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RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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Wednesday, 28 November 2012

FS SIMPSON
SPEAKER

N J LAURIE
CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT

L J OSMOND
CHIEF HANSARD REPORTER

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WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2012

The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Membership

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (2.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the member for Gaven, Dr Douglas, be discharged from the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee and the member for Ipswich, Mr Berry, be appointed to the committee as chairperson.

Under the Parliament of Queensland Act it is my role as the Manager of Government Business to appoint the chairs of committees and the government's nominees to committees. With the member for Condamine deciding on the weekend that the hard work of government was too much for him, I had to consider who in the government would and could take on the important role of Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee chairperson. In filling this vacancy I had to weigh up who would best be suited to this role and what other changes should be made to committees as a result.

On Monday I rang the member for Gaven and advised him that I would like him to become the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee chairperson. In the course of this conversation the member for Gaven agreed to take on this new role and fill this vacancy. At no stage did the member for Gaven say that he did not want to do this role. Indeed, he indicated that he believed he would like the new role. I subsequently advised the Premier of this.

After the member for Gaven made some comments to the media yesterday, the Premier asked to meet with me and the member for Gaven to clear up any misunderstanding. At this meeting yesterday afternoon, which was also attended by one of the Premier's senior staff, the member for Gaven again confirmed that he was quite happy to be the chairperson of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. In addition, the member for Gaven was shown a media statement reflecting that position which the Premier's office planned to issue which he said he was completely comfortable with.

In this meeting the member for Gaven indicated that he understood it was the prerogative of the Manager of Government Business to make changes to committees when vacancies arise. Further to this, at 8.16 pm yesterday the member for Gaven rose in this House to say that it was a great privilege to be the new incoming chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. Thus, it was a complete surprise this morning to hear the member for Gaven on radio essentially claiming that he was no longer happy to take on this new role.

The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee is an important portfolio committee that examines issues and laws relating to justice, police and emergency services. It also monitors and reviews the performance of the Ombudsman and the Information Commissioner and must be consulted regarding senior appointments to the Electoral Commission of Queensland. This important committee needs and deserves a chair totally committed to the job, not someone who views it as second prize.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.04 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the Leader of the House today. This is another example of this government thinking it can do anything. Having heard some comments this morning on ABC Radio, we all very clearly can see what is happening. We can see very clearly that this government is all about pushing people aside. In this case a member is being pushed aside because of dissent. If anyone has a dissenting view on anything, the government adopts a foot-on-throat mentality. It is about quashing any sign of anyone with an alternative view. That is what we have seen with the member for Gaven.

We heard earlier that the comments made on the radio today were a surprise. 'Surprise' is something that you scream at a party when someone does not know that a party is being thrown for them. Surprise is not what happens when you already know the answer to the question. That is what we heard from the member opposite, and that is disappointing because I think he knew very well the views of the member for Gaven—and I put a lot of stock in his version of events, given on radio this morning.

Very clearly, this motion is all about 'dechairing' the member for Gaven. There is only one committee that the member for Gaven should be the chair of and that is the Ethics Committee.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (2.06 pm): I rise to speak against the motion. I have worked with the member for Gaven for many years on a number of committees. Along with him and other members of parliament I have considered sensitive matters, and in my experience the member for Gaven has

always done the right thing. He has always acted, as the member for Condamine has prompted me, totally impartially—not according to the political expediency of his political party at the time.

I think this is just a get-square with the member for Gaven because the government has the numbers and it can. What happened to the commitment that the Premier gave that he would not abuse the numbers that Queenslanders handed the LNP at the last election? What happened to the commitment to represent all Queenslanders fairly and honestly and with tolerance? We have seen none of that from this government since it was elected. We have seen this government continue to abuse the privilege Queenslanders handed it at the last election. I certainly oppose this motion and I support the member for Gaven for everything he has done while he has represented his constituents and Queenslanders.

Mr HOPPER (Condamine—KAP) (2.07 pm): On Friday of last week the Attorney-General tried to contact my office. On Friday of last week the Premier tried to contact my office.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Condamine, is this relevant to the motion that is before the House?

Mr HOPPER: Absolutely. I am getting to that, right at this moment. I believe that the reason the Premier and the Attorney-General were trying to contact my office is that at that stage I was the chair of the legal affairs committee. I believe that on that day they were trying to tell me to step down from the committee to allow Alex Douglas to take over because Alex Douglas—

Government members interjected.

Mr HOPPER: The member for Gaven is too impartial to be the chair of the Ethics Committee.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I will not tolerate interjections across the chamber.

Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

AYES, 72—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 11—Byrne, Hopper, Katter, Knuth, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

PRIVILEGE

Unparliamentary Language

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.15 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday in this House we heard the Treasurer and the Attorney-General use the f-word. They were both referring to me at the time. I find this deeply offensive and I find it a slur on the wonderful institution of parliament. Madam Speaker, I will be writing to the Speaker to ask the Speaker to refer the Treasurer and the Attorney-General to the Ethics Committee.

Madam SPEAKER: Member, you can write to me, but it is a matter of order rather than privilege.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Removal of Members' Papers in Chamber

Mr KATTER (Mount Isa—KAP) (2.15 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege. During a division of the House on 27 November documents disappeared from the desks of the three KAP members and one Independent member of the House, the member for Nicklin. This raises concerns about the confidentiality of parliamentarians' documents and reflects poorly on members of the House. I will be writing to Madam Speaker seeking leave to have this referred to the Ethics Committee for investigation.

Madam SPEAKER: The member can write to me according to the standing orders.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliamentary Service, Questionnaire

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, circulated in the chamber this afternoon is the annual questionnaire on the performance of the Parliamentary Service. The feedback of the questionnaire is designed to elicit important information. The feedback will eventually be considered by the Committee of

the Legislative Assembly in its role as the board of management for the parliament. I ask members to please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and place it in the ballot box on the table of the House or forward it to the Clerk's office.

APPOINTMENTS

Katter's Australian Party

Mr KATTER (Mount Isa—KAP) (2.17 pm): I advise the House that the member for Condamine is now a member of Katter's Australian Party and that Katter's Australian Party now has three members sitting in the Legislative Assembly.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

Malanda, Methadone Program

Mr Knuth, from 312 petitioners, requesting the House to remove the Methadone program from the Malanda community [1733].

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

Civil Partnerships Act 2011, Repeal

11,731 petitioners, requesting the House to repeal the Civil Partnerships Act 2011 in line with the LNP election promise [1734, 1735].

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

Caloundra South Development

Mr Wellington, from 153 petitioners, requesting the House to give planning authority back to the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and ensure that all necessary infrastructure is in place before homes are constructed on the site of the Caloundra South Development [1736].

Bimblebox Nature Refuge

Mr Wellington, from 965 petitioners, requesting the House to implement legislative changes to ensure that Bimblebox Nature Refuge is not mined and to not alter legislation that currently protects the Steve Irwin Reserve from being mined [1737].

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

Toowoomba, Biosecurity Queensland

632 petitioners, requesting the House to retain the Toowoomba Biosecurity Queensland, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Animal Disease Surveillance Laboratory and continue these services at the existing premises with facilities suitable to the requirements of this vital work [1738].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPER

MINISTERIAL PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie)—

1739 Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Bleijie) to a paper petition (2001-12) presented by Mr Cox, from 32 petitioners, requesting the House to review all laws on what is personal surveillance or spying on your neighbour

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Qantas Group; Newman Government, Achievements

Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.19 pm): I want to acknowledge visitors from Buderim, which is ably represented by Minister Dickson, who are in the public gallery today. I rise today to share with the chamber some great news for tourism in Queensland. Earlier today I spoke to the Qantas Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Alan Joyce. Mr Joyce confirmed that the Qantas Group wrote to federal tourism minister Martin Ferguson last night to advise that it is suspending its funding agreement with Tourism Australia, effective today. Instead, it will be redirecting its funding to state tourism bodies directly. This is exciting news for Queensland and I commend the Qantas Group for its decision to work directly with the states to promote tourism.

The Qantas Group invests more than any other private enterprise in Australian tourism. It will be putting more than $50 million over the next three years on the table to promote Australia, and that money is now up for grabs. Queensland now has the opportunity to sit down with the Qantas Group to

take a big chunk of that money for cooperative marketing across the Qantas and Jetstar businesses. This is a great opportunity for Queensland. It means that Tourism Queensland and Minister Jann Stuckey will now work directly with Qantas on promoting key markets for Queensland. To this end, I have today asked the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and her department to meet with Qantas at the earliest opportunity.

Queensland and Qantas share a special and unique history. Qantas has certainly demonstrated its commitment to Queensland in the eight months since the government changed in March this year. They have restarted direct flights from Sydney to the Gold Coast after an absence of many years and are consolidating their heavy maintenance facilities in Brisbane.

The Qantas Group operates about 100,000 weekly domestic seats into Queensland airports and we are continuing to work with them to increase their presence across the state. I also note their direct flights into Gladstone. As a government we are absolutely committed to getting tourism going again in Queensland. We are already doing a number of things in this space to promote Queensland tourism, such as our $8 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, which has already reaped results; the allocation of $20 million to implement our tourism investment strategy focusing on destination marketing; and more than doubling the funding available for regional tourism organisations to $7 million. This government is committed to taking the tourism industry in this state to new levels. If the federal government is unable to manage its relationships with key industry players such as Qantas, we are very happy—we are delighted—to fill the void.

To date, our government has been focused on fixing an economic mess. We have worked hard to establish a framework for a sustainable future and to highlight opportunities for our great state. Now, as we look to the future we are starting to turn our focus to converting those opportunities into a better quality of life for all Queenslanders, with better services and better access to government. Across the state, over the next six months we will be handing power back to local communities via their councils. Not only that, we will be continuing to empower front-line staff, whether that be the nurse at the local emergency department needing to improve patient flow, or the principal of the local school determining a discipline strategy. We will be completing work on a new school at Mackay and ambulance stations at both Emerald and Tara. There will be new ambulance officers and vehicles providing access to hospitals with reduced waiting times and new electronic patient flow management systems. We will be planning to ensure that services grow with demand, that they are provided in areas of need and that they improve quality of life for people right across our great state.

For Queenslanders with a disability, we will be commencing the Your Life Your Choice program—a five-year disability services plan. A 20-year demand map will provide families across the state with the security of schools planning, while we will work to complete fire and rescue stations at Clifton, Milla Milla, Mount Tamborine and Emerald.

We will also review the Rural Fire Service. We will launch a 30-year strategic plan for Queensland agriculture and begin work to restore agricultural colleges at Emerald and Longreach. We will make our streets safer, with the rollout of Neighbourhood Watch liaison roles at police stations across Queensland and CCTV cameras for five new locations in Townsville.

We will review legislation, including youth justice and property law. We have made our justice system more effective with the JP pilot program in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The first round of Get Going and Get Playing programs will kick into action and Get Started vouchers of up to $150 per eligible child will assist families with the cost of kids sport.

As well as holding the state's first planning forum, we will kick off the Bowen Basin infrastructure plan and commence infrastructure projects in the first round of the Royalties for the Regions program. We will be pushing the Commonwealth to provide their share of funding to the Bruce Highway and commence a regional survey for recreational fishing.

Additional country race meetings will be announced and new boards for greyhound, thoroughbred and harness racing will be established. Red tape and unnecessary regulation will be in the firing line and we will be reviewing the integrated freight strategy, state planning, blue cards and the overregulated liquor and gaming industries.

Earlier this year the cattle industry benefited from additional weekly regional cattle train services. Winton will now have three cattle train services per week and Cloncurry, too, meaning that up to 968 extra head of cattle can be transported per service, which is the equivalent of 15 B-double heavy vehicles. The focus on regional issues, from a healthy Gladstone Harbour to sustainable water entitlements for mines on Cape York and in the Galilee Basin, will be considered alongside new regional plans for the Darling Downs and the golden triangle. Resources projects will benefit from simplified processes, whether it is reduced red tape for small scale alluvial mining or releasing land for petroleum and gas exploration areas. This will all be done in the era of open data, with more information available, better decision making and great opportunities for industry, communities and individuals across our great state. Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.

Queensland Health, Funding

Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (2.25 pm): For all but 20 years the Labor Party allowed Queensland Health funding arrangements to slide out of control. Budgetary mismanagement under Labor was so bad that at the time of the change of government the combined 2011-12 budgets of health districts and the corporate head office were $130 million in the red, with three months to go. The key difference in Health under this government, compared to its predecessor, is that Health dollars matter and the way that you spend them matters also.

Health dollars buy operations. They buy beds. They pay staff. They are what enables us to improve the health of Queenslanders. The good management of Health dollars enables improved facilities and services. With good management, we extend our reach into remote area health. It enables better access to advanced medicine. It facilitates research and we reap the benefits.

Poor financial management gave us the payroll system that will destroy 1,500 front-line Health positions this year. It precommitted 20 per cent of our capital works budget to just one mismanaged project while other hospitals exist without proper fire protection. Basic maintenance was undone while hospitals on bypass locked their doors to ambulances.

The Labor government is gone, but the legacy of Labor's financial mismanagement remains and the burden it imposes gets worse. Why? Because while the LNP strives to fix these serious problems we are sabotaged by a growing problem with Labor financial mismanagement in Canberra. This year, Queensland has the greatest budgetary increase in health spending of any Australian state. This massive positive impact is maximised by local hospital and health boards working hard to re-establish budgets within a sustainable framework. This is a great state with a great opportunity that is being undone by federal Labor. But it is also undercut by unheralded midyear budget cuts imposed by the federal government Labor Treasurer, Wayne Swan.

In total, Mr Swan cut $382 million from the Queensland Health budget, with the full effect to be felt over four years. Because economic forecasts were so badly mismanaged by Mr Swan, two years of unforeseen punitive cuts to Queensland Health will be felt in just seven months, commencing in December. A total of $103 million will be deducted directly from Queensland hospitals in Commonwealth payments on a monthly basis from December to June next year. This is equivalent to 1,000 jobs state-wide between 2012 and 2016.

Our health services will be stripped of the capacity to handle up to 84,000 normal births, 15,000 hip replacements and 112,000 tonsillectomies. These are real cuts at a time when hospital and health boards are working hard to address years of neglect. They have made hard-won savings, anticipating the opportunity to redirect scarce resources into improved local services. Now, the fruits of that good work will be stolen to prop up more Labor mismanagement in Canberra. Indeed, only a couple of weeks ago in Perth all state health ministers—Labor and coalition—called on the federal government to reverse these cuts. An amount of $225 million will be cut from metro north and $18.8 million from metro south. Townsville loses $7.8 million and Cairns and the hinterland, $6.5 million. I table a full list of these cuts and seek leave to have them incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Hospital & Health Service (HHS)	FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET CUTS IMPACT [$MN]
Cairns	6.5
Cape York	0.9
Central Queensland	4.8
Central West	0.6
Childrens	3.4
Darling Downs	6.1
West Moreton	4.3
Gold Coast	9.2
Mackay	3.2
Metro North	22.5
Metro South	18.8
North West (Mt Isa)	1.4
South West	1.2
Sunshine Coast	7
Torres Strait - Northern Peninsula	0.9
Townsville	7.8
Wide Bay	4.9
HHS Total	

Tabled paper: Table headed, 'Hospital and Health Service (HHS): federal government budget cuts impact [$MN]' [1751].

Madam SPEAKER: I have to ask you to wrap up. It is time for questions and we have to do other matters on the list.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I challenge Mr Swan and I challenge members opposite—

Madam SPEAKER: No, Minister, I ask you to take your seat because I am afraid that time has expired. Thank you.

(Time expired)

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Parliamentary Committees, Membership

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (2.30 pm): On Monday morning, 26 November 2012, I received a phone call from the Leader of the House to notify me that I was being moved to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to replace the member for Condamine. I asked to stay as Ethics Committee chair. It was refused.

At no stage did I request to be removed from my position as chair of the parliamentary Ethics Committee or the PCMC as stated by the Premier in parliament yesterday. I completely reject the statements made today by the Leader of the House and I ask for a full retraction of every statement defaming my character and integrity made on radio.

I would also like to call on the Premier to reinstate me to the position of the chair of the Ethics Committee and member of the PCMC.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.31 pm): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Leave not granted.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Member for Gaven

Ms PALASZCZUK (2.32 pm): We will get to the bottom of this one way or another. My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his statement in this chamber yesterday that, 'My understanding is that the member for Gaven said that he would like to change,' and the transcript of the ABC Radio interview from this morning in which the member for Gaven explicitly says, 'No, I did not.' I ask: will the Premier now reveal the real reasons why the member for Gaven has been pushed aside as chair of the Ethics Committee and as a member of the PCMC?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I am delighted to deal with the matter. In relation to the reason for the change, I think that is very, very clear. The reason for the change was outlined yesterday. Under the relevant act of parliament—that is, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001—section 91 says very clearly that the chairperson is the member of the committee nominated as chairperson by the Manager of Government Business. We had a vacancy caused by the member for Condamine deciding that he would be better placed in a different political party. A vacancy was created and it had to be filled. The Manager of Government Business—by the way, he will always be the Leader of the House to me. He is a very good Leader of the House indeed.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the questions; do they want the answers or do they want to play political games? I want to come in here and talk about the economic future of Queensland. I want to talk about creating great jobs for Queenslanders. I want to talk about taking this train forward, this state forward, into a bright future because it is a great state with great opportunity. That is what I want to do. I am happy to answer the politically charged questions of those opposite. I did yesterday. I would be more than happy to speak about the way that this state is already seeing some economic sunshine, but to return to the matter—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: I warn the member for Bundamba under standing order 253A. Premier?

Mr NEWMAN: Madam Speaker, as always, thank you for your protection. What has happened in relation to the change? Well, it is as the Leader of the House said earlier. He went and talked to the member for Gaven and I reject totally, unequivocally—in fact, quite forcibly—what he has said in the House today, indeed what he is reported to have said on the radio. I reject that totally. Perhaps that speaks volumes about why there does need to be a change, because if you do not have the integrity to tell the truth about a meeting with the leader of your party, with the Manager of Government Business, then perhaps you should not be doing that job.

Yesterday, because I was concerned about the press conference that the member for Gaven had given, I asked him to come down to my office. In front of two witnesses he said he had no problem. But what is more, I said there and then, 'Alex, there was going to be no move if you are unhappy.' He said, 'I am perfectly happy to do this and move.' That is what I say today, that is what I will say to my dying day and that is why the decision was made.

Member for Gaven

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. After today's revelations about a conflict in statements between the member for Gaven and the Premier in this chamber, how can the public have any faith in the LNP's ability to govern this state with integrity?

Mr NEWMAN: How can the people of Queensland have any faith in the LNP? Look at the outcomes I say to you, outcomes to do with the economy, to do with sorting out the mess that those opposite created. Where do I start?

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease her interjections. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Since being elected we have got to work delivering on our initiatives to help cut the cost of living. What have we done? We took $7,000 worth of tax off the family home that those opposite voted for in May-June last year. They put a big whack of tax on the family home. It is gone. We have taken away the so-called waste levy. We have cut payroll tax for small and medium sized businesses. We have frozen tariff 11 electricity prices. We have frozen family motor vehicle registration. We are now working with the very difficult issue, against a lot of federal government nonsense, of the longer term future of electricity prices. We said we would be open and accountable: we are putting data on the internet that has been held as a secret forever by the previous mob. What did they say? 'We had an idea to do that.' When we looked at that it was about two years ago they had an idea but they never did it. Talking about the economy, we had the DestinationQ forum and through the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund we are already seeing new direct flights into Queensland: Etihad, Qantas, Scoot Airlines, China Eastern and China Southern. We are seeing double digit growth in passenger movements through the Gold Coast airport—double digit increases.

What about consumer sentiment? In the Westpac-Melbourne Institute Consumer Sentiment Index released in recent days, the CSI for Queensland in original terms rose 2.4 per cent to 95 points in November 2012. This is a very good result. It is the best result for some time. We are also seeing the CCIQ sentiment of business conditions showing nine out of 10 businesses supporting this government's fiscal repair measures—I will say that again: people who understand how hard it is to make a payroll cheque, how hard it is to get that money together to pay government taxes and charges, people who generate economic wealth, generate opportunity for Queenslanders, they understand—nine out of 10—that the government had to act on fiscal repair. We are seeing the Australian Bureau of Statistics retail turnover figures rising 0.5 in September to be 4.5 per cent higher over the year. We are also seeing, and this is from the Treasurer's release on 8 November, encouraging signs in the housing market with trend dwelling approvals 11.2 per cent higher than the year before.

Queensland Economy

Mr DAVIES: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the House on good news in Queensland's economy?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am a little concerned, though, that there seems to be a bit of collusion between the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member. Clearly, they want me to talk about the great things that have been happening in Queensland. We are not being distracted from the job of creating a great state with great opportunities for Queenslanders. We are getting on with it. The House is working very hard. I thank honourable members for working so hard. Visitors in the gallery may not be aware that the House sat until almost one o'clock last night. This team is working very, very hard.

It is important not to overlook the great achievements of our companies and our economy, underpinned by the positive decisions that this government is making. For example, recent figures for the Gold Coast indicate strong tourism growth for the region. Going to those figures I alluded to before,

there has been an increase of 14.7 per cent for the total domestic passenger movements going through the Gold Coast airport and an increase of 19 per cent in international passengers for the year ending October 2012. Those are the first green shoots of economic recovery in tourism. However, that is not all. In North Queensland, tourism growth prospects are improving rapidly as a result of the government's policies. Where was the member for Mulgrave early last year when his local area, particularly Cairns, was down in the dumps? It was in a terribly depressing situation. I noticed it straightaway when I went up there in April last year. It was palpable. What did they ever do about it?

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I hear him interjecting. The answer is that they did not care and they did not know how to fix it. I have alluded to the new flights that are coming in.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I have hit a raw nerve. I spoke before about the CCIQ report, which showed not only that most businesses supported the government's austerity measures but also that retail turnover had risen by 0.5 per cent to be 4.5 per cent higher over the year, while trend dwelling approvals were up 11.2 per cent. I will say that again for the economic illiterates across the way: they were up 11.2 per cent.

Also, our exporters are doing the state proud. Overnight we heard that PWR Performance Products won the national Small to Medium Manufacturer Award and the Prime Minister's Australian Exporter of the Year Award. I am also pleased that the Australian Agricultural Co., Browns English Language School and Oniqua MRO Analytics also won their categories. That is a tremendous outcome for those Queensland exporters. I conclude by saying that there are some great things happening in this state's economy as a result of the hard work not only of Queensland businesses but also this government, which is all about getting the state back on track to create a great state with great opportunities for all.

Parliamentary Committees, Membership

Mr MULHERIN: My question without notice is to the Premier. Given the extraordinary situation this morning when senior members of the Newman government appeared on radio contradicting each other about the reasons behind yesterday's committee's change, I ask: will the Premier outline to whom he spoke about the pending changes to the Ethics Committee and the PCMC before the decisions were announced?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Could the member please repeat the question?

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I want to hear the member's question in totality.

Mr MULHERIN: That is okay. I have bronchial pneumonia. Given the extraordinary situation this morning when senior members of the Newman government spoke on radio contradicting each other about the reasons behind yesterday's committee changes, I ask: will the Premier outline to whom he spoke about the pending changes to the Ethics Committee and the PCMC before the decisions were announced?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for Mackay for his question. I most sincerely wonder whether the honourable member really needs to be here today. I would certainly understand that, as he does sound awfully ill. I want to reach out to him and say I am sorry he is feeling very crook today.

I have already covered this, but I am happy to give a bit more detail. I am an open book. What happened was that we had a vacancy. As I recall it, the Leader of the House came to see me and said, 'We need to make some changes.' He said, 'This is what I propose to do.' The changes were outlined yesterday. One of the changes was the need to appoint someone as chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. He proposed to put the member for Gaven there. I totally recall what I said, because I said it again to the member for Gaven yesterday. I said, 'Ray, I will only be happy to see that particular change if Alex is happy.' That is what I said. Do members know why I am so clear about that? Because yesterday, when I asked the member for Gaven to come and talk to me with my head of government media and, indeed, the member for Mermaid Beach, I said the same thing. I said that that is what had happened. I said, 'Alex, you need to know that you would not have been asked or forced to move if there were any concerns that you had.'

But guess what? There were no concerns expressed, not to the member for Mermaid Beach when he first broached it and not to me yesterday in front of two other witnesses. There was nothing at all. Therefore, I have to go a bit further and ask, what then did he say last night? I do not have the exact words in front of me, or maybe I do. As I recall, last night he said that he was very honoured or very pleased—words to that effect. There was no suggestion of any concern at all. Yesterday I took at face value his explanation that he was quite comfortable with the change.

I think the distressing thing is that, yes, today two members of the government were at loggerheads on the radio and that is of great regret, but I know at whose feet I place the responsibility for this and I am sad to say that it is the member for Gaven. That is why there needs to be a change today. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee needs to be headed by somebody who is with the government, who is on the right track, who wants to build this state's economy, who is concerned about jobs, who wants to actually build a better future for Queenslanders, who is concerned about our schools, who is concerned about our health system, and who does not want to play politics and does not want to actually just look after oneself.

Mining Industry, Water

Mr MALONE: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development. Can the Deputy Premier inform the House what plans the government has to deal with the major problem of floodwater in coalmines and what, if any, plan the opposition has to deal with this problem?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Mirani for the question. It is a good question about an issue that goes to the heart of the economic future of Queensland and, more particularly, the economic future of Central Queensland. This was a problem that the former government simply could not address. The member for Mirani asks a good question. It is a question very similar to the one asked by the member for Keppel in the House a couple of weeks ago and I have spoken about the issue here a number of times as well.

We have put a lot of effort into finding a solution to this problem. We have consulted widely with all stakeholders and we have put together a pilot release strategy for the coming wet season. We think that a whole-of-river-catchment management system will provide a long-term solution that is based on a discharge allocation system. It is a river management system very similar to the one operating in the Hunter River. In the Hunter River a similar river system has been managed for quite some time to provide much better water quality and allow the resources industry and the agricultural industry to co-exist.

The real question is why the opposition has not asked any questions about this issue. They regularly go up to Rockhampton and run scare campaigns. I have a couple of examples from the local media. The Leader of the Opposition goes up there and runs scare campaigns about dirty filthy water being put into Rockhampton's drinking water supply. The member for South Brisbane goes up and runs a scare campaign about some sort of a dirty deal and makes all sorts of crazy accusations. Even the poor old member for Rockhampton gets dragged into it occasionally when the visitors come to town. When the visitors come to town, old Bill, the member for Rockhampton, gets dug out of his office to make a few scary comments himself, but it is not working.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Premier, please resume your seat. There are too many interjections across the chamber. Hard as it may be to believe that we could not hear the Deputy Premier, I am sure Hansard want to be able to hear him as do others. I call the Deputy Premier.

Mr SEENEY: It is noteworthy that none of them are prepared to ask me a question in here. Day after day they ask questions about a whole range of other things that do not have an effect on the Queensland economy, do not have an effect on Central Queensland or do not have an effect on all the jobs that are dependent on the resources industry. They do not stand up in this place and ask me questions about things that they are prepared to go up into Central Queensland and try to run scare campaigns about.

The good news is that the people of Central Queensland are not buying their scare campaigns. They have embraced the solution that we have put forward. Even the Capricorn Conservation Council has cautiously welcomed the solution that we have put forward. We have achieved an admirable degree of cooperation from all of the interest groups because all of the interest groups in Central Queensland know that this issue has to be solved. There has to be a solution that allows the resources industry, the agriculture industry and the urban centres of Central Queensland to co-exist within that river system. We will do that despite their scare campaigns.

(Time expired)

Taxation

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the LNP's promises about lowering taxes and the cost of living. I draw the attention of the House to the state tax review released today by independent accounting firm Pitcher Partners which shows that Queensland has lost its No. 1 tax competitiveness status under the LNP for small to medium sized businesses. This follows figures from the budget showing taxes per capita have risen by $76 under the LNP. I ask: will the Premier confirm that this report proves the LNP has broken yet another promise to Queenslanders?

Mr NEWMAN: I have not seen the report that the honourable member has mentioned today, but I will be very interested to have a look at it.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 28 November 2012, by Pitcher Partners, titled 'Pitcher Partners State Tax Review 2012/2013—Which State is in better financial shape?' [1741].

There might indeed be what is called a lead-lag effect given there were some pretty hefty tax rises from the previous government. If I recall correctly, we saw increases in land tax, stamp duty and payroll tax. We saw a number of things from the previous government. Of course we saw the great big waste tax, the waste levy, brought in as a big environmental slush fund.

In relation to our tax competitiveness, probably the best thing to look at is the taxation per capita figures across various states. I have some figures in front of me here. In terms of taxation per capita Queensland is at $2,347. New South Wales is at $2,978—that is higher. Victoria is at $2,745—that is higher. Western Australia is at $3,188—that is higher. Is there a theme building here? South Australia is at $2,415—that is higher. Tasmania is lower at $1,825. The ACTU—there is a Freudian slip; a Labor administration, the ACTU, we know who really is in charge—the ACT is at $3,411. That is the highest, isn't it? The Northern Territory is at $1,743. I say to honourable members today that we have Tasmania and the Northern Territory that are clearly the mendicant states—they have to go and suck up money from the rest of us. They get all of our GST.

We know what the Labor Premier in Tasmania said when asked how they are going to get their budget into surplus. She told a colleague at COAG, 'That's easy—the mining boom. We are doing real well from mining.' Someone said, 'What mining?' She said, 'WA iron ore.' That is the Labor way of balancing the budget.

The point is that we are very, very competitive. I spoke earlier on about the payroll tax threshold which has gone from $1 million to $1.1 million. It goes to $1.2 million next year and so on and so forth. We understand that small and medium sized businesses are the engine room of the economy. They employ people. They take risks. They needed to be rewarded as well to continue to create those great jobs for a great state with great opportunity.

Queensland Economy

Ms MILLARD: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House of any positive developments in the housing sector and how these will reflect broader economic conditions in Queensland?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Sandgate for her question. The member for Sandgate is, of course, out there fighting hard every day for her community, particularly against the rapacious effects of the federal Treasurer, Wayne Swan, who is ripping, as the health minister said, $103 million out of the health system this year alone—$40 million in the first seven months. The federal member for Lilley believes that Queensland has 35,000 fewer people in it this year than it did last year. Every time someone goes into a hospital and says, 'Why is that bed empty?' there will be a sign on that bed saying, 'Courtesy of Wayne Swan and federal Labor's inability to balance a budget.' We know that they cannot balance a budget in the same way that Labor in Queensland could not balance a budget.

Unfortunately, Mr Swan has been, as he claims, bullied by the member for Sandgate. Who can believe that of the member for Sandgate. Poor old Wayne! He came into town from Canberra and he got bullied by the member for Sandgate. It is unfortunate that Mr Swan felt bullied by the member for Sandgate. I do not know where on earth he gets those thoughts from—probably the same place he makes up the numbers in his budget.

Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. We are seeing in fact, across the broader economy, improvements in the housing sector in Queensland. For those Queenslanders considering buying a home they will be pleased to know that housing affordability is at its highest level since 2009. The HIA, the Housing Industry Association, yesterday released its housing affordability index showing affordability increased by 5.9 per cent in the September quarter. The affordability index for regional Queensland, importantly—because it is not just in the cities as Labor would have people think but all across Queensland—also increased four per cent over the September quarter. That is good news for all Queenslanders—for those in the cities and for those in the bush.

The REIQ also released analysis yesterday showing demand for affordable homes is strengthening across the state as buyers take advantage of the ideal buying conditions. The number of house sales under $350,000 in Queensland increased by 24 per cent. House sales across Queensland increased by 24 per cent for the September to September quarters. That is enormous growth. The REIQ says that investors are being enticed back into the market as rental demand returns. The ABS finance data for September rose again on its August rise and is 6.4 per cent higher over the year. This is good news for builders, suppliers and bankers and, most importantly, it creates jobs.

In Queensland we know that government does not have all the answers, but we know that we need to get out of the way. We know we need good state finances. In Queensland we have a great state with great opportunities.

(Time expired)

Newman Government, Performance

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to comments made by the Manager of Government Business on ABC Radio this morning where he criticised the member for Gaven for speaking on an issue physically outside his electorate. I ask: will the Premier rule out implementing the same approach he adopted in the Brisbane City Council of banning MPs from speaking publicly about issues outside their electorates?

Mr NEWMAN: To go to the second part of the honourable members question, I cannot recall any such ban at the BCC at any stage. If the honourable member has such material, I would ask her to table it. I certainly reject the assertion in the question.

But what I will say is that the member for Mermaid Beach was making a very important point. Perhaps at the time of the interview he was unable to perhaps be as expansive as I would have been and I now will be in relation to this particular issue which, I understand, is the issue of the Gold Coast cruise ship terminal. It goes back to what I was saying earlier on and yesterday. We have a party room process where all members on my team know they can speak up. All members know they can come to me and tell me that they do not like something or want to do something and we will deal with it.

I need to make the point sadly to this parliament this afternoon that I was concerned to see the member for Gaven go out very publicly against the cruise ship terminal, not because I had a problem with him exercising a democratic right to go and talk about any particular issue—and I totally respect that. The thing that concerned me was that it was not raised with me. To my knowledge, it was not raised with the Deputy Premier as the responsible minister.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Manager of Opposition Business under standing order 253A. There have been far too many interjections. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Why was I so concerned? Because during the Gold Coast City Council election campaign there was a debate about cruise ship terminals and the current incumbent mayor, Tom Tate, said very clearly that if he were elected he would pursue a Gold Coast cruise ship terminal. That is what he said and, as the newly elected Premier of this state, I said that we would support him. I would therefore have expected that if the member for Gaven had concerns he would have come to me and told me, or he would have raised it in the party room, or he would have written to me, or he would have sent me an email, or he would have done anything. But, frankly, I never received that and I think that is my concern.

If you want to be part of this government team, if you want to be on the train that is taking Queensland forward, if you want to be part of a program to create jobs and investment to build this state up, then we need people who have the courage to back important decisions like the Gold Coast cruise ship terminal. It will create jobs. The Gold Coast has been economically in the doldrums for the last two or three years, and I would have thought that every Gold Coast member—and I know all the others do—would have been right behind it, supporting it, supporting jobs and investment, getting those tourists right into the heart of the Gold Coast. So that is why I am disappointed. That is why I am disappointed in what the member for Gaven did, and that is why I support the member for Mermaid Beach in his comments.

(Time expired)

Newman Government, Achievements

Mrs SMITH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. Can the minister provide an update to the House on progress of the initiatives within the Newman government's six-month plan and outline how these actions are helping to build a better future for Queensland's families?

Mr LANGBROEK: It gives me great pleasure to rise and I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for the question, because of course the member for Mount Ommaney is in here asking questions about matters of policy that affect the daily lives of Queenslanders. That is in stark contrast to those opposite.

Of course the first months of the Newman government have been marked by our capacity to deliver great outcomes in a great state. We have delivered on our election commitments and every six months we are coming up with a new list of commitments in our portfolios which we are intent on delivering so that we can meet the needs of Queenslanders right from early childhood all the way through schooling and training and vocational education. We are getting things done from crayon to career. We are getting the great state back on track. So let us have a look at some of those specific examples.

I know that the member for Mount Ommaney has had a lot of appreciation from special schools in her electorate where we have provided them with 7,000 e-tablets over the last couple of weeks. I know honourable members have all received good publicity about that but most importantly appreciation from the people they represent in their electorates where we are looking to improve outcomes for our students with special needs.

We have made sure that we involve our communities in our schools, and we are doing that via the Independent Public Schools program, where 26 schools are going to become independent schools from 2013. We are going to fix the disgraceful maintenance backlog left by those opposite—$296 million in maintenance backlog we were left with. This is one of the biggest initiatives that the Treasurer has seen fit to allocate in my portfolio—$200 million over the next two years to fix up schools and to make them places where children want to come to learn, where parents are proud to bring their children and where teachers and principals enjoy their working environment.

We have also provided additional services from speech and language pathologists. We have identified the schools who need the most help so we can improve outcomes. We have funded extra chaplaincy services, making sure that we have extra pastoral support to guide students in their journey through school.

Rural and regional Queensland does not miss out either. We have trialled an e-kindy program which will start next year, so hundreds of children in remote and rural Queensland will be able to access this from next year. There are extra literacy and numeracy programs to the value of $26 million, and of course in the training area we are just days away from a government response to the Skills and Training Taskforce so we can make sure that our TAFEs and training institutions are providing the best training.

But the question for those opposite in the opposition is: why don't they come in here and fight on their record? Why don't they come in here and speak about the things that they achieved over the last 14 years instead of the state of decay which they left our systems in that we have had to fix up in every portfolio? Why don't they propose alternative policies? The reason is that they have none. They have no policies at all. We are delivering for the people of Queensland. They delivered nothing but failure and debt and deficit. We will do better for the people of Queensland.

Gladstone Hospital

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. Minister, some time ago the Gladstone Hospital was assessed as a level 3 service based on a general practice model. This was said to be a starting point. When will the model for the provision of health services be reviewed given the exponential growth in the Gladstone electorate? And will the review be the responsibility of the hospital board or Queensland Health executives?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Gladstone for her question and certainly acknowledge her very significant ongoing interest and passion with regard to the matters of Gladstone Hospital—and indeed probably something which drove her to come to this place a number of years ago.

Just before I go to the specifics of the question, it is also important to understand that there are some ongoing challenges with regard to the Gladstone Hospital. One of the things that is needed is a significant amount of investment, I think, from a leadership point of view in ensuring that some of the issues that surround morale at the Gladstone Hospital in the way that it actually views itself in the context of the overall Central Queensland health region are addressed so that morale can be lifted to a particular higher level. This is one of the challenges of course. There are great people there in Gladstone, as the honourable member for Gladstone knows, doing a good job in the hospital, and there certainly are some issues that do need to be addressed.

One of the most important things when it comes to the delivery of health services in Queensland now, whether it be under our predecessors with the establishment of local hospital and health networks or under us with the establishment of hospital and health services, is that matters to do with the planning and the day-to-day running of clinical services at a hospital are best dealt with by the hospital board. I say to the honourable member for Gladstone that, when it comes to the issue of deciding what the service level capabilities will be there, the health service level planning is certainly going to be done at a local level with the hospital board.

I understand that in the last 12 to 24 hours some issues and concerns have been raised that the local hospital board has limited power to operate in the field of developing a health services plan for its hospital district and that it only has the power to hire and fire the chief executive officer. I can assure you, Madam Speaker, that, along with the ability to dismiss its chief executive officer if they are not living up to the expectation of the board or the community, the hospital board has the power, has the authority, to be able to work out a health services plan that meets the needs and expectations of that local community in conjunction with that local community.

One of the challenges we have in Gladstone—and something that is going to have to be looked at—is that the presentations through the ED actually present that hospital at a higher level than what actually happens with regard to admissions. I understand that the presentations through the ED would indicate that it should be a level 4—and I stand to be corrected if that is not the case—but the level then of in-patient admissions indicates that it should be a level 3. There have been some improvements in recent times in Gladstone Hospital. There have certainly been some investments assisted by the private sector or the mining sector in a range of areas, and we will keep building on more in the future.

(Time expired)

Newman Government, Achievements

Mr LATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Can the minister provide an update to the House on progress of the initiatives within the Newman government's six-month plan and outline how these actions are helping to build a better future for Queensland children and families?

Ms DAVIS: I thank the honourable member for his question because I know that he has a very strong interest in the protection of children and in strengthening Queensland families. Of course I am very pleased to highlight the important work that we are doing and some of the key achievements in our six-month action plan.

Before I do that, can I take a moment to reflect on the apology that was offered yesterday in this House? There were over 250 people who were present yesterday when the apology was delivered by the Premier, and it was an apology that they had waited a very long time to hear. Of course there were many more who watched the apology online. But it was very heartening to hear the great support for the words that the Premier delivered in that apology. It had been a long time coming, and I think the Premier would agree that it was a very special occasion for us to meet with those people who were affected by forced adoptions. Yesterday I said a number of things, but these people were deserving. They were deserving yesterday. They waited a very long time for it. What we should never allow to happen again are those policies and practices of the past.

Just as this government is prepared to stand up and say sorry for what occurred in the past, we are also getting on with the job of fixing our child protection system. In our first 100 days the government established the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, delivering on a key election commitment to chart a new road map for child protection in Queensland. Whilst this takes place, we are getting on with the business of delivering our first six-month action plan.

A solid investment has been made to target childhood neglect through our Fostering Families initiative. This is a first of its kind in Queensland, with over $4 million over two years to undertake a trial of this program. I am pleased to announce that 300 families will receive intensive in-home and out-of-hours support services in three locations in Queensland: in Brisbane south through Mission Australia, in Maryborough and Hervey Bay—I know the member for Maryborough has already met with the provider there; that is, ACT for Kids—and in Toowoomba through the Sisters of Mercy. These services will be up and running early in the new year.

