I move the following amendment—

10 Clause 291 (Insertion of new sch 13A)

Page 166, line 4, 'any of'—

omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr CRIPPS: Clause 291 of the bill inserts schedule 13A, titled 'Excluded matters for SCL or potential SCL concurrence agency jurisdiction'. Among the list of activities that will be excluded include—

A building, structure or activity supporting cropping on SCL or potential SCL.

Can the minister please clarify if ordinary routine farming activities such as drainage works and laser levelling of paddocks that may require a DA to be lodged to a planning authority, such as the department or the local council, will be exempt from triggering the SCL mapping and the costs associated with the mapping process? The list of activities in schedule 13A inserted by clause 291 lists a building, structure or activity supporting cropping on SCL or potential SCL. So we are going to have a situation where a DA may come to a planning authority—the department or a local government authority. It requires a DA, but I would hate to think that routine, ordinary farming activities such as trying to improve drainage by laser levelling or improving the infrastructure for drainage on a property would trigger an assessment of strategic cropping land, which would then incur the cost to the applicant.

Ms NOLAN: I am happy to provide the assurance to the parliament that any measure which is about improving the productive capacity of the land is not covered by these provisions. For instance, if you laser level a field in order to make it more productive then we are not going to say it is strategic cropping land and therefore you cannot laser level it, and, indeed, you would not have to go through the

process. Similarly, if you sought to build a packing shed in order to be able to package up the harvest from your strategic cropping land, there would not be a process or a prohibition on that activity which is fundamentally about agricultural productivity as a result of this bill.

Clause 291, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 292—



Ms NOLAN (5.40 pm): I move the following amendments—

11 Clause 292 (Amendment of sch 26 (Dictionary))

Page 166, lines 23 to 26—

omit, insert—

“**footprint**, for a provision about development, means the portion of the relevant lot covered by—”.

12 Clause 292 (Amendment of sch 26 (Dictionary))

Page 167, after line 7—

insert—

‘**permanent impact**, on SCL or potential SCL, see the SCL Act, section 14(1).’.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 292, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 1—



Ms NOLAN (5.41 pm): I move the following amendment—

13 Schedule 1 (Zonal criteria for original zones)

Page 175, line 13, ‘3cmol/kg’—

omit, insert—

‘3cmol/kg’.

Amendment agreed to.



Mr McLINDON (5.41 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Schedule 1 (Zonal criteria for original zones)

Page 179, line 8—

omit, insert—

‘Slope is 8% or less.’.

This is a very important amendment in relation to the Wet Tropics zone. On paper it says five per cent of the slope gradient. I am pushing to amend that to eight per cent. Many of us would have received a very considered letter from John Dalton, the Secretary of the Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group. In that letter, which I will table, he states—

KCCG has recently studied the impact of DERM’s intention to stick with the maximum 5% slope criteria with the result being that only isolated pockets of highly productive land will be protected. A greater proportion of equally productive land between these protected areas will be available to damaging projects such as bauxite mining and Underground Coal Gasification. Exploration for bauxite has recently been completed in these highly productive paddocks.

That increase from a five per cent to an eight per cent slope would have a significant impact on that area. The current 67,000 hectares, or three-quarters of all the cropped areas in the South Burnett, fall within the five per cent threshold. Increasing the slope threshold to eight per cent would increase the area protected by approximately 11,500 hectares. I aimed high for the moratorium without success, but I would hope that the increase from five per cent to eight per cent is something that the government, and certainly the opposition, could consider with this amendment. I would also like to highlight that the three farmers who would be affected by this amendment have a combined total of 171 years experience on these farms and the production on paddocks with a slope from five per cent to eight per cent have an equal yield to those below the five per cent threshold.

If this bill before the House is indeed worth the paper it is written on, this would certainly be an amendment that should be seriously considered to ensure that this legislation is not just words but something that certainly carries with it the weight of its intent. I table that two-page letter from John Dalton. I thank him for the good work he has done with that committee. I strongly urge the government to consider this proposed amendment.

Tabled paper: Proforma letter, from John Dalton, Secretary of the Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group, to all Queensland members of parliament in relation to strategic cropping land [\[6123\]](#).

Mr SEENEY: This amendment illustrates the point that I was making in my second reading contribution—that this business of soil criteria is a nonsense way to do land-use planning. This stipulation of a number of criteria is not the sort of thing that is used in responsible planning anywhere

else. It is not the sort of thing that is used in urban town planning, for example, where land-use studies are done and areas are set aside for urban or industrial development. Those areas are not set aside based on whether a particular criteria is seven or 7.1 or 5.6 or any particular number. They are set aside on the basis of a land-use planning study which identifies the best land use for that area.

That is exactly the LNP's policy. That is what we have guaranteed to the people of the South Burnett, which is the example that the member who has put forward this amendment has used. The South Burnett is a classic example of where there are areas of great agricultural land that do not fit this criteria that has been plucked out of the air. There is no difference between a five per cent slope and a 5.1 per cent slope. It is about determining the appropriate land use for that prime red soil agricultural area of the South Burnett, and that is agriculture. It should be mapped and protected accordingly.

I do not think the amendment that the member has moved will be necessary if the LNP is elected to government in this state, because we will protect those areas with a proper regional planning process that a responsible government would have put in place before this—a regional planning process that contains statutory land-use maps that defines appropriate land uses, that defines the best land uses for particular areas and maps them accordingly. It will set those maps in statutes, set them in law, and protect those places from that sort of development. That is the guarantee we have given to the people of the South Burnett. That is the guarantee we have given to the people of the Scenic Rim. That is the guarantee that we will give to people of the blacksoil country in the Darling Downs, and that is the guarantee that we will give to the people in the golden triangle. Eventually those sorts of planning mechanisms should be rolled out right across areas where land-use conflicts occur.

We will not oppose this particular amendment, but it will be unnecessary under the planning scheme that we will put in place. It will add to what is a system that is only just better than nothing now until we can get a better system in place, the sort of system that the government should have put in place long ago.

(Time expired)

Mr CRIPPS: I note that the member for Beaudesert in his second reading contribution to debate on the bill recognised that I had canvassed the issue of the limitations of the eight criteria that are established under the framework in the bill in addition to the two additional tests that are applied, that being the cropping history test and the minimum size test. I said during the debate that one way of addressing this issue would be to amend the boundaries of the regional cropping zones to allow some types of land to be incorporated into adjacent zones with a higher slope criteria threshold or to allow the land to be protected by creating more zones. Another alternative would be to fall marginally short against one or two criteria but still be able to be considered for SCL if, for example, the land enjoys a reliable water supply, if it is close to a market or if it displays a reliable cropping history test.

I do not know why the minister is so surprised that the LNP would support an amendment of this nature. I just point out to the member for Beaudesert that, whilst he has identified an amendment that will make a difference in terms of one area of the state, there are eight criteria and there are two additional criteria—being the cropping history test and the minimum size test—and, in addition to those eight criteria and those two additional tests, there are five zones with different thresholds for each of those eight criteria across those five zones. If we were to go through a process of amending threshold tests, and in addition the minimum size test and the cropping history test, for all of the five zones, all of the eight criteria, we would be here ad infinitum.

The member for Beaudesert has moved an amendment that will make a difference in terms of a particular area of the state, but the mapping of strategic cropping land in the management area and the two protection areas involved still involves an enormous number of threshold tests and criteria tests as set out in the bill. I recognise that the member for Beaudesert acknowledged the fact that the issue of some of the limitations of the criteria tests and the two additional tests will be borne out wherever we draw lines in the sand. But I make the point, in terms of supporting the contribution by the member for Callide, that the LNP has the capacity, if it is successful at the election, to implement its policy. What it will do is establish the strategic cropping maps attached to statutory regional plans based on the productive capacity of the land, not a series of complicated criteria tests that will inevitably create situations like the one that the member for Beaudesert has identified in the South Burnett.

Ms NOLAN: The future is decided by those who turn up. The LNP has met the first test. They have decided to join us. What we see here is an insight into the future. Why is that? What is this all about—this five per cent versus eight per cent? What does it mean? What it means is the seat of Nanango. There are people in Kingaroy who would like to see more land protected and they would like to see more land protected by a different definition in this bill of what a slope is.

The LNP came in here and were proposing to vote for the bill as it was written at five per cent. It is the Katter party which has led a change. It is the Katter party which is putting on the table what the people of Kingaroy have asked to occur. What has the LNP done under the pressure—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! The member for Hinchinbrook, you have had your go. The minister has the call.

Ms NOLAN: As I said in my summing-up, the LNP are saying one thing to farmers and saying another thing to miners.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I find those words offensive. They are wrong. What I said here is what I said in the South Burnett—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SEENEY:—what I have said in the *Country Life*—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat.

Mr SEENEY:—what I have said for month after month—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat—

Mr SEENEY: I find the words offensive—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat.

Mr SEENEY: I find the words offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! A couple of things: when I ask you to resume your seat, as I did three times, you resume your seat and if I call for order you come to order. The minister did not refer to you. She made no reference to you so you cannot take personal offence at any comments that she has made. There is no point of order. The minister has the call.

Ms NOLAN: I just point out that the LNP had the opportunity to move the amendment themselves and they did not. But they agree to it because it is about the politics of the seat of Nanango where, with the sitting member retiring, both the LNP and the Katter party are trying to pick up the seat.

What have they done? They have come in here intending to support the bill, but now they have to change. That is the window into the future. They have been telling miners that the balance was okay and now because there is day one politics—there is a bit of immediate politics—they have to make a different call. That is what an LNP future would be like. I hope that those at the Queensland Resources Council are watching.

In the future, should the LNP be in government, then the rural rump, the Katter party—whoever it might be—would wag the Campbell Newman dog. That is what would happen. There would be a different balance. It would not be the balance we see today. It would be a balance where every time some farmer says there should be more land that is the way they would go. That is what those at the Resources Council need to understand.

This Labor government has found a balance. It is scientifically determined and we are seeking to put it in law. We are seeking to put rock solid, certain balance for the future in law. At the first little suggestion from the Katter party up the back they abandon that science—at the first suggestion.

The future is decided by those who turn up. On Tuesday they could not turn up. On Wednesday they could not speak. On Thursday we see just a tiny little bit of an insight into what that future, led by the National Party's rural rump, would look like. I very much hope that those who make a living out of mining, not just farming, are watching.

Division: Question put—That the member for Beaudesert's amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 37—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Gibson, Hobbs, Hopper, Horan, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Nicholls, Powell, Pratt, Rickuss, Robinson, Seene, Simpson, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Wellington. Tellers: Foley, Sorensen

NOES, 46—Attwood, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Darling, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Fraser, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Kiernan, Kilburn, Lawlor, Lucas, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nolan, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Robertson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Stone, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Male

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr McLindon) negated.

Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 2—



Ms NOLAN (6.02 pm): I move the following amendments—

14 Schedule 2 (Dictionary)


Page 183, line 21, '(b)'—

omit, insert—

'(a)'.

- 15 Schedule 2 (Dictionary)**
Page 187, lines 26 and 27—
omit, insert—
'**minimum size**, for land or a part of land, see section 62.'
- 16 Schedule 2 (Dictionary)**
Page 189, line 26—
omit, insert—
'(h) for land that, under a resource Act, is in the area of a resource authority under that Act—the holder of the resource authority;'
- 17 Schedule 2 (Dictionary)**
Page 193, after line 5—
insert—
'**SCL compliance certificate** see section 112C.'
- 18 Schedule 2 (Dictionary)**
Page 194, lines 15 to 19—
omit.
- Amendments agreed to.
Schedule 2, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and the Arts) (6.03 pm): I move—


That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and the Arts) (6.03 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Order of Business

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (6.04 pm): I move—


That government business orders of the day Nos 2 to 8 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Revocation of State Forest Areas

 **Hon. VE DARLING** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (6.04 pm): I move—

- 1) That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of a protected area as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of area to be revoked

Main Range National Park

Area described as lots 1 and 2 on SP248330 and containing an area of 2.8116 hectares as illustrated on the attached survey plan and sketch

- 2) That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment for submission to the Governor in Council.


The Department of Environment and Resource Management manages approximately 12.9 million hectares of protected area estate across Queensland. From time to time there is the need to revoke the dedication of small areas for legitimate purposes, such as to allow for the repair or expansion of essential public infrastructure. I will only support the revocation of land from our national park estate for an alternative use if it can clearly be demonstrated that the proposed usage is in the broader public interest and there is no reasonable practical alternative.

The Department of Environment and Resource Management has given careful consideration to this proposal and appropriate consultation has occurred with affected stakeholders. Native title issues have also been considered in relation to this proposal and it has been determined that the action may proceed. I will now outline the background of this proposal, and the offsetting arrangements that have been agreed to compensate for the loss of the protected area estate. The proposal is to revoke approximately 2.81 hectares of land from Main Range National Park at Cunningham's Gap to allow for the realignment of a damaged section of the Cunningham Highway. The Cunningham Highway is an important freight route across the Great Dividing Range between Western Queensland's pastoral communities and Brisbane's industrial zones and of course it is an important transport route for local residents.

A section of embankment failed in December 2010 following heavy rainfall over the wet season, damaging three of the four lanes through Cunningham's Gap. Stabilisation work has been conducted to provide two temporary lanes, which are currently operating. The Department of Transport and Main Roads has advised that assessment of the embankment indicates that it is still slipping and further failure is likely. The two temporary lanes currently in place are, therefore, at risk of failing if subject to further heavy rainfall in the upcoming wet season, which may result in their closure. Closure of the highway would cause significant disruptions to the national highway network and may result in public safety issues and economic impacts for the region and Queensland.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads has considered alternative design solutions within the current highway footprint. However, these options did not significantly reduce the impacts or relied on uncertain foundation conditions and, in some cases, did not serve to adequately reduce the risk of further embankment failure. Following an assessment of the proposed alternatives, the Department of Transport and Main Roads has recommended that realignment of the highway is the most practical option. As the highway realignment is of high public interest, the Department of Environment and Resource Management endorses the revocation and realignment proposal. A cash offset is being provided by the Department of Transport and Main Roads as there is no suitable land for purchase in the vicinity that may be added to the national park. The cash offset will be used to purchase other land for the protected area estate.