We have also already announced that Kids Helpline will receive $500,000 over four years to ensure children from regional areas of Queensland have access to telephone counselling 24 hours a day, seven days a week so they can report abuse or discuss issues important to them. This focuses on children and young people from remote and regional Queensland—

(Time expired)

Member for Gaven

Mr HOPPER: My question is to the Premier. On Friday the Premier's office and the Attorney-General's office rang my office. I understand that the purpose of this call was to remove myself from the legal affairs committee in order to allow the removal of the member for Gaven from the parliamentary Ethics Committee. My question to the Premier is: was the Premier considering removing the member for Gaven from the parliamentary Ethics Committee because he was too impartial?

Mr STEVENS: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 115, that comes under imputations or hypothetical matters.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! The question does carry imputations, and I warn members to be careful with their questioning, but I will allow the Premier to answer it.

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the member for Condamine, the new member of the Katter's Australian Party—a party that can tell you the problems but can never tell you the answers; a party that runs around promising everything but will never deliver anything. I urge Queenslanders to look at this bunch of people who are really playing to every possible prejudice or sweet spot they possibly can. I respect that regional people need to be fought for and stood up for, but that is what this government will do. This government will look after regional Queensland, and has done in the way I outlined in my ministerial statement, because that is what we are all about in the LNP.

To go to the heart of my answer, I will say this: on Friday we all believed that the member for Condamine was a loyal member of this team. We all believed the member for Condamine would show loyalty to us and loyalty to the people of his electorate—people who voted for an LNP candidate. People in his electorate were entitled to do that because he made a statement in November last year saying that he would serve as a member of the LNP. He said that to the community—

Mr HOPPER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker. Could you ask the Premier to answer the question?

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Condamine, take your seat. You have asked a question of the Premier. I allowed it even though it had imputations within it, and I am going to allow the Premier to answer it.

Mr NEWMAN: My point is this: on Friday we on this side of the chamber believed we had a person who was loyal to his community and part of this team. So why would I have rung him? Why would I have tried to ring the member for Condamine, who—

Mr Hopper interjected.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I now warn the Manager of Government Business under standing order 253A and I warn the member for Condamine under standing order 253A. We will have no interjections across the chamber and we will allow the Premier to answer the question.

Mr NEWMAN: The member for Condamine suddenly became unavailable. That happened in November last year. Suddenly he had phone problems, or he lost the phone, or the dog ate the phone or the phone tipped out of a ute and went into the lake—I do not know. But the reason I was trying to ring him was the same reason the Treasurer spoke to him on the same day—on Friday. The Treasurer spoke to him—

Mr Nicholls: For an hour and a half.

Mr NEWMAN:—for an hour and a half about difficulties he was having with his committee and whether he needed any support. I wanted to know how he could deliver a committee report that was against things that he and members of the committee had voted for here in this parliamentary chamber.

Mr HOPPER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr HOPPER: I don't know where this is coming from. I don't remember the Treasurer speaking to me for an hour and a half.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Take your seat. That is not a point of order.

Mr NEWMAN: To refresh the honourable member's memory, he was at the University of Southern Queensland on Friday with the Treasurer of Queensland, who was there loyally backing him up about things of interest to people on the Darling Downs.

The point is this: we were concerned about the legal affairs committee and knew nothing about the impending defection of Mr Hopper, who back in 2004 lashed out at Independent members claiming they were 'pew sitters marking time at the expense of the electorate. Independents can achieve nothing. They have no road plans, no legislation. They are useless.' He was then going to Kennedy to campaign against the defector Bob Katter.

(Time expired)

Newman Government, Achievements

Dr DAVIS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Energy and Water Supply. Can the minister update the House on initiatives in the Newman government's six-month plan and how these are building a bright future for Queensland families?

Mr McARDLE: I thank the member for the question. He is a member who is very keen about cost-of-living issues in his electorate and indeed right across this great state. It was only a few months ago in August of this year that the Prime Minister suddenly found that electricity prices were a major concern to her when she gave an address at I think the media club in Canberra. Until that time the Prime Minister had not even heard of the word 'electricity'. She never came to this state and criticised Anna Bligh about the massive increases in power prices until she thought electorally she could garner some support by making a statement about power prices. At the same time under the leadership of Campbell Newman, the LNP government had been moving forward doggedly to try to arrest these ongoing concerns on a day-by-day basis.

Unfortunately, the Labor federal government has now been in power for a period of five years and it has produced one white paper—one paper. That is what it has done to arrest the issues addressing this state and this nation with regard to power prices. What has Queensland done under Campbell Newman? Firstly, we have frozen tariff 11. We made a commitment and we did it. Secondly, we reduced the solar feed-in bonus from 44c to 8c. Thirdly, we have the QCA looking at what is a realistic figure going forward, and there is a draft report on the QCA website now addressing that very issue. Fourthly, we have had an interdepartmental committee looking at the issue of what is driving prices up. Fifthly, we have had the independent review panel release a report as late as last Saturday on the DEWS website highlighting very clearly where we can focus our forces and our energy. This is a government that is showing leadership on energy. This is a government that is focused on what we can do for Queenslanders as opposed to the Labor Party in Canberra, which has produced one piece of paper, has thrown it up in the air and hopes it catches fire somewhere along the way.

Even the Labor Party in Canberra are ahead of the ALP in this state—because Queensland Labor have done nothing, said nothing, moved nowhere and achieved nothing with regard to power prices, even though the cost drivers are clearly laid at their feet for the long periods of time that they let the energy networks run up network charges and increase the costs. This government is dealing with the issues. Julia Gillard is not dealing with the carbon tax and the green schemes. This government is showing true, strong leadership. This is a great state with great opportunities, a great LNP government and a great Premier to boot.

Newman Government, Performance

Mrs MILLER: My question is to the Premier. After this week's extraordinary events—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs MILLER: if you cannot govern yourselves—and clearly you can't—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Take your seat. I will not have interjections while a member is asking a question, and when they are not asking questions I expect order in the House. I ask the member to start again.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Premier. After this week's extraordinary events, if you cannot govern yourselves—and clearly you can't—how can you govern Queensland?

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker. Using the word 'you' is not permissible in the House.

Madam SPEAKER: Correct. Member for Bundamba, the reason you do not use the word 'you'—as previous Speakers have ruled—is that you are addressing the chair when you say that, so unless you are asking me a question you do not ask it in that way. I will ask you to take your seat. You have had enough of a chance to put that question again.

Mrs MILLER: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order, member for Bundamba?

Mrs MILLER: Madam Speaker, I have been vilified by you in this parliament for the last six months.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Take your seat. I already have the member on a warning under 253A for interjections across the chamber. I now ask the member to leave the chamber for an hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Bundamba withdrew from the chamber at 3.22 pm.

Newman Government, Achievements

Mr MOLHOEK: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister provide an update to the House on progress of the initiatives within the Newman government's six-month plan and outline how these actions are helping to build a better future for Queensland families?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for Southport for the question. I know that he understands the importance of safety in his community and the rights of the people in his community and he puts them first and foremost. He also understands the rights of the victims. This is unlike the previous Labor government, who obviously put the rights of the offender first and foremost when they brought legislation to this House and set a pathway of neglecting the safety of the people of Queensland.

The Newman government was elected with an historic mandate from the people of Queensland. It is not a mandate for sitting on our hands and doing nothing. After years of Labor inaction and procrastination, there is much about Queensland that needs to be changed because this is a great state with great opportunities. We aim to revitalise front-line policing services and deliver safer streets for Queensland communities. One of the most important initiatives is our commitment to provide 1,100 new police over the next four years. This government is committed to increasing penalties for those who illegally use firearms, and I thank all members who supported the bill that was before the House last night. Unlike the previous regime, this government believes that police helicopters provide a vital tool for fighting crime, and this is being proven on a day-to-day basis. In the recent budget, we set aside $3 million to deliver a police helicopter service for the Gold Coast. This was the first instalment of our $18 million plan to have two permanent helicopters for the Gold Coast and South-East Queensland.

Another initiative of this government is the review by the member for Mirani of the Rural Fire Service. We want to help our rural firefighters find a model that returns authority to the people on the ground, empowering brigades to defend their communities not only from fire but also from flood and cyclone. Another area of great concern to Queenslanders is the behaviour of some people who show absolutely no consideration for others on our roads. In addition to tough new penalties for those who evade police, Queensland is set to have the toughest anti-hooning legislation in Australia.

At the core of everything we do in this House is community safety, and nowhere is this more important than on our roads. At this time of year, as people head off on holiday or to visit relatives, it is especially important to observe the fatal four and obey the road rules. As we head towards the holiday period, I implore all motorists to take special care this Christmas. Remember, always obey the speed limits, do not drink and drive, always wear your seatbelt and do not drive tired. Also, pay attention to your mobile phone usage.

(Time expired)

Parliamentary Committees, Membership

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to comments made by the Manager of Government Business on ABC Radio this morning where he described MP responsibilities on committees as 'sharing the spoils'. Will the Premier explain whether the government makes decisions regarding committee appointments based on MPs performing important work or does it make appointments based on sharing the spoils?

Mr NEWMAN: I have not seen a transcript of the interview nor did I hear it, as I was involved with important deliberations about the future financial direction of the state and important decisions about actually taking our economic future forward. I just state to the House that I am at a loss as to the premise of the question, but I will say that the gist of the conversation with Steve Austin on 612 is strongly and emphatically supported by me. The member for Mermaid Beach, sadly, had to go on the radio to make some important points to rebut those things that were said by the member for Gaven. It is a sad day when a member of the government has to go on the radio to refute what another member on our side of the chamber has said, but it was necessary to set the record straight. All that we are after as a team is a desire to get on with the task of building this great place up. That is what we are on about. We are going forward. We have a plan for this state economically. We know what has to be done. We are building up agriculture, construction, tourism and resources.

Today, in answer to other questions and also in my ministerial statement, I have spoken about the things that are going on, the green shoots of economic recovery that we are seeing in Queensland right now. The things we are doing are making a difference, but what we need—as members of parliament

who have been trusted by local constituents to take an agenda forward—is people to back the agenda. So when the member for Gaven decides that he is going to go and speak at rallies, talking against a large investment that will bring tourists into the Gold Coast, of course we are all concerned. We would like to have that debate in our party room. We would like to know what his concerns are. We would like to see if we can modify the proposal in some way to make him more happy.

We are not going to accept a situation where there is basically a crass intervention on a failed Gold Coast mayoral campaign, a relitigation of a decision that the Gold Coast voters had already made in relation to the quest for the mayoralty. That is what has concerned us most greatly in recent days and weeks over here—hearing the member for Gaven seeking to prosecute or relitigate the Gold Coast mayoral election. It is just not on. Again, I reiterate that all MPs from the Gold Coast—other than the member for Gaven—have said to me that they totally support the Gold Coast cruise ship terminal. In relation to the member for Gaven, he has never once, not once, told me that he is against it.

(Time expired)

Reform

Mr STEWART: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. In view of the need for urgent and innovative reform in Queensland after 14 years of Labor neglect—

Madam SPEAKER: Attorney-General, one minute.

Mr BLEIJIE: A minute yesterday, a minute today and perhaps a minute tomorrow. Let me continue where I left my minute yesterday. This government is serious about cutting red tape in Queensland. We are serious about getting Queensland back on track. Henceforth, in the next two weeks I will be releasing the split Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act because the real estate industry, the lawyers and the property developers want it. The Labor Party did nothing for 14 years. I table for all honourable members a copy of the—

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: One minute, Premier. I table a copy of an REIQ document in which the REIQ chairman, Pamela Bennett, said that the REIQ had lobbied for many years on behalf of its members to have the PAMDA streamlined.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 23 October 2012, by the Real Estate Institute Queensland, titled 'Legislation reform welcomed by profession' [1740].

For many years they lobbied those former cabinet ministers, who now sit opposite, when they were in government but there was not a word. They attended many meetings, but their ears were shut. Our ears are not shut. Within seven months we are getting on with the job. We are reducing red tape.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you, Premier. We are reducing red tape and we are going to get this great state rolling again and we are going to get this great state back on track.

Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, after considering the matter, I have decided that the member for Bundamba has reflected on the chair and I am referring the member to the Ethics Committee.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tour

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, we acknowledge today students from the Woodridge State High School from the electorate of Woodridge who are visiting the parliament.

CRIMINAL PROCEEDS CONFISCATION (UNEXPLAINED WEALTH AND SERIOUS DRUG OFFENDER CONFISCATION ORDER) AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.31 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

CRIMINAL PROCEEDS CONFISCATION (UNEXPLAINED WEALTH AND SERIOUS DRUG OFFENDER CONFISCATION ORDER) AMENDMENT BILL 2012

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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

A Bill for an Act to amend the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes.

(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 27 NOV 2012

Tabled paper: Message, dated 27 November 2012, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012 [1742].

Introduction

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.32 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001, the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012 [1743].

Tabled paper: Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes [1744].

I am pleased to introduce the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012. The bill represents the fulfilment of the Queensland government's pre-election pledge to introduce tough new unexplained wealth and drug trafficker declarations to target the ill-gotten gains of criminals. Serious criminal activity is often motivated by greed and an unwillingness to work hard and be liable for taxation on profits. Engagement in serious criminal activity allows these persons to fund lifestyles which are often beyond the reach of ordinary Queenslanders who earn their incomes and pay their taxes in accordance with the law. They also provide the funds that may underwrite other criminal enterprises in which criminal organisations engage. The ease with which vast sums of money can often be made from serious criminal activity is a 'hook'—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, please have respect for the member who has the call. Take your conversations outside or sit in silence.

Mr BLEIJIE: Thank you for your protection from my own honourable colleagues, Madam Speaker.

The ease with which vast sums of money can often be made from serious criminal activity is a 'hook' that can be used to convince people that it is worth the 'gamble' of becoming involved in such activity. This is why this bill seeks to increase the risk of involvement in serious criminal activity by increasing the chances that involvement may end up costing a criminal not only their illegally obtained assets but also their legally obtained assets. This bill also acknowledges that those who engage in the trade of illicit drugs are involved in criminal enterprises that carry a high and often tragic cost for the community.

The 2012 health of Queenslanders report from the Chief Health Officer of Queensland estimated that illicit drug use cost Queensland society $1.6 billion in 2004-05, with an estimated $39 million spent on health care. There is also a link between drug use and involvement in other criminal activity. The main objective of this bill is to deter serious criminal offending by increasing the personal risk to persons who become involved in serious criminal activity. The bill achieves this objective by creating a new drug trafficking declaration scheme in the form of a 'serious drug offender confiscation order scheme' and introducing 'unexplained wealth' orders.

Under the new serious drug offender confiscation order scheme, the Supreme Court, as a preliminary step, can make restraining orders over property so that the property is preserved for possible future forfeiture under a serious drug offender confiscation order. The bill provides that a court sentencing an offender for a serious drug offence must issue a serious drug offence certificate. A 'serious drug offence' is defined to include a wide range of serious drug offences.

In order to make a serious drug offender confiscation order, the Supreme Court must be satisfied that an offender has been issued with a serious drug offence certificate for a single trafficking offence or three other types of serious drug offences committed within a seven-year period. The Supreme Court must also be satisfied that the state has brought its application within six months of the issuing of the certificate for the qualifying offence. The effect of a serious drug offender confiscation order will be that all property of the person and all the property that was gifted by the person in the six years before the person was charged with the qualifying offence is forfeited to the state. These amendments will enable the community and the justice system to seek compensation for the burden the illicit drug trade places on the community, health and justice systems.

However, the bill does provide for a person against whom a serious drug offender confiscation order is made to retain certain property identified in the bill as 'protected property' with a view to fairness and encouraging the offender's rehabilitation. The bill also amends the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act to include 'unexplained wealth' laws that provide that, if the state can prove on the balance of probabilities that there is a reasonable suspicion that an individual has been involved in serious criminal activity or acquired serious crime derived property without providing sufficient consideration and any of the person's current or previous wealth was acquired unlawfully, then that individual must prove the legitimacy of all of their assets. The bill provides that, with respect to both serious drug offender confiscation orders and unexplained wealth orders, the Supreme Court has a discretion to refuse to make the order if it is satisfied it is not in the public interest to do so. Further, the Supreme Court has a discretion to exclude assets from the operation of a serious drug offender confiscation order or reduce the amount that would be payable under an unexplained wealth order if the court is satisfied it is in the public interest to do so.

Under the bill, innocent dependants of persons against whom serious drug offender confiscation orders and unexplained wealth orders are made can make applications for hardship orders with respect to certain property. Currently, dependants of persons against whom proceeds assessment orders are made do not have the ability to apply to the Supreme Court for an order seeking relief from hardship. The bill provides that these dependants will have the same ability to make an application for hardship order as the dependants of persons against whom unexplained wealth orders and serious drug offender confiscation orders are made.

The bill updates the provisions of the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act with respect to the issuing of notices to financial institutions. This will allow investigators to obtain the information necessary to allow them to identify and protect property from dissipation in a timely manner. The level of information provided to investigators and the increased penalty for noncompliance more closely aligns the position in the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act with other Australian jurisdictions.

The bill provides an explicit mechanism in the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act that will enable Queensland to participate in equitable sharing programs with other jurisdictions. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement report encouraged the facilitation of equitable sharing programs in order to make cross-jurisdictional work on proceeds of crime matters easier.

The bill provides for other minor amendments in order to assist the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act to enhance its operation. The Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Unexplained Wealth and Serious Drug Offender Confiscation Order) Amendment Bill 2012 ensures that Queensland will not become a safe haven for those wishing to hide their ill-gotten gains. The bill is consistent with the Queensland government's unapologetic commitment to being tough on crime. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.40 pm): 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.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

DIRECTORS' LIABILITY REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.41 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend particular acts for matters relating to the liability of executive officers of corporations. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Directors' Liability Reform Amendment Bill 2012 [1745].
Tabled paper: Directors' Liability Reform Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes [1746].

I am pleased to introduce the Directors' Liability Reform Amendment Bill 2012. The bill substantially reduces, across the Queensland statute book, the number of provisions that impose personal and criminal liability on directors for offences committed by corporations—directors liability provisions. There has been a tendency in the past to provide for blanket directors liability to apply to offences under acts without adequate justification.

The bill responds to concerns expressed by the business community and the legal profession about the number and complexity of provisions that impose personal liability on directors for corporate fault. Business groups have also suggested that laws of this nature impact on entrepreneurialism and economic growth as directors adopt an overly cautious approach, in turn curtailing competitiveness, innovation and profitability.

The reforms proposed in the bill are consistent with a national commitment to improving the consistency of approach to directors liability across Australian jurisdictions. The government will apply these principles and guidelines in developing future legislation.

The bill has been prepared following an audit of Queensland's directors liability provisions against nationally agreed principles and guidelines. Under the principles, the imposition of personal liability on a director for the misconduct of a corporation should be confined to situations where: there are compelling public policy reasons for doing so, for example in terms of the potential for significant public harm that might be caused by the particular corporate offending; liability of the corporation is not likely on its own to sufficiently promote compliance; and it is reasonable in all the circumstances for the director to be liable having regard to factors including:

- the obligation on the corporation, and in turn the director, is clear;
- the director has the capacity to influence the conduct of the corporation in relation to the offending; and
- there are steps that a reasonable director might take to ensure a corporation's compliance with the legislative obligation.

As I said, the bill has been prepared following the audit of Queensland's directors liability provisions against nationally agreed principles and guidelines, a copy of which I now table for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Personal Liability for Corporate Fault—Guidelines for applying the COAG Principles' [1747].

Under the agreed principles, where the imposition of directors liability can be justified directors should generally only be held liable for corporate offences if they have encouraged or assisted in the commission of an offence or have been otherwise negligent or reckless. However, the principles recognise that in some instances it may be appropriate to put directors to proof that they have taken reasonable steps to prevent the corporation's offending if they are not to be personally liable.

The guidelines provide a practical guide as to how the principles are to be applied. Under the guidelines, for a directors liability provision to be retained stated criteria must be satisfied. For example, one criteria is that the underlying offence has the potential for significant public harm such as death or disabling injury to individuals, serious damage to the environment, serious risk to public health and safety, undermining of confidence in financial markets, or otherwise highly morally reprehensible conduct—for example, serious offences under child protection or animal welfare legislation. Other considerations include the size and nature of the penalty applying to the conduct, whether the underlying offence is central to the regulatory regime, and the effectiveness of enforcement against the corporation alone.

If a directors liability provision is justified, the guidelines provide for three levels of liability, provided for in the bill as follows. Type 1 liability, the least onerous, places the onus on the prosecution to prove that the director failed to take all reasonable steps to ensure the corporation did not engage in conduct constituting the offence. Type 2 liability makes the director liable for the corporation's criminal conduct; provides that directors bear the onus of bringing evidence to show that they did not know and could not reasonably have been expected to have known of the corporation's conduct constituting the offence or that they took all reasonable steps to ensure the corporation did not engage in conduct constituting the offence; and requires the prosecution to prove the contrary beyond reasonable doubt.

Type 3 liability, the most onerous, deems a director criminally liable for a corporate breach and requires directors to prove in their defence that they did not know and could not reasonably have been expected to have known of the corporation's conduct constituting the offence or that they took all reasonable steps to prevent the commission of the offence by the corporation.

The audit of Queensland legislation according to the guidelines identified over 80 acts and over 3,800 provisions across the statute book for which directors or other corporate officers can be found to be automatically liable. The following legislation was not audited as it was not within the scope of the national review: the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Marine Parks Act 2004, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Vegetation Management Act 1999. Two further acts have been excluded from implementation of the results of the Queensland audit: the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, which is currently the subject of a legislative comprehensive review, and the Child Care Act 2002, which is in the process of being replaced. The principles and guidelines will be applied in developing directors liability provisions in resulting amending or replacement legislation.

For the statutes amended by the bill, thousands of offences for which directors may be liable for corporate fault have been reduced or removed. The categories of offences for which directors liability is retained include animal cruelty, child protection, fire and building safety, public health and safety in areas including nuclear facilities, water and energy production and supply, waste services and disposal, food safety, pest management and radiation sources, revenue protection, protection of identity of complainants and defendants in sexual offence proceedings, transport of dangerous goods, marine pollution, environmental and heritage protection and unauthorised mining activities.

Directors will remain liable for offences where they have personally committed an offence or are deemed to have committed an offence under the Criminal Code. For some amended acts, the bill provides for strengthened deemed liability where the executive officer authorised or permitted the corporation's conduct constituting the offence or was directly or indirectly knowingly concerned in the corporation's conduct.

Because the nationally agreed milestone was for legislation to implement these reforms to be introduced by the end of 2012, there has been limited opportunity for ministers to consult with the public or stakeholders in the preparation of the bill. Because of the short time frame for preparing the bill, the amendments for the removal and retention of directors liability have been prepared as an overlay on the existing offence framework under individual statutes. Ministers may also subsequently, in more fundamentally reviewing their portfolio legislation, consider opportunities for better targeting and streamlining offences to which liability of directors is appropriate and whether that liability should be imposed directly or indirectly as a result of corporate offending.

This bill represents a significant reduction in red tape and the regulatory burden placed on directors and other corporate officers. I would like to thank all of my ministerial colleagues for their cooperation in achieving this result. I am reliably informed that the number of offences under statute has gone from 3,800 to around 280. I thank all of my ministerial colleagues for getting on with the job and further reducing the red-tape burden across Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.49 pm): 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.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

MINING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

Hon. AP CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (3.49 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012, the Fossicking Act 1994, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Mineral Resources Act 1989,

the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 [1748].

Tabled paper: Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes [1749].

The Newman government continues to deliver on its commitment to reduce the regulatory and financial burden on Queensland's resources sector. Today I am introducing a package of proposed reforms to Queensland's mining legislation and the Environmental Protection Act 1994. These include a suite of amendments to reduce red tape and green tape for operators of small scale mining of opal and gemstones, fossicking and additional amendments to clarify and modernise mining legislation and measures to expand and improve the competitive tendering framework for coal, petroleum and gas exploration permits. Together these reforms support the government's commitment in its six-month action plan to review legislation and regulation for the resources sector to reduce red tape and give investment certainty to industry.

Small scale mining operations for opal and other gemstones are an important industry in regional Queensland. They deliver economic benefits to small towns through local employment and tourism. They are the lifeblood of small communities in regional Queensland—places like Yowah, Quilpie, Emerald, Rubyvale, Sapphire, Anakie and Winton. Unfortunately, these small scale miners have faced increasing pressure from a steady increase in fees, compliance costs and red tape over many years which has driven down participation in the industry. The reforms I am introducing today address these issues and will reduce ongoing administrative processes and fees for the industry.

This bill simplifies applications and removes ongoing administrative processes and fees for these miners who operate on a scale between that of mining leases and activities on mining claims. Mining claims are currently limited in area and must be mined by hand. Eligible small scale miners for opal and gemstones currently operating on mining leases will be able to transition to the mining claim framework. Amendments proposed by this bill will allow mining claims for these minerals to be granted, or converted from a mining lease, for larger areas. These amendments will also permit machine mining and allow small miners to enjoy the reduced administrative and financial burdens under this tenure type. This will rectify the one-size-fits-all approach that currently requires these operators to be subject to the same requirements of a large coalminer, which is both unreasonable and unnecessary. For existing mining claims, the limitations of only mining by hand on one hectare will continue.

These new arrangements will allow the industry and the Queensland government to differentiate between small opal and gemstone mining and large mining operations and therefore apply a more appropriate level of regulation. There will be a statutory Small Mining Code as a condition of grant for activity impact management and a work program must be provided to the state government. By choosing to convert a small mining lease operation to a mining claim, an eligible person mining opals or other gemstones may opt for a much more simplified and low-cost framework in which they may hold up to two mining claims of up to 20 hectares each, will no longer be liable for annual rental payments and will not be required to lodge royalty returns if the value of the operation is under a reportable threshold.

In the simpler process, new applicants will notify the relevant local government and all underlying landholders rather than engaging in a wider public notification process. The rights of the underlying landholders and relevant local government will be protected by retaining their right to have objections heard in the Land Court. The Newman LNP government is committed to restoring clear, stable regulatory frameworks for the resources sector, including with respect to environmental regulation. Given that opal and gemstone miners and small scale exploration have a relatively low impact on the landscape and environment compared to large scale mining operations, changes are proposed to regulation relating to the environment as they apply to small scale mining operations. I want to acknowledge the contribution and support that I have received and my department has received from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and his department in the preparation of the provisions of this bill.

Risk based criteria are being introduced to determine which low-risk small scale mining activities will be exempt from the requirement to hold an environmental authority. This will take into account a number of factors, including the area of land to be disturbed, whether the activity is carried out in a watercourse or riverine area or on strategic cropping land, or whether it is located on or adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas. If an environmental authority is not required, the holder will be exempt from relevant application and annual fees and certain administrative requirements. The operator must still comply with their general environmental duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to take all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent environmental harm. Financial assurance and rehabilitation requirements will continue to apply. These changes will benefit the small mining sector and so encourage growth and provide opportunities for more jobs and economic benefits in regional Queensland communities.

The bill will also achieve other significant improvements to the regulation of mining including:

- clarifying the definition of 'occupier' in all resource acts so that it recognises a broad range of legitimate business arrangements such as family trusts, partnerships and companies associated with managing rural businesses on freehold and leasehold land;
- streamlining the terminology used to describe regulatory officers and transferring the statutory powers of mining registrars under the Mineral Resources Act to the minister or chief executive;
- removing the previous native title restrictions to obtaining fossicking licences to enable this tourist activity to occur more freely where native title has not been determined to exist to the exclusion of all others, and where exclusive native title has been determined the native title holders have the same rights as freehold owners to grant access to fossicking licence holders; and
- enabling LNG proponents to construct and operate their infrastructure to minimise impact on overlapping tenure holders, underlying landholders and the environment, and where tenure holders have been granted pipeline licences linear project infrastructure such as electricity and telecommunications related to the operation of other petroleum authorities will be able to be co-located in the area of a pipeline licence. This change facilitates the streamlining of project approvals.

The Newman LNP government recognises the importance of all players in the resources industry, including the exploration sector. The amendments in this bill seek to improve the way in which coal and petroleum and gas exploration rights are allocated in Queensland. Amendments to the Mineral Resources Act will facilitate a contemporary stewardship approach for managing exploration involving:

- the controlled release of land and competitive tendering for coal exploration, including inserting improved Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 provisions into the Mineral Resources Act;
- competitive tendering, with a cash bidding component, for highly prospective areas to ensure an adequate return on the state's resources, reflective of in-ground value; and
- a direct allocation option for coal resources in specific circumstances.

Additional amendments to the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 are also sought to improve the effectiveness of the existing competitive tendering approach following the introduction of cash bidding as a criteria in the tendering process. These amendments will allow a consistent regulatory framework to be applied across the state's two largest resource industries and provide greater certainty and transparency in the allocation of exploration rights. This new framework will also allow the Queensland government to ensure those most capable of developing the state's resources are given the opportunity to do so and ensure the community receives an appropriate return on this development based on the in-ground value of Queensland's resources.

On 16 September 2012 the Newman LNP government announced its new plan for the development of the Aurukun bauxite resource in Far North Queensland. The bill includes amendments to support the state government's development of this project on Cape York. The amendments to the Mineral Resources Act will make it clear the process for the cancellation of a mineral development licence and a mining lease and also ensure that the state is able to enter into arrangements with one or multiple Aurukun bauxite proponents at the end of the tender process.

The Newman LNP government stands for removing unnecessary regulation and red tape in the resources sector. We stand for encouraging resources sector investment, particularly in emerging industries and for our small miners. We are committed to the resources sector as one of the four pillars of Queensland's economy. This bill will confer significant benefits on small scale miners and larger mining projects generally. It delivers on our commitment. Importantly, this bill contains a number of measures that will benefit economic development in regional and rural areas of Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. AP CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (4.00 pm): 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.

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

MOTION

Order of Business

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (4.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 3 and 4 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RACING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 1 November (see p. 2385).

Second Reading

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (4.01 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Health and Community Services Committee for its prompt consideration of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and I note that the committee tabled its report on the bill on 22 November 2012. I table of the copy of the government's response to that report.

Tabled paper: Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 14—Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, government response [1750].

I am pleased to note that the Health and Community Services Committee has recommended the passage of this bill. I note that the committee has asked that I consider a number of matters and I am happy to respond to each of those and provide information to the parliament. I note that the committee has asked me to consider regional representation issues when providing advice to the Governor in Council about the appointment of members to the control board. The issue of mandating regional representation on the control board and the all-codes board was given careful consideration in the development of this bill, but the key objective is to have persons with the required qualifications and experience on that board. It becomes far too problematic to start mandating in legislation that specific regions or stakeholder groups be represented on any of these racing boards. What happens if it is mandatory that a person in regional Queensland, who is specifically appointed to a board because of their residence, moves to live on the Gold Coast? Maybe they get removed? But what if they are moving for only three to six months? Are they still regional representatives or not? This is just one simple example of the complexities involved in having to mandate representation in legislation.

Although regional representation has not been mandated, I will be encouraging as many people as possible from rural and regional Queensland to apply for positions on the racing boards. To ensure the widest possible applicant pool from rural and regional areas, board positions will be advertised in newspapers throughout regional Queensland and in *Queensland Country Life*. The people who will ultimately be appointed to the boards need to have the support and confidence of the wider Queensland racing industry. This lack of endorsement from the industry was one of the key weaknesses of the former governance model, which has been addressed. People interested in being considered for appointment to the racing board will need to be endorsed by the industry's licensees, racing clubs and industry associations or other stakeholder groups.

In addition to extensive advertising in regional areas, I will also be writing to all of the racing clubs and stakeholder groups across the state and asking them to encourage people who fit the selection criteria to put themselves forward as candidates. Country and regional Queensland has many people who have the requisite skills and experience to contribute to the strategic management of the industry. In fact, their particular experience in addressing the challenges faced by rural and regional racing would be a valuable addition to the governance structure of the racing industry. I encourage such people to apply for a position on the racing boards.

As for probity checks, the committee has sought further information on the probity check proposed for candidates who have lived and worked outside of Australia. All candidates that the selection panel identifies as appropriate for appointment will be required to complete a personal probity form. Anyone supplying false, misleading or incomplete disclosure, and this includes information from overseas sources, may be prosecuted. Overseas residents will be required to provide a police report or clearance from the appropriate authority in the jurisdiction in which they reside. Candidates will be required to provide a summary of their work and business history regardless of where it was, including the details of all directorships of corporations, businesses conducted solely by the candidate or in partnership, and details of all past and present employment.

The personal probity form requires the disclosure of any conviction or investigation undertaken by a law enforcement agency either within Australia or overseas. Law enforcement agencies include, but are not limited to, state, federal and overseas agencies such as police services, crime authorities, crime commissions, commissions against corruption, securities and investment commissions, customs services, taxation offices, competition and consumer authorities and gaming authorities. Each candidate is also required to provide a consent and authority for further information that may be required to be obtained by the chief executive.

The committee has requested further information on the costs associated with the reforms that are contained in the bill and who will be liable for those costs. The establishment of the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board and the three individual control boards is expected to provide significant savings to the industry. The boards will be statutory bodies and, therefore, members will receive a lower remuneration level than would be expected by companies formed under the Corporations Act. Remuneration levels must be endorsed by cabinet and recommended to the Governor in Council. So it would be inappropriate for me to pre-empt any such decision making. However, rest assured I will not be recommending anything that will cost the racing industry more.

All employees, assets and liabilities of Racing Queensland Ltd will be transferred to the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board and it is expected that there will be no significant cost associated with that transfer. The Racing Disciplinary Board will replace the first level of appeals boards currently appointed by the control body. Although the cost of the Racing Disciplinary Board will be borne by the industry, it is not expected to cost significantly more than the current appeals structure run by Racing Queensland. However, like all appeal mechanisms, the cost will be dependent upon the workload, which is directly attributable to the decisions made by the control body.

The Racing Integrity Commissioner is a new part-time position and the cost will be borne by the industry. This position exists only because there is a racing industry. That is why it is necessary. The commissioner's remuneration levels must be endorsed by cabinet and recommended to the Governor in Council. So it would be inappropriate for me to pre-empt what that level may be. It should be noted that in the financial year 2011-12 Racing Queensland Ltd received product fees of $138 million. The benefits to the integrity and credibility of the industry from having the commissioner's independent oversight will far outweigh any associated cost.

In relation to recommendation No. 4 of the committee's report, I note the committee's recommendation that proposed section 113AW be amended to specifically provide that self-incrimination is a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with a notice under proposed sections 113AU or 113AV. Proposed Section 113AW provides that a person need not comply with the requirement to answer a question or produce a document if they have a reasonable excuse. In determining whether the power to override established common law rights has been provided in legislation or whether an incidental power may be implied, the courts have regard to common law principles of statutory interpretation.

The common law is well settled in this area. While an act of parliament may override common law rights, it is settled law that any such power must be conferred expressly and unambiguously. This is why when it is intended that the privilege against self-incrimination be removed by legislation, the legislation must expressly and unambiguously change the common law. This approach can be seen clearly in the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 where the privilege against self-incrimination is specifically addressed and the act states that in certain misconduct investigations a person is not entitled to refuse to answer a question on the ground of the self-incrimination privilege. As section 113AW does not, and does not intend to, remove the excuse of self-incrimination, this excuse is available for a person to use. Section 113AW has been purposely drafted broadly so as to permit a range of other established common law excuses to also be used, such as the right to claim legal professional privilege.

There are many situations that may arise where a person may have a reasonable excuse not to comply with a direction from the Racing Integrity Commissioner and none of these have been specified either. For example, a person may have been provided with a written notice to appear before the Racing Integrity Commissioner and on the way to the hearing suffer a medical emergency that prevents their appearance. This is, I would suggest, another example of a reasonable excuse that would apply but has not been specifically identified.

The common law privilege against self-incrimination entitles a person to refuse to answer any question, or produce any document, if the answer or the production would tend to incriminate that person. This established excuse is available to any person appearing before the Racing Integrity Commissioner and it is considered that there is no reason to amend the section as currently drafted.

This bill fulfils the Queensland government's election commitment to remove Racing Queensland Ltd as the control body for racing; establish the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board and individual control boards for the three codes of racing; transfer appropriate racing integrity functions to government by establishing the Racing Disciplinary Board and the Racing Integrity Commissioner;

provide a more competitive environment for Queensland bookmakers by allowing them to take bets via the internet and at approved off-course premises; and extend the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme from 2014 to 2015 by amending the Wagering Act 1998. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.12 pm): I rise to speak in relation to the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. At the outset I wish to indicate the opposition's support for the bill. The opposition will be supporting the bill despite having a number of reservations in relation to it. We have always maintained the belief that the LNP's commitment to pulling apart Racing Queensland Ltd and reinstigating three control bodies would be a destabilising and very expensive demerger for the racing industry. The demerger of RQL into three separate control bodies will cost the LNP more than $1.3 million in efficiency savings that existed with a single racing control body. With this bill the LNP government is implementing an additional layer of bureaucracy and red tape by demerging RQL into three separate control bodies and then establishing an overarching Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board. For a government that was elected on a platform of reducing red tape, introducing another level of bureaucracy into the racing industry seems somewhat extraordinary. The $1.3 million in efficiency savings which were realised through only having one control body could have been spent by the LNP government on conducting extra race meetings or allocating more prize money in the same way as the previous Labor government spent such savings, but instead the LNP will put the money towards additional red tape and bureaucracy.

I also note that with this bill the LNP government is transferring the integrity functions which are undertaken by the control body to the government, but this process will still be paid for by industry. I bet the proposal went down well with industry, making them pay for something that they no longer have any power over. In the political climate we have in Queensland at the moment, where every day we see new integrity and accountability questions raised about numerous members of the LNP government, the LNP government is transferring more integrity responsibility back to itself. The original reason racing integrity functions were removed from government and made the responsibility of the racing industry was a hangover from the 'Minister for Everything', Russ Hinze, and his improper grip on the racing industry. We are seeing Queensland politics slide back into the murky pre Fitzgerald days. On the same day we see a poll indicating that more than half of Queenslanders do not trust this LNP government, it is convenient and coincidental that the LNP government is granting itself more integrity powers. The bill also proposes the minister has more involvement in and power over the operations of the control body. Again this echoes the ghost of Russ Hinze who, as racing minister, had absolute control over the industry. At a time like this it would be a disaster to take the racing industry back to the uncoordinated arrangements of the past.

I also note the bill ensures that the control bodies will be provided with the necessary powers to manage the industry, but it mentions nothing about the funding to establish and manage these processes. In fact, the department briefing identified no extra funding would be provided to the board structures even though the amount of board positions will go from seven to 11 members. The department briefing also identified that despite the LNP advocating this model for years, as recently as a couple of weeks ago, on 7 November, they had no idea how this was going to be funded. Many of the costs associated with the structure, including the remuneration details of appointments to the all-codes board and the control boards, as well as the costs associated with the Racing Integrity Commissioner, had not yet been decided and I accept the comments made by the minister earlier. Today we are debating a bill without the full details of how it will be funded and how the minister will pass the costs on to administer the integrity functions of the industry. This also seems highly suspicious for a government whose integrity is questioned by the people of Queensland on a daily basis. The opposition will follow with interest how the minister approaches the integrity functions and how the changes in relation to legal representation and appeal rights will work practically.

Section 9CO of the bill also precludes the minister giving directions to the control board to request specific allocations of race days by the all-codes board. It appears the minister is also not lawfully allowed to allocate prize money for races. This is despite the minister speaking about the LNP election commitment to support country racing with $1 million a year to fund an additional 20 race meetings over the next four years. I fail to see how the minister will deliver this election commitment and also ensure the boards comply without breaching section 9CO of the bill. The farce that this parliament has become is that we find ourselves in a situation where an LNP election commitment seems to breach a piece of the LNP legislation which, funnily enough, was also an LNP election commitment.

The consultation process for this bill also raises concerns about the future of racing in Queensland. The bill was introduced to the parliament on 1 November and submissions to the Health and Community Services Committee closed on 12 November. I am concerned about the lack of consultation which has been a hallmark of this government. But what is also concerning is that the period of consultation spanned the Melbourne Cup Carnival. Because the Melbourne Cup Carnival attracted such a great proportion of the Queensland racing industry, the period of consultation was held at the worst possible time for the industry. It raises the question of whether the LNP government selected these consultation dates specifically over the Melbourne Cup period to avoid scrutiny of the bill by the industry.

Another indication that the LNP government is attempting to avoid scrutiny of the bill is that they cancelled with no warning a public committee hearing at which members of the industry would have been able to ask questions about the legislation. Racing industry representatives arrived at Parliament House to attend the public hearing, ready to give evidence before the committee. However, they were soon to learn that the committee was cancelled with no warning. Sadly, that meant the industry was not able to give the evidence that it wished to communicate to the committee. It is rather disgraceful that members of the community and the racing industry have been silenced and not allowed the opportunity to raise any issues they have with this legislation and ask questions of the committee. This is yet another example of the LNP government stifling the democratic processes in Queensland. Under this government, no proper community consultation exists in Queensland. The industry's concerns deserve to be heard, instead of being brushed aside by the arrogant LNP government.

The opposition is also concerned about the perceived watering down of the Police Commissioner's ability to advise the minister on the intelligence the commissioner may have in relation to the appointment of a board member. The bill appears to remove section 23(3)(c), which allowed the Police Commissioner to write in a report 'other relevant information to which the commissioner has access'. This means that the commissioner was able to advise whether a person was in debt to organised crime figures or had overseas convictions in areas of fraud or race fixing, for example. During the departmental briefing, much was made by the LNP committee members of the potential for unsuitable people who had adverse histories overseas being able to obtain a board position and what impact this could have on the local industry. The change in the bill means that the commissioner may not be lawfully entitled to provide this other information, including overseas criminal histories. The commissioner may have access to information other than criminal histories in the form of verified intelligence reports. The bill introduced by the minister looks to keep the commissioner quiet on this information. Any infiltration of the boards by unsuitable members may test the integrity of the industry and I can only hope the lack of consultation will not let someone untoward slip through the cracks, which would cost the state millions of dollars.

Despite the line of questioning during the departmental hearing by LNP members, it seems they chose not to highlight this potential problem in the final report and bring it to the attention of the minister. This is another example of the LNP's tactics to silence some elements of the fragile backbench. We all know the way that members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee who dared to highlight problems with the boot camp and body corporate bills have been treated recently. Again, bullyboy tactics are stifling democratic debate in Queensland.

Concerns were also raised in submissions about the regional representation of the board members. Despite the minister's commentary on that matter, regional Queenslanders have already been burnt by what they believe is a Brisbane-centric LNP government and they are questioning whether the city Liberals have any real regard for their concerns. Those involved in country racing may well like to write to the minister and see how he will deliver on his promise for regional board representation.

The opposition supports the changes to the Wagering Act 1998 and the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, which brings the bookmaking activities of Queensland bookies into line with other states and other new competitors in the industry. We also support the bill permitting bookmakers to use the internet to conduct bookmaking. We respect that people in the community enjoy gambling and we wish the Queensland industry well as it begins to compete against its interstate and international rivals.

The key to a sustainable gambling industry is ensuring that all players in the industry act in a responsible way. We understand match and race fixers will test the integrity of the gambling industry and we have seen plenty of examples over the years, not just in racing but also in other sports. We will ensure the minister sets up proper systems and processes to detect those types of fraudulent activities. The racing industry and the sports betting industry rely on transparent and accountable industries. I wish the stakeholders in the racing industry all the best as they work through these changes. The opposition will be supporting this bill.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Reflections on the Speaker by a Member

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (4.24 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I wish to unreservedly apologise to Madam Speaker.

RACING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from page 2871.

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (4.24 pm): Today I rise in support of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. At the outset, I commend the minister for bringing this legislation forward. Over the recent past, racing has had, for want of a better analogy, a chequered history and the amendments within this legislation will start to address the ongoing issues within the industry. In talking to the report, I begin by thanking the members of my committee for their work in preparing this report to the parliament. In particular, I thank Sue Cawcutt, the research director, Lee Archinal and Kathleen Dalladay, the principal research officers, and Ms Dianne Christian, the executive assistant. Those ladies really did put a lot of time and effort into this.

I took offence at the comments of the member for Rockhampton who, in his contribution, said that we had closed the committee meeting, the briefing and the hearings and that we had not engaged in consultation. I assure the minister that the engagement and the consultation was far and wide. We contacted numerous stakeholders and key industry groups. They are actually listed in the report. I draw the attention of members to that list of people who made submissions, although we went beyond that. We engaged, we phoned people, we emailed people. We got everyone we possibly could who we thought had a valid contribution to make. At the end of the whole process, one person was able and prepared to come and address the committee. We felt that was not a suitable or satisfactory outcome. One further person actually just turned up at parliament, because they thought the thing was on. The presentation was by invitation. It is not just a speak-easy where people can wander in. We are a little more professional and a little more sophisticated than that in the committee arena. To say that it was shut down and there was no warning are inflammatory comments that were certainly embellished beyond belief. Certainly they are not a reflection of what happened.

I am pleased that during his contribution the minister addressed a number of the issues raised quite legitimately by the committee. The minister has gone through quite comprehensively the issue around recommendation 2, relating to regional representation on the board. In simple terms, the minister has summed it up: we want the very best people in that role, no matter from where they come, for the overall benefit of the industry and we will search far and wide. Recommendation 3 and recommendation 4 were covered beautifully and I thank the minister for his contribution.

I put on the public record my thanks to the submitters who contributed: the Rockhampton Trainers Association; the Australian Jockeys Association, Queensland branch; the Gold Coast Harness Racing Club; Wayne Dossetto; the Eastern Downs Racing Association; the Townsville Turf Club Incorporated; the Australian Bookmakers Association; the Marburg Pacing Association; Stephanie Houghton; Racing Queensland Ltd; the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club Incorporated; Gerard Betros; the Queensland Racehorse Owners Association; and the Breeders, Owners, Trainers and Reinspersons Association Queensland Incorporated. I am sure, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you would agree that the spread of submissions comes from across the state, from large and small, and from interested individuals. Again, it is fair to say that due diligence was done comprehensively. I am sure everyone is aware that I will no longer be the chair of the committee. I will miss the Health and Community Services Committee.

Mr Hathaway: We're going to miss you, too, Peter.

Mr DOWLING: I am pleased to hear that. I leave them in good hands and in good shape. I recognise my replacement. While I hope he cannot replace me, I know he will do the same job as I did in that role. I commend the member for Kallangur. He has taken over the reins of that committee.

Dr Flegg: A good member, too.

Mr DOWLING: He is a very good member. With those few comments, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVIES (Capalaba—LNP) (4.29 pm): I rise to speak to the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I am pleased today to highlight the good work this government is doing in relation to the Board of Racing Queensland and its support of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. It is important to highlight the good work this government is doing because it is in stark contrast to that of the previous regime. In fact members of my electorate who frequent the Capalaba greyhounds and those who work at the track, like Ross and Nigel, will be very interested to know of the activities undertaken by the former board of Racing Queensland. I will now take this opportunity to outline some of the many examples that illustrate clearly the strong need to reform the racing industry.

As a member of the HCSC it was quite shocking to hear of the wheeling and dealing and shifty deals that seemed to be part of RQL's, and ultimately Labor's, DNA. Let us start with the former board of RQL agreeing to alter the employment contracts of four of RQL's top executives, including the addition of a clause that allowed an increase in salary of 30 per cent. I am not sure how the mates on the board

actually came to 30 per cent being an appropriate figure considering there was no independent benchmarking, no linking of increases to KPIs. The retention payments were not linked to any definable performance targets either. But let us not get too bogged down with the intricacies—we have a lot to cover—suffice to say that two executives who stood to benefit financially from the change in their employment and conditions were directly involved in the negotiation process.

Two days after the state election all four executives resigned from RQL and promptly received separation payments totalling $1.8 million. That is right, $1.8 million.

A government member: Shameful.

Mr DAVIES: It is shameful. This figure includes 14 months salary, redundancy payments and leave entitlements. Those who stood to benefit did and the interests of those who were supposed to be looked after were shafted, as was noted in the Auditor-General's report.

But why are we surprised when we note which prominent AWU man was involved on the board—no doubt hand picked by the former leader of our state and the overseers of this debacle, Labor—'Big' Bill Ludwig. 'Big' Bill Ludwig's history of manipulation within the Labor political realm is well documented. If any members need a refresher course, I am sure the member for South Brisbane would be happy to give them a detailed history and an update.

So aside from the gross conflict of interests and golden handshakes that would make the executives of Lehman Brothers proud, we can now—

Government members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: It is true. It is unbelievable. We can move onto the financial mismanagement. The 2011-12 annual report makes very bleak reading. Some highlights include the company's expectation to post a loss of $14 million, driven by such factors as a payroll—it seems to be in Labor's DNA—which expanded by over $4 million. This can largely be attributed to a strategy of centralised control. Clearly 'Big' Bill Ludwig and his mates on the board were borrowing from Labor's play book on that one. Nothing beats a big old-fashioned deficit. In fact, this is more than bleak reading; this report stands as a damning indictment of the RQL board and the executive's performance as well as the former government who oversaw this travesty.

I would not be able to speak to members about the RQL borrowings straight out of Labor's play book in all honesty unless they had wasted money as well. Well, fortunately, they did. This theme of reckless financial mismanagement, so ably displayed by the former government, was again followed by their mates on the RQL board when they delivered $10.6 million of infrastructure that will have no comparative financial returns and will instead burden the industry for years and years to come.

I only have a limited time available so I will not continue to speak about the $150 million worth of infrastructure contracts provided to a single firm without appropriate tenders being undertaken, which is in blatant contrast to their own procurement policy requiring all work in excess of $10,000 to be competitively tendered to at least three suppliers. Instead, I would like to take the time to remind the House how this government is taking measures to ensure this will not happen again. Changes are being made to enable industry participants to finally have a voice.

Firstly, this government will reform Racing Queensland as the controlling body for the three codes of racing and establish the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board to fulfil yet another election commitment and continue this government's record of delivery. In establishing a new body to control these three codes, the new board will have representatives from each code of racing and independent members chosen following recruitment and selection processes. Again, this is in stark contrast to the actions of the previous lot. This is to ensure that each code of racing has adequate representation and accountability in their new roles and enable the board to have the powers and functions required to manage the three codes of racing.

In addition to its control functions, the new board will provide advice to the government on strategic issues that face the industry and facilitate negotiations with regard to strategic issues and agreements such as major capital expenditure priorities, funding distributions and the administration and conduct of racing. One of the other highlights of the bill that the minister has brought before the House is that it will actually bring bookmakers in Queensland into line with bookmakers in other states. It will allow them the same opportunity to use internet facilities and therefore compete with their interstate counterparts.

This government is committed to being open and accountable. These are measures that are not easy but are necessary to bring the industry back to a place of sustainability after so many years of irresponsible errors from the previous government. This bill is about restoring trust in the racing industry in Queensland. I commend this bill to the House. I commend the minister for bringing about really important reform. Racing is a big part of the Queensland economy.

Throughout the committee process the focus on country racing was very evident. As someone who has links to the country, I think it is really important that we restore country racing back to the place it should be in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House. I commend the minister.

Mr DILLAWAY (Bulimba—LNP) (4.37 pm): I rise to speak today on the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I commend the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing for its introduction to the House. It is a significant step that honours the Newman government's election commitment to revive Queensland's racing industry from its ground-trodden state. I acknowledge my colleagues and the dedicated research staff on the Health and Community Services Committee for the examination of this bill and thank all who provided submissions to the committee.

In the hands of the former Labor government, we have seen a decline in the racing industry, with appalling management and a lack of strategy and resourcefulness. Unfortunately, it is just another example of the same old Labor story where negligence and mismanagement has led to the deterioration of what could be a great asset to Queensland.

The LNP government appreciates the enormous value that the racing industry presents to our state economy and recognises its importance to the 30,000 industry participants. We are committed to maximising its potential and giving these stakeholders back their voice.

Racing Queensland Ltd is the current statutory control body for the racing industry, implemented under the former Labor government. Recently it released its 2011-12 annual report that revealed the extent of damage as a result of years of mismanagement of both the old RQL regime and the former government. It is clear that Labor has driven the Queensland racing industry into the ground. The reported loss of nearly $14 million is absolutely staggering, courtesy of the former RQL board that was headed up by Labor mates and a former union official.

This loss can be traced back to the RQL payroll, which increased from $12.1 million in 2009-10 to more than $16.2 million in the 2011-12 financial year. This increase was driven by the previous board's failed strategy of centralisation and head office control that was not matched by comparative savings in local facilities plus a number of other contributing factors including the decision to seize operational control of several clubs, legal fees and the infamous 'golden handshake' payouts to four senior RQL executives.

Mr Costigan: What a disgrace that was!

Mr DILLAWAY: A disgrace. I take that interjection. That is not to mention the massive $10.6 million investment into stabling infrastructure at the Sunshine Coast that will never deliver a comparative financial return to the state and which saddles the industry with additional burden for years to come. This irresponsible conduct by the former Labor government and Racing Queensland Ltd is shameful and at the end of the day has left Queenslanders suffering once again. This is why the LNP government is responding to the racing sector's cry for help. We acknowledge the issues of the racing industry in Queensland prior to 2012 election. We are now honouring our commitment to rejuvenating the industry and we are looking to restoring accountability and transparency and approving the odds for the racing sector.

The Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 delivers on these promises and amends the Racing Act 2002 with several policy objectives. This bill delivers three main achievements that will restore life and prosperity to Queensland Racing: firstly, the removal of Racing Queensland Ltd and establishing the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board as well as a separate code-specific control board for each of the three codes of racing—thoroughbred, harness and greyhound; secondly, the implementation of a Racing Disciplinary Board and a Racing Integrity Commissioner; and, thirdly, the provision that will allow bookmakers to use internet based technologies to conduct their business both at the racecourse and at other off-course premises.

The removal of Racing Queensland Ltd is vital to bringing racing integrity back under government control. In its place three independent code boards will be established for thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing to better represent the interests of the industry. The racing boards will be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations regarding allocation of race dates and prize money, providing advice to enhance their specific code rules of racing, and undertaking ongoing consultation with code stakeholders and developing a five-year rolling infrastructure plan for their code.

To combat the potential for an 'empire-building' board membership that unashamedly took place under the old regime, members will only be able to serve a maximum of two three-year terms. In addition, to ensure members of the board are truly representative of the sector and to uphold the integrity of the industry, only applicants who can demonstrate that they have the support of one or more licensees, racing clubs, industry associations or other relevant stakeholder groups will be eligible for appointment. This structure will restore control to the 30,000 people in the racing sector, giving participants a real voice in the future direction of their respective codes.

To maintain unity and cohesion of the racing industry as a whole, the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board will function as the principal racing authority for the three codes of racing. Their responsibilities for general management for relevant codes will include acting as the principal racing authority for the purposes of satisfying national and international racing authority's governance and regulatory requirements, addressing issues that affect the racing industry as a whole such as wagering negotiations and television rights deals, facilitating negotiations between two or more control boards about issues affecting the relevant individual codes, and providing administrative and corporate support to code-specific boards to enable them to deliver their functions and meet their objectives. This format allows for transparency and accountability but most importantly restores control to the stakeholders of the racing industry and gives them a voice.

The Newman government has received overwhelming support for this new governance structure from a racing industry that is highly critical of the previous government ignoring the abuse of power and mismanagement by Queensland racing administrators. The Queensland Jockeys Association in their submission to the Health and Community Services Committee stated—

The creation of separate Boards for each Code is something that has been discussed for a number of years and is more than welcomed. It means that each Code can be in control of their destiny with the participants having a voice. Previously the participants felt dominated by Racing Queensland under the previous Government pulling the strings. The Industry had lost direction and the participants lost hope.

Supporting this view, the Gold Coast Harness Racing Club wrote—

... key aspects of racing had been *'brought to its knees'* through disrespect, carelessness and arrogance emanating from the single control body Racing Queensland Limited.

Furthermore, the Queensland Square Trotters Association agreed that the amendments presented in this bill 'are fully supported in principle, as there is no doubt harness racing and possibly all codes have been failed by the current structure and governance'. And, finally, the Townsville Turf Club argued—

The industry covering all three codes, has for too long been controlled and dictated to as a whole under the current Racing Queensland Limited structure, with the proposed new board establishments providing each code with a greater level of autonomy and input into the direction of their respective code of racing.

There is no doubt that the feelings emanating from the entire Queensland racing community are those of abandonment, dissatisfaction and disappointment in the previous Labor administration. The Newman government wants to restore hope to this industry, to the sport of kings, and to reassure the 30,000 participants that they will not be forgotten under our government. They will have control once more and have the ability to direct the industry to a more positive future. This bill delivers this. This bill is the beacon of hope this industry has been waiting too long for.

I would like to acknowledge the recommendations made by the Health and Community Services Committee regarding regional representation through board membership. In several of the submissions received, a concern was raised that, in order for the independent code boards to be truly representative of the sector, steps should be taken to ensure representation of the regions. Subsequently, the committee made two recommendations (1) that the minister consider regional representation issues when he provides advice to the Governor-in-Council in relation to appointment of members to the control boards; and (2) that the minister inform the House of the steps he will take to encourage eligible persons from regional and rural areas to seek appointment to the control boards and to respond to the industry's desire to ensure adequate regional membership. I note that the minister addressed both of those concerns in his second reading speech.

The bill further seeks to improve the integrity, transparency and accountability of the racing industry through the establishment of a Racing Disciplinary Board and appointment of a Racing Integrity Commissioner. The Racing Disciplinary Board will deal with appeals to replace the much criticised and flawed process currently in place under Racing Queensland Ltd. The Queensland Jockeys Association stated in their submission—

Under the present system the Control Body hold all the 'aces' in obtaining legal representation or expert representatives as a result of their financial advantage compared to the average appellant ...

The Racing Disciplinary Board will address this issue, ensuring independence of decisions surrounding integrity issues in racing. The bill provides for the appointment of a Racing Integrity Commissioner to maintain the highest levels of transparency and accountability. The future of racing in Queensland will see a marked difference from its previous history of abandonment. Under the current Racing Act, Queensland bookmakers are allowed only to take bets when present at a race meeting and are restricted to using approved telephones to take bets from customers who are not physically present. This restriction has deeply inhibited their competitiveness with their interstate counterparts who are allowed to use internet based technologies to conduct business at the racecourse and at off-course premises approved by the minister. This bill brings Queensland in line with New South Wales which for the last two years has allowed bookmakers off-course betting capabilities. Victorian bookmakers, I note, are soon to also be granted this option, with other states expected to follow. These amendments will help Queensland bookmakers to continue to support the Queensland racing industry and regain a level of commercial viability in an intensely competitive national wagering market.

The establishment of the three code-specific boards and the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board and removing Racing Queensland Ltd, establishing and transferring appropriate racing integrity functions to the government and providing a competitive environment for Queensland bookmakers will see this bill deliver on the LNP's election commitment to rejuvenate the racing industry. This bill delivers the changes that are so desperately required in the racing industry with the vision of a great state that delivers great opportunity and a prosperous future for racing in Queensland. I once again congratulate the minister for the introduction of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (4.48 pm): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to speak in support of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and to commend the minister for these changes. It would be wrong to say I do not know which end of a horse is which, because I do know the business end from the other end and which end bites and which end kicks, but I could not say that I am a regular punter. I would not say that I am a punter at all. However, I do know that the racing industry in Gladstone not only employs a lot of people—many of whom you do not see on race day—but also is the centre of entertainment for a lot of people and, for some, entertainment in terms of wagering. So, for the community that I represent, our Gladstone Turf Club has been an intrinsic part of the community for many, many years. It has not always succeeded. It has had its ups and downs, but the current committee, headed by David Weinert and his group of people, have worked tirelessly on a voluntary basis to get the turf club back on track, and they have done an amazing job.

Mr Costigan: Good old Ferguson Park.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: That is it; Ferguson Park. It has not been helped, however, by the previous government. The changes to the legislation that transferred all of the power to Queensland Racing did nothing for country racing. I was discussing the matter with my parliamentary colleague the member for Townsville, and he was saying how the racing industry withered on the vine. From Gladstone's point of view it did not wither on the vine; it was Tordoned by Queensland Racing.

Other members have talked about the construction of the Queensland Racing Board and its activities and actions which I would 100 per cent support. The actions of that board in relation to country racing, in particular, were appalling, distasteful and unacceptable. The Gladstone Turf Club has been reduced to five race days a year, and it is supposed to survive on that. It does such a good job. I think they are called ghost race days. Is that what they call them?

Mr Costigan: Phantom.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Phantom race days, okay. Well a phantom is a ghost.

Government members interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: That is okay. I am in the right stall. The club needs to improve on that number of race days. The quantum of racing has been taken by Rockhampton and, to a lesser degree, Yeppoon. I think if you look at the history of the Gladstone Turf Club it shows its bona fides for increased racing days. It is responsible, it is visionary and it is innovative. I think somebody like David—and I have not spoken to him about this so I could be poking my nose in where it is not welcome—would be an incredible asset to a new board. It is appropriate that the minister have some involvement in the racing industry. The government and we as a parliament are responsible for racing in terms of regulation and ensuring the appropriate running of races and oversight of wagering, but it is also appropriate because it affects so many people's employment and recreation.

I am sure that you will find out quickly enough if your involvement is unwarranted, unwelcome or inappropriate. You will get the message because that is the way the racing industry is. They speak with a big brickbat. However, they are decent people in the main. I have never met anyone whom I would not regard as a decent person. Certainly, in relation to my electorate they are wonderful people who just want to see racing and its ancillary interests survive and grow.

This bill will also review and make recommendations regarding the allocation of race dates and prize money. I would again encourage the minister to have a look at Gladstone. We are not one of those TAB racing places, but I think they deserve to have that reviewed. I am referring to TAB races when it is a bigger race day. I know that we have more people attending races than a number of the bigger clubs in Queensland. I am not talking about the south-east corner.

If you talk to David and others in Gladstone about how much they have grown the sport and the recreational side of it, there has been talk for so many years. When Russell Cooper was the minister, there was talk of relocating the turf club to a more appropriate site where they can have a grass track. They are still running on dirt. There was talk about relocating to a grass track and having a training track inside—a multi-user facility. It has gone nowhere because previous ministers would not guarantee that the club would get the proceeds of the sale from the track back to allow for a relocation and rebuild.

Queensland Racing told them that if the site was sold—and it is a prime real estate site because it is right next to the major shopping centres; admittedly, it is also right next to a cemetery, but it is a well-kept cemetery and there are not going to be noise issues—the money would go to Queensland Racing. However, Queensland Racing would not guarantee that the Gladstone Turf Club would get the benefit of that sale so the club was stymied no matter which way it turned, and it did not deserve that because it is a great club which has worked so hard to grow and succeed. I cannot stress that enough.

The committee recommended that the minister consider regional representation issues when providing advice to the Governor in Council about appointments. I would again encourage the minister to look not just at the major centres like Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns but also at some of the smaller centres like Gladstone to be able to get a more rounded board, to be able to speak for all of those facets of racing.

We also have another club in my electorate, the Calliope Jockey Club. It has one race meeting a year. That is what it was reduced to—one. It is also a brilliant group of people. It has combined with Polocrosse and the horse-jumping people. Dressage?

Mr Hathaway interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Pony club and that type of facility. It also needs a review. The previous racing board would talk about improving standards at race clubs, reduced race meetings and said, 'You have to find the money yourself to be able to make these improvements.' It was setting these clubs up for failure when they worked tirelessly for success. The Gladstone Turf Club is certainly the most well organised and the biggest in my electorate, but the Calliope Jockey Club is also a wonderful bunch of people who have improved facilities. It wants to keep racing going. I am certain it would be interested in more than one race meeting a day but I cannot speak on its behalf. It is a wonderful country race club. They are salt-of-the-earth people.

I look forward to the changes in this legislation that will give some ownership back to racing in all of its forms, whether it is greyhound, harness or horse racing. It will give some ownership back to those various areas of racing, but it will make the people involved feel re-empowered. That is what has been missing. They have been told what to do and not given a voice. I commend the minister for these changes, even though I admit that I am not personally heavily involved in racing.

I acknowledge that the committee also raised a concern about self-incrimination, but in the minister's reply he indicated that the proposed section—that is, section 113AW—does not abrogate the privilege against self-incrimination. That is an important defence. I commend the minister for these changes. I believe it will be good for the Queensland Racing industry to have a voice—to have a minister who wants to be involved and who does not want to abrogate himself from his responsibilities. I wish him success. I wish the Queensland Racing industry and, in particular, Calliope racing and the Gladstone Turf Club success.

Mr HATHAWAY (Townsville—LNP) (4.57 pm): I rise today as a member of the Health and Community Services Committee to speak in support of our report No. 14, Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

Mr Ruthenberg: And a fine member you are.

Mr HATHAWAY: Thank you. I note for the record that this was what I thought was a relatively easy piece of legislation for the committee to review. Indeed, in the report one would think it received unanimous concurrence from the HCSC and its members supporting the legislation and recommending its passage. I must admit that I was rather surprised by the member for Rockhampton, who obviously sat in our committee meetings and had a totally different view. I have to question why if a committee member wants to make a reservation they do not put it in writing instead of at the eleventh hour noting their reservations in this format.

I will go on further. I thought it was going to be easy but I should have understood that it would not have been. It is rather interesting given the track record of the previous Labor government, which in 2010 made amendments to the Racing Act 2002 and amalgamated the three previous control boards—thoroughbreds, trots and dogs—into the one body, which then saw gross mismanagement and arrogance in the extreme by the control board to the industry that is supporting about 30,000 people, both direct and indirect employees of the sector.

I strongly support the report from the committee. In particular, I make mention of recommendations 2 and 3, and these will go to most of my discussion this afternoon. The committee recommended that the minister considers regional representation issues when he provides advice to the Governor-in-Council about the appointment of members to the control boards. Likewise, the committee also sought from the minister the steps that he will take to encourage eligible persons from regional and rural areas to seek appointment to the control boards and to respond to industry's desire to ensure adequate regional representation. This is particularly important to members of this House from regional areas. I include specifically my former colleague from the committee, the member for Barron River, and

also my colleagues from Cairns, Whitsunday, Burdekin and the like. I thank the D-G for his response to the committee's questions which specifically outlined the recruitment process and the reference to regional representation.

My interest in country racing, I have to admit, is entirely selfish because it is very, very important to country communities. Country racing, as the member for Gladstone pointed out, was allowed to wither on the vine under the previous administration. Contrast this with the promises of the Newman government, our commitment to the legislation and also our budget commitment of $4 million across the forward estimates—and the member for Rockhampton should be here listening to this—to rejuvenate country racing with up to 80 race meetings through the establishment of three new programs, that is, the Showcase Country Series, Celebrate Country Series and Sustain Country Series, which I believe have already begun. To date, extra race meetings have been scheduled for Kilcoy, Roma, Innisfail, Beaudesert, Goondiwindi, Bell, Tambo, Esk, Mareeba, Herbert River, Alpha and Gladstone, and I welcome the minister's support for country racing.

Any one of us from the regions will easily tell you how important these race meetings are to our local clubs and our community. We heard earlier from the member for Gladstone in that regard. The member for Mackay—and I think he was a minister in the previous government—was complicit in the demise of racing in our state through the formation of Racing Queensland Ltd. He allowed them to deal in the equity of the clubs and strip them of their assets. He is not here and he was not there before for country racing at all.

This government, in contrast, is committed to ensuring that country racing clubs again become the rallying point for their communities, and this is really important. The races enable people to get together on a social occasion and have a flutter if they so choose; I do not support gambling but I did win on Melbourne Cup Day. They are also about getting into the social environment, dressing up to the nines and entering fashions on the fields. They are about opportunities for businesses to advertise their wares. This is what country racing is about and it draws these communities together. But I do digress.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr HATHAWAY: I accept the interjection from the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General will understand that I have never, ever won fashions on the field. However, back to the point of representation on the control boards. This was very important in a number of the submissions that were made to the committee, including those from the Townsville Turf Club and the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club in my area. This might seem a bit strange, because I recall the member for Rockhampton talking about the lack of consultation in his speech during the second reading of this bill.

There are three major racing agencies within Townsville—Townsville Amateurs, the Townsville Turf Club and the Townsville Greyhound Racing Club. As a member of the committee, I did what every local member should have done when this bill was introduced in the House—I got in touch with them and made sure they had the bill and the explanatory notes and I suggested they consider making a submission. I had a 66.6 per cent success rate with that. I am not sure what the member for Rockhampton did, but that is what you do as a local member—you get out amongst your organisations and you talk with them to find out what they think about it.

Whilst I thank the member for his comments in regard to recommendations 2 and 3 and I also note the DG's formal response to the committee, I do understand the merit based and the arms-length recruitment plan that we will have for the appointees to the control boards. I understand it is very necessary that they have the requisite skills, knowledge and attitudes to ensure that racing across the three codes and across the all-code board can move forward in this state. However, I point out to the minister the absolute key importance, from a regional perspective, of ensuring some regional representation on either a code specific or the all-code board.

I draw the House's attention to section 3 of the Townsville Turf Club's submission to the committee where they pointed out that in thoroughbred racing there are 122 race clubs across this great state. South-East Queensland and the Downs area contain 36 of the 122 race clubs, and all the areas outside the south-east and the Downs area contain the rest, which is 86 for those people who cannot do the mathematics. The large geographical area north of the Capricornia and the Central West contains over a third of Queensland's thoroughbred race clubs, and that includes three TAB clubs. That is why this is important to the regional racing community.

I also note for the House and in particular for those opposite—who would not understand open and transparent accountability in government if it was a bus and it came smashing through the doors this afternoon—how we have translated this into action. We have established the Racing Disciplinary Board and the Racing Integrity Commissioner to ensure that racing in Queensland is open, has integrity and will move forward for all the components of our industry. Likewise, I welcome the opportunity for Queensland bookmakers. This government is about removing red tape. This government is about setting the stage for business. We are about ensuring that Queensland bookmakers can compete on a level playing field. I welcome the fact that they will become more competitive with their interstate

colleagues through this legislation. We will enable our bookmakers to use internet based technology to conduct their business both at the racecourse and after meeting a minimum requirements level off-course.

As usual, I would like to acknowledge the terrific support that we had from the committee secretariat. They worked tirelessly and in a very quick fashion and provided us with all of the information. I would also like to acknowledge our outgoing chair, the member for Redlands, and welcome our new chair to the committee. I thank the minister for introducing this bill to the House and also for his comments on the second reading. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr SHUTTLEWORTH (Ferny Grove—LNP) (5.08 pm): I rise in the House this afternoon to discuss the merits of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. We should not at this point underestimate the passion of the racing industry in Queensland, and neither should we overlook the commitment we made to the state of Queensland to review this industry and to ensure that our amendments are undertaken with a deliberate mindset to address the wrongs of the previous maladministration of this vital industry.

Before I outline the benefits of this bill, I feel it essential at this point to highlight to the House just a few of the many examples where under the stewardship of the previous administration we have witnessed an appalling lack of integrity and where the self-serving, feathering of one's own nest was typical, run-of-the-mill methodology of those opposite. On 27 March 2012, just three days after the electors throughout Queensland sent a fairly clear message, the *Courier-Mail* reported a story with the heading 'LNP examines payouts as Racing Queensland Officials Malcolm Tuttle, Jamie Orchard, Paul Brennan, Shara Reid quit'. The article stated—

The exodus at RQ—

Racing Queensland—

started on day one of Labor's demise.

...

Racing Queensland chairman Bob Bentley confirmed last night that all four will be paid out the remainder of their contracts.

What we now know is that in August 2011 the former board of Racing Queensland agreed to alter the employment contracts of the four aforementioned top executives, including the addition of a material adverse change clause and a 30 per cent pay increase.

Within two days of the 24 March election Racing Queensland Ltd was lumbered with the enormous payout of $1.858 million, which was inclusive of 14 months salary, redundancy payments and leave entitlements. It is important to note that the executive payments were not benchmarked to industry or linked to performance outcomes and the introduction of these changes was undertaken by individuals who were directly affected by subsequent changes. Of course, this was just the icing on the cake. There are numerous examples of financial mismanagement, too. The former Labor administration's financial standards were all too evident within Racing Queensland Ltd. Racing Queensland was at the brink of destruction. In the recently tabled annual report, Racing Queensland Ltd outlined how they are expecting to post a $14 million loss this year. A number of factors contribute to this forecast, not the least of which was the centralisation of control, the building up of bureaucracy and loss of efficient processes. Of course, the effect of this magnificent golden handshake contributes in excess of $1.35 million above budgeted costs.

We could also review the process that the board used, which was questionable at best. We hear of a number of contracts awarded to a single engineering firm valued at $150 million without competitive tendering. This is in complete contrast with Racing Queensland Ltd's procurement process, which stipulates that works in excess of $10,000 are to be competitively tendered. Alarmingly, two of the executives who were integral to this process were recipients of the magnificently generous golden handshake and are now employed in senior positions of the same engineering firm. Is it any surprise that the racing industry—an industry that employs many thousands of Queenslanders and supports many families throughout this great state—looks to this LNP government with great confidence and comfort knowing that we are the government that is able to provide a secure future with true accountability and transparency?

I now return to the amendment bill. I will begin by highlighting how our amendments will provide the industry with the certainty that they seek. The objectives of this bill are to remove Racing Queensland Ltd as the control body for thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing; establish a Queensland all-code board and three separate control boards; and permit Queensland bookmakers to utilise the internet to undertake bookmaking. The Queensland thoroughbred racing, the Queensland harness racing and the Queensland greyhound racing boards will be established as code-specific control boards and will be vested with the powers necessary to ensure that the specific board will be sufficiently empowered to undertake the management of their racing code.

The primary task of the control board is to undertake the actions directed by the all-codes board in terms of strategic direction to review or recommend meeting dates, allocation of prize moneys as recommended by the all-codes board and interfacing with the industry stakeholders to facilitate optimum outcomes within each of the industry codes. As a result of this bill the industry stakeholders will feel empowered to address specific concern facing their specific code of racing. For too long through the dysfunctional centralised bureaucracy each sector of this industry has felt voiceless and constrained. These newly empowered control boards will develop and review strategic plans and a rolling five-year infrastructure plan for their code of racing in conjunction with the overall direction of the all-codes board.

There was a concern raised about the level of rural and regional representation on the three-member board. The department response to this concern is a well considered one. Criteria and enforced memberships of boards often result in less than optimum outcomes. It is, therefore, thought that the membership of the board should only be the best fit for purpose rather than putting in place regional location requirements. Well qualified and experienced regional individuals will be encouraged to apply to ensure a balanced representation is possible, but it is not necessary to accept substandard membership simply to satisfy a regional representation. All that said, the committee does recommend that there are processes in play that encourage and support regional applications. If there are individuals from the region with suitable skills identified, it is recommended that the minister consider the regional location as an added benefit to the applicant's consideration.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SHUTTLEWORTH: Absolutely nothing! With the three control boards established, the three chairs will become members of the overarching all-codes board. This board will be responsible for developing the strategy for the overall industry, pursuing challenges facing their individual industry or all codes, and identifying priorities with regard to capital expenditure and future developments. In addition to the chairs of the control board, there are two additional members who must have experience in relevant areas of need such as law, business, financial management, marketing or racing. The appointments to the board and the executive positions will be staggered to ensure that there is a well maintained management succession and consistently maintained transfer of industry knowledge.

There are other aspects of the bill that are also very important components in ensuring that the industry re-establishes confidence in their own industry's future. This confidence may come through the fact that their industry will now compete on a more level playing field when compared to other jurisdictions. This comes about because of the amendment to the wagering and bookmaking components of this bill. Across various states bookmakers enjoyed a staggering 150 per cent increase in revenue between 2005 and 2011. However, in Queensland bookmakers lost 40 per cent over the same period. This is in no small part attributed to the antiquated laws we have in regard to the use of internet for bookmaking activities. Thankfully, this is addressed in this bill and bookmakers will now be able to use telecommunication systems and, therefore, ensure that they are able to compete with bookmakers throughout other states. Other amendments will ensure that the Interactive Gambling Act current tax rate of 50 per cent will be reviewed to comply with other bookmaking taxation levels. There will also be the capacity to take off-course wagers, further increasing the competitiveness of our Queensland bookies.

The last aspect I wish to address is the integrity functions of the racing industry. Most importantly, this function will be undertaken by an independent arbiter who will be separate from the racing industry. There is also provision within the bill to ensure a level playing field whereby if an aggrieved person chooses to employ counsel, the control body may employ counsel. However, if the aggrieved person chooses not to employ counsel, the control body cannot either. This should ensure that the perceived financial disadvantage between the control board and an individual is not a determining factor due simply to the capacity to employ counsel. A true level playing field through an independent disciplinary board does provide the racing industry with increased confidence about the management of the disciplinary and appeals process.

In closing, I would like to thank the secretariat for their outstanding support of our committee and also acknowledge the efforts of our previous chair, the member for Redlands, Mr Dowling. I thank the minister and his department for the level of consultation undertaken and the confidence he is returning to this vital industry of the state of Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (5.17 pm): I support this legislation. The policy objectives of the bill state, in part—

remove Racing Queensland Limited (Racing Queensland) as the control body for the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes of racing;

I never thought I would see the day. I think that is great news for Queensland Racing in general but especially for country racing. I believe deep down that when I was elected in 2004 it was partly due to starting a petition supporting country racing. Back then I saw many country race clubs in my electorate such as the iconic Mingela close due to funding being cut. Over 2,000 people attended that race

meeting. Likewise, Georgetown held three race meetings a year but funding was cut for Georgetown and it closed down. Also Capella had its great race meeting closed. Jericho's great race meeting closed down as well. Alpha, which held another great racing meeting, closed after funding was withdrawn. I say to the minister that the good news is that Alpha is now setting up another meeting. A bloke named Kevin Wiltshire, who was a former president of the Jericho race club—and Jericho is right beside Alpha—is kick-starting that club. They are hoping to hold a race meeting by next year, which is good news.

I believe that the previous board, particularly under Bob Bentley, completely gutted country racing—full stop. The devastating effects on country racing will take a long time to recover from. There was a network of race meetings that jockeys and trainers would attend year in and year out and they could travel from one meeting to another. When the number of meetings was reduced and there was less funding provided, the jockeys and trainers started to lose heart. There was no incentive for them. Even the local graziers played a big part in ensuring there were horses to train for that special event every year—year in and year out.

In relation to country racing, I can honestly say that in the past the support from government was absolutely pathetic but the support from the people is alive and well. People want to go to race meetings. I cannot speak for city racing, but I see the races in Brisbane and I see the Melbourne Cup on TV. The support from the people for country racing is alive and well. For example, this year 3,000 people turned up for the amateur races at Charters Towers, 6,000 people turned up for the Mount Garnet races and last year there were 2,000 people at the race meeting in Moranbah. The social interaction and the economic spin-offs keep those communities alive. They thrive on it and look forward to those special events, year in and year out. Take that away and you take away the lifeblood of those rural communities.

I alert the minister to something we have to be very careful of. The Moranbah North race meeting attracts 2,000 people. Anglo coal provides great sponsorship. Previously, Queensland Racing would see that there was a race meeting in Mackay on the Thursday and would not allow those horses to race at Moranbah on the Saturday. The Mackay race meeting is important, but it is held on a Tuesday and is attended by about 30 people whereas the Moranbah meeting attracts 2,000 people. We had to fight extremely hard to change that situation.

One of the policy objectives of the bill is 'to ensure that the minister responsible for racing has more involvement in, and power over, the operations of the control body'. I believe that that should carry some weight. As a result of unfavourable decisions made by Queensland Racing in the past, many communities were completely kicked in the guts. A racing event that attracted 2,000 or 3,000 people would suddenly be cancelled for particular reasons. I cannot give all of the reasons of the previous racing body that completely discriminated against country racing.

One of the things hurting country race meetings is security. Country race meetings cover a broad area. There is a lot of area to manoeuvre. The cost of providing security for a race meeting is sometimes $30,000 to $40,000. The clubs just do not have the funds to provide that, especially when they have to put up railings and comply with other types of regulation. As a result, special events such as Dog A Hog and the Peeramon pig hunt are lost. Organisers struggle to stage those events because of security issues. In the same way, it is hurting many race clubs. I commend the minister on this bill. It is good legislation and I fully support it. It is about time it happened.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (5.23 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak in support of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I congratulate the Minister for Racing for bringing racing back to the country—how it should be for Queensland country racing. It is great to see a government that actually delivers on its promises.

We have promised the Queensland people that we will rejuvenate Queensland's racing industry, because we recognise the enormous value that the three codes of racing—thoroughbred, harness and greyhound—have in our economy, our society and our community. The valuable racing industry employs more than 30,000 people and supports 130 community based clubs. Several of these clubs, and one of the most important clubs in Queensland, are actually based in the Nanango electorate, hence why I thought it essential that I speak on this bill. The Nanango electorate is home to the great race clubs of Kilcoy, Esk, Nanango and Kumbia and the Burrandowan Picnic Race Club—fantastic country race clubs that are in the position they are because of the hardworking community members who are the good constituents of my electorate.

When I put up my name as a candidate to represent the Nanango electorate I met some amazing people. One of the first couples I met was Tammy and Craig Fritz from the Maringandan produce store. This couple said to me that their little business of training up horses for harness racing had been stripped under the Bentley administration. Then I went down to Esk and I met Darren and Rebecca Ebert, who have the butcher shop there. They are also involved in the harness-racing industry. They felt that their industry had been completely stripped under Racing Queensland Ltd.

I had discussions with great people who had built up race clubs like the Esk race club. People like Dr Tony Fitzgerald have worked tirelessly for that club, which was stripped bare and left with just one race meeting per year. I thank the minister for giving the Esk race club another meeting, which will be held on 22 December. As part of getting in the Christmas spirit, I encourage everyone to come along. Esk is not that far away from this chamber. That race day will be a fantastic day on which we can celebrate in the lead-up to Christmas.