I submit that this proposal is the most appropriate way to accommodate the repair work required to the Cunningham Highway and ensure that disruptions to this important road network are minimised. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.08 pm): I rise to speak to the revocation of a three-hectare portion of the Main Range National Park to allow for the realignment of the Cunningham Highway as proposed by the Minister for Environment on 25 October this year. Realignment of the highway is required due to major damage and land slippage, as the minister just explained, sustained on steep sections during the previous wet season. I have been informed that DTMR has advised that repair to that particular part of the existing highway is not feasible.

As the Cunningham Highway is a major link between Brisbane and pastoral communities in south-western Queensland and a key freight route to all destinations to the south, further deterioration of the highway would result in loss of public access, public safety issues and economic impacts for the region, state and nation. As such, while any revocation of national park should be considered a last resort, the LNP will not be opposing this revocation. The realignment will provide the users of this key piece of infrastructure with improved certainty and safety when using the Cunningham Highway during and following extreme weather events. However, it is important that during the realignment reconstruction period safe access is maintained for this crucial east-west connection between Ipswich and Warwick for industry, tourism, businesses and the community.

Roadworks and heavy machinery have become something of a permanent fixture at Cunningham's Gap over the past eight months, not unlike many roads in my electorate, and it seems motorists should not expect them gone any time soon. The Cunningham's Gap reconstruction program is underway, but completion time lines have been blown out, with new signage in place on the highway offering a vague mid-2012 completion date I suspect partly because of this necessary revocation this evening.

I am concerned about these reconstruction delays at Cunningham's Gap as the current situation is not adequate for the thousand trucks a day going through the gap on the Brisbane-Sydney and Brisbane-Melbourne run. There are serious delays in moving between Brisbane, up into the Southern Downs and out through Goondiwindi. We need to get this vital trade and tourism link back on track and we need to provide safe passage for the long-suffering locals.

It is noticeable that the revocation section for the national park has not been undertaken in time to enable commencement of work on the realignment project before the start of the wet season. I hope this delay was because the government was considering all other options, as the minister suggested, and not because of unnecessary bureaucratic meddling. I was going to ask the minister to outline any attempts to identify a suitable offset, but I have noted that DTMR will be providing a cash offset on the basis that they were unable to identify any suitable land offset in the neighbouring vicinity and that cash offset will be used to purchase an equal amount of protected estate. As I said, the LNP will not be opposing this revocation.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Parliamentary Amnesty Group



Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.11 pm), by leave, without notice:
I move—

That the Parliament of Queensland:

1. joins with Amnesty International in calling for the Indonesian Government to act immediately on allegations of human rights abuse at the Third Papuan Peoples' Congress on 19 October 2011;
2. notes that an investigation by the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission found that Indonesian security forces opened fire on participants at the peaceful gathering, as well as beating and kicking them;
3. calls for the protection of human rights in Papua, and, in particular, that the Indonesian Government respect Papuans' rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association;
4. notes that the Indonesian President's office has rejected the findings of the Commission, along with recommendations that the Indonesian National Police Chief investigate the matter.
5. with Amnesty International, urges the Indonesian authorities to initiate an independent, thorough and effective investigation into the Commission's findings; and
6. if the investigations find that security forces committed unlawful killings, torture or other ill-treatment, then calls for those responsible, including persons with command responsibility to be prosecuted in proceedings that meet international standards of fairness, and victims provided with reparations.

It is with great pleasure that I move this Amnesty motion tonight. I thank my colleague Dean Wells for affording me this right. I moved the first Amnesty motion in the Queensland parliament on 6 December 1990. I established the Queensland parliament's first Amnesty group some time during that year. At one point in time we met quite regularly. I remember in 1990 it was quite a challenge to talk Wayne Goss and then Leader of the House Terry Mackenroth into allowing us to have 10 minutes or so to do this Amnesty motion, because after 32 years of not being in government they were not really inclined to share too much of the parliament's time with anyone but the government. So it took a lot of persuasion to get this Amnesty motion launched in that year, but they were good enough to give parliamentary time over to that and it has become a tradition ever since.

I think it is a nice end-of-year tradition for members of this parliament who are fairly inward looking. We all care about Queensland and we care about the minutiae of what happens in the state. I think it is important as members of parliament to be more outward looking on one occasion during the year, and this is an opportunity to reflect on how lucky we are as a state and a people to live in the country that we do and to have such high standards of human rights compared to the rest of the world.

In my 22 years of being involved with Amnesty in this chamber, I despair at the direction that human rights is going in many countries of the world today. I do not think we are seeing improvements. In fact, I think we are taking backward steps in many countries. So it behoves us all to be very vigilant about the human rights standards in our own country and our own state but also to fight for causes internationally at every opportunity.

This debate is an opportunity for Queensland parliamentarians to send a strong message to other governments in other countries that we are observing their behaviour and how they treat their citizens. On this occasion it is about Indonesians and how they treat their citizens in Papua, but on many occasions in the past we have looked at lots of governments around the world. It is with great pleasure that I move this motion tonight and join my colleagues in caring about this community.



Dr FLEGG (Moggill—LNP) (6.15 pm): I have great pleasure in seconding the motion moved by the Leader of the House. Indonesia is of course our nearest populous neighbour and the world's largest Muslim nation. There are many things that we need to appreciate from Indonesia, which has great difficulty with a very diverse country and which has done a lot of good work in the area of fighting terrorism, on cooperating with Australia on people smuggling and on building one of the most functional democracies among emerging countries with a high level of press freedom. We should not underestimate the difficulty of doing that in a country like Indonesia.

But, sadly, there is a black spot on Indonesia's record on human rights and that is in the area of Irian Jaya or Papua, a nation of over two million people. It is a nation that really has very little in the way of human rights. When they voted to join Indonesia, in a country of over two million people only around a thousand people were able to record a vote. The problems there relate particularly to militarisation, with a large Indonesian army presence. As a result, they have become isolated from the rest of the world as a matter of Indonesian government policy. International journalists are either prohibited or very severely restricted, and there has been considerable oppression against organisations that try to promote human rights.

This came to a head with the murder of prominent journalist Adriansyah Matra'is, who was a very prominent journalist on state television and on a number of different channels in Indonesia. After recording illegal logging being done by a company associated with senior military officers, he was found murdered, floating in a river in Papua. There are many political prisoners in the country who are arrested under laws relating to subversion and incitement but who more often than not are just peaceful protesters. Murder and torture have been widely reported.

There is an area in Mercure Regency of Papua Province where 1.2 million hectares of land that belongs to traditional owners in that country has been alienated for commercial development and largely for cash crops such as palm oil rather than food crops that the often subsistence population requires. There is extensive violation of Indigenous land rights in this area as the Indonesian government and frequently corporations associated with high officials try to exploit the province's mineral wealth. Those land rights are particularly vital in a society where life is still very traditional, very subsistence and very village based. As usual when we see this secrecy and violation of human rights, it is often the weakest people who suffer the most, and that is frequently women. There are many reports of atrocity and maltreatment of women. There is now large-scale migration from other parts of Indonesia into the mineral rich province.


In 1969 the alleged act of free choice—which I referred to earlier where only a thousand people out of a nation of two million were able to record a vote—is still considered to be a valid vote by the Indonesians.

Mr Rickuss: In 40 years the Indonesians have done more damage than the Dutch did in 400.

Dr FLEGG: Yes, I take that interjection. What those who are concerned for human rights want to see happen is that, firstly, the Indonesian government needs to acknowledge and accept that it has violated the human rights of people in the West Irian area. It needs to immediately move to lift the curtain of secrecy that surrounds journalism and access in that country and restore openness to it. It needs to permit a United Nations presence to observe some of the military activity that occurs there. It certainly needs to allow much greater freedom for international military.

It needs to decrease the military presence in a country where mostly poor civilians do not present a large military threat to justify the force that is there presently. It needs in particular to respect and acknowledge Indigenous land tenure issues that are so vital for those people. This is a nation that is very close to us. In many ways, they are a friend of Australia and I think it is right and proper that the Queensland parliament and Australia as a whole should be urging them to improve their human rights record in this area. It is a black spot on them.


Finally, I would like to pay tribute to those from Amnesty and the other human rights advocates who frequently risk their own lives in operating in areas like Papua in order to try to protect the rights of others. We are all relatively safe and comfortable in this country, but it is certainly not the case if you are a human rights advocate in Papua. I take my hat off to those people and acknowledge the work that they do at their own risk.

 **Hon. DM WELLS** (Murrumba—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the honourable Leader of the House and seconded by the honourable member for Moggill. I thereby support Amnesty International's campaign for human rights in West Papua Irian Jaya. It is a proud tradition of this parliament and a proud tradition of the Queensland parliament chapter of Amnesty International that the very last substantive motion that we move before we break for Christmas is always a blow for human rights. This is something of which every member of this House as well as every citizen of Queensland can be proud.

On 1 September this year, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki-moon, said that human rights abuses in Irian Jaya West Papua should be considered by the United Nations Human Rights Council. I urge honourable members to add the voice of this parliament to the many other voices calling for action against human rights abuses in Irian Jaya. On 6 January this year, the West Papua News Network reported that Indonesia's own National Human Rights Commission had reported human rights issues, including allegations of torture, to Indonesia's President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The torture allegations included footage posted on YouTube and seen all over the world of Indonesian soldiers conducting an interrogation while applying a burning stick to the genitals of an unarmed man. The chairman of Indonesia's own human rights commission, Mr Ildhal Kasim, said—

Our investigations found that the military had committed serious human rights violations and we ask for those responsible to be brought to justice.

The day before yesterday, the *Jakarta Post* editorialised that the perpetrators of human rights abuses should be taken to the human rights court. The paper said, 'Papua have long suffered under human rights abuses committed by Indonesian authorities.' The paper also said that a team of international human rights experts should be appointed to investigate current and historical human rights abuses by Indonesia in Irian Jaya and that the troops deployed in the province should be withdrawn or reduced in number. I submit to honourable members that there is sufficient evidence of serious human rights abuses on our doorstep to cause us deep concern. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (6.24 pm): I rise to join in this debate. Dr Neles Tebay is, amongst other things, a coordinator of the Papua Peace Network, and he has advised the following—

2010 and 2011 have been particularly singular for the indigenous Papuans who live in the Western half of the Island of New Guinea. In 2010 episodes of torture perpetrated against Indigenous Papuans were displayed worldwide. Through shocking and horrific video images, the entire world has discovered how the Indonesian Army deliberately commits torture against Indigenous Papuans.

The Indonesian government's policy of isolating Papua from the rest of the world—not allowing access to foreign journalists, international human rights workers, researchers and diplomats—has not been able to cover up the brutalities committed by members of the Army against the Papuans. However, the 2010 torture episode has not been the first case of torture committed by the Indonesian security forces against Papuans, and it will not likely be the last one either.

In fact, Papuans have suffered for a long time because of the human rights abuses committed by Indonesian authorities. Since Indonesia took over the territory of Papua in 1963, the Indonesian Army has conducted at least ten massive military operations against indigenous Papuans. Papuans living in places where military operations have been conducted have horrific stories to tell about the abuses they have suffered. They describe, for example, how they have watched their houses burning down, their gardens and source of livelihoods being destroyed. They give accounts of how they watched their friends, acquaintances and family members being intimidated, tortured, and killed during military operations.

The government's promise of justice is nothing more than empty words for the simple fact that very few military personnel have been held accountable for human rights abuses committed against Papuans. Moreover, perpetrators of abuse have been, at times, even recognized as national heroes by the government. Papuans have never heard any stories about the government's success in imprisoning human rights abusers.

The people of Papua New Guinea, whether it is East or West, are a special group of people to us in Australia. The Papuans were called very affectionately the fuzzy wuzzy angels. Geographically, I do not have a reference point to say that these particular Papuans and their parents and grandparents were involved with the Australian troops in New Guinea, but the Papuans were great supporters of the Australian troops. We have a very close and supportive relationship in more recent years in terms of endeavouring to work with Papua New Guinea, and it is not in the Indonesian sector, to try to encourage and grow their democracy. The stories my dad told about the Papuans in New Guinea and their closeness to the Australian Army people give them a very special place in my heart and in our history. It is difficult to accept that any group of people are subjected to such atrocities. It is even more difficult to accept when they live so close to our shores. I support the motion.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


Sitting suspended from 6.28 pm to 7.25 pm.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (7.25 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 14 February 2012.

VALEDICTORY

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (7.25 pm): It is a pleasure to rise in the valedictory debate as we conclude the parliamentary year for 2011. The tale of 2011 will be a story of devastation, a story of sorrow and a story of lives torn apart by the most devastating chain of events in our nation's history. It will be recorded as one of homes and lives destroyed and 99 per cent of our state disaster declared.

But 2011 will also be a story of hope, a story of resilience. It will be a tale of new bonds forged through a shared experience. It will be a tale of rebuilding and, mostly, it will be a tale of what it is to be a Queenslander. The terrifying scenes as floodwaters raged through Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley will be forever etched on Queensland's consciousness. Over a three-week period, floodwaters swallowed communities across the state, the destructive power of the water carving deep scars across the land and through the hearts of many Queenslanders.