I also congratulate hardworking people like Con Serle and the race club at Kilcoy, which has also been very lucky to get a much needed extra race day. It is wonderful. The minister has already attended a Kilcoy race day and was very well received. Everyone on that day was congratulating him for seeing the importance of country racing and appreciating what it does for our community. It brings people back. People from all over the state come back for our country race days.

I also want to congratulate the Kumbia Race Club. As everyone knows, at the recent Kumbia races we were fortunate enough to have in attendance the Premier, the racing minister and several other ministers including our Attorney-General, who entered the Fashions on the Field. The lovely wife of the Minister for Local Government judged the Fashions on the Field, hence why the Attorney-General unfortunately could not win! The wonderful thing about that is that we were able to show this government how important country race days are. Thousands of people turn up and spend money, whether it be in the dress shops or other local shops or even just getting their hair done. It all helps our community. Kumbia now has not only the Melbourne Cup feature race day but also a race meeting to be held on 1 June 2013. I encourage everyone to get out to Kumbia to enjoy a special race day.

This bill will remove Racing Queensland Ltd—what a fantastic idea of the minister and this government—and establish a code-specific board for each of the three codes of racing. The new three-person control boards—the Queensland Thoroughbred Racing Board, the Queensland Harness Racing Board and the Queensland Greyhound Racing Board—will be provided with powers and functions to assist the new Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board to properly manage these three codes of racing. As a previous speaker has said in this House today, there is a wonderful opportunity to get people from the regions onto these boards. We have amazing people in the regions who have spent their lives supporting their community through their local race club. I encourage the minister to embrace regional people who put up their hands to go onto these boards so that we can cover the whole of Queensland.

I do not need to repeat—but I will—that after 20 years the tired Labor government abandoned country racing. It abandoned every form of racing and completely destroyed the racing industry, and we are building it back up again. Already within this first short period we have been in government we have seen the rejuvenation of country racing, and I can only congratulate the minister and our government for that. The amendments proposed in this bill will restore confidence in this industry in Queensland. It is a wonderful feat. Amendments to the Wagering Act will extend funding for the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme from 2014-15 to ensure that our government can deliver our $110 million infrastructure promise for racing venues across Queensland. This will provide a much needed economic boost for this important industry. Again, I congratulate the minister for this very important bill that will do so much for my electorate of Nanango. I commend this bill to the House.

Mr COSTIGAN (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.30 pm): I am absolutely delighted to rise in the House this evening to support the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and place on the parliamentary record my enthusiastic support for racing, in particular country racing, together with various members who have participated in the debate so far. What is country racing? I will give members a hot tip: it is racing in the bush, it is racing in our country towns, it is racing in our provincial cities and it is part of the social fabric of these communities. Over the years I have had the pleasure of attending many country race meetings around Central and North Queensland.

Mr Symes: As seen on Facebook!

Mr COSTIGAN: I have been seen on Facebook at various racetracks as the member for Lytton points out. Those tracks include Ferguson Park in Gladstone, Pioneer Park in Emerald, Ooralea in Mackay of course, Keppel Park on the Capricorn Coast, Ben Bolt Park in Bowen and Cluden in Townsville. Ben Bolt Park in Bowen is celebrating its 150th anniversary next year.

Mr Walker: Not the Dapto dogs.

Mr COSTIGAN: Not the Dapto dogs, I might add. Over the past decade I have been to all of those tracks that I have mentioned. I should also place on record that I am a very proud member of the Mackay Turf Club and the Bowen Turf Club, with, as I said a moment ago, the latter celebrating its 150th anniversary—the oldest turf club in the oldest town in the north celebrating 150 years of racing next year at Ben Bolt Park in Bowen. It was again tremendous to be alongside so many fun-loving people from the Whitsundays at Ben Bolt Park and even further afield—places like Mackay, Townsville and the Burdekin—at this year's Bowen Cup. The member for Burdekin is a regular there and it was great to be

alongside her on that memorable day. I personally had the good fortune of co-hosting Fashions in the Field—not the first time I have done that. Suffice to say that the ladies looked spectacular and the blokes not too shabby either, although it is fair to say that it seemed to be the case that the fillies caught the attention of most observers.

As the member for Townsville remarked in his contribution to this debate, country racing is an opportunity for people to dress up, to have a punt, to have some fun. What is wrong with that—having some good old-fashioned fun, reconnecting with people you have not seen perhaps for years, essentially meeting up with your mates and having a damned good time over a few beers? Let us contrast that with Labor, who were the joy killers when it came to bush racing. I am sure the member for Gregory and the member for Warrego will know what I am alluding to here when I start mentioning places like Jericho, Windorah, Stonehenge, Alpha and Mitchell. They were all killed off thanks to Labor and other places such as Aramac and Tambo took a hit when it came to losing race dates, as did other clubs right around Queensland. In the dark days under Labor officials of country race clubs had very little say. If they did not sign over the ownership of the club, they basically did not get a brass razoo for capital works. That is what it came to. Back in 1989 when I worked in Bowen, racing was a regular occurrence at Ben Bolt Park, but nowadays guess what? They only race four times a year—pretty ordinary, as I said earlier, considering that this is the oldest turf club in North Queensland.

In the decades prior, the old bushies around the traps would remember how horses would be put on the train at places like Collinsville and railed down to Bowen because the road was not sealed in those days. The Peter Delamothe Road, as I still call it, was not sealed until 1969. Of course, that road remembers a great champion of the people of Bowen. Returning to Labor's approach to country racing over these past two decades, we have seen two decades of waste, golden handshakes and shonky deals. You do not have to go too far to see the carnage that it left behind. In the Mackay-Whitsunday hinterland at places like Bowen River and Collinsville it is sad—very sad. My uncle Brahma Costigan first went to Bowen River in the late 1950s. Like a lot of bushies—salt of the earth people—they lament the loss of racing at Bowen River. When I was there in June this year alongside the member for Burdekin, who of course has a great history of going to Bowen River with her family and camping under the stars, I could see the look in poor old Brahma's eyes wondering how such a good thing for the bush bit the dust. In many cases these bush clubs died because of that lack of government support and, more to the point, governments that had a mission of just shutting them down, demanding unrealistic standards at racetracks. To think that you can have an Eagle Farm or a Doomben type set up in the bush is of course pure folly. The bushies certainly know it, but Labor regrettably just did not get it.

One of the great components of the aforementioned bill is the new approach to ensuring representation for regional and rural areas—something that bush racing has been crying out for for some time. I congratulate the minister for making this possible. For country race lovers, it has been a long time coming. The other two codes of harness racing and greyhound racing have also suffered thanks to two decades of Labor in Queensland. In the early 1990s one of my old jobs was to report on the dogs at the Townsville showgrounds. At that time I was working for the *Townsville Bulletin* and I got one of the big jobs: no court reporting, no chasing ambos; I would be going out chasing the dishlickers on a Thursday night. They used to hold the newspaper for me. The printers would say, 'When are you going to be back, Costigan? We want to file that copy so we can print the damn thing!' They were great days. Sadly, there is no greyhound racing in many places in regional Queensland, including my home town of Mackay, where of course the dogs enjoyed strong support many years ago on a Thursday night—like elsewhere across the state.

It is the Queensland Harness Racing Board by name, but it may as well be the 'South-East Queensland Harness Racing Board' as far as I was concerned. You only have to look at those who used to be regulars at paceways in places like Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton at good old Callaghan Park. In fact, in Rockhampton people like Mel Slade, a great stalwart of the Rockhampton Harness Racing Club, still shake their head at what happened—as I do recalling years gone by when I would be only too pleased to host club functions at places like the Cambridge Hotel. Harness racing is in the blood of Mel Slade, like many others who love the trots, and I am delighted to see his granddaughter nowadays in the gig winning races and making her Poppy proud. I noted the contribution to this debate by the current member for Rockhampton, who indicated that the opposition would support the bill. How noble, because it was people like his predecessor who hurt the racing industry, causing irreparable damage in the eyes of so many observers! The member for Rockhampton even had the hide to rave on about the so-called lack of consultation on this bill. As I alluded to earlier in the debate, where was the consultation when it came to shutting down clubs like Bowen River and Collinsville?

Mr Symes: None!

Mr COSTIGAN: That is right; there was none. There is no doubt that under Labor, which prior to March this year occupied the treasury benches for 20 of the last 22 years, racing did suffer. In the case of regional communities, it was killed off in some places up and down the coast and of course areas west of the Great Divide. In this debate we have already heard about the much needed reforms to

racing in Queensland and this new era being ushered in by our new Minister for Racing that will be delivered thanks to this bill. I certainly will not double up too much on that but simply sum up this debate from my point of view by quoting the words of the minister—

> The 30,000 people who rely on the racing sector for their employment will once again have a voice.

I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.38 pm): I rise today to speak to the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I have been waiting a long, long time for this day. In fact, for the six years that I have been in parliament I have advocated strongly for this day to come. I congratulate the minister on the wonderful work that he has done in bringing this important bill to the House within the first eight or nine months of this LNP government. Being a brand-new minister for the racing industry, he has done a wonderful job in going out and assisting—and for once all three codes have been assisted—to get better legislation and to make a better life for those in the racing industry right across-the-board.

My humble experience with racing goes back to the first Melbourne Cup winner that I can remember, which was Lord Fury in 1961. That horse was an eight-year-old gelding—the last eight-year-old to win. That is why those people who this year backed Americain lost their money. In 1962, Even Stevens won the Melbourne Cup. For obvious reasons, I cleaned up in my primary school grounds. I think I won two shillings. From there I went on to be on the Richmond Diggers Race board in north-west Queensland as a 21-year-old. I loved and enjoyed country racing. I have been on the Gold Coast Turf Club racing board for 14 years. So I have an experience and a love of a sport that was absolutely decimated by the Labor Party and the cartel of Labor mates that it put in charge. They drove the industry into oblivion. It tore my heart out to see what the Labor Party did to the racing industry. When we had this marvellous clean-out of Labor members in March, I knew that, again, racing had a friend in the LNP government.

So from there we come to this legislation. While I was in opposition I advocated for integrity and having three separate codes. Those in the industry would know that thoroughbred racing, harness racing and greyhound racing are like chalk and cheese in character. I have been involved in both the greyhound industry and the thoroughbred industry. I have never dabbled in harness racing, but there is always tomorrow. Quite clearly, those three codes have a different clientele. They have different industry participants and they have vastly different interests. This new arrangement that the minister has put in this bill of three codes with an overarching board will undoubtedly deliver the best possible outcome for all three codes.

As we know, the codes are funded primarily by the gambling dollar. That is a fact. If there is no gambling, there is no prize money. If there is no prize money, there are no horses. It is a very simple equation. We have to have participants in the industry; otherwise, there is no gambling. It is noted that in New Zealand the gambling dollar is sliding away from the racing industry. People are gambling on rugby union and rugby league. People are punting on those sports, which means that there is not the money to put back into the three racing codes. So we have to start with a young Ray Stevens being at the races and other people enjoying going to the races with their families. Going to the races is not about the gambling; it is about enjoying the horses—those magnificent animals—the environment and the skills of the jockeys. That is what this racing bill is about.

This racing bill is very much about putting good people who understand racing and who are involved in racing in charge of racing. From the board's point of view, we have Kevin Dixon leading the way. He has done an excellent job, in concert with the minister's direction, in coming to this legislation today, which I know will deliver a much better industry than we had previously under the last period of Labor government—from 1998 through to 2012.

A big winner out of this LNP government has been country racing. The Premier has gone to lengths to make sure that country racing has been reinstated. I think the member for Beaudesert probably thinks his area is involved in provincial racing. There is a thriving racing industry in the Beaudesert area. We want to see that particular area come back with major training facilities and major input from people involved with horses.

To me, as a person who loves the racing industry, as a person who loves the people in the industry, this bill before the House is a great joy. Yes, there are 30,000 employees in the racing industry, but many more people—in fact, hundreds and thousands of people—get involved in the industry as their sport, as their passion. The racing industry is not just a business; it is a sport that people feel passionate about, just as people feel passionate about netball and other sports. As someone who has funded racehorses, I can assure members that very few of them make money. In fact, the last horse that I had that was any good won seven races—$90,000 and we broke square. So the racing industry is very much an industry that people have to love to be involved in and it has to be supported like all other sports and interests are in this great state.

As I have mentioned, right across Queensland hundreds and thousands of people are involved in the racing industry. For people in country areas, the racing industry is the lifeblood of their social life. In many cases it provides the only way for people throughout country areas to come together. To me, the way racing in Queensland was driven by the previous Labor regime was absolutely abhorrent and deserving of all the penalties imposed on those people should that be the case in the future.

I cannot say a lot about the bill that has not already been said. However, what I can do is implore all people involved in racing—all three codes—and particularly people who are involved in country racing, with whom I have great empathy through my upbringing, to get on board and be at one with the industry, because the racing industry has to survive in a very competitive market against other forms of gambling on other sports. That is where we are. We cannot go back. You cannot ban gambling on various interests. We have to involve people in the harness, the greyhound and the gallops industries to make sure that people want to gamble on the races because that is what they know. People tend to gamble on the things that they know. Obviously, I do not know enough about racing because I have not won very much lately.

Racing provides people with a wonderful opportunity to socialise and to be involved in a very rewarding sport. The thrills are there and, hopefully, one of these days we might even have an LNP syndicate buying a horse and winning the Melbourne Cup.

Mr KATTER (Mount Isa—KAP) (5.47 pm): I rise to offer my conditional support for the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. As a country lad who has been to many country race meetings, it would be remiss of me if I did not convey to the House the excitement and glamour of these events. I am sure many members here are aware of that. To put country racing in perspective, in my electorate of Mount Isa there are 13 non-TAB clubs that race anywhere from one day to a weekend, bringing to the region thousands of visitors, plenty of money and a piece of country racing culture that is impossible to replace. Included in those races is the iconic Birdsville Races. It is for country racing that I direct my concerns about this bill.

I think this bill is a great move in the right direction. The government identified that there were huge problems in the racing industry, and I am very complimentary of that. But there still are problems in the racing industry that are very challenging. If members share an appreciation of the history, tradition and optimism found at any country race meeting in the north-west, then they will share with me the hope that this amendment bill will deliver a just and worthy investment in the future of these race meetings. Sometimes people drive for five or six hours to attend a race day. They party long and hard—usually for the weekend.

This industry is a huge direct employer. I have heard the figure of 30,000 referred to. For those down the food chain of providing services and supplies to the racing industry, it is all about the people. I encourage members who are voting for this bill to look beyond the flashing horseflesh, which carries the hopes of the punters and the dreams of its owners, and think about the little bloke sitting on the fence of the birdcage watching the thoroughbreds and probably finishing his lunch. His parents will not be far away, but it is a fair bet that his siblings are socialising with their neighbours from 150 kilometres away. As one family, they are not just part of the crowd; they are an important part of the economy which, for many country towns, is struggling. Racing is a critical part of the social fabric of those towns. Race meetings for them—and by association the racing clubs—are like Christmas to retailers. They must make the most of it while they can.

I applaud many of the aims of this amendment bill, in particular the establishment of three boards, which is a bold move and one which has been requested by industry representatives who for too long have been held to ransom for their funding by Racing Queensland. But there is a caution: the integrity of the overarching Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board must be ensconced in legislation. Racing too often can be its own worst enemy in terms of breaches, and a credible and just control body is paramount. To that end I fully support the establishment of a Racing Integrity Commissioner.

I also applaud the authors of this bill for their proposal to extend the funding of the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme from 30 June 2014 to 30 June 2015. Capital development and infrastructure costs are often beyond the budget of many country non-TAB Queensland race clubs and this has the potential to put at risk some of its operations. In terms of prize money, it is virtually impossible to impart to the members of this House the critical role it plays in the life and future of country racing, in particular with non-TABQ meetings. In the metro and larger regional clubs, adding $10,000 prize money onto a $150,000 horse race is barely noticed, but add $10,000 to the $25,000 Cloncurry Cup and you have just handed the club a marketing windfall and given the district's owners and trainers added incentive to make the three-hour drive from Richmond or Hughenden.

I urge members to consider the allocation of 5.32 per cent of the TABQ's net profit to be returned to those non-TAB Queensland clubs. The challenge in the future is that that is adequately distributed to maintain an industry that offers adequate prize money. We try desperately to hold on to many of these smaller race meetings but the problem goes deeper than that because many of the trainers are

struggling themselves to remain viable and to support these events. If the prize money is not there it makes it very difficult. I acknowledge these are very difficult issues for the minister and I commend the way that this has been taken on.

That figure from the TAB has not been amended for many years. It has not matched the rising cost of running many of these clubs and their facilities. That will be a challenge for the future. On the racing front it is disappointing that not one of the 15 Showcase Country Series, Celebrate Country Series and Sustain Country Series events are being in held in the north-west where there are some very popular race meetings, despite Racing Queensland's promise to rebuild the quality of the country racing circuit in Queensland. That was disappointing, but is hopefully something that may change in the future.

I mix with a lot of trainers and jockeys in the Mount Isa area. I would not profess to be an expert in the industry. Like most people in regional areas you cannot help but have a lot to do with the industry. The main issue that came up was that the old regime under Bob Bentley was certainly not popular at all. There were not many kind words flying around country race meetings when he was at the helm. It is very welcome that there is a new regime in town. I commend the minister for that. Many people acknowledge that these clubs are struggling. There is not a lot of money around and there is a big challenge from online gambling. The gambling dollar is being spread very thin these days. That has been identified and addressed by this bill. Again I commend the minister for that.

Another comment that has been made by people in the industry is that in the past country racing has not been promoted enough in Queensland and that Victoria are leaders in the field. I pass that on. Perhaps there is scope to take a look at what they are doing there. Perhaps we can copy some models they have. All in all I think this puts us back on the right track. Hopefully we can invigorate country racing which means so much to the people in the area that I represent. I think many people acknowledge that it is a challenging industry. There are some huge problems there. The joke I like making most with my trainer friends is that there is a lot of money in horseracing. They all laugh when I say it because they are all battlers and no-one is making much money out of it. They do it for love and they provide a great platform for entertainment. Many blokes meet their wives and girlfriends at these events. They are always the big events of the year in these country towns. They form an important part of the social fabric. This bill puts racing back on the right track. I commend the minister for the work that has been put into it and commend the bill to the House.

Mr KRAUSE (Beaudesert—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise in support of the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. In his explanatory speech the minister has noted that there are 30,000 people in Queensland who rely on the racing sector for their employment and they will have a voice once more. Several hundred of those reside in the Beaudesert electorate so I am very happy to support this bill. I thank the minister for his assistance and attention which he has given to me since the day after the election and for delivering some results for the Beaudesert Race Club and the Beaudesert Racecourse.

In this bill we are implementing part of the LNP's election policy commitments in respect of restructuring the racing industry and rejuvenating country racing. We are amending the Wagering Act 1998 to allow for the provision of our infrastructure funding package. That is an important package to be redirected into the industry, in particular country racing venues, and I am pleased that the Beaudesert Racecourse will be able to benefit from some of that package to support the industry in my area.

There are approximately 200 horses, perhaps a few more, that train in Beaudesert. It is a growing number. It is real thoroughbred country where a lot of people over the last couple of decades have moved in order to train and in order to set up their stables. It is close to the Gold Coast, it is close to Brisbane, it is close to Ipswich and it is also close to New South Wales. The training industry and the spelling industry, the whole equestrian industry in the electorate around Beaudesert, support a lot of jobs: trainers, stock feed retailers, vets, even farmers who sell their excess produce to trainers to feed their horses. It is very important and that is why I am glad that the minister has been able to assist.

We have a proud history of racing in Beaudesert. The first race was held in Beaudesert in about the 1880s. There were several clubs but eventually Beaudesert became the pre-eminent one. Country racing was a part of the social scene. In the seventies and eighties there were hundreds, sometimes even thousands of racegoers visiting Beaudesert Racecourse for weekday meets. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we could go back to those years? I am not sure that we will get to that, but we certainly need to support these country race clubs.

There has been some great progress so far in the electorate. We have a new track—sand and turf. There are some new facilities going in as well. It has been recently announced that there will be fortnightly TAB meets in Beaudesert at the racetrack. That is a great boon for the local racing industry. I thank Racing Queensland Ltd under its new management for that decision. I also thank the minister because I know that through my strong representations to him there has been some representations made to RQL in relation to Beaudesert.

I would like to refer to an article from the *Beaudesert Times* from today titled 'All systems go at race club as work continues.' I table the article.

Tabled paper: Extract from the *Beaudesert Times*, dated 28 November 2012, titled 'All systems go at race club as work continues' [1752].

The first race meet for the new Beaudesert Racecourse will be on 28 January, which is actually the Australia Day holiday. I invite all my parliamentary colleagues to come to Beaudesert and enjoy a great showcase country race day. It will be a fantastic day. Members will not recognise the facilities if they have been there before.

Mr Costigan: The Kingfishers will.

Mr KRAUSE: The Beaudesert Kingfishers probably will be in attendance, member for Whitsunday. I know a lot of the Kingfishers. They are not only great rugby league players but also great race fans as well. You will be well at home, member for Whitsunday. The fact is that the government is supporting country racing and, in particular for my electorate, is putting Beaudesert back into a gallop. It will be a great day on 28 January. It is part of the Showcase Country Series. It is the first one; Anzac Day will be the next one. The fortnightly TAB meets are fantastic. I know that the whole community will be looking forward to that.

Of course, some issues remain to be resolved. I will be speaking with the minister about them in the future. One is the issue of tenure over racecourses. As many members will know, Racing Queensland Ltd resumed tenure over many local racecourses around the state. In many communities there is a great desire to get that tenure back. They want to return the ownership to community hands, whether it be the race club or another body. If it is not going to be in the hands of the all-codes board, we can look at alternative structures in relation to ownership. Perhaps it will not be just race clubs that are involved in the ownership of a course; we could utilise country racecourses for other community purposes, which would enable them to have a more viable future, relying not only on the racing industry but perhaps looking at other sources of income as well.

In conclusion, I will be supporting the bill. I understand the opposition will be supporting the bill as well, which is fantastic. I thank the minister for all of his assistance. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MILLARD (Sandgate—LNP) (6.00 pm): There is a very good reason that tonight I stand to talk about the Racing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which I decided to do while sitting here listening to other contributions. It is simply because the headquarters of Racing Queensland Ltd is based in my electorate of Sandgate, at Deagon. For the record, thoroughbreds have been at Deagon since 1886 and that is the way we want it to stay.

I want to tell a quick story about what happened during the election campaign and about how people were terribly afraid about what was happening with the board of RQL at that time. I received an anonymous phone call from a trainer who said, 'We need your help. No-one will help us. No-one wants to listen to us.' I said, 'Okay.' From that moment, I have been involved with the trainers, with the jockeys, with the track riders, with the stable hands and, since the election, with the RQL board and the racetrack managers.

Basically, the previous board wanted to move thoroughbreds away from Deagon, although they did not really know where to. They wanted to rip up people's families and their communities. They wanted to stop a whole industry. They wanted to bring the trots and the dogs to Deagon, even though the trots and dogs industries did not want to come to Deagon. They had their own establishments, their own families and their own communities elsewhere. We had to fight to keep Deagon for the thoroughbreds. We fought really hard and we fought as a community. I was part of that fight. I am proud to say that Deagon will remain a home to thoroughbreds.

However, there is more to it than that. Now that the RQL has a new promising board and a bright future, this is about making sure that the training centre at Deagon works with the community, as it is starting to do. I put it on the record that it is already starting to work with the local men's shed, by storing timber in its big containers. It is working with the PCYC helping with the community gardens and we are looking at having a picnic race day maybe later this year or early next year.

I put it on the record that during the election campaign we fought a really hard fight to keep thoroughbreds at Deagon. I am really proud that I joined that fight, because it is about our community. It is about the families that have trained thoroughbreds at Deagon for decades. We have families such as the Lakeys, the Murdochs and the Duffs, Greer and her husband, and Normie Stevens. Some pretty famous horses have come through Deagon, as well. I am really proud of what the government has done. I support the bill.

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (6.03 pm), in reply: Firstly, I thank all of the members who have spoken today. All Queenslanders have a great passion for racing. What I have heard in this chamber today excites me and will create enthusiasm throughout the racing industry in this state. I thank all LNP members. I thank the Independents and it is good to see that the opposition is supporting the bill today. I will touch on a few topics before I go onto my main speech.

I thank the member for Rockhampton for his contribution today. Firstly, I am glad to note that the opposition will be supporting our bill on this vital reform to the racing industry. Under Labor's watch, Queensland racing had been nearly ruined. As many members have touched on today, it was absolutely decimated. I am very pleased to address the issues that the member has raised. On the issue of

efficiencies and savings, the member fears that our new structure will cost more. I have given a commitment that the new governance model will not cost any more than the current RQL model. I make that point extremely clear. The RQL directors' fees approved by Labor were $525,000 for seven directors. I think that message has been sent very clearly today. The all-codes racing and control boards will cost much less.

Secondly, the member talked about the transfer of integrity functions to the government. During the election the LNP made a clear policy statement that the racing industry would pay for the integrity services, but that these would be undertaken by the government. The Newman government had a clear policy position that the key integrity functions will be run by the government. Those functions include drug control, appeals functions and functions of the Racing Integrity Commission. Thirdly, the member raised questions about funding the new governance model. The racing industry will fund the new model, as it does now; it will just cost less. The member for Rockhampton raised issues over the powers of ministerial direction. No minister anywhere in Australia has the power to direct a thoroughbred control body on prize money or race date allocations. That is the system of racing in this country. I will work with the all-codes board to get the outcomes that are best for this industry. I hope that answers most of the questions of the member for Rockhampton.

I am sorry that the member for Gladstone is not here, because I do not get enough of an opportunity to say kind things to her. She is a great stalwart of this parliament and will be for a long time to come. I acknowledge the warm contribution of the member for Gladstone on this bill. I will address some of the issues she spoke about this afternoon. Indeed, I concur with the member that the racing industry does employ a huge number of people. In fact, in Queensland the racing industry is a key industry that employs 30,000 Queenslanders. That is why the Newman government is ensuring that this industry is run properly. The member commented on volunteers. Those people give their time freely and are critical to the industry. The racing industry cannot operate without volunteers. That is why one of the primary functions of the new control board is to engage with grassroots participants.

I agree with the member for Gladstone that the attitude of the RQL towards the country sector was extremely poor indeed. Under the new governance model, one of the key functions of the control board is to consult and engage with participants, which is something the RQL simply never did. As to the member's submission for more race dates in Gladstone, that is an issue that the Gladstone club should certainly take up with the current chair of the RQL, Mr Kevin Dixon, and the new all-codes and control boards when they are in place. The new all-codes board will have a country racing committee and the Gladstone club will have the opportunity to lobby it. The responsibility for racing infrastructure will be a key function for the all-codes board. Each control board will be required to develop a rolling five-year infrastructure plan to ensure their future is strategically put in place.

I thank the member for Dalrymple for his support of this vital bill. I note his comments regarding the former government's lack of support for country racing, which is a theme that continues to ring through again and again. Under the former RQL model, little regard was paid to engaging with the grassroots participants in the racing industry. Under the new governance model, both the all-codes board and the three control boards will have a specific responsibility to engage with stakeholders at all levels within the three codes of racing.

I thank the member for Mount Isa for supporting the bill, as most members of this House have done. He fully supports the establishment of the Integrity Commissioner. I am sure he would like to see an increase in prize money. We have done that with country racing. We have done that with the QTIS program. There is to be $2.5 million a year for the next two years. I thank the member for his support. We will do everything we can as the Queensland government to deliver for racing.

I inform the House that the importance of this bill to the Queensland racing sector cannot be understated. If for no other purpose, these reforms are vital for a number of reasons. What the opposition failed to mention is that their apathy and the financial mismanagement of the former Labor government in handing off responsibility for running the racing industry to a bunch of their cronies has had a devastating impact on those 30,000 people I spoke about earlier who rely on this sector to make a living.

Since 24 March the Newman government has consistently been able to identify shortcomings in the management and conduct of the former board of Racing Queensland. First was the infamous golden handshakes for senior board members, including racing tsar Bob Bentley and union official Bill Ludwig. What we know is that in the dying days of the former Labor government the former Racing Queensland board signed off on a deal which gave RQL top executives a 30 per cent salary increase and something called a 'material adverse change' clause in their contracts. That all sounds a bit clever, does it not? This clause meant that when all four executives resigned just two days after the Newman government was elected they received a separation payout totalling $1.858 million—a staggering amount of money in anybody's language—including 14 months salary, redundancy payments and their statutory leave entitlements. Who could ever get a deal like that? You would have to be blessed.

In a subsequent investigation into this matter the Auditor-General found little evidence in RQL's board minutes that the responsibility of the directors under the Corporations Act 2001 was actively considered by the board members, particularly the requirements to act in good faith—that is a salient point—and in the best interests of the company. Those opposite really need to look at what company law is all about because they have a very dismal understanding of it.

There can be no doubt that the RQL board put in place extraordinarily favourable employment arrangements that delivered these executives a sweetheart deal of the century—a collective payout of $1.858 million upon their voluntary resignations. That is incredible. Of course, when it comes to the former Labor government and anything they touch, the only consistent thing we can rely upon is their inconsistencies. With a multimillion dollar payout being handed out with free abandon, one might be led to believe the finances of Racing Queensland were in excellent shape. Unfortunately, for 30,000 Queenslanders this is simply not so.

The RQL board recently released its 2011-12 annual report which laid bare the years of mismanagement and the apathy of both the RQL regime and the former Labor government. There is no doubt that the former Labor government drove the Queensland Racing industry to the brink of destruction, as we have heard so much from so many members in this House from all sides. There is no doubt about this at all. However, this has never been clearer than when analysing the findings of the RQL annual report, with the company this year posting a loss of $14 million, which the member for Capalaba touched on. I think I heard earlier what a great success Bob Bentley and Bill Ludwig were. How wrong they are. The size of the loss is absolutely staggering, and can only be laid at the feet of the former RQL board, headed up by Labor mates and a former union boss. Bill Ludwig's name just keeps coming up all over this state and all over this country. He is quite an amazing fellow.

Finally, we come to the latest example of the former Labor government's legacy when it comes to the board they put in place to run the Queensland racing industry into the ground. I recently received correspondence from the acting chief executive officer of Racing Queensland advising that he had identified major inconsistencies during a recent review of the company's past and proposed capital works programs. The acting CEO wrote to me stating—

A number of characteristics of these projects regarding their procurement and performance have caused concern. In addition, some recent events have added to that concern and we believe that action is now appropriate to address these concerns ...

The major concerns raised by RQL involve work performed by a single consulting engineering firm, specifically: the probity of the awarding of contracts to the company; record keeping and reporting of consulting payments made to the company; inconsistencies in the completion of the contracts by the RQL directors; and the relationships between the RQL personnel and the engineering firm's staff.

By way of background, I advise the House that RQL has advised me that for the period from 1 July 2007 to 31 October 2012 this engineering firm had been awarded contracts and undertaken work on behalf of the consolidated entities of RQL to the value of approximately $158 million. The engineering firm was paid approximately $5.6 million in consulting fees with no record of whether they also received intercontract or subcontractor payments.

RQL's own procurement policy requires all work in excess of $10,000 to be competitively tendered to at least three suppliers. RQL's policies also require a contractor's register to be kept of all payments. Despite RQL paying $5.6 million to the engineering firm, RQL's own recent review has identified that only $3.19 million was logged in the register. Woops—I wonder where the money went? No contract or engagement documents have been located for the remainder.

Despite the tender policy, RQL now reports that a substantial portion of the work awarded to the company was done without RQL undertaking a competitive tender process. The acting CEO of RQL advised that he cannot identify any circumstances that would have justified a policy like this being ignored.

On 29 March 2012, the week following the state election, a letter sent by the engineering firm to RQL on 21 August 2011 was countersigned by then RQL chairman, Mr Bob Bentley. RQL's view is that this appears to be a clear attempt to catch up, or should I say cover up, the approval documentation from previous payments by the director.

The acting CEO has also advised me that the former RQL CEO, Mr Malcolm Tuttle, and the former director of product development, Mr Paul Brennan—the two former senior RQL executives charged with overseeing the procurement process and by extension of that RQL's close working relationship with the engineering firm and who left RQL immediately after the state election on extremely favourable terms—both now hold senior positions with the same firm at the centre of the allegations. I think I need to say that again. They were employed by the same company that they were dealing with. That is incredible.

The matters raised by the current management of RQL are serious ones and continue to reflect what appears to be a consistent pattern of behaviour from those previously charged with running the racing industry in this state. RQL has indicated to me that it is their intention to commission a special independent audit in an effort to get to the bottom of what we would all agree on face value are serious matters requiring serious investigation.

As previously mentioned, the management model put forward by the former Labor government meant that the Racing Queensland board was completely unaccountable to any authority, unresponsive to the needs of the industry and allowed to underperform in all areas of governance. The vital reform that we are putting in place marks a turnaround from the old Labor guard and we will allow the Newman government to restore accountability to the racing sector as we help rebuild the racing industry in Queensland.

I have been going around for quite some time since this bill was put forward to the House with a flow chart. I do not know if everybody has seen it yet but, if you have not, get a hold of it. We will put it on the net very shortly. What it talks about very clearly is the 30,000 people employed by this industry—the strappers, the jockeys, every single person involved in this industry. They are not going to get jobs elsewhere. We need to look after them. That is what I have heard from most members in this House today. They want to look after the racing industry, and I thank each and every one of them for that. I need you to get out there. I need you to promote racing in the state of Queensland, and I do not think any of you in this House would be opposed to doing that. That is what we should all be about. Let's inspire the state to move forward. Racing is one component. There are so many pillars to the economy of Queensland. We have to support them all.

So moving down the flow chart to the three new Queensland boards that are being put in place—those 30,000 people get to pick the people they want to go on those boards. They endorse them. They promote them. They put them forward. That is where we are going—open, accountable and transparent. That is what the LNP promised leading into the election. That is what we are delivering. That is what we are doing here today—exactly that.

There will be three people on each of those boards. Each chairperson will step up to the Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board and there will be two other people appointed and they will be independent. They will be financially aware people and people who have a great understanding of the racing industry. Together there will be five people on that overarching board and they are the ones in control of racing—not me and not anybody in this room. The racing industry will be in control of their own business. That is what the LNP is delivering for the racing industry here today. We are delivering what we promised to do, unlike those opposite who went to the last election promising a whole lot of things and then coming out the other side of that election and deceiving the people of Queensland. We are not going to do that. We will never do that, particularly when it comes to the racing industry. This is my portfolio. I love this industry. I think it has such opportunity. We are way behind New South Wales. We are way behind Victoria. But now we have a chance to catch up. We are a few furlongs behind but I know we can catch up in the long term.

I want to thank each and every one of you, particularly those speakers I commented on earlier, and even the opposition. I thank them for supporting this bill because I believe they know this is good for the racing industry. It is good for those 30,000 people who are indirectly employed through this industry. I believe we have such a great future here in this state. Racing intrigued me when I first became the minister. I did not know that much about it. I do not go to the races all the time. But I tell you what—I have been to a lot of races in the last few months. It has been absolutely incredible and amazing.

Deb Frecklington spoke earlier on about the Kumbia races. We were out there. We saw what the world thought about the Kumbia races. It might be just a little country town in a lot of people's minds. But to be out there on the day to see the excitement from all the small towns in that local area and to see how they came together and how much fun they had—it is not just about spending money; it is about bringing communities together. Again, that is the point I want nobody to miss. Be it out at Kumbia, be it out at St George, be it anywhere through the state of Queensland, be it here in Brisbane—people come together to enjoy an event but more so in the country. You see families coming in—in particular, at St George and all of those surrounding areas. You just would not expect to see people coming from so far, yet I am talking about hundreds of kilometres away. They come from everywhere, far and wide. They bring their kids with them. They get together. It is like weddings and funerals. I would much prefer to go to weddings, not so much funerals. But races—that is what it is all about. That is what this bill is about. As the Minister for Racing, I feel honoured and privileged to have heard the debate here today. I thank you one and all. I look forward to moving forward with this bill and I look forward to your support.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 77, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (6.26 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am going to speak really slowly as we head towards the dinner break. I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. SL DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (6.26 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

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (6.27 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding standing and sessional orders, general business notice of motion No. 1, disallowance of statutory instrument, be postponed to a later day.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 6.28 pm to 7.30 pm.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Error in Introductory Speech, Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

Hon. AP CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (7.30 pm), by leave: Earlier today, in my introductory speech for the Mining and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, I stated that the competitive tendering process amendments to the Mineral Resources Act would provide for a direct allocation option for coal resources in specific circumstances. I advise the House that this statement was incorrect and I take this opportunity to amend the record, which should state that a direct allocation for coal in specific circumstances is not permitted.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! I would remind all members to have their phones on silent.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BILL

Resumed from 1 November (see p. 2380).

Second Reading

Hon. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (7.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I want to thank the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee for its consideration of the Economic Development Bill 2012 and its recommendations. The committee has made a considerable number of recommendations and the government will be supporting the majority of them. For the benefit of the House, I table the government's response to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee's recommendations.

Tabled paper: State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 15—Economic Development Bill 2012, government response [1753].

When I introduced this bill to the House I said that it was primarily a process bill. I will say again tonight that it is primarily a process bill. What it does is combine two existing bills together. However, a lot of the commentary that I have seen reported has failed to understand that there is very little that is new in this bill. It is the combination of two existing bills. Given the government's particular policy positions in regard to the ULDA especially and in regard to our commitment to driving economic development in this state, we saw an opportunity to combine those two bills together to establish an economic development driver that would both achieve the government's policy positions and allow us to transition the considerable amount of powers of the ULDA back to local government in a way that created greater efficiencies and synergies within government.

Unfortunately, I think some of the comments that have been made have bordered on conspiracy theories, especially in regard to a provision that was added to the bill to ensure that the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry were implemented. The Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations were supported by both sides of this House before the election. The previous Labor government supported those recommendations, as did we. After the election we certainly maintained our support. The Labor members in this House have used the suggestion that those recommendations now be enacted as an opportunity to run off on a whole lot of wild and scary stories that simply have no basis at all.

Tonight let me go through in some detail what this bill is about in an attempt to put it on the record and make it very clear what this bill is about. The bill integrates and modernises key provisions of the Industrial Development Act 1963—can I pause and say that again: 1963; an act that has been around since 1963—and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007. That act was enacted with some controversy by the previous government. But this bill sets out to combine those two acts together to establish a single economic development act to assist government to drive economic development in Queensland.

At the bill's core, there is a re-emphasis on supporting, facilitating and fast-tracking economic development in the state by refining and improving the existing processes. The bill includes amendments to other legislation that will also contribute to the government's economic and community development objectives. It contains legislative changes to continue the vital rebuilding work of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and to implement particular recommendations made in the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry report, which I referred to a little while ago.

The bill will enable particular developments to be fast tracked to meet the government's priorities for economic development and development for community purposes. The bill is intended to commence as soon as possible. However, some operational arrangements will need to be established, and consequently provisions will commence by proclamation to ensure the smooth transition to the new arrangements. The cost of the operational arrangements under the economic development act will be met from existing allocations.

The Economic Development Bill, while procedural, offers three key and fundamental differences from the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 that it repeals. Firstly, it provides for a changed and integrated governance model. The Urban Land Development Authority, or the ULDA, was established as an autonomous, self-funded organisation independent of government. The bill, if enacted, will establish the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, or MEDQ, as a corporation sole. In contrast to the ULDA, the MEDQ will be managed from within government and will have the ability to deal commercially in land, property and infrastructure. The MEDQ will also have responsibility for planning and development activities.

The bill integrates the two current entities—the ULDA and the Minister for Industrial Development, or MIDQ—to enable approved operational efficiencies and increased opportunity for streamlining planning processes. It also supports consistency and cohesion as operations will be under the leadership of a single board that is under the direction and mandate of the responsible minister. That single board will be made up of four of the state's most senior public servants.

Secondly, it offers greater flexibility and provides scope to plan and develop within declared areas including for a wider range of activities than is currently the case. At present, development in declared areas must focus on development of affordable housing. That was the charter of the ULDA. The bill provides flexibility to develop land for a broader range of purposes including economic development.

Thirdly, it provides for increased local government engagement. I repeat: it provides for increased local government engagement. I am not sure many of the submissions made to the committee understand that. This bill deliberately and proactively provides for increased local government engagement. Unlike the two existing acts, the bill enshrines local government involvement. This includes consultation on proposed priority development areas, the power to establish local consultative committees and the opportunity for direct delegation of MEDQ functions to local government.

The bill allows flexibility for the Minister for Economic Development to delegate all or some of the planning powers in the bill to local government. The MEDQ powers that could be delegated include the powers to prepare and make development instruments, land use plans and development schemes, prepare and make amendments to development instruments, assess development applications and make decisions to approve, refuse or partly refuse these.

The bill also provides for a local government to prepare an amendment of its planning scheme to provide for a priority development area that is no longer a priority development area. The bill provides local government with the opportunity for greater input into the management of priority development areas through representation on local representative committees. It is intended that these committees represent the interests of local communities and the relevant local government is identified as a potential member of the LRC.

The part of the bill that perhaps caused the most ill-informed and misdirected comment was the part that deals with temporary emissions licences. As I said, this was in response to the Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations. The temporary emissions licence is designed to be a quick decision on limited criteria to permit a release, for a limited period of time, of water from such areas as mine sites. I spoke about this issue in the parliament earlier and how the previous government had been so totally unable to respond to the issue. That inability to respond cost the economy of Central Queensland dearly. The previous government could not deal with this issue. What we have done since we have come to government is we have dealt with it on a number of levels.

The temporary emissions licence deals with emergency release situations. As this is to be used as an emergency tool, the decision on whether to approve the licences must be made within 24 hours. This takes account of the fact that it is dealing with an emergency situation. However, to balance the quick decision time frame, the licence is fully flexible. It can be immediately amended, cancelled or suspended without receiving and considering submissions from the operator if, for example, downstream drinking water is adversely affected by the release. This provides for the community to be protected where decisions have to be made quickly and on limited information. This flexibility is one of the measures in place to prevent environmental harm and detrimental impacts on agricultural land.

However, more importantly, water quality—especially drinking water quality—is still an important consideration in deciding whether to approve the licence in the first place. To begin with, as part of an application for a temporary emissions licence, proponents would be required to provide information on any increased risks arising from additional discharges and the proposed monitoring and mitigation strategies to offset these risks. In addition, the decision maker would still be required to consider water quality, environmental health and public health issues in deciding whether to approve the application.

These criteria are spelt out under 'Criteria for decision' in section 357D of the bill, which states that the administering authority must have regard to 'the likelihood that the release will adversely impact the health, safety or wellbeing of another person'. The example given for that subsection of a release that adversely impacts another person is where the release could affect the quality of downstream drinking water. Where there is a high risk to human health from a proposed discharge, the application of the proposed decision criteria would make it highly unlikely that a licence would be granted. This tool is designed to be used as part of a response to an unforeseen emergent event. To fetter this discretion unduly would limit the effectiveness of the tool. However, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is preparing guidance material which will assist decision makers in assessing applications for a temporary emissions licence for particular types of natural disasters and releases.

There has been a lot of confusion between the temporary emissions licences designed to address emergency release situations and the efforts that the government has been making to address the longer term problem of dealing with what is sometimes called the legacy water in Central Queensland's mines. This part of the legislation was not meant to deal with the broader question of the legacy water. The legislation was not introduced retrospectively, and there is no intention to use the new temporary emissions licence to allow mines to release legacy water held from previous floods.

As a result of discussions with industry, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is proposing to address the issue of legacy water in a very different way. That is the process I spoke about in the parliament earlier and it is the process we discussed with the community of Central Queensland in Rockhampton a couple of weeks ago. It is the process that has been the subject of so much misrepresentation and so much scaremongering by the people on the other side of the House. As I said in the parliament earlier, it is gratifying to me that the attempts by the member for South Brisbane, the opposition leader and the member for Rockhampton to run scare campaigns in Central Queensland are simply not working. They are not working because the people of Central Queensland know first and foremost that this issue has to be addressed. Their scare campaigns are not working because the people of Central Queensland know and understand that a whole-of-river management system is at the heart of obtaining a long-term solution to this issue. Their scare campaigns are not working because we have presented to the people of Central Queensland a comprehensive proposal based on precedents that exist around the world. The nearest precedent is in the Hunter River in New South Wales, where a very similar scheme has been operating for some time to ensure that the quality of the river water is monitored and that a series of trigger points is used to determine the release strategies.

We will be moving to implement a pilot program this coming wet season with the intention of eventually establishing a water quality trading scheme in the Fitzroy Basin which will enable the economic drivers to incentivise coal mines and other proponents who want to release water into the river to do so in a way that ensures that the water quality at the most sensitive of the receptors along the river—that is, at the Rockhampton water intake—is always never worse than it is in a natural situation.

I have no doubt that during this debate tonight we are going to hear more irresponsible and ill-informed comments about this issue by members on the other side, including the member for South Brisbane and the member for Rockhampton. But this is an issue where we have to do more than just run scare campaigns. It is an issue that is critical to the economy of Queensland and particularly the economy of Central Queensland. It is critical to the job prospects of many of the people whom the member for Rockhampton represents, yet the best that he and his colleagues can do is continue to run those sorts of scare campaigns.

The other part of the bill I want to comment on is the amendments that are proposed to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. Once again, there has been some ill-informed comment about this. One of the platforms this government was elected on was to restore the role, authority and powers of the Coordinator-General. The objectives of the amendments in this bill are to fast-track project approvals and facilitate project delivery. The amendments are all about what we said we would do. We said we would streamline the approvals process. The Coordinator-General has been implementing a 37-point fast-tracking action plan, and he has radically reformed the whole approach to assessments and decision making. The focus is on time because time is the great cost for proponents proposing these projects. The focus is on time, with the clear target of reducing approvals times by 50 per cent while still maintaining the credibility of the approvals process.

As at 20 November, the Coordinator-General was actively assessing 35 projects which have the potential to contribute to the Queensland economy $78 billion in capital investment and provide 42,000 jobs in construction and 24,000 jobs in ongoing operational roles. As of that date, 20 November, 86 statutory decisions had been made by the new Coordinator-General in his first seven months, compared to just 45 by the previous government in a full year. That is 86 statutory decisions in seven months compared with 45 in 12 months. That is the best indicator of what our government is doing. It is one of the best indicators of what we have changed since we have come to government.

However, the government recognises the need for the Coordinator-General to be supported with strong and efficient legislation that has the flexibility and the capability to empower the Coordinator-General to deliver on the government's objective and drive economic development. The amendments ensure that the Coordinator-General has clearer and more effective powers to manage his key activities, which include: the coordination of declared projects undergoing environmental impact statements, progressing the economic development and management of state development areas, assessing applications for private infrastructure facilities and managing land acquisition associated with major projects. As a result, assessments of applications for coordinated project declarations will be more comprehensive and rigorous, with proponents being made well aware of the requirements.

One of the amendments that has attracted some attention in the last couple of days and more particularly today is the amendment that seeks to change the declaration of a 'significant project' to a different terminology so it would be called a declaration of a 'coordinated project'. This has always been an area where I believe change has been necessary. The 'significant project' title implies that a project has government support or is a state priority. There have been numerous examples over a period of time where proponents have used the fact that their project has been granted significant project status by the Coordinator-General as some sort of marketing advantage. They have produced material that suggests to the market that, because the project has been declared a project of state significance, it has at least an element of state support. We are going to change that in this legislation because it is inappropriate for this declaration to be used in that way. The declaration does not imply any degree of state support. What it does is allows the Coordinator-General to undertake an assessment process. This bill before the House will change the name of that process so that the process will declare projects 'coordinated projects'. However, it is important to note—and to note with some emphasis—that that is the only change that it will make. It will change the name from a 'project of state significance' to a 'coordinated project'. It will ensure that proponents are not able to use the term and the title to misrepresent their projects as having some degree of state support or even some degree of state involvement.

I think it is an issue that is particularly pertinent for people who consider these issues from the other side of the language barrier where these terms are translated into other languages. The meaning of the term is much easier to misrepresent in another language. I would say very clearly tonight to the investment industry that what is being changed here is the name, is the title. We are doing that to ensure that that particular declaration cannot be misrepresented. I am aware that as late as today particular proponents have suggested that they are going to challenge the validity of this legislation because it is unconstitutional. I think the fact that they have sought to do that indicates very clearly that they are the people who have been misrepresenting this declaration and doing so for quite some time. The coordinated project is a much more appropriate term, reflecting what the declaration means. It starts a

comprehensive environmental impact statement process managed by the Coordinator-General. It indicates that the project will undergo whole-of-government coordination of the environmental impact assessment.

The amendments make very small changes to the application and decision-making process. The amendments make the eligibility criteria for a coordinated project more comprehensive. The three key additions are the requirement to provide prefeasibility information on the project, details of the proponent's capacity to complete the environmental impact statement process and other matters that the Coordinator-General considers relevant. Existing criteria are also clarified and strengthened, for example, the need to be consistent with government policies and plans. These changes will lead to a more comprehensive assessment process which will ensure that only those projects that meet the criteria and are likely to happen are declared coordinated projects.

These amendments also assist potential applicants in clearly identifying the type of information which has to be submitted. The need to demonstrate prefeasibility is important in order to reduce the number of speculative projects being declared that do not ever get built but are simply after the title. The need to demonstrate prefeasibility is also important in order to reduce the possibility of government resources being wasted during the EIS process and the creation of unnecessary concern in the community about the impacts of projects that are not likely to proceed. Additionally, with the applicant having to demonstrate its financial and technical capability to complete the EIS process, it is less likely that projects will languish after the declaration period.

There has also been some comment about the amendments that provide an ability for the Coordinator-General to refuse or receive or process an application for a declaration. This allows the Coordinator-General to refuse or receive or process an application if insufficient information is provided in the application to make a decision. It prevents the unnecessary use of the Coordinator-General's resources in considering an incomplete application. The new section also allows the Coordinator-General to give the proponent a reasonable opportunity to provide the information before refusing to receive or process it.

There is also a provision that I think has been misrepresented today that allows the Coordinator-General to cancel a coordinated project declaration. It is a new section that allows for the cancellation of a declaration, for example, firstly, where the proponent requests it, which sometimes happens; the Coordinator-General considers that the proponent lacks the capability to complete the environmental impact statement; there is a public interest to cancel; there is a change to the proponent; or the project substantially changes. It is absurd and ridiculous to suggest, as I have seen suggested today, that the government would seek to cancel a coordinated project declaration for any other reason. We are a government that is intent on driving economic development. It is our intention and our determination to drive economic development, to drive as many of these significant projects as we can using the coordinated project declaration. To suggest that this section of the bill is somehow part of a conspiracy theory to allow us to cancel declarations for some spurious reason is simply nonsensical. It is puerile, childish, absurd and completely without foundation.

The other part of the bill that I would also like to make some comments on is the part that changes the private infrastructure facility declaration. A private infrastructure facility approval is all about compulsory land acquisition by the Coordinator-General for a private sector proponent. That is its only purpose. It enlivens the Coordinator-General's powers to compulsorily acquire land for the benefit of a private sector party where the proponent has been unsuccessful in negotiating a commercial agreement with the landholder for the purchase of the land. A private infrastructure facility approval is considered a last resort and is intended to be used when commercial negotiations have been unsuccessful in providing the land for the infrastructure facility. Section 153 sets out a range of criteria for approval of a project as a private infrastructure facility. Amongst a number of requirements, the project must have economic or social significance and economic or social benefits to Australia, the state or the region in which the project is to be undertaken; it must satisfy an identified need and be consistent with state policies; and the project will be completed in a timely way.

An approval for an 'infrastructure facility of significance' is what this process used to be known as. Once again, the term 'infrastructure facility of significance' was all too often misrepresented in the way that a 'project of state significance' declaration was. Hence, the process is being renamed 'private infrastructure facility' to better reflect its purpose and to reduce the ability of proponents to use the approval as a marketing and negotiating tool and to imply a level of state support for the project which simply does not exist.

The new name and timing of when it may be made available post environmental impact statement approval also reduces the risk that proponents could unduly influence landholders in negotiations. That is an important part of the reason this is in the bill, because there have been times in the past when project proponents have gone to landholders with the opening statement in their negotiation being, 'We have the power to take your land. We are now here to negotiate about buying it.' The ability for private infrastructure providers to compulsorily acquire land should be used as a last resort and it should only be used when every effort has been made and every effort has been demonstrated to acquire that land by commercial negotiations.

I think I have dealt with some of the issues that have been the subject of misinformed and ill-informed debate since this bill was first introduced into the parliament. As I said, I welcome the recommendations of the committee. The government will accept the majority of the recommendations that the committee has made to the parliament. We will enact those recommendations through amendment during consideration of the bill in detail. I look forward to hearing the contributions of members in the House as we consider the bill here tonight. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TRAD (South Brisbane—ALP) (8.01 pm): I rise to speak on the Economic Development Bill 2012. In doing so, I would like to register the opposition's severe concerns regarding the bill and to inform the House that we will not be supporting this bill. When the Deputy Premier—

Mr Hart: You do not like economic development, do you?

Ms TRAD: They must be testy after the party room meeting where they tried to expel a member.

When the Deputy Premier introduced this bill only three weeks ago—and even earlier tonight—he stated—

The bill I present today is primarily a process bill.

This is not merely a process bill. The Deputy Premier's statements are just really the 2012 version of 'don't you worry about that'. 'Just a process bill,' the Deputy Premier said when he introduced the bill and earlier tonight. 'Just a process bill,' he said as he attempted to push this legislation through the committee system with minimal public scrutiny or consultation.

To its credit, the committee did not follow the Deputy Premier's wishes and went ahead and held a public meeting on 9 November. It was not very long to give community and other organisations input and proper, genuine, meaningful consultation, but I commend the committee for perservering and holding a public inquiry. On behalf of the opposition I place on record my thanks to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee for all of their work. I particularly note the former chair, Ted Malone, and Dr Kathy Munro, the research director, for all their work.

The committee report made 20 recommendations for amendments to this bill and follow-up actions. The committee of mainly government members supports the position that, in fact, this Deputy Premier is wrong and this is not primarily or merely or in any sense a process bill. The Deputy Premier told us that his amendments around untreated mine water were all procedural and to implement the Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations. This is not the case. The committee at page 25 of the report states—

... the committee considers this Bill to be more than a procedural Bill to implement recommendations already accepted by the Government.

In fact, what we do know after meeting papers from a Queensland Resources Council meeting surfaced is that the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer specifically met with the Queensland Resources Council about royalty increases before the state budget. What we do know is that during those discussions in relation to the royalty increases offsets were put on the table. We also know that one of the major issues put on the table to offset the royalty increases was in fact dealing with the legacy water issue. For the benefit of the House, I table the meeting papers, the resolutions and the discussion that was had.

Tabled paper: Queensland Resources Council—Notice of Meeting, 10 August 2012 [1754].

For the benefit of the House I shall give some quotes. The meeting paper states that the recommended resolution put to the board was—

That the Board

- Note that the Secretariat has entered into confidential discussions with the State Government around a package of potential royalty increases (focussing currently on the coal sector) and measures that could deliver tangible cost offsets to members;

Further, the papers detail at point 9—

Considerable time was also spent discussing—

with the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer—

what a royalty increase might look like and what cost offsets government could provide industry. The secretariat steered the discussions towards a royalty increase that has a legislated sunset (after three years). In terms of offsets, QRC pushed fiscal stability agreements which lock-in royalty rates for future projects, real action on the legacy water in mines and moving to minimise SIMPs obligations as well as those issues that may have been placed in the 'too hard basket'.

One of those used as an example is 'the union's misuse of the mining OH&S Act as an industrial tool'. Imagine that: the mining union using the OHS act! Outrageous! Further, in terms of communications the paper also states—

At this point in the discussions, the QRC is endeavouring to keep discussions 'closed' and publicly we have been appreciative of government's committed to at least engage in consultation which did not occur under the Bligh government.

That is because the Bligh government would not enter into a dirty deal around dirty mine water like this government is prepared to do.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am happy to take as much time as I can. The Deputy Premier is the same person who as the member for Callide in opposition sat on the Committee System Review Committee in 2010—a review that recommended that legislation lay before the committee for up to six months. This report was supported by the current Deputy Premier, who told this parliament—

I was part of that bipartisan committee and ... it was a very successful committee. It operated in a true bipartisan way, which in itself is a very rare occurrence in politics ...

Additionally—

As I have said before, quite sincerely, it was one of the better experiences that I have had in this parliament. We worked through an issue that affects us all.

But what appears to be the case is that what the member for Callide, the honourable Deputy Premier, says in opposition—

Mr Seeney: Where did the quote end? Are you still quoting? What is the end of the quote?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Deputy Premier—

Mr Seeney: No—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier—

Mr SEENEY: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. If the member is going to quote me, she needs to explain where the quote ends and she did not. I am asking where the end of the quote was.

Ms TRAD: I refer the Deputy Premier to *Hansard* of 12 August 2012. He can go back and look at that.

Mr SEENEY: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms TRAD: It is not a point of order.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, I am perfectly capable of determining myself what a point of order is. The Deputy Premier is on his feet and he is attempting to take a point of order. I do not need to receive instructions from you and I will kindly ask you to stop providing me instructions.

Ms TRAD: I am terribly sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr Young: That was contemptuous.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Keppel, you are not helping.

Mr Young: Sorry.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, what was your point of order?

Mr SEENEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have two points of order. The first point of order is that I have the call, which means that the member for South Brisbane should resume her seat. Thank you. Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for South Brisbane was quoting me. I do not dispute that they were the words that I said. When the member for South Brisbane, like every other member in this House, quotes another member she has a responsibility to indicate where the quote starts and where it ends. There was no indication of where the quote ended and I insist that the member for South Brisbane indicates where the quote ends, because unless she can do that then she is wrongly quoting me or at least I run the risk of being wrongly quoted.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, it might aid the House and it might aid the debate if you would indicate where the Deputy Premier's quote ends.

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, it ended where I ended his quote—with a full stop—and I shall repeat it again for the benefit of the House and for the benefit of your deliberation. The Deputy Premier said—

As I have said before, quite sincerely, it was one of the better experiences that I have had in this parliament. We worked through an issue that affects us all.

That is from *Hansard* of 2 August 2012.

Mr Seeney: And that's the way you do it. You indicate the end of the quote.

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask you to rule on whether the Deputy Premier should be addressing me personally across the chamber or through you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, you make many interjections across the chamber through many debates. I would suggest that for the aid of the House and so that we might allow the debate to continue you just continue with your comments.

Ms TRAD: Of course, Madam Deputy Speaker. So it appears, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the Deputy Premier has one position in opposition but another position when in government. He has another position when he has the full power of the responsibility of the Deputy Premiership. He has one different position, as the member for Yeerongpilly has recently found out. He has a different position from the position he held in opposition, as the member for Gaven has recently found out, and he has a different position—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, I find those comments offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, will you withdraw?

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. So why is it then that the Deputy Premier really wants this bill rammed through with minimal public scrutiny and consultation?

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, I find those comments offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane?

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have not personally offended the Deputy Premier. I am making a point, Madam Deputy Speaker. They were not a personal affront.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has found your comments offensive and I would ask that for the aid of the debate and for the aid of the House you withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw them, Madam Deputy Speaker. The opposition would like to see amendments to this bill to respond to public concerns that have been raised repeatedly by stakeholders, community organisations and members of the public in relation to the minimal public scrutiny and consultation that has accompanied this bill. The amendments that the opposition would like to see would go back to the committee for proper consultation and discussion. We cannot support this bill in its current form or with amendments that have not been consulted on. Those amendments we have seen were brought to us here tonight at the commencement of this discussion of the bill. But let me turn back to the reasons we believe the Deputy Premier thought this was merely a process bill. The Deputy Premier has called this bill a process bill because he thought he had the process lined up, as was detailed in the meeting papers from the Queensland Resources Council meeting.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, I find those comments offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Of the comments that the member for South Brisbane made, may I seek clarification, Deputy Premier, as to what you found personally offensive?

Mr SEENEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, under the standing orders of this House anything I find offensive the particular speaker has to withdraw. In this case, I am happy to explain. The imputation that the member is making is that somehow there was a conspiracy between the QRC and our government to do something that only the member for South Brisbane can imagine. Irrespective of that, I, like every other member of the House, have the right to ask for comments about me to be withdrawn if I find them offensive. I find the comments made by the member for South Brisbane offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, the Deputy Premier has found your comments offensive and I would ask that you withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. The Deputy Premier has called this bill a mere process bill because he thought he had an agreement already lined up with the Queensland Resources Council, as was detailed in the meeting papers—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, that is the same comment. Madam Deputy Speaker, that is repeating the same comment.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, could you please resume your seat.

Mr SEENEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, that is the same comment. I find it offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, the Deputy Premier has found comments offensive and he has asked that you withdraw them.

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, I withdraw those comments, but I will draw the Deputy Premier's attention, through you—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane—

Ms TRAD: It is not a qualified—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane—

Ms TRAD: It is not a qualified—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, when I am speaking please do not interrupt me. You do not have the call. I would ask that you withdraw your comments unreservedly.

Ms TRAD: I did. I withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unreservedly.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw unreservedly.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for South Brisbane. You have the call.

Ms TRAD: At the public meeting that I attended on 9 November that the parliamentary committee held the Queensland Resources Council under questioning from me advised that it had received a copy of the legislation perhaps a month earlier. This was in fact a month earlier than anybody else had received the proposed amendments in order to assist in the drafting upon consultation. I call upon the Deputy Premier tonight to release the details—

A government member interjected.

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, can I just point to the fact that this was evidence given under oath during the public inquiry by the representative of the Queensland Resources Council.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Minister?

Mr POWELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for South Brisbane is suggesting that the QRC alone was provided a copy of the draft bill. I need to draw the House's attention to the fact that a range of stakeholders received a copy of the draft bill. It is therefore inappropriate what the member for South Brisbane—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, that is not a point of order. The member for South Brisbane has the call.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I call on the Deputy Premier tonight to release the details of these discussions and to show what influence the Queensland Resources Council has directly had on the drafting of this bill. I also call on the Deputy Premier to respond to AgForce's requests as detailed during that public hearing to see the initial discussion paper that was released by the government that only the QRC commented on during that public inquiry. This discussion paper was the basis for providing the changes to the Environmental Protection Act that we see here before us today, and I challenge the government and I challenge the Deputy Premier and I challenge the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection to release that discussion paper.

Mr HART: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, what is your point of order?

Mr HART: I was in fact the chair of that inquiry and the only reason that the QRC made that statement was because—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh—

Mr HART:—was because—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, it would appear to me that you are expressing a point of view, not a point of order. Do you have a point of order?

Mr HART: I am clarifying for the House—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, this is not the time for clarifications. You can make comments during your contribution to the debate. Please resume your seat. The member for South Brisbane has the call.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Other stakeholders including the Local Government Association of Queensland and AgForce, as I mentioned earlier, were less than impressed by this one-sided consultation process. The Local Government Association of Queensland advised the committee—

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Environment, what is your point of order?

Mr POWELL: The suggestion that the LGAQ, which did receive a copy of the draft bill, should express such is just superfluous and incorrect. The member for South Brisbane is misleading the House with inaccuracies—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister—

Mr POWELL:—and I would ask you—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, it would appear to me that you are expressing a point of view. If you believe that the member for South Brisbane has misled the House, I would suggest that you write to the Speaker. That is not a point of order.

Mr POWELL: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for South Brisbane has the call.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. To repeat: other stakeholders including the Local Government Association of Queensland and AgForce were less than impressed by this one-sided consultation process. The Local Government Association of Queensland advised the committee publicly that it was asking for guaranteed consultation so that its input into the questioning could be provided to ensure the protection of essential urban water supplies. It does not seem like too much to ask of this government or the Deputy Premier. AgForce told the committee that it did not support this bill in its current form—it could not support it in its current form—and it could not support it without the addition of that information that it had not seen. It is clear in the development of this legislation that if you are not a mining company or a financially powerful developer, you are not part of the Deputy Premier's consultative process.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for South Brisbane, the Deputy Premier has found comments that you made offensive and I ask that you withdraw them.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw them. We know, Deputy Premier, that this is part of a dodgy dirty deal with mining companies—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, will you withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw—a deal that the mining industry would not take out a campaign against the government over royalty increases in exchange for trade-offs, which included the security of our environment and urban water supplies.

The committee's recommendations to change aspects of this legislation that can only be described as shambolic are a welcome first step. You need not take my word for it that this legislation as introduced is shambolic; the submission from AgForce stated—

AgForce is concerned that the proposed Bill if implemented as worded will increase the risk that primary producers will face significant negative environmental impacts flowing from poorly managed discharges of mine contaminants including salts, metals and sediments. AgForce is adamant that in responding to one emergency event we do not create another emergency for other stakeholders in the catchment of the affected mine or mines.

Even the Queensland Resources Council representative at the public hearing, Ms Bowie, stated—

If Temporary Emissions are linked to lack of foresight that would obviously have an unintended consequence in terms of planning. I would have to say that unless that provision is amended to remove the lack of foresight link, the obvious unintended consequence would be to lead to poorer planning and particularly poorer evidence of planning.

The Queensland Farmers Federation submission stated—

Downstream water users and environments could be impacted by the release of water from mine sites into river flows unless both the quality of the discharged water and the receiving water is considered ... QFF is very disappointed at the way in which this consultation process has been managed.

Further, the QRC in its negotiations with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection was advised that the cumulative impacts of multiple temporary emissions licences could not be assessed, and I quote—

The cumulative impact one was, however, one that they did not think could necessarily be looked at within 24 hours and that is why they included the provision about being able to impose amendments after a TEL had already been granted so as to be able to scale back a TEL.

Here we have the situation where multiple temporary emissions licences can be granted within a 24-hour period without any ability to assess the cumulative impact on the river system. That is not responsible. I put that to the House and I put that to the Deputy Premier.

Mr Powell interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, the member for South Brisbane is not taking interjections and I would ask that you please cease.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Here we will have field officers—the ever-diminishing number of field officers who work for the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection; half a dozen covering a huge area of Queensland—as given under oath during the inquiry, being compelled to provide temporary emissions licences to release toxic mine water within a 24-hour period. But we can amend the licence afterwards. You cannot amend the environment afterwards. You certainly cannot amend your crop afterwards and you cannot amend your cattle afterwards. There is one thing you cannot amend after the fact and that is certainly the Great Barrier Reef.

The Capricorn Conservation Council, which is an organisation that I know the Deputy Premier likes to quote often, stated in its submission—

> CCC does not support the proposed amendments to the EP Act 1994 due to the high likelihood that the proposed changes ... will result in adverse negative impacts upon the environment, society and the economy in the Fitzroy Basin.

This legislation as it currently stands would allow for any officer in the department or declared person to issue a temporary emissions licence to release contaminated mine water. This direction is to be issued verbally with no follow-up written instruction. The officer and the department would have been required to assess the financial impact—or the economic implications, I understand now—on the mining company of not allowing the release of floodwaters, but not the financial impacts on downstream users such as farmers and graziers of being exposed to contaminated mine water.

The definition of an emergent event—now to be, I think, another watered down term—for which a temporary emissions licence can be issued is also extraordinarily—

Mr Holswich interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, as has been clearly indicated the member for South Brisbane is not taking interjections.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The definition of an emergent event for which a temporary emissions licence can be issued is so extraordinarily broad and is not restricted to the time immediately before, after or during a flood event.

Mr Hart interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, please cease interjecting across the chamber. The member for South Brisbane is not taking interjections. If you wish to make a contribution to this debate, you have your chance to do so.

Ms TRAD: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. To claim that these amendments merely reflect the recommendations of the flood commission of inquiry is wrong. The flood commission of inquiry did not recommend such a broad definition of an emergency. The flood commission of inquiry also recommended that guidelines were to be made public. What we have heard from the Deputy Premier here tonight is that guidelines are being worked on. They are currently being proposed by the department. When I questioned the department about who would be consulted in relation to these guidelines—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, can you please direct your comments through the chair.

Ms TRAD: I am, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane—

Ms TRAD: What did I say that was—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, please do not disrespect the chair.

Ms TRAD: I apologise—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, I am still speaking. You do not have the call. I have asked that you direct your comments through the chair. All I ask is that you please respect my ruling. You have shown gross disrespect to the chair earlier in this debate and I name you under standing order 253A.

Ms TRAD: Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you. When questioned about the development of these guidelines, it was quite clearly put to me by the departmental officer that they are currently under development and that the industry has been invited to make submissions in relation to these guidelines. When I asked whether the community would be consulted in relation to these guidelines, the departmental officer said that that had not been proposed at this stage. My other challenge to the Deputy Premier is to absolutely fully consult with the community in relation to the development of the guidelines before they get enacted.

The committee's recommendations in relation to the amendments to the Environmental Protection Act request the Deputy Premier to make amendments to fix a hopelessly one-sided and ill-conceived piece of legislation. Recommendation No. 10 from the committee is also welcome by the opposition and draws on the AgForce submission to recommend that temporary emissions licence fees be structured to be an incentive for mining companies to prevent the build-up of floodwater in the mine. Unfortunately, despite its best efforts the committee's recommendations just do not go far enough.

Recommendation No. 9 of the committee report is for the minister to ensure that a robust consultation process is held with all relevant stakeholders in the development of guidelines to support decision making around temporary emissions licences. As I have said earlier, while consultation is necessary, it makes no sense to consider this legislation in isolation from the guidelines that will determine the key elements of its implementation.

In relation to the 24-hour licence provisions, which I have spoken of briefly, I will now go into them in a bit more detail. Obviously, this provision is of particular significance. This committee has ignored concerns in relation to a mandatory 24-hour time period being imposed for the issuing of temporary emission licences.

The issue was raised by the Queensland Conservation Council, the Capricorn Conservation Council, the Fitzroy Basin Association, AgForce Queensland, the Environmental Defenders Office and the Coast and Country Association of Queensland. AgForce Queensland in its submission stated—

A 24-hour period would appear to be too short to robustly undertake the considerations required.

Or, as the Queensland Conservation Council put it in its submission—

As the proposed 24-hour turn around to decide applications will not enable full and detailed assessment of the decision-making criteria, there is a very high-risk and likelihood that a wide range of 'unforeseen' adverse social, economic as well as environmental impacts will occur as a result.

The Local Government Association of Queensland also described it as a stretch to guarantee the safety of urban water supplies through a 24-hour assessment process. As I have said earlier, Ms Leanne Bowie from the Queensland Resources Council revealed that the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, in their select consultations with them, advised that they could not assess the cumulative impact of multiple TELs. This is quite clearly unsatisfactory. It is quite clearly unsafe and it is quite clearly wrong. It is legislation that allows for actions to be taken that have the potential to cause significant public health issues, environmental damage and economic damage to other industries without the knowledge of what these impacts are.

The opposition supports changes to environmental licences to deliver what the Floods Commission of Inquiry has actually recommended. These recommendations are restricted to flooding events and the period immediately before, during or after an event, not to facilitate a dirty, dodgy deal with the resources industry of a series of trade-offs in exchange for royalty increases.

It is not only mining companies that the Deputy Premier will listen to, he also listens to financially powerful property developers and that is why I think that this bill is more appropriately titled the 'Russ Hinze Bill'. Instead of a statutory authority presiding over big planning and development projects in this state and what this state will prioritise in terms of industry development, what we now have is the Deputy Premier presiding over it—or the new Russ Hinze.

Mr SEENEY: I find those comments offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member will withdraw.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. This bill abolishes the Urban Land Development Authority, the ULDA, and replaces it with a corporation sole called the Minister for Economic Development Queensland. We have seen the Deputy Premier travelling to Moranbah and around the state promoting the work of the ULDA—championing it actually—work that was commenced under the previous Labor government, and now he wants to abolish it. This bill removes urban development areas and replaces them with priority development areas. The definition for where these priority development areas can be declared is much broader than for urban development areas. The definition is set out in the main purpose of the act at clause 3: to promote or coordinate activities to facilitate economic development for community purposes. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition set out in his statement of reservation to the committee, it is not just the opposition raising issues with this very broad definition. It is a broad definition which expands the scope for the government to remove community appeal rights under the Sustainable Planning Act against a developer. Greg Hoffman, Executive Director of the Local Government Association of Queensland, advised the committee—

I believe as a result of the presentation by the department's representatives, an apparent intention—that developments currently assessed under the Sustainable Planning Act will be effectively called in under the economic development act. So the ULDA has been reconstituted with a broader remit seemingly at odds with the government's empowering Queensland local government policy.

The Council of Mayors South-East Queensland also raised a similar concern, stating that—

The Economic Development Bill expands the scope of the ULDA Act and the Industrial Development Act that it replaces. It would appear that the ULDA has been reconstituted with a broader mandate inconsistent with the government's 'Empowering Queensland Local Government Policy'.

There are no specific definitions of 'economic development' and 'development for community purposes' meaning they may be interpreted broadly in line with their ordinary meaning. As a result there is the possibility that developments currently assessed under the Sustainable Planning Act will be 'called in' under the Economic Development Act.

The committee's recommendations do not respond to this issue of the act having such a broad application. The Premier in March last year called the ULDA's powers, which are far less broad than the powers for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland 'the sort of intrusion into local democracy that is unnecessary and unneeded in Queensland'. Further, the Premier committed that, 'If elected Premier, we will curtail this organisation that is unaccountable and unelected.' In May this year the Premier told us these changes were about 'empowering local governments to make local planning decisions.'

It seems that local government actually has a different perspective. Instead, what this government has done is create an even more powerful unelected corporation sole with a broader scope to overrule local decision making. The Minister for Economic Development Queensland will be able to consider a relevant local government planning instrument and propose a development that is not consistent with it. While the same could happen under the Urban Land Development Authority, the situations where this could occur were far more limited and focused to providing adequate housing supply and sustainable development. The government insists that this will empower local governments as the bill will require consultation with the local government prior to the declaration of a priority development area. However, the bill has no requirement for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to actually consider this consultation in making a decision.

It is worth noting here that section 11 of the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 requires the minister to both consult with local government and consider that consultation in making a decision about a revocation or reduction of an urban development area. The Economic Development Bill 2012 also includes powers for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to acquire land. These powers were not available under the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 for urban development areas. The justification provided for the broad purpose of the bill and these broad powers is that it is in order to ensure that economic development in Queensland grows. I will let my colleague, the Manager for Opposition Business, address that furphy, but let me just say that Labor never presided over an unemployment level as high as it is today. The Labor government presided over unprecedented investment in the resources industry and in construction and infrastructure.

There is no justification provided by this government for broadening the scope for the removal of local community appeal rights or explanation of how this will increase gross state product or assist to set new records of infrastructure investment. In fact, we have seen this afternoon a former LNP member and major investor in Queensland actually provide some analysis in relation to this bill that it will be counterproductive to industry investing in Queensland. It is blatantly clear from the submissions received by the committee that for all the Deputy Premier's bluster, rhetoric and platitudes about empowering local government, it was not properly consulted in relation to this bill. If proper consultation had occurred, the committee would not have had to make recommendation 2 that further consultation is to occur with local government on priority development areas. If proper consultation had occurred then the committee would not have had to recommend that it be a requirement that local government representatives be put on the Minister for Economic Development Queensland committee.

If proper consultation had occurred, the committee would not have had to make recommendation 4, to make amendments to ensure that local governments are appropriately safeguarded against infrastructure costs in priority development areas. All this comes after the Deputy Premier told us earlier this month that this bill was just a matter of process. The Deputy Premier has been caught out trying to hoodwink the parliament into accepting legislation—

Mr SEENEY: I rise on a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! I ask the member to withdraw those statements.

Ms TRAD: I withdraw. The Deputy Premier has been caught out trying to sell this bill as a process bill when, in fact, it has very little to do with process and much to do with policy. The opposition will not support the changes in this legislation that provide a broad scope to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, as a corporation sole, to remove the rights of local communities to oppose or have conditions imposed on development through the Sustainable Planning Act. That broad scope is consistent with our position presented on the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

This is the second strike in this government's agenda to serve the white shoe brigade. Only two weeks ago we saw this government make changes to the Planning and Environment Court. Despite making some last-minute amendments to make those changes less outrageous, most of the community was supportive of maintaining the existing system that allowed community groups to challenge developers without fear of being financially persecuted. It gave freedom to community organisations and enabled neighbours and residents to challenge in the Planning and Environment Court rampant and unsuitable development in their neighbourhoods. Now that freedom has been taken away from them by the LNP government. The government members came into this chamber and lectured the opposition about how we did not understand their amendments and they said that they had listened. We have listened to the community; it is the government that has not listened to the community. Quite clearly, the government members have not been listening.

The President of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, Simon Baltais, said that the government's amendments in consideration in detail would complicate a system that was working well. Before government members all start interjecting with green conspiracy theories, as is their wont, it is also the broader community that is raising these issues. In the *Noosa News*, Johanne Wright said that the government had ignored her advice to the committee that any tinkering could result in an unintended consequence. She further stated—

> The changes will keep lawyers in business trying to interpret all the clauses and cost far more than the previous perfectly good system—what a disaster.

Ms Wright also said that the government did not appreciate the level of community concern. That is what we tried to warn the government about two weeks ago and we give the same warnings here today. I make this point because the government will use the same low-rent tactics of lecturing us on their amendments and accusing us of smearing them, for merely providing a voice for the community and not just for the wealthy property developers or mining companies.

I would like to discuss other parts of the bill that are of concern not only to the opposition but also to the community at large. One of those concerns has also been raised by the committee. Recommendation 7 of the committee report is the removal of clause 292 of the bill, which removes the requirement for the Coordinator-General to provide public notice that an EIS is required for a coordinated project and to invite submissions on draft terms of reference for an EIS. The opposition strongly supports this recommendation from the committee. It is important that the community be afforded the opportunity to engage early in the process through making submissions on draft terms of reference.

Another concern mentioned in the committee report is that the matters to be considered by the Coordinator-General in assessing whether to declare a coordinated project have been shortened. While the committee report rightly states that section 27 requirements under the State Development and Public Works Act 1971 are not all mandatory, it still appears that this legislation removes the following from being subject to consideration before declaring a coordinated project: the project's potential effect on relevant infrastructure; employment opportunities that will be provided by the project; the level of investment necessary for the proponent to carry out the project; and the strategic significance of the project to the locality, region or state.

While we recognise that the committee has made a genuine effort to ameliorate the worst aspects of this bill, we cannot support it in its current form and with such limited, insufficient and meaningless consultation. If the government were genuine about moving amendments, firstly it would go out and consult on them independently and then go back to the committee for proper consultation and consideration. As the committee report states at page 4—

> In the time allowed by the House, the committee has not been able to give adequate consideration to many of the very detailed issues raised in submissions—although it has attempted to convey those issues for the benefit of the House. Nor has it been able to undertake its own research into these matters.

Those details ought more properly to have been sought out, conveyed to and considered by the government during the development of this bill. And the Deputy Premier told us that this was just a process bill. Don't you worry about that!

The opposition cannot support elements of what is rushed and poorly conceived legislation that has been drafted with woefully inadequate consultation and that is targeted at two sets of interests, those of powerful mining companies and wealthy developers, to the detriment of the rest of the community. The Deputy Premier commented earlier that the community supported this bill. I challenge the Deputy Premier to go to the communities that will be affected by this legislation and hold community meetings, not closed room meetings with three, four or eight people.

Mr HART (Burleigh—LNP) (8.46 pm): We have just seen a real case of head-in-the-sand disease. There is no doubt in my mind that the member for South Brisbane is purely pandering to her green tree mates, which is what led the last government into the actions that put this state in such a desperate financial position. It did not look at the economic benefit of any particular issue to the state; it just pandered to wild green attitudes.

This bill is part of a suite of changes designed to get Queensland back on track and working again. This bill will help untangle and dismantle unnecessary Labor red tape, improve government efficiency and help the government to make better and more timely decisions in matters of high importance. The bill will achieve legislative cohesion. It will streamline the relationship and functions of local government and other organisations so that we will be like rowers all pulling in the same direction. That is something that the Labor Party does not quite understand. In that way, we will achieve a better economic performance and outcome for all Queenslanders.

To extend the rowing analogy further, I could say that this LNP bill will be the 'awesome foursome' of legislation. It is a far cry from the lay-down-Sally attitude of the previous Labor government administration, where inefficient red tape held back the Queensland economy. Firstly, this bill will deliver efficiency by integrating and improving the key provisions of the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Development Authority Act 2007. Under the new Economic Development Act 2012, particular developments will be fast-tracked to meet the priorities for economic and community development, delivering benefits to more Queenslanders in a shorter time frame. The Economic Development Act will also set in place clear transparency with the establishment of a Minister for Economic Development Queensland and improved governance arrangements for the act to include a board of up to six members.

Furthermore, the establishment of the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority will streamline government involvement with regard to creating infrastructure for the Commonwealth Games in 2018. That is something very close to my heart because, as we all know, the Commonwealth Games

will be held on the Gold Coast in 2018. In short, this new government structure is a better use of resources which allows the government to get better game bang for its buck. It will deliver better planning, development and production of critical Commonwealth Games infrastructure like the games village and other venues. Not only that, but because of the streamlining and collaboration the government will be better placed to create infrastructure which will deliver a lasting economic, social and cultural legacy from which the Gold Coast can leverage well after the athletes have gone home.

There are other components to the bill, including the amendments to the South Bank Corporation Act 1989. In line with finding efficiencies and streamlining the functions of government, the bill amends the South Bank Corporation Act to transition the statutory planning powers of the South Bank Corporation to the Brisbane City Council in accordance with the Newman government's election commitment. This transfer back to the Brisbane City Council empowers Australia's new world city to better meet the needs of the second half of the 21st century.