On 17 January, we saw the establishment of a commission of inquiry to examine the events and to ensure that we were prepared for the coming wet season. We established the Queensland Reconstruction Authority—in one of the fastest times ever for the establishment of a new statutory authority—led by Major General Mick Slater, to begin the enormous task of rebuilding the state. It is now ably led by his replacement, Major General Dick Wilson.

As the mud army alongside the Australian Army marched across communities helping friends, neighbours and strangers, a new threat was building in the north. Just when we thought there was no more that Mother Nature could throw at us, category 5 Cyclone Yasi unleashed its fury on Northern Queensland. It brought with it a terrifying night as it ripped through towns like Tully and Tully Heads, Innisfail and Ingham, Cardwell and Mission Beach, El Arish, Silkwood and Silky Oak. In its aftermath, it brought devastation and misery. The Far North was already doing it tough as a result of the global financial crisis, and now they had a new fight on their hands. Queensland had well and truly been knocked down but we had not been knocked out. While many Queenslanders had lost everything, they had not lost their fighting spirit, and it is this spirit that shone so brightly around the world and throughout 2011.

We started 2011 with what seemed like an insurmountable challenge in front of us, and as a state we have ended it by overcoming that challenge. There were many things that came into play. The Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal became one of the largest in Australia's history, second only to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal. The funds in the appeal reached \$278 million—from corporate Australia, from other state and federal governments, from people across the world and from mums and dads and kids all donating what they could. The funds were distributed to more than 40,000 individuals in record time.

I must make mention of the morale-boosting power of Prince William, who gave generously of his time visiting Brisbane, Ipswich, Grantham, Toowoomba, Cairns, Tully and Cardwell during his tour of Queensland. There was no doubt that Prince William's visit in March to our flood and cyclone victims and their communities and his genuine concern, warmth and interest visibly lifted spirits at a very difficult time. The visit by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in October did likewise—a visit during which the Queen particularly praised the resilience of Queenslanders for picking up their lives and continuing to rebuild after our period of great adversity.

The road to recovery is not just about healing the physical and emotional scars. Already reeling from the GFC, the disasters were another blow to many parts of our economy. That is why we joined with the property industry to hold the Building Revival Forum, simplified development charges, capped infrastructure charges and launched the Queensland Building Boost. It is why we launched the Nothing Beats Queensland tourism campaign, and it is why we worked with our primary producers, particularly in North Queensland, to get them back on their feet.

What has always driven me is not only creating a stronger Queensland today but also securing a strong future. Queensland's future has never looked so bright. Securing a better future is about protecting the environment for the next generation. That is why we introduced landmark legislation to phase out sandmining on Stradbroke Island, why we introduced landmark strategic cropping land legislation to secure our future food supply, why we introduced waste management strategies to ensure Queensland is not Australia's dumping ground and why we strengthened our already well-established and rigorous regulatory framework for the growing coal seam gas industry.

Securing a bright future is about ensuring people have access to quality health care, regardless of where they live. That is why I am very proud that we have seen a substantial increase in regional cancer services, so that Queenslanders can get more services closer to home, and why in November it was a great honour to open the Liz Plummer Cancer Centre in Cairns, so that patients in Far North Queensland no longer have to travel for life-saving health care and the memory of that great champion will be forever in the minds of people in that region.

Securing a bright future is about planning and building infrastructure now and for the future. That is why this year we secured a contract to deliver the new rapid transit project on the Gold Coast, opened the next leg of the Eastern Busway and turned the first sod on a new rail line from Darra to Springfield. It is also why we are building new hospitals on the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast, building the Queensland Children's Hospital and making upgrades right across Queensland.

Securing a bright future is about grasping new opportunities. This year we witnessed the birth in Queensland of a new industry when we saw the first sods turned on our LNG industry on Curtis Island. This is an industry that will deliver 18,000 jobs over the next four years and will inject up to \$45 billion into the Queensland economy.

As Queenslanders were picking themselves up, they needed something to lift their spirits. Our athletes responded with one of the greatest years ever for Queensland sport. The mighty Maroons, the Roar, the women's Roar, the Firebirds, the Queensland Reds, the Brisbane Barracudas, Sally Pearson, Sam Stosur and Ashleigh Barty all romped into the record books and shone on the national and international stages. What is more, Sally Pearson became the first Australian to win the 2011 International Association of Athletics Federations world female athlete of the year.

And nothing could have capped off a truly momentous sporting year better than the announcement that the Gold Coast is set to take its place among the great cities of the world when it hosts the 2018 Commonwealth Games. I take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the bid for their passionate and hard work. I particularly thank my parliamentary secretary for the Commonwealth Games, Peta-Kaye Croft. I thank the opposition for their bipartisan support of this bid. I think in Queensland we all felt at the end of this year that it was good to have something great happen for our state.

2011 has been a very busy parliamentary year. The work of the parliament, as we know, is made possible by many people, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the ongoing hard work and dedication of the Parliamentary Service, which is ably led by the Clerk of the Parliament, Neil Laurie, who this year not only had to deal with all of us but also had to deal with the birth of his twins. Neil has become a very devoted father—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Ms BLIGH: I think 89 of us might look a bit easier! Neil is currently taking leave to be with his family. I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing hard work of the Deputy Clerk, our current Acting Clerk, Michael Ries.

As we all know, the parliamentary committee reforms commenced in August this year, and the reforms have meant a significant increase in the workload for committee chairs, members and staff, and I thank them all for ensuring that, despite this, the new process—including public hearings—has resulted in comprehensive reports that have greatly assisted members during the debate of bills.

I also thank the directors of all of the service areas, the Sergeant-at-Arms, the First Clerk Assistant, their staff and all of the officers of the parliament. I thank those from Hansard, who, as we know, do a sterling job of recording the public debates of our time as they are conducted here in the parliament; Community Engagement, who have opened the parliament regularly to the public; the library, who do such great work for all of us; the Table Office; the switchboard staff; the catering team; and those who look after this building and the gardens that make it such an important part of our heritage. And, as we all know, the chamber would not function effectively without the assistance provided by our attendants, and I thank them for their support in this regard.

Time constrains me from naming everyone, but I would like to thank each and every person who contributes so well to our parliament for their hard work and long hours. I make particular mention of and thank Theresa Johnson and all of the officers of the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. Without them and their hard work we would have no bills to consider, and they do a great job.

I would like to thank my team of government members for their talent, their hard work and their dedication representing the people of Queensland this year. I also thank the non-government members for their contribution to what is a very robust and healthy parliamentary democracy in what has been, I think, one of the more extraordinary years in our state.

I also must thank my own hardworking ministerial staff, each and every one of them, as well as my electorate office staff, Anna and Angus. It is very handy having an electorate officer named Anna when she answers the phone! I would also like to pay tribute to the hardworking electorate office staff of all members. We all know that our electorate office staff are on the front line every single day. They often take phone calls that are pretty heated when we are not there, and we know what a great job they do.

For some members of our parliament this will be their last valedictory, and I want to take a moment to pay tribute to them. Again, I am constrained by time so, please, do not let my brevity in any way diminish the enormous contributions they have made to Queensland politics. Firstly, I thank the Attorney-General of Queensland, Paul Lucas, who not only has been a loyal and supportive member of my team since the day I became Premier but also has spent much of that time as my deputy. I thank him for his support, for his loyalty, for his friendship and for all of his hard work.

I thank those who have served in their time as ministers of the Queensland government. Stephen Robertson has shouldered some very heavy loads in his time as minister. I think the best I can say about Robert Swarten is that he is someone who will be most missed in parliament. It just will not be the same without him.

Mr Dowling: It is now!

Ms BLIGH: Don't worry: he won't miss the chance later on! Desley Boyle has been such a great champion for Cairns, for the Far North and for Labor causes and Labor values. When she retires from this parliament next year, Judy Spence will become the longest serving woman to have ever served in the Queensland parliament. It is a remarkable achievement but even more remarkable for the fact that Judy won a seat that was widely regarded as unwinable and she was widely regarded in her first term as a oncer. She could not have proved them more wrong. I thank Judy for the work she has done as Leader of the House, particularly with the reforms this year.


John Mickel as Speaker has managed to keep us in check for the most part. That is no mean feat and we thank him for it. Lindy Nelson-Carr will also move into a different part of her life. She has been a great advocate for the people of Townsville and the people she has served and has made a big difference as part of a Labor government.

Mike Horan has so ably served the people that he represents and has become an elder statesman of the conservative side of politics in Queensland. I thank Mike for his service and I particularly thank him for what I think was a great deal of wisdom brought to the work of the parliamentary reform committee. Dorothy Pratt joined this parliament in circumstances such that I think most thought she would be a one-termer. She proved them wrong. Whatever people might think of some of Dorothy's early politics, I think it is important to recognise that she has been a passionate advocate for the people that she represents in this place.

I would also like to pay tribute to the families of all government and non-government members. Being a relative of an MP is very tough, but we could not do it without their support. I would like to thank my own family, my husband, Greg, and my two sons, Joe and Oliver. Oliver managed to make his own spectacular entrance into the political fray this year. Their unconditional love and support is a source of enormous strength for me, as is the love and support of the families of all of us. I thank each of the members of my family for coming on this journey with me, including my mother.

I have been served by a very strong and able cabinet this year and throughout the term of this government. They have stood staunchly by me through all the thick and all the thin of politics and we have had plenty of both. I want to thank each and every one of them. I particularly thank Andrew Fraser, who now serves as my deputy and who I think has been an outstanding Treasurer of Queensland in some of the most uncertain of economic times.

Let me conclude by wishing each and member, each and every staff member and the families of all a wonderful, safe and happy Christmas and a great and prosperous and peaceful new year. I also hope that for all of us, and more particularly for all of the people who we represent in this parliament, Mother Nature gives us a much better start to 2012. I look forward to seeing you all back here in 2012.

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (7.40 pm): As the parliament winds up for 2011, I am somewhat honoured to join in this valedictory tonight and to firstly endorse the comments that were made by the Premier in regard to the natural disasters that afflicted our state in the early part of 2011. I think 2011 will always be remembered as the year of the flood and Cyclone Yasi. Above all else, those natural disasters have now come to brand 2011 as a year of struggle and recovery for so many individuals and for so many communities right across the state. The natural disasters were unprecedented, but I think they brought out the best in communities, they brought out the best in people and I hope that they brought out the best in many people in this chamber in the roles that they have as parliamentarians. I would also echo the expression of hope that we will not see those types of natural disasters visited on our state again as we look forward to 2012.

In keeping with the wording of the motion before the House tonight, I acknowledge all of the people who have made the operation of this parliament possible. Mr Speaker, to you I extend congratulations from all members of this House, especially from the members on the opposition side whom I represent tonight. I think the position of Speaker is a very difficult one. I have seen it performed in a number of different ways by a number of different people in the 14 years that I have been here, but I can say without fear of contradiction that the way in which you have performed the role has made this parliament work the way that it should.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, above all else that is a great service for you to provide. There are very few people who understand what a parliament is about. Without wanting to start an argument, I would say that there are quite a number of people in this parliament who do not understand what this parliament is about. There are people who write in some of the media outlets in this state who have no idea what this parliament is about—no idea at all. They have no idea of the function that this parliament should serve. It is an essential part of the Westminster democracy.

Mr Speaker, this parliament plays an incredibly important role and the ability for this parliament to play that role depends very much on the way in which you administer this place. The role is never going to ensure that you are popular with everyone in here. In fact, on a number of occasions you have not been popular with me. But, like a good referee in a football match, you have ensured that there has been a fair match in this parliament and this parliament has fulfilled that role. Mr Speaker, I want to congratulate you on that job as we wind up 2011. Mr Speaker, I also want to congratulate you in your role as the member for Logan. We came into this parliament at the same time and we were adversaries across this parliament with a considerable amount of vigour, as I recall. I wish you well in your retirement from that role as the member for Logan as well.

I extend my thanks and congratulations to all of the staff—to the Clerk, Neil Laurie; the Deputy Clerk, Michael Ries; Leanne Clare, and all of the table office staff; and all of the attendants; the security staff; the committee staff; the Hansard staff, who produce the reports for this parliament; the Parliamentary Library staff; the Catering Services staff; and all of the ground staff and the building staff who maintain this great parliament here for us to work in and, for some of us, to live in. Thank you for the roles that you play and the work that you do to keep the parliament attended and to keep it running.

I extend my best wishes to all of the retiring members but, most especially, to Mike Horan, the member for Toowoomba South. On this side of parliament Mike Horan has been of enormous assistance to a whole range of young members who have come to this place with a lot of ambition and not much knowledge. Mike Horan has—

Ms Bligh: Personal experience?

Mr SEENEY: Yes. I will take the Premier's interjection. I speak from personal experience. Mike Horan has been a mentor to many, with an odd spectacular failure in a mentoring role that we will not talk about. Mike has been an inspiration—

Mr Lucas: You're only as good as the material you're given.

Mr SEENEY: Some tasks are just impossible—beyond the best of us. Mike has been a great example to many. He has fulfilled many roles in this parliament. He was a health minister, which I am sure a couple of members on that side of the House will agree is probably the most difficult job in government. He was opposition leader here when the opposition numbered 11 members. He has fulfilled a range of shadow minister roles and he was the whip for the opposition. I think Mike has often been described as the best whip we have ever had. I think that is true. But most of all, Mike was a mate to many of us and he will certainly be a sad loss to us on this side of the House. I want to extend our best wishes to Mike and Helen and wish him all the best as he retires from that job of member for Toowoomba South.

To the other retiring members on the other side of the House—and the Premier went through them all—I wish you all the best in your retirement as well. To Dorothy Pratt in the electorate of Nanango, which is a neighbouring electorate to my electorate, to Judy Spence, a long serving member of the House, to Robert Schwarten—'Schwarto' and I have had some colourful exchanges in this place and I think it is probably best left at that—to Steven Robertson and Paul Lucas, both of whom I think have been worthy adversaries at different times, to Lindy Nelson-Carr and to Desley Boyle, I wish you all the very best in your retirement.

I thank all of the members on this side of the House. I especially acknowledge John-Paul Langbroek, who led the opposition in the early part of the year, ably assisted by Lawrence Springborg. I acknowledge the work that they did and the essential roles that they have come to play in our team. I acknowledge my deputy, Tim Nicholls, and thank him for the great job that he has done. I acknowledge all of the shadow ministers for the roles that they have played in the parliament in the year that is coming to a close. I know from almost 14 long years of experience that it is a very difficult task to be a shadow minister and, indeed, to be a member of the opposition. It is a very difficult task indeed. The work that shadow ministers do quite often goes unnoticed and unremarked. This is one of the few opportunities that is available to acknowledge the great work that shadow ministers on this side of the parliament do and the essential role that they play in making sure that this parliament fulfils the role that is so essential in the democratic system.

I also recognise a man who has probably been mentioned in this parliament more in the past six months than anybody I can ever remember. In fact, I would go as far as to say that without Campbell Newman some ministers would have had nothing to say in reply to questions that they were asked. A search of the parliamentary record would show that, in total, government ministers have talked more about Campbell Newman than any other subject in their portfolios collectively.

I acknowledge Campbell Newman and the courageous role that he has played in Queensland politics over the last eight months. Irrespective of what anybody might think about the particular politics, I think you have to acknowledge Campbell Newman's courage in the attempt that he is making to win government in this state. So I acknowledge Campbell Newman and I hope that members on the other side of the House can find something else to talk about in their answers to questions if we do, as the Premier says, come back in the New Year.

I acknowledge all of my staff in the opposition office. Being an opposition staffer is a very difficult role. I acknowledge all the people who fill the roles in the opposition office, but I especially acknowledge Margaret Hill, who is retiring as the year draws to a close. Margaret has been a staff member for 15 years. She has been a staff member with us on the conservative side of politics for 15 years. She started with us when we were in government and she came with us into opposition when we lost government in 1998. She has been a staffer in the opposition office since then. Fifteen years is a great period of service. Margaret has been my office manager in my role as opposition leader for quite some


time. I wish her well in her retirement. She goes to fulfil the task of a grandmother to two daughters who are each having a baby within a few days of each other. She is certainly not going to have any spare time. I wish Margaret Hill well. She has been a great staffer and probably one of the greatest staffers that I have had the opportunity to work with.

I acknowledge all of the electoral staff who work in electoral offices. It is an incredibly demanding role but an incredibly important role for each and every one of us as members of the parliament. I acknowledge the great roles that they play in difficult circumstances with at times less than adequate equipment and work circumstances. I particularly acknowledge my own electorate office staff, Annette and Mary, both of whom have been with me for many years. Like the electorate office staff who serve all of the members, they make the performance of our roles possible.

As the year comes to a close I acknowledge the partners of all of the MPs here. I endorse the comments of the Premier that being part of a politician's family is incredibly difficult. It is not something that the people who make up our families get a choice in most of the time. They do not get a choice; we make the choice for them. I think as we look forward to the Christmas break we should all acknowledge the extra burdens and the extra angst that our role as MPs brings to the people who love us and make up our families.

I acknowledge my own wife, Therese, who for 13 years has been the wife of an MP in a regional seat. That has involved her husband being away from home a heck of a lot over those 13 years. I think being a representative in a regional seat makes the position of an MP's partner even more difficult. I think members on this side of the House who represent regional seats would know full well what I mean. I wish all of the families of all of the MPs the very best in the difficult roles that they all play.

Mr Speaker, I conclude by asking you to convey to all of the staff here at Parliament House the very best for the year ahead and to wish every member in the parliament a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.


 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (7.54 pm): Once more we all look to the Christmas break with excitement, expectation and relief—excitement and expectation because Christmas is a time for families, for recharging our batteries, so to speak, and for rejuvenating our relationships with those we love. Previous speakers have thanked the staff across all sectors here in the parliamentary precinct. Each of you enhance our ability to represent our communities and we thank you. Many also make our stay here more comfortable. Thank you on behalf of the Independents and the Katter's Australian Party members.

To our electorate staff, we thank you also. Each one represents us on a daily basis in our communities with compassion and care. As the member for Callide said, our families share the responsibility and the price of being elected members in this place. It is a privilege to be here, but there is a cost. They also share our frustrations. We appreciate you and love you.

Not all here in this chamber have enjoyed 2011. Not all in this precinct have enjoyed 2011. Some have confronted illness and some bereavement. Many in our state have suffered great loss, loss of all they possessed and loss of those whom they loved. For those who have suffered so greatly, Christmas will hold a void and a poignant sense of loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Mr Speaker, I can only say you serve this House with fairness and dignity. Thank you is simply not enough, but it is all we have to offer. To those members retiring, we wish you peace, we wish you fulfilment and we wish you happiness.

On behalf of the Independents and the members of the Katter's Australian Party, I wish each one here a safe, happy and holy Christmas. May you travel safely, enjoy your family and friends and may 2012 bring you, each one, great joy.

 **Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (7.56 pm): It is with a great sense of symmetry that I bid farewell to this parliament on the eve of my election here in 1989. It has been an enormous privilege to have served for this length of time as the member for Mount Gravatt and then of Sunnybank. When I was elected as the first Labor member in Mount Gravatt after the conservative parties had held the seat for 32 years, as the Premier suggested tonight, many people earmarked me as a oncer. Given that I received a 17 per cent swing to win the seat, this was understandable. While I am not one for noting personal milestones or records, I have been informed that I am the longest serving woman in the history of the Queensland parliament at 22 years and I am the longest serving female MP sitting on the government benches at 20 years. With the changing nature of voting behaviour it will be interesting to see if this achievement is ever surpassed.

I have worked with three Premiers and I have seen four Premiers preside in this House. In each of my eight elections I have been elected on the primary vote and I have always been humbled by the support of my constituency and the confidence they have invested in me to represent their interests. It is still a pleasure to attend community meetings and celebrations, provide assistance to those in need and help with new projects and problem solving. It has also been very interesting to watch my electorate become the multicultural heartland of Queensland. I am very proud of the way that different people from every background in the world live and grow together in my community.

Many of my constituents express surprise that I am retiring at a relatively young age, but after a long career in politics I am looking forward to the next chapter of my life and the new challenges, roles and adventures that I will enjoy with my family and friends. I have sat in this parliament for over 1,000 sitting days, asked or answered more than 1,700 questions and made over 800 speeches. I have never wanted to be a passenger in our democratic process and I have never considered that the suburbs I have represented are safe Labor territory. I had my back up against the wall to win my seat in 1989 and, like many other colleagues who were elected that year, knew I had to work very hard every day to continue to enjoy the support of the people who had invested their trust in me.

There are thousands of people who have encouraged me along the way. My husband, Heinz, and children, Lucas and Jack, have always provided me unqualified love and support. Jack, now 21, was born into the parliament. Lucas was four when I was elected. I think for them the toughest time was when they were teenagers and I was the police minister. Their mates gave them lots of feedback on how the laws should be changed to reflect the lifestyles they wanted to live, which were often at odds with the laws that we had given the police to enforce. My boys are wonderful adults now and I am enormously proud of them.

I have been able to devote so much time and energy to my work because Heinz has provided the children and me with enormous assistance with house duties and child rearing, and he has worked tirelessly on my campaigns. We are both looking forward to a break from the hard slog of political campaigning. I am also very fortunate to have a close and loving family. My other family—my mother, my sisters, my brothers-in-law and their children—and my good friend Bernie have all been great.

Over 22 years I have had a number of electorate officers. They, my ministerial staff, my branch members and colleagues have been part of the fabric of my life for a long time. Today I want to acknowledge my two longest serving staff members, Kerry Humphreys and Simon Tutt, who are also my very good friends. We have shared the victories and the stresses of public life. I thank them and all of those who have been part of my journey along the way.

We have come a long way in my time here. When I was elected I inherited an office that consisted of one room up a few flights of stairs, a typewriter and a photocopier and a fax and phone, and that was the end of the story. I thought I was extremely lucky because I had come from a high school where over 100 teachers had to share one phone, one photocopier and one fax. It was luxury to have all of that at my disposal. Our offices today are well equipped as are we as members of parliament.

When I was elected there was a large influx of women members of parliament. There were nine of us in those days. I was pleased in the early 1990s to lead the charge to introduce affirmative action in the Labor Party to get more women preselected. There was enormous opposition but we managed it and I think we have normalised the issue of women doing this job. Lots of women who sit in this parliament today benefited from the doors we opened for them, and that is on both sides of politics. Women have changed this parliament in many ways. I do not have the time to elaborate on this today but on my observation the changes have all been positive.

Of course, the biggest change to this parliament in my career has occurred in the last six months. The new committee system has very quickly given Queenslanders unprecedented opportunities to participate in law making, and it has also given members of parliament new and valuable opportunities to listen to anyone who has an interest in the laws that we pass. I had the privilege of chairing the committee that recommended the parliamentary changes. I am sure all members will agree that they are working very well and we have established a very solid basis for future parliamentary reform.

Members who stay as long as I have learn that your own political side does not have the monopoly on having decent people—they exist on both sides of the chamber. Over the years I have led three trade delegations. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition and I went to China together. Many other people have travelled with me around the world on different trade delegations. I have also travelled with members of parliament on many committees over many years. I went with Lawrence Springborg to Canada last year.

I think I have made friends on both sides despite our political divide. As Leader of the House it has been rewarding to work with my Labor colleagues and members of the LNP on the Committee of the Legislative Assembly in implementing our new reforms. On every occasion during this three-year term the parliamentary leadership team of the LNP have proven themselves people who kept their word. I thank them for that.


It has always been a pleasure to work with the staff at Parliament House. We are all well served by having such loyal, helpful and cheerful people working here. On behalf of my family, who have grown up in this place, I thank each of you for your kindness.

I have had too many portfolio responsibilities over the years to single out particular achievements or stories. I have worked with many exceptionally dedicated and professional public servants in all agencies. But in particular I want to acknowledge tonight our Police Commissioner, Bob Atkinson, and my director-general, Frank Rockett, who are two of those people, but there have been many, many more. I want to thank them for their great service.

My colleagues Dean Wells and Robert Swarten and I are the last of the Goss era Labor politicians. I have seen many good people come and go over the years. The class of '89 was particularly idealistic and reformist, as you would expect after a long period in the wilderness. I am in good company at the end of my career. Another good man, Matt Foley, quoted these words by William Butler Yeats in parliament and I will use them again tonight because they are for all the good people I have met along the way—

Think where man's glory starts and ends

And say my glory was I had such friends.

 **Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (8.04 pm): It is with some joy that I follow my very good friend, the honourable member for Sunnybank. I note the fact that when we signed the attendance register it was myself, Lawrence Springborg and you in that order, having been elected 22 years ago tomorrow. There is a sense of irony in following you here tonight. You mentioned our other friend Dean Wells. When we used to sit right behind where you are now they were amongst the happiest and most humorous days that I spent as a minister. I am indeed very thankful to look back on that as a very good time in my history.

I want to firstly do as others have done and acknowledge my family. Unfortunately my father is dead and he does not get to see me retire. But he was here when I got elected and he is with me in spirit. I discussed with him that I would be going either last election or now and I honour my word to him tonight. I am lucky that all of the rest of them are still alive. I would be lost without them. We are a very strong family. We are Labor people by history, by birthright, and we will all die that way.

I want to particularly praise my wife. As the member for Sunnybank said—and our families are very close friends; we have travelled together around the world—we understand what it is that family does for you. It has been great the whole time that I have been in parliament to have somebody who has kept a safe home and great security for our two sons. They have gone on to become journalists. They are very fine men. They came in here like Judy's kids did as babies. I can still remember the horrified looks of the staff as Christopher, who is now 22, was clutching the Royal Doulton in the one red cedar high chair that was here. We have moved on a lot since then.

It is tough for a single mum. That is how my wife has had to bring up our kids. When there was flooding under the house, when the palm tree I planted many years ago dropped a frond and set fire to the house she had to ring the fire brigade, when various animals have been wounded and pets run over she has been up in the middle of the night digging holes; these things seemed to happen when I was away. I say to Judy that she has been a wonderful wife. She has provided a secure family and been a great inspiration to our kids. Their success has been a result of her effort not mine. I am sure that every other member here understands what that means, especially when you are a minister away as often as I was.

I want to thank the party—the great Labor Party—for endorsing me. I would not be here if it was not for the Labor Party. As I said, I was born almost with a Labor Party ticket in my pocket and a union ticket in the other one and I will die with both of them. I hope it is a bit far away. I will never lose my principles. I came in here and read my maiden speech and I would still say the same things today about the Labor Party and the people who make it work. Most of those people unfortunately are dead. Some 22 years is a long time.

I have had the opportunity as I have cleaned up my office to see those people's photographs and they are still enmeshed in my mind and I hope that I have done them proud in the years that I have been here. It is very hard to hold onto your principles. I have watched people rat in this place. I do not think anybody, even my harshest critic, could ever say that I have departed from any principles that I have ever held. I wear that as a badge of honour. It was a promise that I made to the people who elected me. I have kept it as best as I can.

I have worked honestly, conscientiously, diligently, humorously and belligerently for the last 22 years. I am somebody who knows what my failings are. I know what my strengths are. Both of them are equal. I am a flawed individual like a lot of other people recognise, but I have never taken myself that seriously. I have enjoyed being in reformist governments.