In addition, the Economic Development Bill also amends the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 to clarify and streamline the powers of the Coordinator-General. Importantly, these amendments will deliver a more robust criteria for deciding which projects should be undertaken by the Coordinator-General and the streamlining of environmental impact processes, to name just two examples.

This bill will also make changes to the title of such things as 'projects of state significance' and 'infrastructure facilities of significance' to prevent those proponents from using these declarations to wrongly indicate that they have some level of state support when those declarations may not be in fact accurate. The bill also recognises the impact of the 2011 floods and takes important and timely steps to implement the recommendations set out in the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry.

This bill acknowledges the important work of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority in rebuilding vital community infrastructure. The bill will ensure that the tenure of the authority is extended by lengthening the expiry date of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011 to 30 June 2014. The authority will then cease in line with the government's previous commitment.

The bill also amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Disaster Management Act 2003 to implement specific recommendations of the report of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. These amendments provide the issue of temporary emissions licences to allow for temporary discharges as part of the response to an emergency event. This bill helps the mines mitigate risk through provisions made for emergency releases in times of flood.

The implementation of this bill is timely with Queensland now entering its wettest part of the year and the increased potential for flood events. The amendments to this bill create a fair balance between economic and environmental imperatives by allowing more flexible decision making in times of extreme flood events like those seen in early 2011. Should a flood event like 2011 occur again, this bill will mean $2 billion could be kept in the Queensland economy through the granting of temporary emissions licences instead of lost production. I stress that the government will take the issuing of these permits extremely seriously. Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In the case of mine water releases, these would be assessed against the mine's ability to meet strict environmental and water-quality standards and demonstrated levels of dilution.

The committee—and I chaired the public meetings—made 20 recommendations. We have already heard from the Deputy Premier tonight that he has accepted the vast majority of those recommendations. I would just like to speak to a couple of those.

We did hear from interested parties, in particular local governments, about having an additional briefing from the department with regard to priority development areas. They were also concerned that the MEDQ could appoint a local government representative, they were concerned who that representative might be and they were concerned whether local councils then had the authority to delegate that responsibility to somebody else within their organisation. Had the member for South Brisbane bothered to read the amendments that the Deputy Premier is proposing to move she would know that those recommendations have been accepted. The Deputy Premier will be moving amendments to that effect.

There was quite a bit of concern raised by proponents that, where they may have already entered into an environmental impact study, the new legislation might prevent them from moving forward with that study because the legislation actually requires that they start the environmental impact statement under the provisions of this legislation. The committee recommended that the minister have a look to see whether it was appropriate if somebody had already proceeded through the majority of an environmental impact study that they be allowed to have that as their starting point under this legislation. I am glad to see that the Deputy Premier has accepted that recommendation and an amendment will be moved in that regard.

The member for South Brisbane raised the issue of advertising under the provisions of the Economic Development Bill 2012 and the fact that the Coordinator-General was not required to advertise anymore. We have already heard from the Leader of Government Business and the Premier

on numerous occasions that the government is moving forward with an e-data system. I would suggest to the member for South Brisbane that all of this information will be available on the internet. It will only take someone to have a look at that and keep an eye on that. I am sure they can subscribe to get notification.

We all know that our newspaper circulations are dwindling and that it is no longer appropriate for these sorts of advertisements to be placed in newspapers. I would suggest to the member for South Brisbane that she is living in the past. It is time to come into the future. The future is emails. The future is e-data. That is what this government is proposing.

A government member interjected.

Mr HART: Yes. I am not sure whether they are on the NBN or not, but she can talk to her mates about that.

The member raised the issue of the term 'emerging conditions'. Again, had she bothered to read the amendments that are proposed to be moved by the Deputy Premier—and I think he covered this quite well in his speech—she would be aware that the government is changing the wording so it reads 'emergency and applicable event'. I think that fixes all of the issues that the member for South Brisbane raised. It is really only a matter of reading the amendments to get on top of exactly what it is that we are talking about here.

The member for South Brisbane attended our public meeting on 9 November. She quite clearly asked questions that she thought were applicable—very green questions. One of those was directed at the QRC and related to the notice they had of this bill and how long they had had the bill. Then she stood in this place and told us that the QRC were the only people who were in fact notified in advance. I can tell members from firsthand experience that they were the only ones that she asked that question of. That is why she got that answer. The record of the meeting will show that they were the only ones that brought that up because they were the only ones she asked that question of.

I think the member for South Brisbane also raised the implication that this government was looking at individuals and their economic circumstances with regard to our temporary emissions licence proposal. The committee did consider all of this. Broadly speaking, we would like to see the total impact on Queensland taken into account when any of these sorts of things are considered. The Deputy Premier again has considered that and will be moving amendments to make sure that the bill does not refer to any individual but refers to the whole of the state and to any economic impact that that might have on the whole of the state.

I will just raise one last point because I have been talking for quite a while. The member for South Brisbane mentioned the 24-hour period. It was discussed quite heavily in the committee and at our public meetings. We really need to think about what happened in 2011 and the flood event that we had, the amount of water that fell from the sky and the way that changed things. Over a 24-hour period things can change pretty dramatically. I suggest to the member for South Brisbane that it is no good sitting on our hands for 24 hours and just waiting to see what happens. If we do that, we could all end up underwater. Under the previous Labor government, this state very nearly ended up underwater, both financially and in every other fashion.

I thank the members of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee and our staff—Kathy Munro, Bernice, Margaret, Mary and Rhia—for their input, and I thank the people who came along on the 9th and gave us very valuable evidence. I think the committee deliberated over a lot of those things. It is a bit of a shame that the Labor Party did not have a bit more input into our recommendations. Had they been there when we made those recommendations perhaps they might not have put in the dissenting report, which really does not make a great deal of sense.

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.01 pm): I, too, rise to support the Economic Development Bill 2012—

Mr Bleijie: And correct the rubbish that came out of the member for South Brisbane.

Mr POWELL: And correct the rubbish that came out of the mouth of the member for South Brisbane for starters.

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find that remark personally offensive and I ask the minister to withdraw it, please.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! I ask the member to withdraw the comment.

Mr POWELL: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker. This evening I would particularly like to focus on those amendments which are being made to the legislation in my portfolio. The amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1994, which are made by chapter 8, part 2 of this bill, are necessary to implement recommendations of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry about licensing discharge of mine water and emergency powers. But I will come back to that in a moment.

At this point, I wish to correct a number of blatant mistruths and perhaps some more genuine misunderstandings and issues raised not only by the member for South Brisbane but by a number of other interest groups and certainly by the media in recent times. All we have heard from Labor in particular on this is more of the same old scare tactics and sensational headlines as they desperately

fight for relevance. It is fast becoming apparent that the member for South Brisbane wants to become the self-appointed Queensland chief conspiracy theorist. The next thing we know is she will be walking in here declaring that man never walked on the moon and that Elvis is still alive.

Mr Bleijie: Elvis is sitting in front of you!

Mr POWELL: My goodness, I take that back. Perhaps the member for Kawana, the Attorney-General, is up there also with the member for South Brisbane as Queensland's chief conspiracy theorist.

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the association with the member for Kawana offensive.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I, too, find the association with the member for South Brisbane offensive. I ask the honourable minister to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, members. Can we just make sure that points of order are genuine points of order. It is a little light-hearted. It is probably good to have a little light-heartedness, but I am very concerned that the minister has the call and has the opportunity to be heard. I call the minister.

Mr POWELL: For the safety and health and wellbeing of the Attorney-General, I withdraw. But I do want to be clear: the member for South Brisbane has gone out there seeking a conspiracy and has now made an attempt to manufacture one out of nothing. Let me be clear: the Queensland Resources Council has been approaching the previous government trying to address water in mines. They made a lengthy submission last year to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry regarding water in mines. They spoke to me as the shadow minister for environment late last year regarding water in mines. They made an election statement asking both parties to address water in mines. And in the first meeting that I had with Michael Roche from the QRC in April this year they raised the matter of water in mines.

But let me be clear: what we are talking about tonight does not deliver what the member for South Brisbane has somehow manufactured in her brain. What we are talking about tonight is this government taking the necessary steps to reduce the risk of a major environmental incident in the event of another flood. Members in the House will well remember Ensham. Why did that occur? Because those on the other side put their head in the sand and failed to do anything. What did the Floods Commission of Inquiry do? It has asked us to bring forward legislation that meets the requirements to ensure that something like that does not happen again. But perhaps that is a little too simple. So let me be very clear about what actually does occur through these amendments this evening.

There are three very different tools in the Environmental Protection Act. Firstly, there are the emergency powers which permit an authorised person—in other words, an officer of my department—to take action or to issue an emergency direction which requires another person to take action. This is in response to a recommendation by the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry—the very same Floods Commission of Inquiry that the former member for South Brisbane, the former Premier, said that she supported 'lock, stock and barrel'. So my question to the member for South Brisbane, my question to those opposite, is: if you do not support these emergency powers, if you do not support the provisions in this bill, how then would you have delivered the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry 'lock, stock and barrel'?

These emergency directions are very limited—very limited—and can only be issued where serious or material environmental harm is threatened or where human health or safety is threatened and urgent action is needed. These powers can only be used in a true emergency situation. For the members representing the Fitzroy Basin, for the member for Rockhampton, let me repeat that again: these powers can only be used in a true emergency situation. As a result, the government did not support the committee's recommendation that the legislation require that the emergency direction must be confirmed in writing within an hour because it would risk diverting the skills of authorised officers away from essential response activities.

The confirmation of the direction is an issue that is best left to business rules and administrative processes which can build in the type of flexibility needed for an emergency tool. The committee also recommended that the legislation be changed so that only senior officers could direct the release of contaminants into the environment during an emergency. Again, this is an issue which is best addressed by business rules. Limiting the authorisation to only senior officers has the potential to restrict the ability of the officer who is on the spot.

The second tool, which has been confused with the emergency direction, is the new tool—the temporary emissions licence. This licence is not a direction by the department. Instead, the operator must make an application in writing—I want the member for South Brisbane to hear that again: in writing—and the authorised person must make a decision on set decision criteria. Written notice of the decision is then provided by either issuing the temporary emissions licence complete with conditions or giving notice of refusal. As part of an application for a temporary emissions licence, proponents would be required to provide information on any increased risks arising from additional discharges and the proposed monitoring and mitigation strategies to offset these risks.

While the decision criteria are limited, we are not walking away from our role as a strong environmental regulator. The criteria still include essential considerations such as the likelihood that the release will adversely impact the health, safety or wellbeing of another person and the likelihood of environmental harm being caused by the release.

In addition, to balance the quick decision time frame, the licence is fully flexible. It can be immediately amended, cancelled or suspended without receiving and considering submissions from the operator if, for example, downstream drinking water is adversely affected by the release. The tool is also designed to be in effect for only a short period of time, possibly as little as hours and for no longer than months. We are preparing guidance material and that material will be available on the department's website so that the department's decision can be anticipated by operators, concerned landholders and the community.

The third tool that we use in the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection around these matters is the transitional environmental program, which was used to authorise the release of water from mines during the recent flood emergencies. The Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry identified a number of concerns about the use of this tool for the emergency response. That is why we are introducing in this legislation the temporary emissions licence. This tool would not be used—that is, the TEP—for the immediate response to an emergency situation but is about the ongoing management of a site such as upgrading on-site water management infrastructure to ensure that the site is flood ready.

The legislative framework for the use of transitional environmental programs has not been watered down. It is as robust as ever. The other issue raised by the media is whether the water still in the mines as a legacy of the 2010-11 floods would be released under the new temporary emissions licence.

Mr Newman: Who did that pun? Is that deliberate?

Mr POWELL: The Premier would be very pleased to note that the short answer is no.

Mr Newman: It is no that it was a pun?

Mr POWELL: It is 'no'. The legislation was not introduced retrospectively and there is no intention to use the temporary emissions licence to allow mines to release legacy water held from previous floods. As the Deputy Premier and I have said in this House on a number of occasions, unlike those opposite who put their head in the sand and refuse to do anything, we are looking for a permanent solution to deal with mine water issues on an ongoing basis. We are committed to developing a rigorous, science based management system for salinity management that will sustain continued economic development while ensuring water quality. I give my commitment to the member for Rockhampton that his constituents in Rockhampton city will not notice any difference as a result of those discussions.

Let me also be clear that the discussions we had, despite the member for South Brisbane saying that there was no consultation with the Fitzroy Water Quality Advisory Group, meant that we got support from a range of stakeholders including landholders and the Conservation Council.

The amendments to the Environmental Protection Act are sensible changes which will permit realistic decisions to be made in response to an emergency. It is worth noting that, despite what the member for South Brisbane has said, this draft bill has been shared far more broadly than simply the QRC. It has gone to a range of groups including the Queensland Farmers Federation and the Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association. We have consulted broadly and we are delivering an outcome for Queensland.

Mr YOUNG (Keppel—LNP) (9.13 pm): I wish to thank the honourable minister for that clarification. I rise to speak in support of the Economic Development Bill 2012. As an election commitment, the Newman government is committed to the economic development of Queensland. This bill amends legislation administered under the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning portfolio. The bill establishes an economic development act and the role of the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to facilitate economic development for community purposes in Queensland and ensure priorities can be responded to in a timely manner.

The MEDQ will have a board of up to six members and be called the Economic Development Board and have powers to deal commercially in land, property and infrastructure. The board, chaired by the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, will also have the flexibility to appoint local representative committees on a case-by-case basis, allowing a mechanism for local government engagement in planning and development assessment activities to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland. The bill also allows the minister to sell surplus land at market value and to facilitate the grant of an appropriate lease under the Land Act 1994 for an undertaking that supports economic development for community purposes, and I do stress 'community purposes'.

To achieve this act, the bill will repeal the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 and integrate the powers and functions of the existing Minister for Industrial Development Queensland and the Urban Land Development Authority into one act. The bill also amends the South Bank Corporation Act 1989, with objectives to commence the process for the transfer of planning powers of the South Bank Corporation to the Brisbane City Council. Other objectives are to streamline the make-up of the South Bank Corporation Board, enable the South Bank Corporation to transfer a freehold interest of land and ensure there is no impediment to South Bank Corporation's entry into a lease of the parklands to the Brisbane City Council.

Other important amendments required to clarify and improve the powers of the Coordinator-General are to fast-track projects, streamline assessment and prevent proponents from misusing the intent of the Coordinator-General's statutory powers to promote their individual projects, diverting limited government resources and causing confusion to landholders and industry. This can be achieved by amending the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971.

The bill will also amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 by inserting provisions which allow holders of environmental approval to apply for a temporary emissions licence in response to an emergent event. This is a recommendation identified in the final report of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. The proposed temporary emissions licence will enable quick decisions to be made, and in the case of mine water discharges the main benefit is to take maximum advantage of passing flows to reduce the risk of damage to downstream habitat. Strict water quality management parameters will be met.

Another important recommendation from the Floods Commission of Inquiry is to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003 to enable the appointment of an officer of Emergency Management Queensland to coordinate State Emergency Service operations in extraordinary services. This will assist the cooperative approach between state and local governments, recognising that local disaster management is the cornerstone of disaster response. Whilst on the subject of disaster management, this bill will acknowledge the work of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority in rebuilding vital Queensland infrastructure by extending the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011 to 30 June 2014.

I wish to thank the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, its chair, Ted Malone, and the research officers for their work and comment on this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr HOLSWICH (Pine Rivers—LNP) (9.17 pm): I rise to offer a contribution to the debate on the Economic Development Bill 2012. I would like to start my contribution by commending the Deputy Premier for introducing this bill. The reason I commend the Deputy Premier is that what is contained within this bill epitomises the Newman government and sets it apart from other recent Queensland governments. The things that set this government apart from previous governments in this place in recent years is two things: common-sense decisions that have been brought forward in legislation and an ability to tackle the hard issues—hard issues that previous governments did not have the intestinal fortitude to tackle. It is apparent that they still want to have their head in the sand even whilst in opposition.

In my short contribution today I want to touch on one particular aspect of this bill, because it was an important issue and possibly one of the most contentious in this bill and I think it highlights significantly the differences between the opposition and the Newman government. I talk particularly of the issue of temporary emissions licences, TELs. This bill looks to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to allow a TEL to be granted in emergency situations, allowing for the release of water from mines during an emergency event in a way that balances environmental outcomes and economic considerations. I would surmise from the member for South Brisbane's contribution tonight that balancing these different priorities—environmental outcomes and economic considerations—is not something that is particularly high on the priority list for the opposition. It seems to be interested in green extremism at the expense of all else.

This particular issue of legacy water in mines and water in mines from flood events was put in the too-hard basket by the former Labor government for way too long. Their plan, it would seem, was to have no plan, to let the water just sit in mines and not do anything with it because they could not bring themselves to make a decision. Leadership requires the ability to make tough decisions, and that was simply something the former government could not bring itself to do. So, as a result, we see mines across Queensland today that are still having to deal with the ongoing aftermath of the 2010-11 floods. Whilst I acknowledge that this bill does not address those legacy issues, it does assure that in future flood events there will be a clearly defined plan and process to be followed to ensure mine water can be released in the safest possible manner.

On issues of balancing environmental and economic considerations, it is interesting to note that opposition members seemed to assert during the committee deliberations that economic considerations of mining companies or the broader economy should not be a huge consideration in these decisions and that environmental considerations should trump all else. I would suggest that that attitude is one of the

reasons they left our state in the debt and deficit mess that our government inherited from them earlier this year. The former government, as has been evidenced many times over, was one that was captive not to those with genuine environmental concerns but to the extreme green fringe. I have no problems with those who have concerns about the environment—I share those concerns myself—but when you pander to the extreme green fringe then you are entering dangerous waters.

When you look at the economic impact of the 2010-11 floods on Queensland you see there was a loss of $5.7 billion in gross state product for the year ending June 2011 and a significant reduction in mining royalties for the state government. What it showed is that, when you put extreme green views ahead of all else, when you fail to take legitimate and economic considerations into account and when you fail to make decisions at all, you put the state's economy in a precarious position, and we cannot afford to do that. The Floods Commission of Inquiry recommended that action be taken on these issues, and the Newman government is pleased to be acting on those recommendations.

It appeared from the member for South Brisbane's speech tonight that she and her speechwriter must not have read many of the amendments because a number of the issues that she mentioned were actually covered in the recommendations, and I thank the minister for the environment for pointing out a few of those things tonight. She seemed to be full of conspiracy theories and full of condemnation, but do you know what the member for South Brisbane was not full of? She was not full of answers, she was not full of amendments and she was not full of constructive input. It was green extremism at the expense of all else.

If my memory serves me correctly, when we sat in this chamber for the public hearings, one of the environmental groups tabled a submission to the committee—as they had not had time to submit that beforehand—but from what I saw the member for South Brisbane already had a copy of that submission. The member for South Brisbane wants to stand in this place and suggest that we are beholden to particular interests, but I would suggest that there is extremism happening that she is not willing to acknowledge.

I would like to thank the Deputy Premier for accepting many of the recommendations of the committee and particularly for taking on board recommendation 14, which is one I want to point out briefly. It changes the word 'emergent' to 'applicable'. Whilst it might seem like a very minor change, this change will hopefully eliminate any confusion that is caused by the use of terms 'emergent' and 'emergency' in different parts of the bill.

I realise that I have not touched on much of this bill tonight, and it is quite a diverse bill. I want to pay tribute to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee and the committee secretariat for the work that went into the committee stage of this bill. Whilst it might have been a tight time frame that the committee was working within, we still received 22 written submissions and had very positive and productive public briefings and hearings. I believe we have provided a strong set of recommendations for consideration, and again I think this is shown by the fact that many of these recommendations have been taken on board.

I particularly want to place on record my thanks to our outgoing committee chair, the member for Mirani. As a newcomer to this place this year, I have been consistently impressed by the leadership of the member for Mirani and the way he has guided the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee. Whilst he will be missed from our committee, our loss is a huge gain for Queensland's emergency volunteers, and I wish him well in his new role as assistant minister.

As I said at the outset, this is an important bill for Queensland. It is about getting our state back on track. It is about building a better Queensland. I am pleased to be part of a government that is actually putting up answers and not burying its head in the sand. I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.

Ms MILLARD (Sandgate—LNP) (9.25 pm): I rise today to thank our Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning for commending to us the Economic Development Bill. I also acknowledge the committee chair, committee members and the secretariat. Not only do I support this bill but I also wholeheartedly support the resulting creation of Economic Development Queensland to assume single-entity status under the jurisdiction of the newly termed Minister for Economic Development Queensland, or MEDQ. Not only will the MEDQ have the ability to deal commercially in land, property and infrastructure to encourage economic and community development simultaneously but I note it will take over the planning and development functions of the Urban Land Development Authority in order to achieve a more comprehensive approach to development in our state. Importantly, provisions of the bill will be activated in circumstances of market failure, complexity or where local government or industry requests assistance.

The new MEDQ will establish local representative committees as appropriate and where local government clearly has a role in planning and development processes. While the ULDA must be commended for the impressive work it has achieved—for example, in areas of my electorate such as Fitzgibbon Chase—this streamlining of functions, fully utilising councils' development expertise where called for, does make perfect sense.

Local representative committees will work with the MEDQ within priority development areas within a streamlined framework, where this clearly enhances development potential. The identification of priority development areas, or PDAs, will bring development to the market quickly where there are minimal adverse impacts on the local community and consistent with the local government's planning scheme for an area. This creates efficiency, utilises resources and eliminates waste—and that is what the LNP is about.

I commend also the fact that the bill will implement specific recommendations from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry report. I note the term 'emergency' will now be better defined and, with the allowance for temporary emissions discharges in response to emergencies, we will be better equipped to handle a future tragedy even as significant as the Queensland floods. The Economic Development Bill also seeks to clarify and streamline chains of command and management in emergency response. Whilst I would sincerely like to think that such events would never be repeated, nature cannot be controlled. What we can control is our responses and the way in which we learn from our mistakes. I am confident this bill demonstrates the government's responsive and willingness to learn from past mistakes.

Some of the other areas that this bill incorporates are as follows. It establishes the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority. It amends the South Bank Corporation Act 1989. It clarifies and streamlines the powers of the Coordinator-General. It recognises the work of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and so much more.

I support the Economic Development Bill in its objectives of taking a strategic and streamlined approach to economic development in Queensland. Economic development in this context is not presented as a stand-alone phenomenon driven by numbers with the goal of benefiting a mere subsection of Queensland's population. More importantly, it takes a comprehensive approach to equipping us for a four-pillar economy, where building structures go hand in hand with building communities. The Economic Development Bill, if enacted, is a successful illustration of government coordination and local community development at all levels through strategic targeting. No longer will development happen in silos with narrow benefits. This bill paves the way for all Queenslanders to reap the benefits. I support the bill.

Mr BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (9.29 pm): The Economic Development Bill was introduced into the parliament by the Deputy Premier as essentially a procedural bill. Unfortunately, and despite assurances, elements of the bill have raised serious concerns with me as the member for Rockhampton. I am particularly focused on the provisions of the bill dealing with mining company wastewater discharges into the Fitzroy Basin. Government ministers have repeatedly couched this element of the bill as a response to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry final report. I contend that the bill goes well beyond any of the recommendations provided by the inquiry. The State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee reflected on these concerns within its report. It stated—

> The very limited consultation in the development of this Bill has given rise to the large number of issues, both significant policy issues and technical issues ...

The committee also said—

> In the time allowed by the House, the committee has not been able to give adequate consideration to many of the very detailed issues raised in submissions ...

In light of the committee's comments I cannot reconcile the notion that this is a procedural bill. I doubt that any member of the committee, if asked freely and honestly, would actually believe that, given the substance of their report, this is a procedural bill. To go out and provide draft legislation to the Queensland Resources Council for feedback and input but not to the likes of Rockhampton Regional Council nor apparently AgForce, the Farmers Federation or the Capricorn Conservation Council, to name but a few, is a disgrace. I have heard this evening that the minister had circulated a consultation plan prior to the presentation of this bill. If so, I invite him to table it this evening along with the names of the people he consulted prior to the bill being introduced into this House. I would like to know who has been consulted on this bill prior to its tabling in the House. So take that one away!

People should be rightly worried about the way this government has gone about this and about the consultation process in general, particularly in light of what the committee has said. It is not just me criticising the government; it is also the government's own members of the committee. As the committee report at page 4 sets out, the consideration of a bill by the parliament—being them—should not be seen as being part of the government consultation process. The government's consultation process on this bill has been grossly inadequate. This is where half the problems originate in the first place. This was a committee report dominated by government members. On a number of occasions the government has suggested that no secret deals were done with miners. Again, I ask it to table the consultation program for the bill. This has been asked repeatedly.

The mines minister refused to even answer questions at estimates about this issue or give any details because discharges from mines belong to the environment minister. I find it very hard to believe—and nobody living in the real world would consider this possible—that this bill and the opinions

underpinning it have not been extensively discussed among the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, the mines minister and the environment minister. That is common sense and any denial of that is just unbelievable. Despite the denials from all quarters, it was interesting to note that at the public hearing held on this bill comments were made by the Resources Council representative. She said—

Queensland Resources Council did see a draft of those sections of the bill before it went to the Parliament.

She went on to say that there are a couple of issues regarding consultation. You bet there are a few issues with consultation as far as this bill is concerned! Firstly, the evidence clearly demonstrates a detailed and perhaps covert working relationship between this government and the Queensland Resources Council leading up to the introduction of this bill, and that relationship was exclusive and existed prior to the presentation of the budget. By definition this demonstrates who is the key stakeholder for this section of the bill as far as the government is concerned. It certainly was not, and is not, the people who live downstream and who have no choice but to take the water. They should have been the first people to be engaged, not the last as part of some retrofit to cover people's backsides. The Resources Council said that in their view there are a couple of issues with consultation. They stated—

One is that we would have liked to have seen other stakeholders consulted to a greater degree because it would have avoided some of the concern that has occurred afterwards.

Whacko! Even the miners get it. What is the matter with this government? Even vested interests have a greater sense of balance when it comes to dealing with appropriate and rightful stakeholders. I do acknowledge some of the late efforts of the Deputy Premier to engage key regional stakeholders on this broader issue, but this should have been front-end loaded and not given the appearance of being an afterthought.

I must commend the work of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, particularly the outgoing chair, the member for Mirani, and the new chair, the member for Gympie. Given the evident limitations associated with this piece of legislation and the time frames, the committee has certainly done its very best to provide the considered opinion to this House. However, the committee's report does not address the issue of the mandatory 24-hour time frame for consideration of a request for a temporary emissions licence. Once again, the government has tried to hide behind the Floods Commission of Inquiry report. That report does not say anywhere that it should be a mandatory 24-hour time frame for consideration of temporary emissions licences. What the flood report does say is—

Quick approvals would be required, some in less than 24 hours, to respond to a particular rainfall forecast.

This does not suggest that every approval should occur within the 24 hours, regardless of whether a proper assessment of the impacts on residential water supplies or other downstream users has occurred. The Queensland Resources Council has advised the committee that the cumulative effects on other water users cannot always been assessed within 24 hours. The LGAQ has said that the time frame will be a stretch for consulting with local government to ensure the protection of water supplies. In their submission, the Fitzroy Basin Association also expressed concern about this time frame. They said—

FBA submits that 24 hours is too short a period for the administering authority to properly consider the current environmental conditions and the potential impact that a temporary emissions licence will have, and that once impacts are detected that necessitate a change or cancellation of a TEL, it is already too late for remedial action as the damage has occurred.

The Capricorn Conservation Council said in their submission—

A 24 hour turnaround does not allow the administering authority sufficient time to properly assess an application.

The opposition also shares these widely held concerns. We call on the government to listen to the members of its own committee and stop hiding behind the Floods Commission of Inquiry report. For the Deputy Premier's benefit, I point out that the recommendations do not go beyond an event of a flood and are specific to recommending the relaxation of temporary emissions licences when there are large amounts of water flowing past a mine so great that the contaminated water is diluted to safe levels. It is not about allowing the discharge of contaminated water during periods when there is no flooding occurring. However, the new definition of 'emergent event' as per the amendments seems to set out circumstances that allow this. I imagine it would allow any officer in the department to verbally authorise a temporary emissions licence with no written follow-up, no proper assessment of impacts on nearby water supplies and with the economic impacts of various stakeholders being considered but not those of the downstream users.

In summary, this bill does not represent the implementation of the flood commission's recommendation. It goes further and seeks to advantage a particular stakeholder to the possible detriment of others. This stakeholder was given preferential treatment in terms of the consultation leading up to the introduction of the bill as well as preferential treatment regarding the body of the bill. I oppose certain sections, particularly those relating to the expansion of instances where temporary emissions licences can be issued as the net effect of that has not been proven.

Finally, the problems associated with this issue come down to one thing: a failure to have a thorough consultation plan in the development of the bill. Perhaps if consultation 101 had been approached in a different manner, the government might have got a different result. Ultimately, the government should stop mucking around with getting rid of wastewater and start treating it on site.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (9.38 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Economic Development Bill 2012. The way this government carries on with its endless spin and rhetoric one would think that the economy was in recession. Queensland's economy is currently growing at four per cent, ahead of the nation. The biggest risk to growth in this state is this LNP government. Even the LNP's own budget papers state that their savage cuts will contribute to the economy slowing next financial year to a weaker result than was recorded under Labor last financial year. As I outlined yesterday in this parliament, the Commonwealth Bank economics research team has made an assessment that this government's budget cuts will weigh on the economy over the years to come.

This is just another voice against this government when it comes to management of the economy and in particular this legislation. And there is another voice—the voice of someone who once invested in and believed in this government. Of course, we all know who I am referring to. It is Professor Clive F Palmer. Professor Palmer has indicated today that he will take legal action against this bill. He said—

It means that the Government will have the power to take away State Significance status from projects leaving no right of appeal, making sovereign risk worse than any country in the world.

He went on further to say—

I think Queenslanders need to be very concerned about this legislation and the fact that it is being rushed through so quickly before anybody has a chance to understand it fully.

And the Deputy Premier says that this is just about process. What a laughable statement. Professor Palmer went on further to say—

The Bill is supposed to be about promoting economic development, but because it has not been done properly it only undermines investment and creates uncertainty.

While I do not have access to legal advice that Professor Palmer has to assess this statement in depth, I wholeheartedly agree with his sentiments about the lack of consultation. What the Deputy Premier fails to understand is that if you do not properly consult you will only create legacy issues and uncertainty. Neither of these outcomes is conducive to economic growth. I thought the Deputy Premier would have learned from this mistake the first time, when the submissions to the committee made it blindingly obvious that this is more than a process bill, but he has not. Instead, the Deputy Premier has put forward a series of amendments at the 11th hour with no opportunity for the committee to consider them—amendments that disregard many recommendations from the committee.

There has been no refinement of the scope in this bill for declaring priority development areas. This is a concern raised by the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Council of Mayors (SEQ), who both point out in submissions that it is inconsistent with the LNP's election agenda of re-empowering local government. It is a little like the farce that dashed expectations right across the state when it came to deamalgamation. The LNP promises one thing and delivers another. There are so many councils disappointed with the LNP and what it promised before the election. It is disgraceful.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr PITT: You broke your promise, Deputy Premier. You broke your promise and now you've got to lie—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ruthenberg): Order!

Mr PITT: You made your bed and now you have to lie in it. You are just going to have to put up with it. These powers will provide a broad scope for the corporation sole, known as the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, to overrule local government planning schemes—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, order.

Mr PITT: The dark horse has fired up—and to remove appeal rights under the Sustainable Planning Act. The Minister for Economic Development Queensland, not to be confused with the portfolio held by the member for Callide, provides powers much broader than for urban development areas under the Urban Land Development Authority Act. The previous government's legislation specifically restricted powers to the development of affordable housing. The previous legislation, as far as I am aware, did not include powers to acquire land that the Minister for Economic Development Queensland has in this bill. These powers go much, much further and there has been no evidence provided—

Mr Seeney: How?

Mr PITT: You have had your go, Deputy Premier. It is my turn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mulgrave, please address your comments through the chair.

Mr PITT: The Deputy Premier has had his turn. He is going to have to sit there and listen to what the opposition has to contribute to this debate.

These powers go much, much further, and there has been no evidence provided of how they will support economic growth. For all the talk of consultation with local government, there is no requirement in this bill for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to consider the outcome of consultation with local government in the decision to declare a priority development area. This is merely saying, 'We will legislate to consult,' but nothing further. The Urban Land Development Authority Act at least, at section 11, required a minister to consult with local government about a revocation or reduction of an urban development area and required that it be considered in making a decision.

Labor left private infrastructure investment in this state at record levels. The Deloitte Access Investment Monitor in March found that there were $102.9 billion in projects underway in Queensland when Labor left office, with another $91.7 billion in the pipeline. Back then we had an unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent and there were 26,600 more jobs in the Queensland economy. The Deputy Premier has provided no evidence that these priority development areas will increase gross state product or set new records of private investment. All we get from the Deputy Premier is more 'don't you worry about that' statements.

I also found it a bit curious that this bill changes the title of 'significant projects' to 'coordinated projects'. The justification provided is that it allows proponents to present their project to investors as more advanced than it actually is. To me this seems a bit incongruous with the Deputy Premier's talk of growing the economy and attracting foreign investment.

The legislation also curiously removes matters for consideration for the Coordinator-General in declaring a coordinated project. These include the potential effect on relevant infrastructure, employment opportunities, the level of investment and strategic significance of the project. This will lead to fewer projects being declared coordinated projects. The department advised—

The intention of the amendment is to ensure that only projects that are regarded as truly significant, are consistent with government policies and plans and are likely to happen are declared.

While I understand the need to support only projects that are viable or likely to proceed, there has not been any evidence of the existing criteria leading to nonmeritorious projects being declared of state significance. There has been no evidence provided to support the removal of these matters of consideration for the Coordinator-General in declaring a coordinated project. Nor has there been any acknowledgement of the committee's recommendation that public notification requirements for draft terms of reference for an EIS are being removed. This removes the ability for stakeholders to engage early in the EIS process.

The criticisms of this bill come from all quarters—from AgForce and the Farmers Federation, from local governments and from environment groups. The concerns raised are genuine and they should be listened to, much like the concerns of some of the government backbenchers in this parliament. To conclude, when the Deputy Premier introduced this legislation he said—

It is very appropriate that this bill not spend a long time before the committee. It is not a bill that requires those types of examinations. It is not a bill that requires the detailed public submissions and detailed opportunities for public input that some of the other bills that are currently before the House do.

What a laughable statement. Not only is the Deputy Premier wrong; he failed to learn his lesson. If the Deputy Premier were genuine about listening to anyone but himself he would refer his amendments back to the committee for proper consultation and consideration. But this Deputy Premier will not listen. He will not listen to his own backbench or the recommendations of the committee, let alone the concerns of Queensland's agricultural industry, local community groups and certainly not the opposition. The opposition will not be supporting this legislation. It strips away community and local government appeal rights. It is ill-considered, has been pushed through with minimal consultation and has the potential to create a perception of sovereign risk.

Mr PUCCI (Logan—LNP) (9.46 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Economic Development Bill 2012. This bill is primarily a process bill that seeks to amend legislation administered in the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning portfolio to assist government to drive economic development in Queensland. At its core is a re-emphasis on supporting, facilitating and fast-tracking economic development in the state by refining and improving existing processes.

This bill will repeal the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 to establish a single Economic Development Act. By integrating and modernising key provisions of these acts, the bill will enable particular developments to be fast-tracked to meet the government's priorities for economic development and development for community purposes. This bill intends that the activities under the bill will be focused on intervention in circumstances of market failure, complexity or where local government or industry requests assistance.

This bill establishes the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, MEDQ, a corporation sole with the ability to deal commercially in land, property and infrastructure, to encourage economic development and development for community purposes. The bill also establishes the Economic Development Board. Operationally, the work of the board will be carried out by a departmental commercialised business unit called Economic Development Queensland within the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Both the Economic Development Board and the commercialised business unit Economic Development Queensland will exercise functions of the MEDQ under instruments of delegation. The Economic Development Board has a specific function to ensure the MEDQ adopts best-practice corporate governance and financial management and accountability arrangements. This board and Economic Development Queensland sit within a government department and therefore remain subject to the same scrutiny and constraints of public sector agencies.

This bill provides that any provisional priority development areas that are declared will cease to be such a declared area after three years. The bill also allows for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to, before that three years expires, approve an amendment of the local government's planning instrument to provide for land in the provisional priority development area. This ensures that we have responsive and contemporary planning for our communities.

This bill also amends the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. This amendment will clarify and improve the powers of proponents from misusing the intent of the Coordinator-General's statutory powers to promote their individual projects, sometimes diverting limited government resources and causing confusion for landowners and industry.

These amendments will include the renaming of significant projects to coordinated projects to remove any perception that they have an approval or level of state support. It also goes further to adopt a more robust criteria for consideration of which projects should be declared as coordinated projects. It also allows for the renaming and a substantial restructuring process for consideration of an infrastructure facility of significance to provide greater certainty for landowners and provide a more logical sequence of planning activities. Another amendment to this act will provide a process for improvements to enable the Coordinator-General to streamline the environmental impact statement assessment process. The amendments to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act will assist the Coordinator-General to implement his 37 fast-track plans to ensure that the assessment process continues to be streamlined and reduce approval times by 50 per cent.

This bill will also see a shift in powers and responsibility from the South Bank Corporation to, where appropriate, the Brisbane City Council. The amendments to the South Bank Corporation Act will transfer the power to receive and assess development applications to the council from a date to be proclaimed. In general, current applications will remain with the South Bank Corporation to ensure existing applicants have certainty about the progress of their applications and management of their approvals. In addition, all planning powers in respect of sites 9A and 9B in the approved development plan, known as Southpoint, will remain with the South Bank Corporation while the current approval holder continues to hold an approval in respect of the site.

The South Bank Corporation Act will also be amended to confirm the validity of existing uses and buildings. To facilitate the transition of the role of the corporation, it is important that the responsible minister has flexibility to adjust the structure of the South Bank Corporation Board from time to time to reflect a shift in focus for the corporation—for example, from the roles of place manager, developer and landowner towards winding down. The majority of land within the corporation area is owned in freehold by South Bank Corporation. Both residential and commercial occupiers in general hold long-term leases of their units or buildings. The South Bank Corporation Act contemplates and supports these arrangements. By empowering the South Bank Corporation to dispose of a freehold interest in land with the responsible minister's consent, land and buildings can be disposed of at any time. The ability to dispose of a freehold interest in land provides government with the opportunity to sell corporation real property assets, with proceeds used to reduce corporation debt to Treasury.

This bill is about planning for the future. It is about cutting red tape, empowering local councils and driving the economic development of our state into the next decade. Through a strong economy investing in the development of our infrastructure, our broader community will reap the rewards. This will no doubt enhance the employment opportunities and utilisation of local resources.

No greater development can be seen than our state's long-term investment in the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. This development, supported by the establishment of the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority, will see the state government support the intensive build-up to the games in 2018. This commitment, as mentioned before, will deliver many opportunities for employees and employers throughout the south-east. I hope that the many businesses and organisations within my electorate of Logan will seize this opportunity to not only build their business but also participate in a once-in-a-lifetime event.

I am proud to support this bill and the steps it will take to support the economic development of our great state. I also want to commend the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, the Assistant Minister for Planning Reform and their ministerial staff for their work on this legislation. I commend this bill to the House.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (9.53 pm): I rise to speak on the Economic Development Bill because it is a critically important piece of legislation in relation to the state. The community that I represent has been party to significant economic development, significant land acquisitions and compulsory acquisitions and it should be remembered in this chamber that any of that occurring in a person's life is disruptive and traumatic. Certainly, the limitation of the disruption and trauma is in great measure limited by the people who are involved in the consultation, their humanity and generosity of spirit. This bill covers a great deal of issues and in 10 minutes I certainly will not be able to deal with all of it.

The committee in its report talked about the limited consultation in the development of the bill and states that that has given rise to a large number of issues. I am sure that there is disquiet in the community and amongst instrumentalities and organisations when dealing with these sorts of powers. They are intrusive and I understand that the Deputy Premier said that it is a process bill—I believe those were his words—but in a fairly short look at the bill it does have the potential to impact on landowners and communities quite significantly, so it is important that proper consultation occur. That also applies in relation to development of projects in a region, particularly the major projects that under this bill the MEDQ will be looking out for. The committee notes—

The primary planning legislation in Queensland is the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*. The purpose of the MEDQ, like the ULDA before it, is to 'carve out' from the general planning scheme, land to be developed for the specific purpose of progressing the state's objectives of economic development and development for community purposes. It is the 'special' nature of approved PDAs—

priority development areas—

that warrant them being treated under a different process from those that generally apply for developments.

The committee notes that SPA processes are being reformed with a view to increasing efficiencies for planning and development more broadly.