My predecessor never had a year in government and he was here for 17 years. I have been fortunate to have been a minister, to have shared the benches with people who shared the vision I did, to have been able to drive reforms that I believed in and to end my career when I wanted to end it.

I want to also thank the staff who work for me. I have already mentioned my ministerial staff, and I see my old mate Burgess Stephenson in the public gallery. He has been a mate of mine for a long time and for his suffering he ended up being my chief of staff. I say thanks, Burg, and all the other people I have mentioned before. My electorate office staff are the rocks of my electorate. How they have put up with me all these years I do not know. It started with Greg Evans and Ann McDougall and then I ended up with Debbie Wickerson and Ann's daughter Karen Horstman. At the moment Ann is in helping

because Debbie is off due to an operation. Ann McDougall is anti fluoride and I always say to her that she needs locking up, and she says to me, 'Well, I do need locking up because I have come back to help you.' We are great friends, but I do not underestimate the value of those people. I have seen ministers in this place lose sight of the fact that their electorate is the No. 1 thing in their life outside their family. I have never done that. It has required a great sacrifice from my family and a personal drive by me, but I do not regret any part of it.

When I delivered my maiden speech I started talking about education. I am still as confident today as I was then that the Labor government has done the right thing. It takes a long time to see the results, but what joy I felt the other day when it was reported that our 15-year-old kids in Queensland lead the world in the OECD countries. That is what this is about. That is what Labor is about: public education, battlers' kids, working-class kids making it to the top. While I have breath in my lungs I will continue to enunciate that. I am proud to have been an organiser in the Teachers Union. People like John Battams are very close mates of mine. I have to warn those people on the other side: you do not know the hornet's nest you have stirred up with this new policy. I will not get any more political than that.


As I said at the outset 22 years ago, education is the key that unlocks inequality. I believe that our governments collectively—the three Labor Premiers under whom I have served—were committed to that factor. The Smart State means that now. We do not have the lowest paid teachers anymore, but we did 22 years ago. We had the worst funded schools in Australia and the most dilapidated buildings. We used to hang our heads when I used to go to ACTU conferences with other teacher unions. That is no longer the case, and I am proud that that is the legacy of a Labor government.

Finally, I want to talk about the CLA and what I think it should do. Mr Speaker, in deference to you, we are at odds on this. I think we have democratised this parliament. I have probably ruffled a few feathers when I have said that the issue of the level of pay for MPs is something that we as Labor people need to look at as well as those opposite, as people who believe in parliamentary democracy. Democracy gains nothing by underpaying politicians. I think we need to take a bipartisan view to that to work out what is reasonable and fair and justifiable in the public forum. Most people whom I have met think it is fair enough to pay politicians well, but a lot of people would think that if you gave them a seatless unicycle and they paid their way to come to parliament that would be too much. I do not think the lowest common denominator should be able to prevail. When we consider that when I came to parliament a high school principal was paid more than I was and now they are paid more than I am, we must realise that there is something wrong in our system and it should be fixed.

I do not believe this parliament should resemble an undertakers' picnic or a mausoleum. I have enjoyed my time in here in the cut and thrust of debate. If I have offended anybody, too bad! The result is that I walk away from here with a clear conscience, a smile on my face and a great hope in a better world and a return of a Labor government.

I want to praise the media in my local area for giving me a fair go. Journalism is a very noble trade. Both my sons are journalists. I hope that one day the media understands that their transparency is just as important as ours. There needs to be accountability. The stuff that is going on at the moment is very interesting. We see some of the journalists who I would not spit on out there running a case to say that we need to be less accountable. I think this place is much more accountable since I have been in it, but I am not sure the media is. I salute the journalists in this gallery, most of whom I regard as decent people. I will not go into the negatives of some of those others I have given a serve to in here. I stand by my words on that.

I wish everybody well. As I say—you would not expect me to say anything different—I want a return of a Labor government, I want to die under a Labor government and I want to die when I am a hundred. Thank you very much, everybody and I wish you all very well.

 **Hon. S ROBERTSON** (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Water Utilities) (8.15 pm): As this will be the last valedictory debate that I will have the opportunity to participate in, I would firstly like to place on record my most sincere thanks and appreciation to the staff of Parliament House who have been of invaluable help since my election to parliament in 1992. Over the course of nearly 20 years as a member of this House, I have witnessed its evolution from a very conservative and staid institution to a more dynamic and relevant chamber where members have the opportunity to directly contribute to the framing, drafting and passing of legislation more so than in any time over the last 100, if not 150, years. Unfortunately, over the same period I have also witnessed a significant decline of culture of this somewhat unusual workplace. I hope that this may return sometime in the future when a new generation of elected representatives has the opportunity to frame a new culture free of the bitterness of a political history borne of the ructions of the 1980s and 1990s.

Since 1992 I have had the honour to represent the seats of Sunnybank and Stretton. These electorates centred on a unique part of Brisbane that once—not all that long ago—were part of a belt of small and large market gardens from the Redlands out to Logan and beyond. It is now part of Brisbane that is defined by its human and cultural diversity with one of the highest proportions of residents born overseas of any electorate in Australia. It is this diversity that I have been most proud to represent as it has also enriched my life and opened opportunities to gaining a deeper understanding for our world than

I could have ever imagined. It is also why I count as one of my proudest moments to be the first politician in Australia to have spoken out against the racist outbursts of Pauline Hanson following her maiden speech to the federal parliament back in 1996. In representing such a multicultural electorate I knew implicitly the hurt, offence and outrage that so many of my constituents immediately felt. While many sat back and equivocated, I knew I had to immediately make a vocal and principled stand against what she was calling for. This was not the Australia that I and my constituents believed in and it was a battle we ultimately won.

On 16 December I will have been extremely fortunate and honoured to have served 13 years as a minister of the Crown in successive Labor governments. Following my appointment as parliamentary secretary in 1998, I was promoted to cabinet in 1999, firstly as minister for emergency services. I was just joking with my staff earlier that my first duty two weeks later was to preside over Y2K. I spent the new millennium in the disaster control centre at Kedron Park. As the lights of New Zealand stayed on, we knew that perhaps a lot of money had been spent in vain. Of course, since then I have had a number of portfolios. I can say with confidence and pride that I have never been one to shy away from tackling the difficult portfolios and have taken on some of the most challenging policy issues facing Queensland.

As part of a Labor government I have been most proud to have participated in the ending of broadscale tree clearing in Queensland, one of the most important environmental protection measures which delivered Australia's largest ever reduction in carbon emissions and allowed the former Howard government to claim Australia had met carbon reduction targets required under the Kyoto protocol. I was given responsibility for rolling out the \$7 billion Queensland Health Action Plan—the largest ever investment in Queensland's health system—resulting in significant improvements in health services throughout the state including increases in clinical staff and hospital beds. But most importantly, it has been the significant improvements to patient safety and patient rights in our public and private health systems and the development of Australia's most transparent reporting of health system performance that I am most proud of during my time as Minister for Health.

In 2004 I was responsible for establishing the independent review into Queensland's electricity distribution system resulting in a far more reliable and secure network through a significant increase in capital investment over the past seven years. I introduced Australia's first ever laws to encourage the development of the coal seam gas industry and subsequently devised and introduced land access laws and compensation templates to provide a balance between the interests of resource companies and the rights of landholders. I also banned the use of the controversial B-Tex fracking chemicals.

As Minister for Natural Resources, I had the responsibility for ensuring the protection of some of Australia's and the world's most pristine environments through Queensland's unique wild rivers legislation and subsequent declarations of wild rivers in Cape York, the Gulf and Fraser Island.

Over the past few years I have driven the development of Queensland's Renewable Energy Plan and introduced the highly successful solar hot-water scheme and oversaw the rollout of the very popular rooftop solar bonus schemes. Nearly 30,000 Queenslanders have signed up to install solar hot-water systems over the past 18 months, and over 350 megawatts of energy are now generated from the rooftops of Queensland homes—the equivalent of a medium-sized conventional power fired station.

Whilst it took some time and a number of goes, I succeeded in overhauling Queensland's land valuation system and the development of the new fairer site valuation method as used by most other Australian states, replacing the old land valuation system which had been in place for over 70 years. To the member for Rockhampton, you can pass this on: described as the most significant public health initiative in recent history, the addition of fluoride into Queensland's drinking water supplies is an initiative I am particularly proud of.

Finally, from 1 July next year we will introduce a new system of cost-reflective tariffs which will represent the most significant overhaul of electricity tariffs in Queensland in decades, resulting in a fairer, more transparent system that will reward energy efficiency rather than energy consumption.

Over the years I have been blessed with having an amazing group of young and not-so-young policy, media and administrative staff work alongside me: Cameron Dick, who seems to have done pretty well for himself, Dr Kay Pearce, Kathie Standen, who I know is listening and is soon to give birth to her first child, Catherine Goldie and Lance McCallum, who is in the gallery. Each one of them are very special in their own way and each one of them can claim part ownership of the legacy I leave behind.

I have worked with outstanding policy and media advisers like Myra Geddes, whom I am particularly proud of, who now works in the Prime Minister's office; Paul Lynch, Paul Inches, Scott Zakeresen, Josh Cooney, Tim Watts, Kate Van Poelgeest, Don Wilson, Charlotte Petersen, Zoe Russell and Emma Cleary among many others including most recently Grace Johnson and Kirsten Shelley. I have always encouraged and taken great pride in seeing my staff build on the opportunities of working in my office. So many of the names I have just listed have done exactly that in making excellent contributions in their particular fields of endeavour, and long may they do so. I have also enjoyed the loyalty of long-serving administrative staff like Gail Clelland, Jenny Downie and Michael Jennings, all of whom have been with me from day one.

Finally, to my electorate staff—Donna, Carol and Sarah—a very special and heartfelt thankyou for looking after my electorate during my frequent absences due to my ministerial responsibilities. To all my staff, past and present, I thank you all for your amazing support and friendship over the years.


It is no secret that I am not one of Queensland media's greatest fans. In general, and of course there are notable exceptions, I am of the view that the Queensland public are poorly served in how complex issues are often reported to them, if at all. I have often reflected on reading the reports of proceedings in this chamber whether I was in fact living in a parallel universe. I am reminded of US President Lyndon Johnson's observation that, 'If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: "President can't swim."' Unfortunately, in my view, there are tangible signs that the standard of reporting will only continue to deteriorate as the 24-hour news cycle becomes ever more pervasive and reporters become ever more oppressed to deliver copy to feed this hungry beast.

I particularly will not miss the daily editorial lectures or the overuse and abuse of the word 'crisis'. However, my experience with the media in Queensland over many years reinforces my view of the importance of a well-resourced and fearless ABC with a fierce commitment to in-depth analysis of local and state-wide news and current affairs. The reporting of politics in Queensland cannot be left to commercially focused and unaccountable organisations with limited capacity or interest in thoughtful and agenda-free analysis of matters impacting on our state. I do view with concern a creeping centralisation of ABC news and current affairs resources throughout Australia.

After 20 years in parliament and 13 in cabinet, it is time to move on. I have been enormously privileged to have served my party, my electorate and my state over such a lengthy period of time. It is rare for a politician to be allowed to serve at such senior levels and to depart at his own choosing, and I am extremely grateful for that.

In 1965 an unskilled ex-British serviceman left Aberdeen, Scotland seeking a better life and opportunities for his young family. I will forever be grateful to my father for this decision, and I hope my contribution to public service in Queensland has in some ways contributed to making this great state even better. To quote Abraham Lincoln and, more recently, Bob Carr upon his retirement, I will leave this parliament at the next election with malice for none and charity for all.

I am looking forward to the next stage of my life with my loving wife, Caz, who has been a willing listener to my frustrations, my joys and my ups and downs over many years. In case we do not return to this chamber before the election is called, I wish all of you the very best for your respective futures.

 **Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (8.25 pm): I would like to thank the parliament for the privilege of being able to stand up here tonight and reflect on some 21 years as a member of this parliament, something which I have been very proud. I thank the Premier for her gracious words and my good mate Jeff Seeney for his kind words as well.

Growing up in Moorooka as the son of a working-class family—a policeman and a nurse—I never dreamed I would be in this place. All I ever wanted in life was one day to get out of Brisbane and have a farm. Thanks to my parents, I had nine wonderful years at St Laurence's Christian Brothers College, and I will be forever grateful for the background and education that the Christian brothers through great sacrifice gave to so many thousands of us young men from the south side of Brisbane.

The world opened up for me not long after leaving school when I met a lovely young nurse at the Mater Hospital, which was just down the road from St Laurence's. Helen, since 1966, has followed me through the hallways of rugby league, of dairy farms, of running showgrounds, rock and roll, speedway and rodeo at the Toowoomba showgrounds and eventually to a by-election in Toowoomba for Toowoomba South in 1991. It did get off to a bit of a rocky start. We had a honeymoon in Sydney and I had a trial match for Parramatta against St George, but despite that she is still with me today.

We have been incredibly fortunate in that time to have had three lovely kids who have all done well. Matt, Tim and Emma have all done exceptionally well in their separate careers and we now have seven lovely grandkids in Lucy, Courtney, Alex, Lewis, Amy, Patrick and Elouise. That probably gives you a good reason for my looking forward to retirement.

The by-election for Toowoomba South came about very suddenly when Clive Berghofer had to retire from either being the mayor of Toowoomba or the member for Toowoomba South. As well as that, he had the biggest pub and the biggest contracting business in Queensland. I joined the National Party. I was the manager of the Toowoomba showgrounds at the time. Five weeks later I was in parliament. After I joined, a week later there was a preselection. I did not know what that was about. Someone said, 'You have to go around and see all the people who are going to vote.' Then I was elected to parliament. In the four weeks of the election campaign, someone told me about preference votes. I said, 'What are they?' It was quite an experience. Suddenly the weight of it all came upon me and I thought that if I lost this seat—it was the only seat we had in 1991 up in that area—that it would be a terrible thing.

Anyway, I was fortunate enough to win it and come in here in 1991 with Terry Sullivan, who stood in a by-election that same weekend in Brisbane. It has been quite a ride since then. I got a shadow ministry a few months later. As long as I live, I will be very proud of the fact that I was Minister for Health in the Queensland government. It was an exciting time. I had some outstanding colleagues around me and I well remember the term from 1992 to 1995 when we really took it to the government, which was a government with quite substantial numbers. I think everyone who has been in this parliament who has had the privilege of being a minister will feel proud that they have been able to serve the state. Ultimately, to be able to serve as a minister, do some things and make some things happen is a great thing in your life.

I will be forever proud of the fact that Queensland was the first state in Australia to have a free public hospital system, and I think it has been one of the wonderful systems in Australia. I was exceptionally proud of—in fact in awe of—the staff of Queensland Health and what they achieved, whether it was looking after a little premature baby or helping people with mental illnesses, right across the state from the Torres Strait down to Coolangatta and out to Birdsville. It was an amazing system.

In that time of about 2½ years, we were able to put in place immediately a completely new system of management, a flatter system of management which was more decentralised. We were able to revolutionise the system of surgery and put in place 'surgery on time', which still exists today. In that time we achieved our category 1 targets and we were very close to getting our category 2 targets. We were able to get breast screening and immunisation to over 90 per cent, and we brought in the 10-year mental health plan. I think that has been a great change for Queensland, where we now have acute care, community care and care in the larger more chronic centres as well.

We were also able in that time to double the amount of funds available for capital works and undertake about 112 capital works projects, ranging from the little nurses quarters at Alpha to major hospitals like the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospital. It was a time of enormous achievement not only in that portfolio but right throughout. I certainly will forever be able to look in the mirror and feel very proud of that time.

I also will reflect on my time as opposition leader, which is one of the toughest gigs in the world. When there are only 11 of you, it is even that bit harder. I think I was also shadow Treasurer and shadow Attorney-General. I do not think I was shadow minister for women—I think Fiona was—but I was just about everything else. Today six of my colleagues from that time are still here in parliament and they are great friends for life.

In the time that I have been in parliament, there have been some outstandingly interesting events. In the first term I was here, after the Joh trial, Dean Wells, who is now my friend, rushed down here with a transcript from the trial to read it into the House, and this place erupted into chaos like many of you have never seen—books were thrown across the place, lids on desks were banged and what not. I was the eighth person to get thrown out that day. I was a young member of parliament, not really knowing what I was doing, but I was given an instruction to read something out regardless of what the Speaker said. I got most of it in. I remember that the media reckoned I got myself thrown out because my son Tim was playing for the Wallabies against Samoa in the World Cup that day and I wanted to watch him play.

I remember the terrible events of 9/11, when Peter Beattie and I met that morning and ultimately we came in here—and this has never happened before—and he spoke for two minutes and I spoke for two minutes. We were all in shock; it was quite a historic time.

I remember when we came into government. I think Australians can be proud that we have a democracy where after the by-election in February 1996 when it was 44-all we were able to come in here, without any riots in the street, and form government. Under democratic rules, the Governor told us to come in and test the parliament. It was 44-all and the Independent member for Gladstone—who I must acknowledge for the truthfulness and commitment she has shown through her whole years in parliament—went our way and we were able to form government. There are not many countries in the world where you could do that, and I think Australians should be proud to have a system like that.

I have seen the changes in technology and I have seen large numbers of women who are now in the parliament. I have also had the opportunity, like many members of this parliament, to travel all over the state—to beautiful places like the Torres Strait, Western Queensland and North Queensland. I have met the people of Queensland and it really makes you very proud to be a Queenslander. One of my best trips was with my old mate Vaughan Johnson. We went from Longreach and we called in at Stonehenge, Jundah, Windorah, Betoota, Birdsville, Boulia and Urandangi, and we had a beer with Betty at the Dajarra pub on the way home to Winton. I certainly got a taste for Queensland on that trip.


I have a vision for the state, and much of this is personal and not my party's vision. I have always felt with the five big weighted seats we have that every time there is a redistribution—and I have been through four redistributions in my career—there should be consideration of those. Some of those now are bigger than France, and I think in this great decentralised state it would be fair to consider an additional one for those every now and again.

I hope we can all think about those people who have come into our electorate offices with children who have severe disabilities and the heartache we have all felt. I hope in the future we can make sure that they are all looked after. I also hope we can get a Toowoomba bypass one day.

I have been lucky to represent a beautiful place like Toowoomba. When I made my maiden speech, I spoke about KR Darling Downs, Southern Cross, McCafferty's and the Defiance mill. They are all gone and their place has been taken by big new mining companies, construction companies and the University of Southern Queensland. It is a wonderful city with wonderful people.

Towards the end of my speech now, I want to talk about my admiration for everybody in this House I have known over the years and I know now. The dedication that everyone gives to their job here is amazing. They are backed up by wonderful families and wonderful electorate staff. My electorate officer has worked for me for about 25 years at the Toowoomba showgrounds and in my electorate office. I want to thank sincerely the members of the Toowoomba South branch; they are amazingly loyal and dedicated people. I loved the National Party when I joined and I love the LNP now. I love the people who are the backbone of our party, who give of their time and their efforts for the betterment of the state of Queensland.

Finally, I want to get back to the lovely young nurse I met in 1966. Helen and I have had a great time together. She doorknocked with me. She tried to keep me company when I was drowning under the enormous weight of being minister for health. She has been by my side the whole time, looking after the kids, looking after everything else at home. I have been very fortunate and really I have shared this journey with her. To all of you, happy Christmas and I wish you every success and enjoyment in your careers.

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (8.36 pm): I rise on potentially the last occasion I will have to speak here and am aware of the immense privilege that I have had to represent the people of my electorate for the past 15 years. It has been a privilege to be a minister for 10 years serving the people of this state. These are privileges that many aspire to yet few are fortunate to be chosen for. We discharge them in acknowledgement of those who came before us, those who have served with us and those who will come after us.

Regardless of political party, or of none, we strive to the best of our ability to set the rules and to frame and administer the laws and the institutions so that those who experience the bounty of this state do so cognisant that it is there for all, both present and future. We are technically elected as individuals, but in reality are part of groups, even Independents. As peculiar as it might sometime appear, we are not generally here by accident. We are here by virtue of those who have nurtured and supported us, with the endorsement and support of our political party, the hard work of our family and supporters and the votes of the people we represent.

I have indeed been fortunate to have a loving and supporting family—my mother and father, Col and Trish, my greatest fans. My dad is the most decent person I have ever known, whose life I can never contemplate being without. To my mum, she is always there, like St Monica praying, proud even when I have not been at my best. Her greatest indignation was, however, expressed when the *Courier-Mail* state political editor, Steven Wardill, wrote that I could not hold a tune. I learnt to sing with my mother playing the piano—she will not forget.

To my former wife, Sharon, our ways have parted but for the support of me in our time together and for being the fantastic mother of our four wonderful children; this is beyond measure. They are fortunate that she provided the stronger genetic material for them. I just say to them: Honour your mother, and forgive your father his flaws, foibles and faults.

To my four children, Tom, Matt, Mike and Monica, of whom I am immensely proud—each of them are so different but of the same stock. They were all encouraged to question and seek the truth, and they all take great delight at poking fun at me around the dinner table and repeating that day's media critique. It is like dining with channels 10, 9, 7 and 2, but at least at home you can tell them what you really think. There is Tom the loyal, Matt the kind, Mike the thinker, Monica the doer.

And of course Alison. I truly did not think it was possible to be so different to someone yet share so much in common. Her wit, intellect, beauty, charm, tidiness and counsel have made our time together such fun. We love our seventies and eighties music, a bottle of wine or two and entertaining friends. An outstanding cook herself, she has patiently put up with my cooking, including my curried sausages. She tolerates my aviation obsession. She is the example, par excellence, of women having no taste in men, yet I look around this chamber and see she is not alone in sharing that female defect. When it is all said and done, it is your family who will be there for you long after the final speech is given, the final meeting is held.

My local branch members in the wonderful Bayside have supported me for so long. They front up, they work and they care. I know they will support my successor, like they did me and Tom Burns before me. Like Tom Burns, I promise not to be a pain-in-the-neck former local member who does not know there is nothing more ex than an ex. Other former members would do well to emulate Tom.

I now turn to my colleagues here. I have had the privilege of serving with many great people in this House such as Peter Beattie, the best retail politician Australia has ever had. As Terry Mackenroth once observed, he could put his hand up an S-bend and pull out a gold Rolex. Raised in adversity, his dream was for a better Queensland. Another is Anna Bligh, a person I believe in more than any other, whose every molecule is about the hard yards, the tough decisions—the blood, sweat and tears to build a fairer, modern and prosperous state. My greatest privilege was serving four years as her deputy, followed closely by my time working with her and the now Deputy Premier, Andrew Fraser, a man whose intellect and capacity are without peer—and conservatives from other states tell me that as well.

I have loved working with my caucus and ministerial colleagues. I say to them: I got over factions years ago. I want to work with people who want to make a difference. I am in the Anna Bligh faction. There are improvers, nervous nellies and wreckers. I have always worked with improvers. I have enjoyed working with my parliamentary opponents. If you try, as you should, you can find much in common with most here. If you cannot laugh or get on outside here, you are not a true parliamentarian.

It has been very important to have a laugh, particularly at oneself. I am a great believer in the adage that if you dish it out here then you have to take it. Those who cannot manage that are not serious players; they play in the B-grade, like people who take frivolous points of order. Every day in this and indeed any job, one must have the attitude that there is some lesson to be learned. Those who carry on like they know it all simply illustrate that they do not, and underscore it at that.

There is a time and place for everything here—the cut and thrust of question time, the policy detail of legislation and the debates of high principle. Regardless of any position argued, it is truly in the latter that the acid test is applied. I say to members: on these difficult issues it is what you say that really counts. Think of what those who read the debates in 50 years time will think. What will great-grandchildren born after you die think when they read them? Silly rhetoric and an undergraduate style will speak more of you than the biographical details you might have penned elsewhere. The spivs, smart alecs and empty vessels are ridiculed or cast aside in the cold, hard light of history. Failures in insight are forgiven, but intemperance and intolerance are magnified. I have had some big fights with those on the other side, and I particularly respect those of them who have views based on principle. It is better to believe in something than nothing. It is nihilism that I really abhor.

In our caucus I go at a time of my choosing and because I am determined that our long-term future depends on constant renewal. There are a number of people here whom I mentored in their youth, and I am very proud of that. We have achieved this consistently with a diverse base—women, young faces, people from so many walks of life.

I have been very fortunate to have such a broad variety of portfolios over 10 years. I have enjoyed them all. I have had wonderful staff. I am a tough taskmaster, yet they are the best. They give 150 per cent. I have watched them grow and, for those who have moved on, seen their achievements. I like to think we treat each other as equals, even if some of them are high maintenance! I will mention just two of them, if you like as representative of all of them, who epitomise their loyalty and hard work. My driver, Bob Lamacchia, is there at the start and there till the end, at the start of each day and at its end. And Robert Hoge is the most inspirational person I have every really known well. He has never complained, is never cranky and, despite his physical hurdles, is a big-league batter. And my electorate staff, like so many on both sides, have to put up with the abuse from a small minority over decisions they had no say in but they have a daily desire to help.

In my 15 years here Queensland has changed fundamentally. I have enjoyed playing a part in that, both locally and as a minister. In Lytton we have our new police and fire stations, the Whyte Island Fire and Rescue Service Academy, the Manly Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service base, the phenomenal growth in the Port of Brisbane and the Port of Brisbane Motorway but, most of all, the \$150 million Bayside State Schools of Tomorrow program—a fundamental investment in our greatest asset: our children.

I have held a number of infrastructure portfolios to put together the bricks and mortar to allow people to live and move efficiently and safely around the state. Many took a lot of work—securing the funds, deciding the route, dealing with the politics, separating the nimbyism from the legitimate community concern. Infrastructure does not exist in another dimension; it needs to be built on or under the ground. The opposition asked me a question this morning, so I might just refer to that and perhaps select a number of highlights across my portfolios.

I mention the young drivers licensing regime; security cameras in cabs; disability cabs in small towns where there is only one cab; the largest integrated ticketing area in the world; railway duplications and extensions on the Gold Coast and at Richlands and Ferny Grove; the rolling stock and buses funded as a result of 55 million extra passenger trips since 2004; our busway network in tandem with land use; the King George Square busway under the CBD and into Roma Street Railway Station; the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital busway, to be extended further with two underground parts of the Northern Busway; the Boggo Road underground busway to the University of Queensland; and the Eastern Busway.

It is the toughest tasks—the hard ones—that are the most rewarding. South-East Queensland's road network is unrecognisable. The M1 and Ipswich Motorway have been upgraded. Three projects that I am particularly proud of are the Gateway Bridge duplication and extension—no capital city has an entry to an airport like it—the Tugun bypass and Airport Link, Australia's largest ever PPP. In regional Queensland there are projects such as the Mulgrave River Bridge, the Tully-Murray, the Forgan and hospital bridges in Mackay, the Townsville Ring Road, the Yeppoon Tanby Road and the Bundaberg Ring Road.

But it is not just about physical infrastructure. I mention the work our wonderful health workers do—eliminating surgical waits longer than a year, keeping us with the shortest elective surgery wait times in Australia—and the new funding initiatives in areas such as telehealth, chronic pain management and cochlear transplants.