I would seek clarification as to whether the MEDQ will be covering only matters covered by the ULDA. The information that I gleaned from a reading of the bill was that the MEDQ would be covering much greater projects than housing projects under the ULDA. If that is the case, the two cannot be equated. The ULDA only developed housing; it did not develop industry development areas and it did not develop major proponent works. It was housing only. If I have misunderstood the legislation, I am happy to accept that. But if the MEDQ is going to be dealing with major projects, it cannot be equated to the ULDA in isolation.

With regard to provisional PDAs, the bill's provision for provisional PDAs is new. The department advised the committee that investigated this bill that provisional PDA declarations are designed to apply in circumstances where there is an overriding economic or community need to start development quickly—and this is the key I believe—and where the proposed development is consistent with the local government's planning scheme. Over the past few years local governments have been noticeably excluded from development. They have lost their voice in great measure and the local government communities, at least in my area, have had to cover costs for major developments that they should not have had to, that the Coordinator-General should have better recognised in conditioning. If these provisional PDAs are only going to be declared where the proposed development is consistent with the local government planning scheme and in consultation with the local government, then I believe the community will be comforted by that process.

Also in relation to that same matter, the LGAQ raised a matter of conflict with regard to legal advice relating to the local government potentially being left with a shortfall providing infrastructure to a UDA property development, and I am assuming that the LGAQ is projecting that it could occur to PDAs or to developments under the MEDQ. The legal advice, however, that was provided to the department conflicted with that and the committee commented—

The committee believes that it is reasonable for local governments to be able to levy charges to recover shortfalls in the provision of infrastructure when local governments are not party to, and may not have input into, the infrastructure agreement between the MEDQ and the developer.

Unless that is allowed for, local governments and, by default, the local community will be left with costs that they should not have to bear. It is occurring in councils now—it has occurred in Gladstone Regional Council—where the Coordinator-General has not liaised well with local government. It has an advisory body status in the EIS process, but often its concerns and issues are not well translated into the conditioning.

So local councils are left to pay for infrastructure, sometimes outside of the development area but relating to the development area, and that by necessity means that local constituents are paying for industry development, and they should not be. So that liaison between council and the MEDQ—the approving agency—must be transparent and it must be alive to ensure that residents are not caught and that councils are not caught in that nexus.

I note that earlier there was some comment that the powers of the Coordinator-General had changed to enable the Coordinator-General to streamline the EIS process and approve short-term leases for land held by the Coordinator-General in state development areas. I think there are two state development areas in my electorate. They have received preliminary approval for light or heavy industries. So much of the preliminary work has been done. The process up home is that there is this underpinning EIS process and the industry has to do a site specific EIS, and that is appropriate, too. But the EIS process—even the terms of reference process—really still needs to have community input. Terms of references are now pretty well standard, and I acknowledge that. But the community has to have ownership of the process, otherwise they will not only feel alienated but also more readily object to the proposal because they do not have any ownership of the process at all.

I know that other members talked about getting up to speed, not relying on the local paper, and doing things electronically through the internet. Not everybody has access to the internet and not everybody is internet proficient. Many people in the community are comforted by being able to see what is happening and what comment opportunities there are through the local media—the local rag, the local paper. For the cost of the advertising in the local paper I think it begs the question why the community could not be involved in that EIS process fairly consistently.

In relation to the compulsory acquisition of land, the committee comment in the report states—

It is a serious and significant power to compulsorily acquire land.

During the term of previous governments third-party access powers were given. The government could acquire land compulsorily for a third party. That drew some concern from the community not only about the impact on them as landowners but also on the ability of the government to acquire land perhaps as rural land and then sell it as developmental land, making a huge profit. More importantly, the compulsory acquisition of land needs to be done sensitively. These are people who hurt. These are people who lose generational contact with this property. It has to be done sensitively. People who are sent in to acquire land need to have a personality to start off with and they need to be able to communicate compassionately with landowners. That has not always been the case and the fallout from that poor communication is a lot of pain.

I am going to run out of time before I even get on to the water release matters, which I will raise in consideration in detail, because they were raised with me. I have talked to the Hon. Andrew Powell, and he has answered my questions, but I would like that to be on the record. I will do that in the consideration in detail.

Through all of these changes it has to be remembered that people have to be considered. They have to be consulted and the dealings that the government and industry have with them have to be fair, transparent and equitable.

Mr DRISCOLL (Redcliffe—LNP) (10.03 pm): I am very proud to be able to rise tonight to speak to the Economic Development Bill 2012. As a member of the committee that assisted with some of the amendments that the minister has opted to take on board, I certainly want to thank and recognise the chair of the committee, Ted Malone, and the secretariat for their hard work and all the other members of the committee for the work that went into this legislation.

The bill establishes the Minister for Economic Development Queensland—or MEDQ—a corporation sole, as we heard, to replace the Minister for Industrial Development of Queensland. The thrust of this bill, and one which the Labor opposition seems to have some difficulty with, is ensuring that we see economic development in Queensland. As the member to proudly represent Redcliffe—an electorate that was neglected by Labor for many years—I know that economic development across this state is something that is critical to Queenslanders. It is about jobs, it is about opportunity, it is about growth that is sustainable for Queensland and it is about this government moving forward to ensure that those opportunities are assured and locked in for Queenslanders and that, under an LNP government, they are no longer neglected. Operationally, a new entity—the Minister for Economic Development Queensland—will assume responsibility for bringing developments to market under the guidance and direction of a board and the MEDQ.

Other aspects of this bill also establish the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority—a board that will work with the MEDQ through the Economic Development Board. Importantly, the powers and functions of the MEDQ will be utilised for the planning and development of the 2018 Commonwealth Games village and other venues. Again, that shows that this government is focused on tourism, growth and jobs and is about ensuring the future of Queensland and making sure that Queenslanders can be proud of this great state.

I must say that I have been absolutely amazed to hear some of the comments so far from the opposition members, who are feigning some sort of interest in the wellbeing and welfare of local councils in this state. What an absolute joke for anyone who sits on the Labor side of the House to even pretend to care about the interests of councils. On the other hand, this government is focused on making sure that there is a collaborative and cooperative approach with local government and state

government. I am sure that in the fullness of time this legislation will also show that cooperation at work whilst not missing out on those economic opportunities that the opposition so readily turned its back on when it was in government.

Other elements of this bill will put the government in a position to facilitate economic development and development for community purposes, particularly where there are identified and persistent market gaps. Again, this government is not shy to put forward legislation that will specifically generate growth and jobs. It is not shy to be for Queenslanders and to make sure that those opportunities that the LNP promised throughout the election campaign are delivered upon.

This government will continue to support economic development in Queensland. We proudly believe that Queensland is a great state. Under the LNP Newman government, we are focused on generating the opportunities that Queenslanders deserve. They are great opportunities for Queenslanders and we look forward to seeing more of them. I certainly commend this bill to the House.

Mr MINNIKIN (Chatsworth—LNP) (10.07 pm): I rise in this chamber to contribute to the debate on the Economic Development Bill 2012. I commend the Deputy Premier for his hard work and efforts in putting together such an essential piece of legislation that this state so desperately needs. It is certainly no easy feat to put together a bill that will be instrumental in rebuilding our great state of Queensland.

With the legacy of debt left by those economic illiterates sitting opposite the chamber and the struggling Queensland economy, this bill will most certainly get Queensland back on track. Queenslanders can rest assured that the Newman government is committed to fiscal responsibility without worrying about the waste that had occurred with the previous government of the day. It is time to introduce a bill that will assist Queensland to develop its economy to its full potential. The Economic Development Bill 2012 will help establish initiatives that will ensure that the Queensland economy has a step in the right direction.

It will mean that my constituents in the Chatsworth electorate will have faith that they have elected a representative who is part of a government that will deliver robust economic development. By building a strong economy in Queensland, we can ensure that we can keep the cost of living at a reasonable level—something that the previous government failed to do so miserably—to ensure that, most importantly, a solid economic foundation is left for our children instead of a cracking foundation of increasing debt.

It will ensure that this government is making sure that Queensland is really going places. The Newman government is committed to delivering on its election promises. The Economic Development Bill 2012 will amend legislation that is under the portfolio of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. It will ensure the creation of an Economic Development Act as well as the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, a corporation sole, to make economic development actually happen, instead of the typical hype and spin seen by the previous Labor government. The ALP produced great shiny coffee table brochures that promised the world but delivered little. Governments are judged by what they actually do deliver, not by what they continually promise with hollow rhetoric and never-ending spin. Not only will this corporation strive to achieve economic development, it will ensure that community development is not neglected.

The Economic Development Bill 2012 will also play an important role in the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. By establishing the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority, together with the Minister for Economic Development, this bill will assist with planning and development of the Commonwealth Games village and other supporting infrastructure. By reporting through the channels of the Economic Development Board, it will ensure that Queensland delivers the best games possible, showcasing this wonderful state to the world.

The Chatsworth electorate will play an important part in the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Some in this House might not be aware that the Belmont Shooting Range located in my electorate will be one of the host venues during the games.

Government members interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: I take all those interjections. Instead of building flashy new infrastructure, paid for with more debt, the Newman government is making great use of infrastructure that is—shock, horror!—already in place. That is far more practical than an indoor ski jump from the geniuses on the left.

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: I take the interjection from the Premier. Queensland will be on show in 2018 with the Commonwealth Games and I am proud that my electorate will have the opportunity to host a small number of events in our little patch of Queensland. That is why it is important to me, like my colleagues surrounding me in the chamber, to support wholeheartedly the Economic Development Bill 2012.

The creation of the corporation called the Minister for Economic Development Queensland will replace the Minister for Industrial Development Queensland. It means that a sole corporation will be in place to promote and make it easier for Queenslanders to participate in economic development. It will

streamline the processes to get infrastructure building again in this great state. By streamlining the planning processes it ensures that everyone knows that Queensland is well and truly again open for business.

With a background in property development, I know firsthand the red tape and duplication I suffered under the previous government. At times I often wondered why any sane person would want to develop and build in Queensland if all you were faced with was constant inefficient processes. As I have said in this House previously on many occasions, unlike this side of the chamber, those economic illiterates on that side, those seven soulless souls, know absolutely nothing about the real world of development, economics, terminal yields, capitalisation rates or internal rates of return. I may as well be speaking Martian! Time is money in the property development industry and the incompetence of the previous government was, in fact, costing businesses money. Holding costs that businesses simply could not afford, along with never-ending red tape, were driving people to invest their money elsewhere, certainly anywhere but in Queensland.

I wholeheartedly support the Economic Development Bill 2012 as I want to make sure the Newman government is able to make Queensland a far more attractive place for people to invest in economic development. With the Minister for Economic Development Queensland's powers derived from this bill, it will ensure processes are in place to deal with competing priorities when complexity hampers opportunity for development in Queensland to benefit all. It will ensure that gaps or situations where planning provisions are no longer sufficient are properly dealt with to ensure that an essential development is able to proceed from a business perspective in a very timely manner.

The Economic Development Bill 2012 will also make much needed amendments to the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. It will give much needed change to the processes that are required for infrastructure facilities of significance to be considered. With a background in property development and a masters degree in property economics, I am particularly pleased that the Coordinator-General will be tasked with streamlining the environmental impact statement assessment processes. In the previous government this pile of papers seemed to get higher, making it near impossible to progress without costly delays or red tape. I thoroughly commend this important bill to the House, and I congratulate the Deputy Premier for showing true strategic vision. Thank you.

Mr BOOTHMAN (Albert—LNP) (10.15 pm): My contribution will be far more modest than that of the member for Chatsworth which was very informative and well said. This bill is about building economic development in our great state of Queensland. It is about firmly placing Queensland as the state envied by all others. For too long our state has been focused on one section of our economy, a legacy left by the previous government. This new legislation is not about blame, it is about getting on with the job. Current economic conditions across the globe are precarious at best. We are continually buffeted by concerning economic news from around the world. No longer can governments afford to sit back and hope economic issues will automatically sort themselves out. These head-in-the-sand philosophies have crippled many a great nation and placed additional burden on taxpayers. Sound economic policy which creates economic development can no longer be ignored. Planning for tomorrow takes planning today.

The Economic Development Bill is a proactive approach to remove the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007. The functions of these two separate acts will be integrated into the auspices of the new Minister for Economic Development Queensland, or MEDQ. This will create improved operational efficiencies and facilitate bringing development to the market.

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of South Bank is Expo 88. It was famous across our great state. South Bank formed as a direct result of Expo 88, which certainly put Queensland well and truly on the map and made Brisbane an international city. I can still remember when Expo 88 first came to Brisbane. It was certainly a very exciting time in my youth. This bill amends the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 to transfer statutory planning to the Brisbane City Council. The bill also protects any existing approvals and also allows the transfer of interest in freehold land with the minister's consent. This will help the South Bank Corporation reduce debt by the sale of commercial premises.

The bill includes the establishment of the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority. This authority will report to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland and the MEDQ will assist the authority in relation to planning and development of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, something we are excited about in my electorate of Albert because, fingers crossed, we will have a couple of events held in the local Oxenford area.

This bill also amends the Disaster Management Act 2003. I am a very proud member of the State Emergency Service and I am deeply proud of the achievements of the State Emergency Service. For eight years I have been a member of this truly great organisation, an organisation that has touched so many lives throughout our great state. Before I talk about the amendments, I just want to say thank you to the Logan and Gold Coast SES units which fall within my electorate. Your service to the community will not be forgotten and everyone in this parliament and throughout Queensland certainly owes you a debt of gratitude.

The amendments to the Disaster Management Act 2003 focus on the FCoI report recommendation that the Disaster Management Authority be amended to give the chief executive of the Department of Community Safety the ability to appoint an EMQ officer to be an SES coordinator. The SES coordinator will be able to direct SES operations in the event of extraordinary circumstances, thus providing command and control arrangements above a local controller. A crucial aspect of this bill is to allow local disaster coordinators for disaster management within local government areas the ability to coordinate large scale activations whilst utilising their local knowledge. No-one knows a local area like the local disaster coordinator. They know the area, they know the landscape and they are on the front line. They know the resources that are in that area. It is plain logic to do that.

Mr Crandon: Sorry, did I put you off there?

Mr BOOTHMAN: Yes, you did, Mr Crandon. I thank the Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, and the assistant minister, Ian Walker, for this fantastic piece of legislation. This bill will be good for the electorate of Albert in respect of the Commonwealth Games. It will help to build a lot of economic development throughout the area. With the storm season upon us, the new legislation will be beneficial as in this area we are susceptible to supercells. The legislation will go a long way to coordinating local SES activities. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (10.22 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Economic Development Bill 2012. While the bill presented today is primarily a process bill, its aim is much larger than that. Its aim is to facilitate economic and community development within Queensland in good times and in times of disaster. I am proud to be part of a government that recognises economic development as a vitally important part of our state. Many of the processes in this bill will heavily support the regions and the four-pillar economy that we are so dedicated to building. The bill will equip us with the legislative tools necessary to identify and drive development projects that contribute to a strong and sustainable state economy.

Whilst there are many aspects covered in this bill, I feel compelled to talk about the benefits to local government, because I sat in this House and listened to the rot that was spoken by members on the other side of the House on this subject. The bill proposes to increase local government input into the planning and development of land within areas that have been declared priority development areas. The bill repeals the Urban Development Authority Act 2007, as that act did not explicitly allow for input by local governments. What a novel idea to have input by local governments! That is a fantastic idea of the Deputy Premier.

Our government empowers local governments and we listen to local governments. This bill will allow vital projects to get off the ground through the reduction of red tape. The bill also expands the role of local government in the planning and development of land in the priority development areas. The bill explicitly provides for consultation by the Minister for Economic Development Queensland with the relevant local government. This will ensure that local governments have a greater say in the planning and development of those areas within their communities. It allows for greater flexibility for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to delegate powers and functions to a local government directly or to a local government representative committee that may have local government membership.

Councils have seriously welcomed the Economic Development Bill. In front of me I have a letter from the Redlands City Council that states—

> Council commends the government for introducing this bill, which local government will see as a potential accelerant for stalled local projects.

It also states—

> The proposed legislation will be particularly welcomed by councils that have battled for years to get major projects off the ground.

The bill is designed specifically to deliver and facilitate economic development by creating the MEDQ, which will have the ability to deal commercially with land, property and infrastructure, which will encourage economic development and development for community purposes. I commend the Deputy Premier for his contribution to this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (10.25 pm): I have great pleasure in rising to support the Economic Development Bill and to congratulate the Deputy Premier on the measures contained in it. Firstly, I want to deal with some of the comments made by the member for Mulgrave, who has kindly come to join us up here to hear this firsthand. He said that this side of the House was overestimating, overexaggerating and overemphasising the problems facing the Queensland economy. I make the point that we are not doing so at all.

The Property Council of Australia puts out a quarterly summary of property sentiment around the country. Although I will not go into the detail of that sentiment around the country, needless to say the property and construction industries in this country are all concerned about the future and are all performing well under their potential capacity. One of the challenges facing this government is to ensure that those industries once again are given the confidence they need to contribute as one of the four

pillars of our economy. One interesting set of figures that the member for Mulgrave did not refer to is the Property Council survey of government performance. It is an interesting survey. I table a copy of the survey, to which I refer.

Tabled paper: Table in relation to government performance index, December quarter 2012 [1755].

To evaluate the government performance index for the Property Council survey, the question asked of the property industry was: is the state or territory government where you primarily operate doing a good job planning and managing growth? The interesting thing about the graph is the performance of this government since it took office. I will run through a few of the figures. Since the June quarter, when this government took office, through to the December quarter, the current quarter under consideration, the confidence index in New South Wales has risen four points; in Victoria, it has risen seven points; in Western Australia, it is steady; in South Australia, it has fallen two points—I think they only produced two lots last year; and in Tasmania, it has risen 10 points from minus 73 to minus 63, which is hardly what one would call tremendous ratings. The biggest growth and the biggest turnaround for the property industry's confidence in what the government is doing is in Queensland. In Queensland, when we took office the confidence index was minus 29; this quarter it is plus four, which is a turnaround of 33 points. That shows the confidence that the property and construction industries have in the Newman government, in our reliance upon the four pillars and in our absolute determination to ensure that the property and construction industries are given the support that they need. It is in that context that I want to speak about the Economic Development Bill. Many members who have spoken tonight have very assiduously gone into the specific provisions of the bill.

But I think it needs to be seen in the context of the total approach that this government is taking to ensure that the property industry is getting the support that it needs, that we are removing the unnecessary red tape—the unnecessary barriers to development—and that we are not casting care to the winds and still protecting what the community values and needs, that we are still protecting our environment but letting the property and construction industry get on with the job. I will remind the House of a couple of the measures that the Deputy Premier has brought to this House or has promulgated by regulation which are achieving just this effect.

The first of them is our temporary state planning policy which is planning for prosperity. As I have raised in the House before, this requires and enables local government and state agencies to ensure that economic growth is part of the planning decision process. Instead of having a raft of negative planning policies, all with the word 'not' in them, that have been brought in by the previous government, we have a balancing element—an element that says, as the Sustainable Planning Act itself says but has never been acted upon until now, that economic development must be an outcome of our planning system. Planning for prosperity ensures that when local governments are making their planning schemes and when state agencies are making decisions that economic development of our community is part of what the planning scheme delivers. That is a very important part of what we have done.

We have been able to bring through to the House the Sustainable Planning Act amendments. Those amendments are also there to ensure that we de-risk the planning process as best we can for the proponents of development within our communities—that is, those who are trying to get things done. Members will recall that the Deputy Premier's legislation does things at every stage of the planning process to ensure that the proponent is given a fair go in the process.

It de-risks the application stage. It takes away the technical things that can bring an application undone, even at the very end of the process—the properly made application issue, the state resource entitlement issue. It creates a single state planning concurrence agency that takes away the conflict we have had with state agencies all saying different things. Proponents have had to take their application around to a number of planning agencies instead of one. It creates a single state concurrence agency that will mean that this government speaks with one voice as to the issues it wants addressed in a planning scheme or in a planning application.

It also deals with the dispute resolution section of planning matters and ensures that the reintroduction of discretion as to costs gives some significant rigour to that process. At the same time, it will ensure that if a person goes to mediation they are not going to cop costs and, in fact, that the mediator may be able to judge and determine some cases with no implication as to cost. That is a tremendous advance within our system.

That brings us to this legislation—the Economic Development Bill. I would suggest that of all of the measures that the Deputy Premier has brought to this chamber this is the great sleeper. I am a bit concerned—and I have mentioned this to the Deputy Premier and others in the department—that the community has not yet realised the impact of this legislation. I hope that the speeches that have been made here tonight go out into the community and that people do realise what significant changes the Deputy Premier is making by virtue of this legislation. Many of them have been enumerated tonight.

The particular one that I want to concentrate on is the ability of the government to declare PDAs, particular development areas. This is a very different process from that which was used in the ULDA legislation where local governments had urban development areas thrust upon them. Under this

legislation, the priority development areas—the PDAs—will only be introduced after consultation with local government. So it is not going to be a matter of an arrogant state government forcing its planning wishes on to local government.

The Premier himself has said and this government has entered into an agreement with local government to ensure that there is cooperation, that things happen hand in hand and that things are not thrust upon and forced upon local government. This act will be the way forward in terms of allowing priority development areas in all sorts of areas, be it for affordable housing, be it for a city centre that needs rejuvenation, be it for a major development, be it for whatever economic interest is served by having development occur rapidly and with as little fuss as possible. This bill enables that to occur. This bill enables that to happen. It gives the Deputy Premier and his department the power to move forward in terms of priority planning areas which will benefit the state, benefit the state's economy and deliver for the four pillars that are so dear to the heart of the Newman government.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this legislation. I encourage the House to support it. I congratulate the Deputy Premier on the steps that he has taken to ensure that it has come to the House so quickly and that it completes what, I think, is a great set of planning initiatives that have been brought to the House in the first six months of this government. We can go to Christmas knowing that so much has been done in giving us a fresh start for next year.

Hon. JA STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (10.35 pm): I rise to join the debate on the Economic Development Bill 2012 introduced by the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning on 1 November 2012. As the Deputy Premier has pointed out, the bill combines the provisions of the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 into a single Economic Development Act that will establish the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, MEDQ, as a corporation sole, and the Economic Development Board, in place of the current Minister for Industrial Development Queensland and Urban Land Development Authority.

My particular interest is in what the bill achieves for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. This is a simple, sensible, coordinated approach to developing infrastructure for the games. My department collaborated with the Deputy Premier's department in the drafting of provisions for the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority, the CGIA, which will facilitate the planning and development of the games village, and other venues, by providing advice to the MEDQ and performing functions delegated to it by the MEDQ such as planning and assessment functions.

The directors-general of my department and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning will be members of the authority. The chief executive officer of the Gold Coast City Council and the chairperson of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation, GOLDOC, will also be members, subject to their appointment by the Governor in Council. The Governor in Council may also appoint other members with appropriate knowledge and experience. As I have said many times in this chamber, the Newman government is determined to deliver the best Commonwealth Games ever, and we will do this on time and on budget. This new authority will help us do just that.

We have just passed the one-year mark since the Gold Coast won the bid to host the games and preparations are on track. I would like to congratulate the board chairman, Nigel Chamier, and all those at GOLDOC for their efforts to date. Preparing for an event the size of the Commonwealth Games is a massive task. The Gold Coast Commonwealth Games will be the largest multisport event in Australia this decade. It will be the equal largest event in Asia Pacific, alongside the Winter Olympics in South Korea, and will involve a workforce of more than 1,000 people and a massive 15,000 volunteers.

Not only do we need to provide world-class facilities for the 6,500 athletes and 1,000 technical officials, but we must ensure we leave a lasting, positive legacy for the Gold Coast and Queensland. Without doubt, the largest infrastructure project of the games will be the development of the athletes village at Parklands. The business case for the village has recently been completed and I look forward to seeing the early works commence in 2013. The Gold Coast Aquatic Centre will also be upgraded, as I announced just weeks ago, two years early, in time for the 2014 Pan Pacific Swimming Championships.

Both of these developments will require a great deal of coordination and planning. I am very confident this new authority, under the guidance of the Deputy Premier, will provide the additional mechanism to ensure this happens. Specifications for these and other games developments will be provided by my department, in accordance with our obligations under the host city contract and other relevant requirements. Those specifications will be given to MEDQ through the CGIA so development can occur. This follows the government's sensible approach to organising other aspects of the games.

While my department is responsible for coordinating the overall games program, various other agencies and entities will play their parts. GOLDOC is organising the games event and police will be responsible for security. Transport and Main Roads, the Gold Coast City Council, the Commonwealth government and others will also play critical roles.

Upon passage of this bill, I look forward to working with the Deputy Premier in his role as MEDQ and the infrastructure experts in his department to plan and deliver the village and other games infrastructure on time and as efficiently as practicable. Honourable members, I am excited by the imminent commencement of the village and the aquatic centre upgrade, as they will contribute significantly to the Gold Coast economy and the end products will be something that will showcase the Gold Coast and Queensland to the world.

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (10.39 pm): I only want to speak for a short period of time as the former chair of the committee during its deliberations of the Economic Development Bill 2012. Firstly, I congratulate the members on the team that put together the summary in this committee report. I also thank and congratulate the staff of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee—Kathy Munro, who is the research director; Bernice Watson, who did most of the work in respect of this bill; Margaret Telford; Mary Westcott and Rhia Campillo.

This bill is a very significant bill that will be passing through the House tonight. It actually underpins economic development in Queensland. The way in which the bill is drafted will actually push forward development. We have been waiting for over 20 years for land to be developed in Moranbah, Blackwater and other areas in mining towns where the previous government sat on pieces of land and they were not developed for housing. Under this bill, we can now develop those blocks for housing in those areas where people have been paying up to $3,500 per week rent for a house.

I do not need to speak at length on the bill. I thank the team and thank the staff who put the summary together. I am sure that well into the future people will talk about this bill passing through the House tonight.

Hon. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.41 pm), in reply: I want to thank all of the honourable members who contributed to the debate here tonight. I recall that I said at the beginning of my second reading speech that I expected some conspiracy theories and some ill-informed and misleading contributions from the members of the opposition. Well, honourable members, they certainly did not disappoint us. What a load of rubbish that we heard from the members of the opposition—conspiracy theories that would do well with the confused folk who sit up in the back corner of this chamber. What a load of nonsense.

No matter how many assurances were given about those particular issues, they stood up and repeated them over and over again. No matter how many assurances I gave in the second reading speech, no matter how many times the points were made in the government, they were determined to continue on those same old tired lines about conspiracy theories, not to mention the absolute hypocrisy for the members of the Labor Party to talk about taking away the powers of local governments! It is difficult to sit here and think that anyone in Queensland can be so ill-informed about the history of this state and the history of the legislation that has passed through this House as to think that a member of the Australian Labor Party can come in here and stand up and talk about disenfranchising local councils or taking away the rights of local councils. It is absurd to the extreme.

I want to thank the members of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee once again for their examination of the bill. I noted in my earlier remarks that the Economic Development Bill 2012 is primarily a process bill. It is nevertheless important legislation that will refine and improve existing requirements and assist the government to drive economic development in Queensland and remove red tape.

I referred to the bill as a process bill because its main effect is to integrate the existing Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 and the entities that have carried out the functions under those two pieces of legislation. As detailed in the explanatory notes to the bill, the relevant government agencies were consulted during its development. This level of consultation is entirely appropriate for a bill that largely reframes procedural legislation and re-establishes and streamlines internal government arrangements.

To the best of my knowledge, the Industrial Development Act has operated without any fundamental issues for nearly 50 years—and the opposition did not point to any fundamental issues with the operation of that bill over the last 50 years—while the single most common complaint relating to the Urban Land Development Authority Act has been a lack of engagement with local governments under the former state Labor government when the powers and functions of that act were exercised. But of course members of the opposition did not mention that in their criticism of the bill tonight. As the member for Mansfield quite rightly pointed out, this bill requires a completely different approach.

Integrating the two acts, the Economic Development Bill modernises the provisions of the existing Industrial Development Act, expanding their scope beyond industrial land to enable the government to unlock and drive opportunities for economic development, together with opportunities to develop land, property and infrastructure for community purposes. When it comes to planning and development functions relating to the declaration of priority development areas, the bill mandates consultation with local governments, addressing the concerns of councils with the existing legislation—concerns that were ignored by the former government, concerns that were completely ignored by any of the members of the opposition in their contributions here in the parliament tonight.

It is understandable, in my opinion, that local governments did not trust the former Labor government. The Urban Land Development Authority Act was forced on them without consultation regarding urban development in their particular areas. However, this bill mandates consultation with local governments. It reflects this government's commitment to open dialogue with local governments and reflects our ongoing commitment to recognise the autonomy and the role that local governments play in their communities.

Noting the committee's recommendations about consultation with local government, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning has consulted with the SEQ Council of Mayors and the Local Government Association of Queensland about the bill. No new issues with the bill were identified to the department during these briefings that have not already been addressed.

I thank those opposite and the committee for their interest in ensuring adequate consultation is undertaken in developing good legislation. But at the same time I must stress how important it is that the limited resources of government are not deployed on consultation for consultation's sake or, as the former government did, consultation just so they could tick the box.

Before making any concluding remarks, I will address some of the points raised during the debate and by the committee. The member for South Brisbane was critical about how quickly the bill was progressed through the committee system. This is a bit rich given some of the occasions we have seen in this House when legislation was gagged and guillotined and legislation that had not even been to a committee! For the benefit of the member for South Brisbane, who has been in this place about five nanoseconds, it has only been in recent times that legislation went to the committees at all. Before then, legislation used to be brought in here and rammed through the House using the guillotine or the gag, which the member for Hinchinbrook was protesting so loudly, and quite rightly, about earlier tonight. That was the way the Labor Party did it. That was the way the Labor Party did it for years and years and years.

It has only been in very recent times—I think four or five months before the state election—that we had a proper committee system, and we were insistent in drawing up that committee system that the committees had the authority and the power to consider legislation. So, once again, how absurd is it, honourable members—how absurd, how ridiculously laughably absurd—that a member of the Australian Labor Party would come in here and talk about the short period of time for a bill to be referred to a committee? She knows absolutely nothing about what she is talking about. I can assure the House once again—and I can assure the member for South Brisbane and all the other conspiracy theorists over there—that there is no Machiavellian conspiracy here. There is no smoking gun. There is no grand conspiracy.

The member for South Brisbane is simply not right when she says there was no consultation on the draft bill, nor were the members for Rockhampton or Mulgrave who parroted her point over and over. It seems to have escaped the attention of those opposite that this is an omnibus bill. That means it is a bill with a number of different parts. Each of the parts were the subject of consultation with the appropriate stakeholders. So while the bill in its entirety was not the specific of broad consultation, specific components of the bill were the subject of consultation, each in their own area. For example, the amendments to the South Bank Corporation Act, which I did not hear mentioned a heck of a lot in the debate, were the subject of extensive consultation with the Brisbane City Council. The amendments to the Environmental Protection Act were the subject of consultation with the Queensland Resources Council as well as a substantial list of other stakeholders which, as is required, was detailed in the explanatory notes.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr SEENEY: Page 21, member for South Brisbane. Read the material. It is listed. For the benefit of the House, the other stakeholders named were the Australian Industry Group, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, the Queensland Farmers Federation, the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association, the Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of Queensland, the Local Government Association of Queensland and a range of government departments. What the member for South Brisbane has shown is that she simply did not understand the bill. She came in here with a speech that had been written for somebody else and stood up and demonstrated quite clearly that she did not understand—

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the imputation that I did not write my own speech personally offensive, and I ask the Deputy Premier to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! The member has found offence in the—

Mr SEENEY: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for South Brisbane has also shown that she has not understood the bill when she talked about the removal of the appeal rights that existed under the Urban Land Development Authority Act. There were no appeal rights in the Urban Land Development Authority Act relating to the declaration of urban development areas—the equivalent of

priority development areas in the new bill. There were no appeal rights under the legislation introduced by the former Labor government. These provisions were transferred across and there were no appeal rights for the priority development areas.

Concern has been expressed that moving the functions of the Urban Land Development Authority into the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning would remove the transparency and accountability that existed by having an authority with independence from government. I am able to assure all members that the bill will require the MEDQ, through the departments, to maintain all of the processes, all of the administrative and reporting functions of the ULDA including the need for the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, or MEDQ, to keep registers which must be available to the public via the department's website.

Transparency is also achieved through broad representation in advising and making recommendations to the MEDQ through the Economic Development Board established by the bill. As I said in my second reading speech, the board will be made up of four of the most senior public servants in Queensland. Exercising the functions of the MEDQ through the department will ensure that all of the accountability mechanisms applying to state departments apply to the exercise of these functions, including oversight by the Auditor-General of Queensland. Furthermore, it will firmly place responsibility for the performance of these functions with the responsible minister and the responsible departmental heads.

The member for South Brisbane has also accused the government of having a lack of regard for the environment, lacking concern for agricultural industries and for public health and safety when it comes to the release of water from the flooded mines under temporary emission licences.

Mr Powell: More conspiracy theories.

Mr SEENEY: As the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection says, it was an address based almost entirely on conspiracy theories—almost entirely on scary stories that had no basis at all.

The temporary emissions licence is designed, as I said in my second reading contribution, to enable a quick decision on limited criteria to permit a release for a limited time period. The licence might only allow for the release over a number of hours. However, where the emissions are required for longer, such as the temporary authorisation of a waste transfer station to operate beyond its usual condition, it can be granted for months. It is in fact aimed at preserving and, in many cases, preventing further damage to the environment. It is about managing environmental issues, not ignoring them.

As this is an emergency tool, the decision on whether to approve the licence must be made within 24 hours. The member also raised concerns that cumulative emissions cannot be assessed within 24 hours. Cumulative impacts include both the existing emissions and the potential future emissions. The existing emissions are known and, while true that potential future emissions are not known, particularly where multiple applications for temporary licences are made, this is one of the reasons why the licence is fully flexible. Flexibility is one of the measures in place to prevent environmental harm and detrimental impacts on agricultural land. However, more importantly, water quality, especially drinking water quality, is still the most important consideration in deciding whether to approve the licence in the first place.

Mr Cripps: Hear, hear! Did you hear that, Bill?

Mr SEENEY: We have said that over and over and over again. To begin with, as part of the application for temporary emission licences, proponents would be required to provide information on any increased risks arising from additional discharges and the proposed monitoring and mitigation strategies to offset these risks. In addition, the decision maker would still be required to consider water quality, environmental health and public health issues in deciding whether to approve the application. These criteria are specifically spelt out in the criteria for the decision in proposed section 357D of the Environmental Protection Act, particularly subsection (f), which states that the administering authority must have regard to 'the likelihood that the release will adversely impact the health, safety or wellbeing of another person'.

No matter how many times it is pointed out to the members of the opposition, they come in here and parrot speeches that completely ignore the facts and that completely ignore the black-and-white words in the bill. As I said, this is a tool. It is designed to be used as part of a response to unforeseen emergent events. It is a responsible use of regulation and it was in response to the Floods Commission of Inquiry.

The members for South Brisbane and Gladstone also spoke about the acquisition of land powers. Let me make it clear: in combining the existing legislation to establish an economic development act, the bill does not introduce powers to compulsorily acquire land. What it does is allow the government to deal in land, infrastructure and property like any other member of the community or any other entity. Those members who have been in this House for any particular length of time will well know the concern I have around the powers of compulsory acquisition as it affects landholders. They well know the long history I have of talking in here about the issue of private property rights and the impact on those private property

rights of public infrastructure. Some may well even remember the fact that I have introduced four private members' bills in regard to that particular issue. It is beyond my power to describe how it makes me feel to be lectured tonight by the member for South Brisbane.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr SEENEY: Over 14 years in this place there is no single issue that has been a more central plank to my political identity than the protection of private property rights. The member for South Brisbane comes in here—here for five nanoseconds on a Socialist Left platform—and suggests to me that I need to be aware of the private property rights of private landholders. I struggle, colleagues, to find words to adequately describe the absurdity of such a situation and the sheer ignorant gall of a member who would advance such a proposition in such a reckless way and then sit there and laugh about it. It shows a complete disrespect for any sort of argument that another member might put forward.

Having said that, I acknowledge that the concerns raised by the member for Gladstone were very sincere because I have heard the member for Gladstone raise those concerns before and I share the concerns that I think were the motivations for the things she raised. We will always as a government be very careful to recognise the impacts on private property owners.

The other provision in this bill that goes to the heart of that philosophy is what we are doing with the declarations for infrastructure facilities of significance. As I said in my second reaching speech, the only purpose of such a declaration is to allow for the compulsory acquisition of private land by the Coordinator-General for a private entity, for a private infrastructure facility. It is a provision that is in the legislation at the moment, and we are doing two things with that. We are changing the name of it so that the infrastructure facility of significance cannot be misrepresented as something that has the support of the state. But, more importantly, when we look at it from the perspective of private property owners' rights, we are ensuring that a proponent does not have access to that compulsory acquisition power until such time as extensive efforts have been made to acquire the land through commercial negotiation.

I said in my second reading contribution that I am well aware of situations where companies or company representatives have come to landholders and put the authority to compulsorily acquire on the table and said, 'Now let's negotiate,' and that is not a fair situation. The compulsory acquisition powers should be the last resort in any situation, and particularly more so when that situation involves the compulsory acquisition of land for a private infrastructure facility, such as the situation that is anticipated by this bill.

Once again, I acknowledge the contributions that were made by the committee members. I have the highest regard for our developing committee structure and the process used by the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee to consider this bill. I thank the committee for rising to the challenge and giving substantive consideration to the bill within a relatively short period of time.

I will be moving a number of amendments in response to the committee's recommendations and stakeholder feedback that will support the intended operation of the legislation. I will do that, just as I have done with previous pieces of legislation I have brought into this House. As I have said before, a number of us—and my colleague the member for Southern Downs was one—were involved in putting the committee system in place. There were a number of sceptical points of view at the time that ministers would not allow the committee system to operate in the way that it should. The committee system in this parliament will only operate if ministers make a genuine attempt to take account of the recommendations that the committee makes. I have done that and I intend to continue to do that. The suggestion from members of the opposition that, in taking notice of the committee, a minister is somehow acknowledging that the legislation is deficient is a repugnant suggestion and it strikes at the heart of the committee system itself. If that suggestion takes hold, then all honourable members who sit on committees will be wasting their time.

I encourage each and every minister in this government to take due account of the committee system and the recommendations that the committees put forward and reject completely the absurd notion that, in so doing, they are somehow confirming that the legislation they introduced into the parliament was deficient or somehow not up to scratch. It is an absurdity from the member for South Brisbane, and it is one of the more absurd suggestions in the long list of absurdities that she has brought to this parliament tonight. It shows an appalling lack of understanding of the committee system, an appalling lack of understanding of the processes of this parliament and an appalling attitude to go with it.

I commend this bill to the members of the parliament tonight. I thank the members of the parliament for the kind comments they made and I thank those who recognised the significance of some of the provisions of this bill. I particularly acknowledge the comments that were made by my colleague the member for Currumbin and Minister for Tourism in regard to the Commonwealth Games village. Meeting our state's obligations in regard to the Commonwealth Games will be a huge challenge. It was a challenge that was totally unrecognised by the former government when they made the commitment to have the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. It is a project that we anticipate with some—

Mrs Stuckey: Trepidation?

Mr SEENEY: That is not the word I wanted.

Mrs Stuckey: Enthusiasm.

Mr SEENEY: Yes, we anticipate that project with some enthusiasm, but in anticipating that event with that enthusiasm we do not for one moment underestimate the challenge that will be involved in delivering that event for the people of Queensland and the people of Australia. A critical part of delivering that event will be delivering the infrastructure that is necessary, including the athletes' village and all of the sporting infrastructure that is necessary. A particular part of this bill has been designed specifically for that purpose—that is, to ensure that we meet our obligations in regard to the Commonwealth Games. I look forward to working with the Minister for Tourism in that task in the years ahead. Again, I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate this evening. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 72—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 9—Byrne, Hopper, Knuth, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

Ms TRAD (11.14 pm): This clause establishes the main purpose of the act. The opposition does not support legislation that is more about empowering the Deputy Premier than empowering Queenslanders. Clause 87 sets out that the Minister for Economic Development Queensland must consider the purpose of the act when making a decision. The purpose of the act is far broader than it was under the Urban Land Development Authority Act and provides the Minister for Economic Development Queensland with broad discretion to declare a priority development area where urban development areas cannot be declared. This bill provides this corporation sole with broad discretion to overrule local government and to remove community appeal rights in the Sustainable Planning Act. This is all about empowering the white shoe brigade and not local government or community groups.

Government members interjected.

Mr SEENEY: I think the parliament greeted the suggestion of the member for South Brisbane with an appropriate level of disdain. What an absurd suggestion! Clause 3 sets out the purpose of the act. The terms 'economic development' and 'development for community purposes' are, I think, self-explanatory. It suggests that the powers that the ULDA formally use to establish affordable housing can be used for other purposes as well. It could only be someone from the Socialist Left of the Labor Party who would suggest that what a government can do to provide affordable housing is somehow inappropriate if you then use the same mechanisms to provide for economic development or development for community purposes.