I have loved dealing with people from all walks of life. I have enjoyed dealing with mayors, particularly rural and regional ones. I have enjoyed dealing with farmers—people whom there is a lot to learn from. I got a front page of *Queensland Country Life* when we first started strategic cropping land work. 'Trust me, I'm a politician', it said. Most of all, I have loved dealing with the inspirational Indigenous people I have met, particularly in health and in training—investing in their peoples' future. In my retirement I would love to give some time to them and the Catholic Church as well. It is part of me, even if I am a less than perfect member. For all of you, if I can give any advice it is to constantly think of the future, nurturing those who will replace us. I am not threatened by young talent; I treasure it.

The Brisbane and Queensland of today are massively cleaner, greener, better, wealthier and fairer than they once were. It is like a running race, though, where you must keep on pushing the finishing line in front of you—like my great party, always restless.

There is a way to work together—with the resource sector giving people in the bush a future, in co-existence with farmers. It has done so for decades. They sit alongside each other on our coat of arms; they have been partners on it since 1893. New Zealand, like Australia, is a wonderful country with great primary production and tourism sectors, but it has a standard of living and dollar massively below ours. Why? It is due to the lack of a resources sector. It pays for our standard of living. Resources contribute \$49 billion to gross state product; agriculture contributes \$9 billion. Both are critical to our wealth and to our state and national identity. It is largely why our exchange rate is as high as it is on a world basis.

The interaction between competing interests is most stark where we need to build roads and railways for the future or in new state industrial areas. Get in early and protect the corridor long before inconsistent land use develops—much like the corridors for the Sunshine Coast, Ripley-Yamanto, the Gold Coast and the range crossing rail or the Bowen and Bromelton state development areas. In fact, new lines like the one to Springfield will be built with complementary high-density from day one.

I thank the Parliamentary Service and the Public Service for their support and diligent work. You who remain, and those who come after, will have those great responsibilities and privileges of making the tough decisions. The harder the decisions, the better the rewards. The long term comes around quickly. I have tried my best. I am not perfect—there are some things I would have done differently, but not many—but I have enjoyed the honour and the privilege. Above all, I thank the Lord for giving me this opportunity and I trust that in the next stage of my life I can also make a difference for others. We are not on this planet for ourselves alone.

 **Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (8.47 pm): We have been hearing wonderful speeches tonight, though I have to say that I am feeling some withdrawal symptoms: there have not been nearly enough mentions of Cairns in the last hour and a half, and I proposed to address that in the next few minutes.

What a wild roller-coaster ride is this politics! It is not something that had been my early ambition—not at all—yet it has been truly a privilege. It has been interesting, challenging, difficult, uncertain, amazing and very often entertaining of course. There are many important things that happen in the period of a career such as mine—13½ years or so in this parliament—yet I must say that the thing I still get the biggest kick out of is when ordinary, everyday people come into my electorate office suffering some injustice at the hands of a complicated, complex or sometimes remote bureaucracy and I have the privilege, as their local member, of assisting them—in righting the wrongs that are being done to individuals. That remains the biggest turn-on for me as the member for Cairns.

What a privileged career I have had as the member for Cairns—some 13½ years, and all in government and of those years half of them as a minister in a range of portfolios and now I choose to stand down at a time that I have chosen rather than, as the saying goes, by public demand. I have many to thank. I am acutely aware and I have always been aware that, while I might have the pleasure of sometimes fronting the media with good announcements for Cairns, this is a big team game and it takes a lot of people and a lot of time to come together and to make the good things happen, many of which have happened during my last period in Cairns.

I have many people to thank and I start with my electorate staff. Lyn Gane has been my senior electorate officer throughout this whole time. In fact, she has served the parliament for some 20 years. She will retire as I do. I thank Lyn and her husband, John, for their excellent service and support. I also thank my current electorate officer, Fiona Henderson, and many others over the years. They have been the very rock on which my performance as the member for Cairns has rested.

I thank also all of the parliamentary staff who every day in so many ways make it easy for all of us in this House to concentrate on the job of representing our constituents and, for those of us who need to, to act as ministers, to perform in parliament and I thank them all. I thank also the excellent ministerial staff who looked after me, who educated me, who worked with me, who put up with me on occasion. In particular I want to mention Charis Mullen, Gerard Carlyon and Meg Frisby, an excellent principal adviser. I also mention Mark Symons—a wonderful media man—and Stephen Beckett, whose successes I claim absolute credit for. There are many others who I could name similarly.

I am, too, able to say to this parliament that I cannot have done the good job that I have done without my family. I have not had the pleasure and support of a spouse, as many of you have had, but I think I have done just as well, if not better. My three fine children have been great supports to me over these years—Rachelle, Jake and Charlotte, who is with us tonight. The downside to having my children's support has been their blind faith in their mother that she can absolutely manage any situation and will. So I have worked hard not only for the people of Cairns but also to meet the expectations that my children have had of me.

We have done well in Cairns over these years—very well indeed. What a small town it was, in fact, when my predecessor Keith De Lacy was elected. In 1983 there were some 65,000 people. By 1998, when I was elected, there were 110,000 and now there are 150,000—a city of substance, a city of style. Many of the changes in Cairns over those years are thanks to the Beattie and the Bligh governments—a huge range of projects. I presided over the completion of a redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital in my early years and now I have seen the commencement of another huge redevelopment and expansion—an increase in the hospital by 50 per cent and we are not halfway through yet. It will fall to the next member for Cairns to follow that project through.

We, as partners with the Cairns Regional Council, created the Esplanade Lagoon that is a tourism icon around the world, a marine training centre of excellence, a refurbished cruise liner terminal and we are on the brink, in partnership with the council, of giving to Cairns a most magnificent entertainment precinct on the waterfront. All of Cairns' schools have been tremendously upgraded and expanded. I recognise all the contributions that have been made by my government during these years and, on behalf of the people of Cairns, I thank you.

It is a pity that there are still many people in Cairns who are convinced that those in the seats of power in Brisbane and Canberra do not understand us and that they forget about us in the Far North. There are even those who think that we subsidise South-East Queensland when, in fact, they are quite wrong; it is the other way around. I wished many days during parliamentary sitting weeks that those such people in Cairns could hear how often Cairns is mentioned. I know how many ministers have worked hard, particularly in recent years when Cairns suffered such a serious downturn in its economy, to do the best by Cairns.


I want to particularly recognise Anna Bligh and her affection for and support for Cairns and Andrew Fraser as Treasurer and as Deputy Premier. With the GFC, we were in very serious economic trouble and there was no hesitation on the part of the Premier and the now Deputy Premier to act rapidly. We had four local building companies—major companies—go bust. The town was in serious strife and, as the business community said, if it were not for the state government there would be no work in town. It was our infrastructure program that kept us going. I am pleased to tell you all that Cairns has well and truly turned the corner and that we are on the way, thanks to the Bligh government in particular, to not only better times but a more diversified economy. We have much in Cairns to look forward to but it will be, of course, an agenda for the next member for Cairns to take, I hope enthusiastically.

I have enjoyed this privilege tremendously. It has been a wonderful, wonderful life. It is, however, a good time in Cairns' history for me to stand down and for a new and younger voice to take up the cudgel. I hope indeed that all ministers in the next government, which I am sure will be a Bligh government, will continue to care for this magnificent city that is the entry point to Australia in the Far North.

It has been about the Labor Party. Not a day has gone by when I have not realised that the privileges that I have been offered are thanks to the Labor Party and to all of the members and supporters, particularly those in Far North Queensland. It is also true that there is not a day that goes by that I do not thank you all for the company, the assistance and the support that you have given me. It has been for me nonetheless in truth in my heart and will always be about a city that I love, about Cairns. Every day and very many nights of these 13½ years, that is what this work has been about. I

think I have achieved. I have certainly done the very best job that I could possibly do. I thank you all for your support and for your friendship. I thank Paul Lucas in particular. He has been a mentor for me. Paul, I say to you, luvvy, thank you.

And thank you all.

 **Ms NELSON-CARR** (Mundingburra—ALP) (8.57 pm): I am really not quite sure how to begin. I have so much to say and so many things to talk about. Like Desley and those of us who came into this place in the year of 1998, I have been here for 13½ years. In that time there have been many highs and lots of lows, lots of achievements and lots of reforms that we have been in charge of.

If I look at Townsville itself—and I think it must be something to do with the regions—Townsville always thinks it never does as well as anywhere else, particularly the south-east corner. In my first term we were fortunate enough to rebuild the Strand. That has been an absolutely magnificent achievement for our Labor government. We have a Douglas Arterial and I still have to pinch myself when I drive over it because it looks and feels almost futuristic with very few cars on it. I do not know how we got that, but we got it and it is just wonderful. Our hospital is world's best. Wherever I travel in the world I know that Queensland Health—Australian health—is the best in the world and we are extremely privileged.

The growth that we have experienced in Townsville—the place that I love and live in—has been extraordinary. The government infrastructure, as Desley said, has been the only game in town for some time and for that I am very grateful and, more recently of course, we have the cruise ship terminal and marine precinct.

It is the electorate itself, my community groups and my branchies, that have sustained me throughout this journey. I have had, without doubt, the most privileged and wonderful experience. This has been the most fantastic job that I have ever experienced in my life. I did come from humble beginnings. I am educated, but this job has just been an incredibly wonderful journey. I love the Labor Party, always have. I have been a working class girl through thick and thin in all my life. I am a strong unionist. I look forward to continuing my involvement in the Labor Party in the years to come.

When I say that this job has been incredibly rewarding, at times it has also been very challenging and extremely stressful. Trying to balance a family and this job has been no mean feat. I do not care what any man says here tonight, it is women who really take the lion's share of raising a family. When you are a female politician it is very difficult. I cannot tell you the number of times that I stupidly would ring my children at night to see how they were and my youngest, Darcy, would say, 'I've got no mother. I've got no father. No-one loves me.' I would just about bleed with guilt, concern and worry for my children. Juggling my family has not been easy, but I have managed to do it.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the role of an advocate in my electorate. We also have something that I think has been the envy of many parties and that is a very disciplined caucus. Over the years, no matter how much we might dislike some of the things that we do, we always stick together and we are extremely disciplined. When I first came in here I thought I would only do one term. Rob Borbidge used to yell out at me that I was a oncer as well. At the time we had the Shepherdson inquiry. That was something none of us thought we would ever recover from. But recover we did. When I look back over the reforms that I have been involved in as a proud member of the Labor government—whether it was the domestic violence reforms, same-sex couples, prostitution law reforms, tree clearing that Stephen Robertson was talking about before, cloning legislation and, more recently, the reforms in education with the Flying Start and the prep year and moving year 7 into high school—I think it has been just phenomenal. The changes to the committee system have been something that I have been very, very privileged to be part of. This has been, I think, something that has enhanced the democracy in Queensland. I think my favourite ministerial position was, without doubt, in the environment. That is something that I absolutely loved.


I do have to say that the last couple of years in this term have been very difficult. At times I have been swamped by negativity and a very deep sadness. We lost a son and my beautiful mother, who lives with us, has dementia. There are times when I think it is just too much, but really I am no different from anybody else out there, I am no different from the people whom we represent. I know that my domestic situation is one of millions throughout the world. But one thing is for sure, we are a unit that is a very close and loving unit and I know that despite the fact that I have a long way to go in sorting through those domestic and emotional upheavals I will get through it because I know that you are never given too much—well, I am not. I can always manage to get through it.

In looking back, I want to thank good old Dale Parker who was my campaign manager when I first came in in 1998. Angela Horner, who was my first electorate officer and who stayed with me until I became a minister and then came down here with me as well, was a champion. She was an electorate officer all on her own, straight out of uni and somehow we managed. To the Murphy family, I could not do without you. Rhonda works with me today. There are so many people I want to thank: my mum and dad, who were the EVPV champions—mum will not even remember that now, but I do; and my absolutely gorgeous husband Russell whose humour has sustained me throughout life. Because I laugh at all his jokes he says to me that after 20 years of being together it is pretty good to have a wife who still thinks

your old, silly jokes are pretty funny, and I do. I think he is just the greatest. To the staff in Parliament House, I thank you. Over the years it has just been tremendous—from the people who clean my room to the people who feed me and those who look after us on our floors. To my children, not just Darcy the one who missed me the most because he was the youngest, who have had to put up with all of the amazing highs and lows, thank you. I remember one time when Peter Beattie rang home and Sam answered the phone and he said, 'Mate, it's Peter Beattie here. Can you put your mum on?' and he said, 'Yeah, yeah, right, you're Peter Beattie and I'm the Queen of Sheba, and Peter Beattie said, 'No, mate, it really is. Can you put your mum on.' Anyway, he felt pretty remorseful after that—my son, I mean.

I have made some absolutely special friends in this place. Linda Lavarch is somebody who I still cherish and have a lot to do with. I am going to miss so many. Every politician has to come to that point where it is time to go. That happens in life, doesn't it? You get to that point. Like Desley I am very lucky to have been able to go of my own accord, to have chosen the time of my own departure. I entered this place in a seat that was a Liberal seat. It was certainly not a safe Labor seat. Since then I have won five elections. My first win was definitely not a landslide win. I have a very big soft spot for Peter Wellington. Many people do not have that privilege that I have, which is to leave of their own accord. They often leave and they do not want to.

I hope I have been a good local member. I have tried my very best. I have always been extremely honest, sometimes to my own detriment. My moral compass has been my guide and I do not think it has let me down. I must admit that I am really looking forward to the next phase of my life with enormous pleasure. You will hear from me and see me if you ever get lucky enough to come to Spain or France or wherever I happen to be. To my colleagues on both sides of the House, to those who came in with me in the year of 1998, to John Mickel who has been a Speaker in very difficult times and difficult circumstances—it is not an easy role—I wish you well. I have had just the best journey and I am very grateful to all of you. Thank you.

 **Mrs PRATT** (Nanango—Ind) (9.07 pm): As most of the other speakers have said tonight, this may be our last opportunity to express ourselves in this place. My journey has been different from that of everybody else in this place. It has been a very turbulent one. It has not been a journey just in politics, but also a journey in self-discovery. As most of you know, in 1998 One Nation made a huge impact on this parliament. I was one of the first 11. I have to say, in the sincerest manner I can, that I am so grateful that One Nation came into being, that Pauline Hanson came into the Australian parliament and said the things she did. I am very grateful that she woke up politics in Australia. It may not have been the way people liked. It was very, very controversial. It polarised people to the point where they were prepared to stand up and vote for another party other than the majors and express themselves in a way to show those other parties that the people were not altogether happy. I believe that, regardless of your opinion of One Nation or Pauline Hanson, she has left a bigger legacy in politics than anyone else in this chamber, other than perhaps Peter Beattie. I have to say that he was one of the most brilliant orators and entertainers in politics that I have ever met.

Most of you will not know this, but the reason I became part of One Nation is that I could not say no. I am not a strong person. I was never a strong person. I do not believe that I have ever said no to anything in my life. I guess that was because of my upbringing. It was not an easy one. It was easier to say yes I will do it than it was to say no. You did not get yelled at. You did not get beaten. It was easier to take the easy road.

So, through my own weakness I guess it was, I became a member of One Nation when they asked me. I do not know why anyone ever voted for me. That is the honest truth. I am not an orator. I have never been a fighter. I have never argued. I have never stood up for myself, so how the heck was I supposed to stand up and fight for other people? I had a huge quandary. How could someone who was as frightened as a mouse stand in a place when nobody wanted to know them or see them and where they probably hated One Nation with a passion and try to put ideas of a community to this parliament? For the first three years in this place I was terrified. I was terrified of the yelling. I was terrified of the arguing. I was terrified of the abuse that was thrown across this chamber.

I survived the first three years. After I left One Nation I thought that would be the end of me and I would never have to come back to this place—never. For some unknown reason the people I represented felt I did a good enough job to send me back. I did not think they disliked me quite that much. But I came back. I did not know what I had done. I do not know that anyone in the National Party in my electorate understood what it was that I did. They said things like, 'Why do people vote for Dorothy? She just talks to people and goes to everything.' I thought to myself, 'Maybe that is what it is all about.'

The thing I have tried to do over the time I have been here is represent my people and not be a politician in any way, shape or form because I am not a politician. I set out to represent the majority view of my electorate, not my opinion because I am only one person. I have done that at times when I did not agree with the majority view. My motto for the whole time I have been in politics was 'People before politics and principles before personalities'.

I have been here five terms and I feel that I have been the most blessed person. I also believe that the people of my electorate have endowed me with the greatest gift that anyone could be endowed with. They have trusted in me. They have believed in me. They have had faith in me. They have loved me and allowed me to love them too. I have never been an open person. I have never let too many people into my life. They have given me more than I could have ever given them other than be their true representative.

In 2001 I was diagnosed with MS. My neurologist said, 'You must get rid of everything that stresses you in your life.' The first thing that came to mind was the job. The second one was my husband. I thought to myself, 'I made a promise to the people that I would represent them,' and I will, and my husband, no matter how difficult he is, I love him and I would never get rid of him.


I have been blessed. I have been blessed to meet all of you and the people who were here before you because each and every one of you have shown me a different viewpoint. You have shown me my strengths. The people have allowed me to know me.

I have been privileged to see people in this place evolve. I have evolved not as much as perhaps most of you, but I at least know who I am, even though I am still shaking here tonight. I know that I can do things that I would never have dreamt of doing and I can stand up for myself.

The media taught me a very strong lesson in the first days of being preselected as the first One Nation candidate. They came and spent three or four hours with me. They took hundreds, I am sure thousands, of photographs. I told them how a few years before I had obtained my pilot's licence, had written a book and done this and done that. I had done lots of things. I had run businesses. I had done everything. As I was helping them pack the car one of them said to me, 'What do you do for fun?' I said, 'I like to do Middle Eastern dance. I like to draw. I like to write. I like to do lots of things.' The headline the next day was, 'One Nation's first preselected candidate is a belly dancer.' I thought after that, 'Be careful what you say, Dolly. Be very careful what you say.'

I have been privileged. In the staff here I have met some of the most wonderful people. I cannot speak too highly of the staff in this place. They suffer a great deal and they listen to lots of boring speeches. They still smile at us. They feed us. They do just about everything for us. I appreciate every single one of them.

My staff have been with me almost all the time. One staff member has had three babies in the time she has been with me. She blames me because every time I go to an election she is pregnant. My other staffer Val has been with me almost all the time except for six months. She has been wonderful. To Tony, I love you dearly and I am coming home.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this is my third valedictory speech and it is also my last. I have been with some of you since 1998, and it is nearing the time for me to go. Before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts and memories with you. I have been reflecting on what my time as your Speaker has meant and means.

With the help of the Community Engagement staff, for whom I have the highest admiration, we pestered and won the support of the federal minister to hold citizenship ceremonies here at parliament. We did this because I believe that this House is the defining symbol for democracy in our state. After one ceremony a former South African lady wrote to us—

Last night I was one of the 90 people who became an Australian citizen and wow what an amazing, memorable, proud and heart-warming experience did I have.

... when all the streamers started to fall from the heavens I knew I had won the jackpot.

This new Australian said what we know in our hearts to be true. Our nation and our state, with characteristic hope and optimism, affirms and reaffirms democracy and the freedoms that go with it for our citizens—whether they are born here or come here by choice.

Her thoughts reinforced to me that parliament is for all of us, not just some of us. That is why we gave priority to a range of other engagement activities during this last term to make the parliament accessible and inclusive, activities such as: the enormously successful open day in May of last year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of parliamentary democracy here in Queensland; participation in the Brisbane Open House initiative, presenting architecturally significant buildings for public access; the multifaith services, the significant religious festivals to include multicultural groups; cataloguing the true heritage values of this magnificent building with a comprehensive conservation plan to protect and preserve Queensland's premier heritage building for generations to come; the program of youth parliaments, whether through the YMCA, the schools, or the Indigenous Youth Parliament; and the introduction of online access to debates through the broadcast on demand initiative.

Along the way our restlessness for a better system of parliamentary democracy was adopted. The new committee system creates a far more engaging role for members and for the public. Members now have the ability to become more rounded in not only being effective local members but also better informed legislators. Members of the public and those parties with a particular interest in a specific piece of legislation now have the opportunity for direct input into and questioning of that legislation.

My memory sweeps back to the injunction I gave to new members in my first day as Speaker. I recall saying, 'As you find your feet I hope you find your voice.' I must confess there have been occasions when I wish those voices had been more muted but, muted or not, they have always been authentic. It is the nature of parliamentary discourse that passions will be aroused, tempers inflamed and even tears shed, tears for those whose lives have been taken in tragedy—and in Queensland we have had our fair share of those. Conveying all those feelings to the people is the role the parliament should play. Parliament should reflect the tensions, the tribulations and the triumphs of Queensland. In my view, this parliament has achieved that. It has done so with humour and conviction. Views have been vigorously expressed, arguments mounted, ideas expounded, predominantly with proper adherence to parliamentary procedure.

I guess for my sins I have watched the televised question time in other jurisdictions. I say to you all: be proud of what you have achieved here. I sometimes hear members recoil from public criticism of question time clashes by saying, 'That's not how things really are. Most of the time we all get along.' But there is no need for any of you to be apologetic about the clash and contest of ideas. There is no need to be defensive about spirited and willing exchange in this place. It is better that it happen in here with words and arguments than out there on the streets with tear gas and tanks. On the whole, members conduct themselves far better than often what you will see at a public meeting. It is at the parliamentary level where the public forms generalisations of us. That is why I want to praise honourable members for their other role, the community service and devotion to community.

I know it is fashionable for the public to cast their views of members in the negative. But for all the abuse hurled your way, precious few of your critics will put up their hands in the months ahead to take your place—perhaps begrudgingly, after all, they understand the commitment and the toll that public life takes. Allow me to acknowledge you for your time, your efforts and the contribution that you make to the democratic ideal. Some time ago a son wrote to his father expressing an interest in taking up public life and his father wrote back—

Public business my son, must always be done by somebody or other. If wise men decline, it others will not. If honest men refuse it, others will not.

This quote is as true today as when John Adams, the second President of the United States of America, wrote it 200 years ago. It speaks to the virtue and the value of public office and public life. So, honourable members, I see you very much in the category of the wise and honest men Adams was referring to, though of course 200 years later it is wise and honest men and women who have not declined, who have not refused but who have stepped forward to take on public life, and I commend you all for that.

I pay tribute to the retiring members for the contribution they have made. You continue the tradition of members elected to this place over the last 151 years—1,159 members in all, members from different backgrounds, different experiences, ideologies and priorities who have come together in this place in the common belief that the role and purpose of parliament is to serve the people and to serve their community. In essence, the parliament is democracy at work on behalf of the community. Of those who have been elected to this place, we are diminished by the passing during this term of 13 of our former colleagues, seven of whom were former ministers.

Honourable members, this week we have recognised the staff both here and in our electorate offices and I have also acknowledged and paid tribute to our late colleague the Property Services Manager, Jason Gardiner. On this occasion I thank my own staff here at Parliament House, Joe, Mary-Anne and Michael, who have committed themselves to helping all honourable members and countless visitors to the parliament. I express my thanks to the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk, the Director of Corporate and House Services and the entire executive team for their guidance and expertise in their support for me as Speaker and the governance of the parliament generally. In the vital roles they play they display a positive and professional image of Parliament House. The executive team are superbly supported by the staff, both here at the parliament and in the 94 electorate offices, who provide the operational capability of the Parliamentary Service. All are crucially important to the running of the parliament and I would illustrate that by asking members to consider how the parliament would function without them. On your behalf, I offer sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the various service areas, to managers who lead them and to the staff whose efforts and abilities keep the parliament functioning day in, day out, week in, week out throughout the year. I will not go through all the individual areas, though on your behalf I do wish to acknowledge the parliament's retiring Librarian, Mary Seefried. I wish her all the best after 30 years of unstinting service.

I also offer grateful thanks to our electorate office staff—and without them, our lives would be vastly different and by that I mean vastly more difficult—to my longstanding and loyal electorate officer, Cheryl, who is, after all, the real member for Logan who has worked with me now for almost 25 years, a lifetime of loyalty, dedication and friendship to my family and to me; to the Deputy Speaker and the panel of temporary Speakers, the party whips and deputy whips, the party leaders and leadership teams on both sides of the House and those on the crossbenches for their assistance to me. I thank them for helping me with the orderly running of this House.

To my family who are in the gallery, especially my wife who, with initial trepidation, took on this journey with me so long ago and who has carried out her role both in the electorate and in this place in a way that has been characterised by elegance and grace, I say a very special thankyou, as well as to my children, who are in the gallery, especially my son, who flew all the way back from London—at my expense—not to be here but to be with his cousins. Like the member for Toowoomba South, he went to St Laurence's. I know that causes great chagrin to the honourable the Attorney-General, who went to Villanova. It has always caused me great pain that I had to beat another St Laurence's boy to get this job. I want to say this about my son. When he was at school, one of the kids was giving my son a reference from his father about me. And my son listened in that wonderful way of his and said, 'You know something, my father never talks about you the way you talk about him.'

I thank my children for their sense of humour which they get from their mother and that they have lived this life with me. Those of you who go on to be ministers will know that it is your children who carry those things at school. I know my daughter at every one of the birthday parties used to have a gaggle of children lined up ready to present me with the latest problems with the go card. I have forgiven the former Deputy Premier for all the problems he left me with the go card. I just wanted you to know that my daughter always used to pass those problems on to me. I do thank my children for being here tonight.

I also want to thank all the local state members from Logan from all sides of the House both at a state and a federal level; our local councillor, Cherie Dally; and, as some of you all know, all my great friends at the Logan City Council. Well, that is the long and the short of it.

Tonight with your indulgence may I simply thank the men and women of Logan, and would you allow me to be partisan for one moment to say thank you to the great members of the Labor Party who have supported me in Logan, who have put up with me, who have been there in the boiling sun with the zinc cream on on the days that counted and came back and had a drink with me, which was history in the making, as Schwarto will tell you. I want to thank them and I want to thank the Logan community. I thank them particularly for the confidence and for the generosity of their thanks to me.

Ours has been the cause of families in the outer metropolitan area, and it has been a cause that I have been proud to have played a part in. Logan residents are committed not to our dated views but to traditional values that never date: the ideal of a fair go and the value of progress through effort. That is why in Logan we work with our community to give hope—hope to people uncertain about the present and support to help them in their potential to shape a brighter future for themselves and for their family.

In closing, when I think back to all the people my family and I have met along the way, I recall the words of the great poet AE Housman, who said, 'What golden friends I have had.' I have had golden friends both inside and outside this parliament. May I sum up my feelings in the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson—

I am a part of all that I have met ...

...

Though much is taken, much abides ...

...

... that which we are, we are,

One equal temper of heroic hearts,

Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

To all of you who believe in and enjoy our system of freedom, the work goes on. The hope still lives and the cause of parliamentary democracy never dies. As I sit here perhaps for the final time I think of the many hundreds of times that I have walked through the doors of this House and this chamber, but for me the greatest honour was that I could walk through just once as an elected member of this parliament. So to all of you, may I simply conclude with: good night, good luck and goodbye.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT



Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.34 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.34 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, Jones, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, 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