A government member: Twisted logic.

Mr SEENEY: 'Twisted logic' would be the kindest description. I think the member's suggestion is absurd and the clause should stand as it is written.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

Ms TRAD (11.17 pm): Again, this clause sets out how the main purpose of the act is primarily achieved by establishing the Minister for Economic Development Queensland. This is about concentrating power in the hands of one politician and slashing an authority that is independent, that provides expert advice, that goes to planning and affordable housing throughout the state. The Deputy Premier comes in here and asks how dare I come into this place and lecture him. I dare come into this place by the grace of the people of South Brisbane. I come in here with their authority—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! There is too much interjecting in the chamber.

Ms TRAD: I come into this place with the authority of my electorate to hold this government to account, to hold this massive majority to account. What do we have here? We have a piece of legislation that seeks to take all of the power from the ULDA and more, and ride roughshod over local councils who have expressed concerns throughout the consultation process about the concentration of power—

Mr Crandon: Give us names and addresses.

Ms TRAD: I would like to take the interjection and say: read the submissions, read the transcript; if you want to have a say, read the content of the submissions.

The concentration of power in the hands of the Deputy Premier is something of concern to those people who have taken the time to not only make submissions to this inquiry but also to other inquiries about other bills that have been presented to this parliament and referred to committees to consider and respond to within days. This is an outrageous abuse and concentration of power. I dare come into this place and continue to object about it day in and day out.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the Deputy Premier, if members want to interject, they need to return to their seats. There is too much interjection from those standing up and those not in their own seat. I instruct the House.

Mr SEENEY: The member's assertions are obviously absurd. As was pointed out a number of times in the debate, this bill puts together two existing acts, the powers under which have existed for many years—since 1963 in one instance and since 2007 in another.

Division: Question put—That clause 4, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 71—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—

Ms TRAD (11.27 pm): I rise to speak on clause 8 as it establishes the corporation sole superpower, the Minister for Economic Development Queensland. It is an absurdity to put the Deputy Premier in charge of urban land development, of industry development across the state, when as Deputy Premier he cannot even manage a quavering backbencher. This is the biggest joke of all. Throughout the whole week he had one job—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! If members are going to interject they need to return to their allocated seats.

Ms TRAD: That job was to keep the member for Yeerongpilly solid. That was his only job this week, because we know that the bureaucrats wrote the speaking points for him to use tonight and we know that his department was busily working away on the spin about how this bill is good for Queensland.

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Could you please rule on relevance to the clause.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for South Brisbane will stay relevant to the clause.

Ms TRAD: Of course I will stay relevant to the clause. As I outlined earlier—

Ms Palaszczuk: The claws are out today!

Ms TRAD: Yes, the claws are certainly out today. As I outlined earlier, this clause provides powers that are far too broad and overreaching for someone who obviously cannot do the simplest of tasks. This follows amendments to the Planning and Environment Court, as I have covered extensively, that make it harder for community members, for neighbourhoods, for residents to launch appeals against financially powerful developers. This is something that many people in Queensland worked hard for over two decades—something that was repealed as soon as Labor came into power in 1989 and something that is, again, taken back to the good old days under the LNP, straightaway. They try to curtail the community as quickly as possible so that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the chamber.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting. The member for South Brisbane has the call.

Ms TRAD: This clause is nothing more than the LNP making a power grab to buy up land to develop it at its will and to give it away to its developer mates. We will not be supporting this clause.

Mr SEENEY: The contribution is so absurd it hardly warrants a response. However, I would point out that the Minister for Industrial Development was a corporation sole that has been established since 1963. This clause simply changes the name of that corporation sole to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland. It has been around since 1963.

Division: Question put—That clause 8, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 71—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—

Ms TRAD (11.37 pm): Clause 16 provides the Minister for Economic Development Queensland with the power to deal in land or other property and sell property. These powers appear to be broader than the Urban Land Development Authority, as I covered extensively in my earlier speech. The government has not established a proper justification for why these powers have been provided to the Deputy Premier's corporation sole. It was an issue that was significantly criticised throughout various submissions to the committee. For these reasons, the Labor opposition cannot support this clause.

Mr SEENEY: These are exactly the same powers that were exercised by the ULDA.

Division: Question put—That clause 16, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 71—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 16, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 168, as read, agreed to.

Clause 169—

Mr SEENEY (11.44 pm): I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 169 (Delegations)

Page 113, after line 22—

insert—

'(4) A local government may subdelegate a function or power of MEDQ delegated to it under subsection (1) to an appropriately qualified employee of the local government.

'(5) However, subsection (4) does not apply to a function or power if MEDQ has, when delegating the function or power to the local government, directed that the function or power can not be subdelegated.'.

2 Clause 169 (Delegations)

Page 113, line 23, '(4)'—

omit, insert—

'(6)'.

I table the explanatory notes to the amendments.

Tabled paper: Economic Development Bill 2012, explanatory notes to Hon. Jeff Seeney's amendments [1756].

Amendments Nos 1 and 2 amend clause 169 of the bill. The purpose of the amendments is to clarify that, where the Minister for Economic Development Queensland—or MEDQ—has delegated functions or powers to the local government, it may subdelegate those to an employee of the local government. The amendments also amend the clause to provide for circumstances where MEDQ can identify powers and functions that may be subdelegated.

The amendments are consistent with the existing practice of delegating powers to local governments under section 136 of the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007. I commend amendments Nos 1 and 2 to the House.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 169, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 170 to 231, as read, agreed to.

Clause 232—

Ms TRAD (11.46 pm): And here we come to the deal. This part of the bill provides a definition that is far too broad for where a temporary emissions licence can be issued and goes much, much further than the recommendations of the flood commission of inquiry, which specifically refer to a flooding event and it is a disgrace. It is an absolute disgrace for this government to come in here and put this outrageous bill on the table and hide behind the skirts of the flood commission of inquiry. It is an absolute disgrace.

Mr Choat: You caused the flood.

Ms TRAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence to that remark and I ask the member to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will withdraw the comment.

Mr CHOAT: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: And the member will, if he wishes to interject, return to his seat.

Ms TRAD: The change of definition from 'emergent' to 'applicable' is a farce. It disregards the recommendations of the committee. This is the parliamentary committee of which the majority are government members, a parliamentary committee that the Deputy Premier came in here today—as he has done repeatedly in the past—and espoused the virtues of. This parliamentary committee stated—

The concern expressed by stakeholders about the potential for TELs to be approved in situations that are not 'emergency' but simply unforeseen, is understandable.

This clause does not address the recommendations of the flood inquiry. This is a farce. Why would you move from 'emergent' to 'applicable'? Why would you even put it up without guidelines? Why are we even looking at this clause without the accompanying guidelines that will tell people, companies, the people who are making the assessment about the TELs when, where, how they will issue these TELs during an event? Where are the guidelines?

This is an outrageous abuse of parliamentary procedure. This is an outrageous example of this government, once again, riding roughshod over the community. The change of the word to 'applicable' does not respond to those concerns. It is obvious why the Deputy Premier will not be sending these amendments back to the committee. It is obvious why these amendments were tabled so late today. It is obvious that these amendments will not be floated with the many organisations. We will not be supporting this clause.

(Time expired)

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Mr Deputy Speaker, I believe we are still dealing with the substantive clause. The amendment has not been moved yet?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Then I am not speaking to the amendment; I am speaking to clause 232, which states—

An ***emergent event*** is an event, or series of events, either natural or caused by sabotage, that was not foreseen when—

(a) particular conditions were imposed on an environmental authority; or

(b) particular development conditions were imposed on a development approval.

And the clause goes on. Throughout the debate and from advice that I have received, we have been talking about events such as floods and the like. Certainly, the concern that was raised with me in my electorate was in relation to flooding. The conversation that I had with the group that was concerned was in the context of emissions from either industry or mines—and that is an industry—where they have an accumulation of water and they are going to be allowed to release that water in a flooding condition, which would dilute any environmental impacts significantly.

I would seek clarification, again, that we are dealing with clause 232 as it appears in the bill, not as it appears in the amendment. What other than flooding events are to be covered by this emergent event? Could it be just the normal process of an industry in dry rather than inclement conditions—flooding conditions? What potential detrimental impact on the environment could approving a temporary emissions licence have?

Mr SEENEY: Perhaps it would help if I moved the amendments to clause 232. I move the following amendments—

3 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 151, line 15, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

4 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 151, line 16, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

5 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 152, line 4, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

6 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 152, line 9, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

7 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 152, line 10, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

8 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 152, line 11, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

9 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 152, line 14, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

10 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 153, lines 9 to 11—

omit, insert—

'(b) the extent and impact of the applicable event, including the potential economic impact of granting or not granting the licence;'.

11 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 153, line 13, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

12 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 153, line 14, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

13 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 153, line 16, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'applicable'.

14 Clause 232 (Insertion of new ch 7, pt 4A)

Page 155, line 12, before 'a condition'—

insert—

'a transitional environmental program or'.

The purpose of these amendments is to provide a term other than 'emergent' to describe when a temporary emissions licence may be approved that more clearly reflects the intent and does not give rise to confusion. These amendments give effect to the committee's recommendation No. 14. These amendments are made to sections 357A, 357B and 357D of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 as inserted by clause 232.

Amendment 10 also amends clause 232 of the bill to give effect to the committee's recommendation No. 15. The purpose of this amendment is to reword section 357D to ensure that broader economic considerations are a consideration in whether or not to grant a temporary emissions licence. Financial impacts on an individual applicant are not. This will allow the consideration of the financial impacts on an applicant if, for example, the applicant was a major employer in the region and the financial impost would result in a significant loss of employment. It would also ensure that the impact on a local or state economy of not allowing a relaxation of the environmental authority to allow a release of a contaminant is considered and that the potential for economic impact on adversely affected downstream users such as agriculture is also considered.

In addition, amendment 14 amends clause 232 of the bill where it inserts section 357G into the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The purpose of this amendment is to specify that the temporary emissions licence approves the activity despite both the transitional environmental program itself as well as the condition of a transitional environmental program. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr POWELL: I will quickly touch on the amendments and then touch on the issue raised by the member for Gladstone. As the Deputy Premier said, the two amendments in particular reflect the recommendations of the committee. We have been harangued by the member for South Brisbane all evening about referring to committee's recommendations. We are amending the definition of 'emergent' to 'an applicable event' so that we can deal with localised events which are not catastrophic enough to fit the definition of emergent. And we are also picking up, as the member for South Brisbane pointed out, a change to the extent and impact of the applicable event including the potential economic impacts.

To turn to the issue raised by the member for Gladstone, I can be very clear that these changes do not apply to any legacy water in mines. A temporary emissions licence could apply to any type of emergent event, and that could include flood, cyclone or fire. It could allow a change in emission to respond to an event. For example, we could allow an asphalt plant to operate at night to repair roads quickly with different air and noise emissions to the licence. We are taking the floods commission recommendations and the lessons learnt from the flood to create a tool that will help make Queensland disaster ready in the future.

To pick up the issues raised by the member for South Brisbane, yes this is going beyond what the floods commission has said, but the reality is we want to be able to put Queensland in a position so that we can respond to a disaster. If that means that we need to work with asphalt plants out of hours to provide enough asphalt to repair roads that desperately need it, then so be it.

I need to clarify a couple of other things. We are not talking about the emergency powers in the Environmental Protection Act. They are in the act already. We are not changing them. They do not allow conditioning, they are very quick powers to be put in place. What we are adding is this temporary emissions licence. It still allows us, as the environmental regulator, to appropriately condition any emission at all and that is to a necessary or desirable level. As I said, it is not carte blanche. We still can condition that emission. As we have said before, we can amend it if necessary along the track. It is very temporary in nature. It may be as short as a couple of hours or it could be up to a couple of months, as I said, depending on our ability to respond to a disaster. I hope that addresses the concerns raised by the member for Gladstone. If not, I am happy to continue that discussion, member for Gladstone.

Ms TRAD: That is a very reasonable explanation put forward by the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and of course it would be reasonable because he has probably had access to the guidelines which should be accompanying this piece of legislation so that stakeholders and members of the community can make an informed decision about what these laws mean.

Mr Powell interjected.

Ms TRAD: I take the interjection from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. If you cannot supply sufficient information to stakeholders, including AgForce, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Queensland Conservation Council or the Capricorn Conservation Council, or feedback to organisations to quell their fears then the minister is the only one to blame in this respect. The guidelines should be with the bill. Consultation should have happened at length. What you are saying now is we need to take your word. This government wants us to take its word that this is what these laws mean. I am sorry, Minister, and I am sorry, Deputy Premier, but your word means nothing and most Queenslanders know that. We will not be supporting these amendments.

Division: Question put—That the amendments be agreed to.

AYES, 69—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 8—Byrne, Cunningham, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That clause 232, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 69—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 8—Byrne, Cunningham, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 232, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 233 to 253—

Mr SEENEY(12.07 am): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr SEENEY: I move the following amendments—

15 Clause 234 (Amendment of s 467 (Emergency powers))

Page 157, after line 13—

insert—

'(3) Section 467—

insert—

'(11) A person who takes an action in compliance with an emergency direction does not commit an offence against this Act merely because the person takes the action.'.'.

16 After clause 238

Page 158, after line 10—

insert—

'238A Amendment of s 540 (Required registers)

Section 540(1)—

insert—

'(la) temporary emissions licences;'.'.

17 Clause 240 (Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary))

Page 159, line 9, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

18 Clause 243 (Insertion of new ss 24A–24C)

Page 160, line 21, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

19 Clause 243 (Insertion of new ss 24A–24C)

Page 160, line 24, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

20 Clause 243 (Insertion of new ss 24A–24C)

Page 160, line 25, 'emergent'—

omit, insert—

'***applicable***'.

21 After clause 244

Page 162, after line 2—

insert—

'244A Amendment of s 47 (Replacement of ss 540 and 541)

Section 47, inserted section 540(1)—

insert—

'(ea) temporary emissions licences;'.'.

22 Clause 250 (Amendment of s 3 (Definitions))

Page 164, line 7, after '*lawful use*,'—

insert—

'*operational work*,'.

23 Clause 250 (Amendment of s 3 (Definitions))

Page 164, after line 22—

insert—

'***operational work*** has the meaning given in the Sustainable Planning Act, section 10(1) but does not include placing an advertising device on premises.'.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 233 to 253, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 254—

Ms TRAD (12.07 am): Obviously it is no surprise that one of the first things this government does when it comes into power is abolish or change the most successful urban management program in Queensland's history. South Bank is the biggest success story that Brisbane has seen in modern times. South Bank is in my electorate of South Brisbane and it is much loved.

A government member: Sit down!

Ms TRAD: To the member who interjected I say this: I will not sit down; I will speak my mind on behalf of the residents of South Brisbane, thank you very much. In relation to clause 254, I draw the attention of the parliament to a submission from the Brisbane City Council signed by Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, who stated that this will—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! There is too much audible noise in the chamber. Please keep your conversations down. If you need to interject, you need to be seated in your proper seat.

Ms TRAD: The submission from the former colleague of the Premier, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, states that this section will expand the corporation's ability to dispose of land in the corporation area to any entity. That is with specific reference to the public riverside parkland. The department's response refers to section 18 of the act and says that the area for riverside parkland is not changed within the definition moved from section 3 to section 18 of the act. It is not apparent how this response to Brisbane City Council's concerns of riverside parkland being sold to an entity other than council with the removal of section 26(2) is acceptable or adequate.

We cannot support this part of the legislation without proper reassurance that riverside parkland is protected from being flogged off to the highest bidder. This is fundamentally about protecting the public space at South Bank from being sold off to potential developers. Put plain and simple: make no mistake, if the Deputy Premier cannot give any assurance tonight to the Labor opposition and the people of Queensland that every single inch of public parkland is protected, even though this act expands the ability for the land to be sold to someone other than the council, then the Labor opposition has no other choice but to vote against this clause. I ask the Deputy Premier to expand, to clarify and to commit to keeping the public parklands public, free and accessible at South Bank, full stop.

Mr NEWMAN: I rise to speak in relation to the comments from the member for South Brisbane. Clearly, the member for South Brisbane either has a very short memory or does not recall facts in very recent years. I recall that, in the not too distant past, the very dear and close friend of the member for South Brisbane made a call behind closed doors to do a deal with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. An area of land that was zoned public open space—it was a plaza between the Conservatorium and the end of the QPAC complex, which was public open space—was handed over to the ABC to build a great big building on. What was once a public space was disposed of for a very worthwhile and worthy organisation, the ABC, but it was taken away from the people of Queensland behind closed doors.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I hear the interjections from the member for South Brisbane and I ask: where was the member for South Brisbane when the dirty dodgy deal was done? She was nowhere to be seen. That shows the hypocrisy we see. The member for South Brisbane comes in here this evening, she beats her chest and carries on about how outrageous these changes are, but the reality is that the only

people who, in the past 20 years, have disposed of public open space, to my knowledge, are those of the Australian Labor Party. What absolute hypocrites they are, what totally fraudulent statements we have heard, what crocodile tears we have seen. Why didn't the member for South Brisbane or, indeed, all members of the Labor Party stand up and save that precious open space? That is why I support this clause. The comments we have heard this evening are humbug.

Division: Question put—That clause 254, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 69—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 254, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 255 to 273, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

Mr SEENEY (12.19 am): I move the following amendment—

24 After clause 273

Page 171, after line 22—

insert—

'273A Amendment of s 86 (Court may exclude person from the site)

'Section 86(1) and (3), after 'corporation'—

insert—

'or council'.'.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 274 to 284, as read, agreed to.

Clause 285—

Ms TRAD (12.19 am): This clause amends section 27 of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act which sets out the matters the Coordinator-General considers before making a declaration of a coordinated project. While the committee report rightly points out that these are not all mandatory matters currently, the opposition still has reservations that the following matters will be removed from consideration. These matters are: the project's potential effect on relevant infrastructure; the employment opportunities that will be provided by the project; the level of investment necessary for the proponent to carry out the project; and the strategic significance of the project to the locality, region or state. These are matters I believe most Queenslanders would consider worthy of consideration in providing coordinated project status. We will not be supporting this clause.

Mr SEENEY: I think these matters were well and truly canvassed in the second reading debate. The clause should be accepted as it stands.

Division: Question put—That clause 285, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 69—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 7—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 285, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 286 to 291, as read, agreed to.

Clause 292—

Ms TRAD (12.27 am): Clause 292 drew a bit of attention in the committee report, and at recommendation 7 we can see advice to the government to remove this clause. It is a clause that seeks to remove the requirement for the Coordinator-General to provide public notice that an EIS is required for a coordinated project and to invite submissions on the draft terms of reference for an EIS. The opposition strongly opposes this clause, which would stand to remove community input into the EIS process from the start, early on, as community should be involved—early on, at the start. We condemn the government for not accepting the committee's recommendation in this respect.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I also express concern about this. EISs are one of the only mechanisms that are now available to communities to articulate their concerns. It is a long and drawn out process, and I understand that. But in the scheme of a project that requires an EIS, advertising in local media—whether that includes your local paper and the *Courier-Mail*, the state major paper—is a very, very, very infinitesimal cost. I am assuming that removing the requirement for advertising will not remove the need for the EIS process to occur. I am hoping it will not reduce any obligation on a proponent to go through a full EIS process, as has always been required. So I do not understand why the Coordinator-General is removing this requirement on a proponent, as I said, given the cost is small and the need for public information and input is of critical importance.

Mr SEENEY: The amendment to section 29 deals with the advertising of the terms of reference for an EIS. It does not deal with the actual EIS itself. The amendment gives the Coordinator-General the discretion to decide whether or not to advertise the draft terms of reference. The draft terms of reference for an environmental impact statement are comprehensive but are becoming increasingly generic. That means that there is a standard being developed for terms of reference. The requirement to publicly notify these terms of reference has time and cost implications for the project and is often of little or no benefit because of the generic nature of the terms of reference.

The intention of providing the Coordinator-General with the discretion is to allow projects to proceed directly to the preparation of an EIS in circumstances where the types of impacts of the project are relatively well known and can be addressed through generic terms of reference. It allows the EIS work to start without delay. The draft terms of reference will be publicly notified for more complex projects and also for projects that are 'controlled actions' under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999—which is most of the larger projects—and being assessed through the bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth. It is intended that the generic terms of reference will be available and will become well known to all interest groups operating in this area.

Division: Question put—That clause 292, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 68—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 8—Byrne, Cunningham, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 292, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 293 to 321—

Hon. JW SEENEY (12.37 am): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr SEENEY: I move the following amendments—

25 After clause 300

Page 188, after line 29—

insert—

'300A Amendment of s 76L (When step in notice may be given)

'Section 76L(1)—

omit, insert—

'(1) Subject to subsection (3), the Coordinator-General may give a step in notice for a prescribed decision or process only if—

(a) a progression notice or notice to decide has been given for the decision or process; or

(b) the Coordinator-General is satisfied that a step in notice is required to ensure timely decision-making for the decision or process.'.'.

26 Clause 310 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 7, sdivs 2–4)

Page 193, lines 23 to 27 and page 194, lines 1 to 3—

omit, insert—

'(a) each of the following apply—

(i) the project has been declared a coordinated project for which an EIS is required under section 26(1)(a);

(ii) the Coordinator-General has publicly notified the Coordinator-General's report for the project;

(iii) the report has not lapsed;

(iv) the area of land identified as required for the infrastructure facility is consistent with the land assessed in the EIS for the project; or

(b) both of the following apply—

(i) the Coordinator-General is satisfied that adequate environmental assessment has been carried out for the project in accordance with an environmental assessment process under an Act, other than this Act, or under a Commonwealth Act;

(ii) the area of land identified as required for the infrastructure facility is consistent with the land assessed in the document, similar to an EIS, to which the process relates.'.

27 Clause 310 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 7, sdivs 2–4)

Page 195, line 18, '4 months'—

omit, insert—

'6 months'.

28 Clause 312 (Amendment of s 173 (Regulation-making power))

Page 202, lines 18 and 19—

omit, insert—

'(2) Without limiting subsection (1)(h), a regulation may—

(a) prescribe a fee for monitoring compliance with an imposed condition; and

(b) prescribe a fee that is a stated amount, CPI indexed for the year the fee becomes payable.'.'.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 293 to 321, as amended, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (12.39 am): 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. JW SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (12.39 am): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Division: Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

AYES, 70—Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Menkens, Smith

NOES, 6—Byrne, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Trad. Tellers: Miller, Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Unparliamentary Language

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I received a complaint from the member for Dalrymple regarding contributions in the parliament on Tuesday, 27 November 2012 by the Treasurer and Attorney-General. The member for Dalrymple contends that the ministers referred to his name in the House with language which could be mistaken for coarse language and that this was unparliamentary language. I have reviewed the Hansard video and written record and have concluded that the language used could be construed to mimic unparliamentary language. I ask the Treasurer and the Attorney-General to withdraw the offending language.

Mr Nicholls: I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Mr Bleijie: I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (12.45 am): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Pacific Fair Shopping Centre, Expansion

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.45 am): I rise to highlight the exciting development of the expansion of the Pacific Fair complex at Broadbeach on the Gold Coast. This incredible AMP Capital $580 million expansion and redevelopment will place the Gold Coast on the international stage with this type and size of shopping centre or, more appropriately, shopping and related tourism experience.

This demonstrates that confidence is back on the Gold Coast for the development of the area. In fact, the statistics are that over the next 10 years, the decade to 2021, they expect the trade area to increase from $5.6 billion to $8.8 billion and are proceeding forward on one of the four pillars in terms of the construction industry of the LNP Newman government. This demonstrates clear support for the new LNP government in Queensland. AMP Capital are putting their money up and certainly showing confidence in the Gold Coast area, certainly in the Mermaid Beach electorate, and very much in the LNP government.

It will be a fantastic fashion, dining and shopping mecca for the Gold Coast and another tourist destination in the heart of our beautiful Gold Coast region. International, interstate and intrastate tourists along with locals will be able to enjoy all the new speciality stores and related activities that will be more like a major tourist experience than a trip to the shops.

AMP Capital have recently purchased the 40 per cent share from Westfield Group, which means they now own the Pacific Fair Shopping Centre, and they have injected this high level of financial support for the development as they see the benefit it will have for their company but also for the region of the Gold Coast. It will create 950 permanent retail jobs when completed and 1,500 jobs in the construction phase—construction being one of the major pillars of the Newman government policy. That will be a real boost to our tradies on the coast who want to stay on the coast because of family reasons.

As a former trader at Pacific Fair when it first opened, I have seen it grow from approximately 26,000 square metres to 84,000 square metres to 110,000 square metres, with this new development and extension of Pacific Fair adding 42,700 square metres. This means the whole site, which is in the Mermaid Beach electorate, will be over 150,000 square metres and will be one of the top three Australian shopping centres.

One of the greatest thing about this development is that it is expected to be completed two years before the Gold Coast is to host one of the largest events it has ever seen—the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. This spectacular investment joins Jupiters Casino's $300 million expansion and the $1.6 billion light rail project to make Mermaid Beach the most desirable part of the Gold Coast, the most desirable part of Queensland, to live in.

Transpacific Industries Group

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (12.48 am): The health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents in my electorate have always been issues which I think of when I am approached by developers or industry with projects in my electorate. This is why when Transpacific Industries Group approached me about their massive expansion and changes to the type of waste at their New Chum site, I told them I could not support them. Clearly and unequivocally right from the very moment I was made aware of the plans my position has been stated. Backed up by a parliamentary petition and media reports, I have expressed my concerns about the potential noise, dust, traffic, environmental and quality-of-life concerns associated with having this massive dump in close proximity to schools and peoples' homes.

Many residents in my electorate would recall there were problems experienced in Swanbank with similar developments and my ongoing efforts to resolve those issues. Many people remember the disgusting foul stenches emanating from this dump in Swanbank in the Redbank Plains area. It was with these experiences in mind that I held grave concerns over the Transpacific New Chum proposal and I did not want other residents in my electorate to suffer the same conditions as those at Swanbank. Since then the issue of the dump has received media attention and was a subject in the state and council elections.

What we have here is a situation where New South Wales rubbish could be dumped on-site, encouraging the electorate in relation to dumping and further dumping from interstate. It is now a legacy of the LNP that Ipswich is now the dumping ground owing to the removal of the waste tax. The minister has rightly said that the approval with this project lies at the feet of the Ipswich City Council, as I have constantly advised my electorate.

Residents have expressed concerns over compliance issues with the site. They have also expressed concerns about workplace health and safety issues. The Ipswich City Council should also ensure that the compliance officers are ensuring that Transpacific conditions are not being breached and, if so, what action would be undertaken in relation to that noncompliance.

I went to a number of community meetings in relation to Transpacific where councillors Paul Tully and Victor Attwood said that they would object to this proposal. They also advised that they would appeal the decision in the courts. So tonight I call on the Ipswich City Council to do the right thing. I am calling on them to appeal the decision. They need to take the fight up to the company on behalf of the citizens they represent, ensure compliance, reiterate their objection to future expansion and, importantly, appeal the court's decision. They need to appeal the decision, as they advised hundreds of residents earlier this year before the council elections was their intention. We are all waiting on the next move of the Ipswich city councillors. I would like to table the flood inquiry cost, which was $3 million and ask that—

Tabled paper: ABC News online article, dated 8 November 2011, titled 'Qld's flood inquiry costs councils millions' [1757].

(Time expired)

Morayfield Electorate, Education Funding

Mr GRIMWADE (Morayfield—LNP) (12.51 am): I rise to talk about some of the great positive initiatives that this Newman government is undertaking in education in Queensland. My local area of Morayfield is a great area and it is readily supported by the Newman government in terms of the education minister's crayon to career vision.

Kindies in my area have been well supported and recently, under the Newman government's initiative, received around $35,000 in contributions and funding for additional resources and equipment to help them have the resources to improve learning outcomes. Recently, I visited the Kidz Rock Educational Centre, which is in my electorate. The owner of that centre, Mrs Karen Butters, showed me around that centre. I give full credit to Mrs Butters. She has spent a considerable amount of money investing in the lives of the children who go through her centre. My hat goes off to her. I know that this kindergarten received a $5,000 grant for some of the resources that it requires.

Recently, this Newman government has funded literacy and numeracy grants. A number of schools in my electorate received funding. Schools in my electorate received $86,112 to increase literacy and numeracy. Burpengary State School received around $17,000 and Morayfield State School received around $31,000. These schools will truly benefit from that funding for literacy and numeracy so that the kids at those schools can have greater literacy and numeracy opportunities. I was supposed to attend at the Caboolture Special School tonight, but I have not been able to owing to parliamentary commitments. Recently, that school received 20 e-tablets. When I visited that school and saw the e-tablets that were delivered to this school and the facilities and the resources that they have for the kids there, I was truly amazed. Technology gives these kids an opportunity.

I can speak all night about the very positive things that this government is doing in education in Queensland, but I will finish by referring to the $160,000 commitment to the backlog of school maintenance, which is part of this government's $200 million commitment. This commitment is making a great difference to the schools in my local area. The P&Cs are reporting that this money is being spent with much goodwill. Morayfield State High School in my electorate has one of the biggest maintenance backlogs, a $1.4 million backlog. All schools will benefit from that $160,000 in funding that will clear the maintenance backlog and make our schools safer places for our kids, our teachers and the parents. This is a great state. It offers a great opportunity for our kids, including those who live in my electorate.

Richlands-Springfield Rail Line; Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.54 am): The construction of the rail line to Springfield that was planned, funded and started by the former Labor government is making good progress and is on track. The Richlands to Springfield project will see a 9.5 kilometre dual track rail line built from Richlands to Springfield and two train stations constructed, one at Springfield and one at Springfield Central. It is estimated that this $475 million rail and road project will create some 3,200 jobs during construction. I also recall that in around 2006 I was with the then minister for transport to turn the sod on the construction of the Richlands train station. So it is great to see that this construction is well underway and that the LNP government is supportive of this project.

When the rail line opens in late 2013, it will help reduce traffic congestion on the busy Centenary Highway. For example, one six-carriage Queensland Rail train can carry around 750 people, taking approximately 625 cars off the road. But it is not just people living at Springfield who will benefit from this rail line. The train line runs both ways. People working in Springfield and students at the USQ Springfield campus will be able to catch a train to their destination instead of catching the 535 bus.

On another matter, in a question to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads on 1 November 2012 I said—

I now table a copy of a letter received by my office yesterday which indicates that the transport minister, unlike other ministers, is refusing to release details of his diary and the people he has met with.

I would like to clarify the record to correct any misunderstanding that may have resulted from my statement. Firstly, the letter was from the delegate of the minister who had been appointed by the minister under the RTI Act. The Acts Interpretation Act provides that any function performed by a delegate is taken to have been performed by the delegator and the minister's office was involved in the process.

The delegate indicated that they met with the minister's chief of staff to discuss the—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition—

Ms PALASZCZUK: However, the letter—

Mr BLEIJIE: I believe the—

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK:—to the minister's delegate who published it—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member—

Ms PALASZCZUK:—indicated that was the case.

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I called order and you kept talking over me.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am sorry, Madam Speaker.

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Speaker, I believe the honourable member is referring to matters that she herself referred to the Ethics Committee. I would suggest that you rule what she is saying completely out of order.

Mr EMERSON: I rise to a point of order. Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was then referring to a matter that I think you told parliament earlier this week had been referred to the Ethics Committee and you made it very clear that no comment should be made about that. I think it is a complete contempt of you—

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Speaker, I am merely clarifying the record.

Mr EMERSON: The Leader of the Opposition was in contempt—

Ms Palaszczuk: You're allowed to do that at any opportunity.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, if this was to do with the RTI issue that has been referred to the Ethics Committee and in regard to the matter that has just been raised, I have clearly reminded the House that those matters are not to be referred to in the House. They are not to be referred to in the House when there is an issue of referral.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I apologise. It was a misunderstanding on my part. I thought I was able to clarify the record.

Madam SPEAKER: Not while there is a matter that is before the Ethics Committee.

Mr EMERSON: Madam Speaker, your ruling is very clear. The Leader of the Opposition has been in this House for many years. Clearly, her actions tonight were a complete contempt of you as Speaker. It was a deliberate attempt to clarify the record when she knows that her comments, which I wrote to you and said were a deliberate misleading of the House and be referred to the Ethics Committee—

Madam SPEAKER: We also will not enter into a debate about the matter. I will consider this issue.

Mr SORENSEN: I rise to talk about prostate cancer statistics in line with the month of Movember—

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sorry, Madam Speaker. There was still some time on the clock and I am happy to keep talking about transport issues.

Madam SPEAKER: I apologise. There was about a minute on the clock. With respect, Leader of the Opposition, can you please in that time not refer inappropriately to matters that have been referred. I will consider the issue that has been raised in regard to that breach.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Excuse me, Madam Speaker. Is it an alleged breach or a breach?

Madam SPEAKER: I will consider that matter when I have an opportunity to view the *Hansard.* There are two minutes on the clock.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you. In relation to the transport issues, we know that they are very important and that they are generating jobs. This week we have heard members of the government say that governments are not there to actually generate jobs. We do know very clearly—and I know the Minister for Transport would share these thoughts with me—that projects such as the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project, which the member for Mermaid Beach was referring to, and the Springfield rail project are very important projects for the life of not only this government but the previous government. We know that they will have a huge impact on people who live around these communities. We know that improving public transport is very, very important, but we still do not hear much from the minister about public transport. We know that these are very, very important—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have not heard the Minister for Transport talk about public transport issues lately in this House. It is very important that the people of Queensland know what the minister believes in in relation to transport. I do want to raise one issue that is very important to the people in my local area.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is, the increased fees put on pensioners who want to travel home this Christmas to be with their loved ones.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Transport will cease his interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Evie Wolffe approached me and said it will be very difficult for her to be able to get home to see her family because of the increased fees that this government has put on in relation to pensioners travelling—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: For the pensioners who have to travel home at Christmas time, the fees are making it very difficult for them. I would ask the minister, with the Christmas spirit, to please rethink—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Speaker, I find the comments by the Attorney-General offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: Attorney-General, the Leader of the Opposition has taken offence.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have finished.

Prostate Cancer

Mr SORENSEN (Hervey Bay—LNP) (1.02 am): I rise to talk about prostate cancer statistics in line with the month of Movember and its focus on men's health. What are the chances of a man being diagnosed with prostate cancer? The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia has some alarming facts on its website. One in nine men in Australia will develop prostate cancer in their lifetime. I myself have recently contributed to these numbers, although I have been very lucky after early detection by my GP, Dr Elaine Dunne. Cancer comes with stealth and we should never, ever think, 'It won't happen to me.'

I was diagnosed in the month of September and I had an operation to remove the prostate in October. My sincere thanks goes to Dr Boon Kua, a urologist who specialises in the robotic prostatectomy using the da Vinci robot. Dr Boon Kua pioneered the laparoscopic radical prostatectomy—that is a mouthful—in Queensland in 2007. He then underwent extra training in the US and was certified in da Vinci robotic surgery. I understand that there are three of these robots in Brisbane. Dr Boon Kua operates out of the Wesley Hospital. To date he has performed over 500 robotic and laparoscopic prostate and kidney surgeries as the primary surgeon. The benefits of robotic surgery are revolutionary. It is less invasive, you have a shorter stay in hospital, there is less blood loss, there is significantly less pain and there is a fast recovery to return to normal bodily functions, which was never seen before this sort of robotic surgery.

Each day, about 32 men learn the news that they have prostate cancer. Tragically, one man every three hours will lose his battle against this dreadful disease. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Australian men. Early detection of this disease is as simple as a blood test. I encourage all male members in the House to go and get checked. I had no symptoms, but I had an inherited family history of this disease. It pays to go and have that test—I can tell you, boys—especially if it is in your family because, if you have a history of it in your family, you have a one in three chance of getting prostate cancer.

I would like to thank my family. I would like to thank Dr Boon Kua. I would like to thank all of the staff at the hospital for their wonderful help. I would like to thank all of the guys who have grown a mo this Movember. I thank them for their contribution to this research.

State Emergency Service

Mr BOOTHMAN (Albert—LNP) (1.05 am): I rise today to speak about the wonderful work of the State Emergency Service, an organisation I am very passionate about and which I have been a member of for many years. Only recently, we celebrated SES Week. Furthermore, last week, the Logan SES celebrated its awards night to honour all the hard work and dedication of its members. Before I speak about the wonderful work the SES has been participating in over recent times, I would like to give the House an overview of the history of the SES and how the SES started.

In November 1973, a tornado ripped through the Brisbane area and caused extensive damage. The Civil Defence Organisation was activated to assist in the natural disaster relief. The Civil Defence Organisation was created back in 1961 to deal with emergencies in the event of nuclear war; it was never intended that it would participate in helping after natural disasters. I should add that the Civil Defence Organisation did participate in a cyclone event in 1971 and it saw much larger involvement during the 1974 floods which struck Brisbane.

The Queensland State Emergency Service was created to fulfil the need of having a service which had a large capacity to deal with natural disasters, whilst also undertaking a civil defence role just in case Australia was invaded and involved in conflict. In 1975, a then conservative government introduced an act into parliament that created the SES—the State Counter-Disaster Organisation Act. Since this time, the SES has served Queensland with a high degree of pride and distinction.

Over the last 12 months, the Logan SES have participated in multiple deployments. Members have participated in searches for missing people in the Scenic Rim, Somerset and Gold Coast regions. Flood boat crews were recognised at the regional awards in 2012. They participated in the search for a missing fisherman on the Albert River, they looked for a child who was lost near the Logan River and they also managed to recover the body of a missing swimmer from the Hinze Dam. The Logan SES are a very vibrant SES with over 180 members. As I just stated, they do have to deal with some gruesome tasks. I wish them all a very merry Christmas. I certainly thank them for all of the hard work they do. On behalf of the Albert residents, I say thank you.

Lytton Electorate, Construction Industry

Mr SYMES (Lytton—LNP) (1.08 am): I rise tonight to speak about a new era of making the Wynnum-Manly region a boom town again. This can only be achieved under a Newman government. The Lytton electorate will play a very important role in the four-pillar Queensland economy because the construction industry in Lytton is helping the Queensland government with its plan and is building a better Lytton. For the benefit of the House, I will outline just some of the ways a stronger construction industry is improving the local region.

Last week, I attended the official soil-turning ceremony at the new, private, high-density residential living precinct in Ronald Street, which is a collaborative partnership between local architects, two local real estate companies, a local building company and the Brisbane City Council. Also, a local construction company BMD is working in partnership with the Queensland government on the $385 million Port of Brisbane Motorway project in the Lytton electorate. It is underbudget and on track to be completed by mid-2013.

The next construction project I want to talk about relates to the health industry. The construction industry will also get a benefit from health services in Wynnum with the health and community precinct. As outlined in today's *Wynnum Herald*, the federal member for Bonner, Ross Vasta MP, the Metro South Health Board and I have a vision for Lytton with regard to the health sector. I table a newspaper article titled 'Bold plans for hospital at the bayside'.

Tabled paper: Flyer from the member for Lytton regarding health services in Wynnum [1758].

Tabled paper: Quest News article, dated 28 November 2012, titled 'Bold plans for hospital' [1759].

We have worked collaboratively for many weeks to provide a solution to Labor's mismanagement in funding the general upkeep of the Wynnum Hospital. Today the federal member for Bonner, Ross Vasta, has outlined that several investors are planning to invest $12 million into expanding the Wynnum Hospital. This visionary plan of the federal member for Bonner and I also includes constructing two new aged-care facilities through private-public partnerships. I look forward to working with private enterprise and all levels of government in building a better Lytton.

Member for Ashgrove, Comments

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (1.11 am): I take this opportunity to respond to the Premier's false claims made in parliament yesterday about me where he said, and I quote *Hansard*—

... I might add somewhat gratuitously, the member for Nicklin, who really has voted with Labor all his career; the guy who got them into power, kept them in power ...

The record shows that the Premier only withdrew these comments after I took a point of order that his claim was false, untrue and offensive. Let us look at the facts. While I have been a member of parliament, I have voted with the Labor Party approximately 463 times, and that includes tonight. The records show that I have voted with the Liberals and Nationals approximately 867 times. When I was a member of the former Maroochydore shire council I was an Independent. We did not have party politics. Actions speak louder than words. In relation to the remainder of the Premier's absurd claims against me, I table for the benefit of members of parliament a copy of the exchange of letters between Peter Beattie and myself back in June 1998.

Tabled paper: Correspondence, dated 25 June 1998, between the member for Nicklin, Mr Peter Wellington MP, and Mr Peter Beattie, then Leader of the Opposition, in relation to support for the government [1760].

For the record, at that time I also met with the member for Gladstone, Liz Cunningham; Rob Borbidge, the then Leader of the National Party; David Watson, the then Leader of Liberal Party; and a One Nation representative. There were no prospects—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. My understanding is that the Premier withdrew the comments.

Madam SPEAKER: The member is entitled to make an adjournment speech. I call the member for Nicklin.

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The records show there were no prospects of forming a stable government including the Liberals, the Nationals and One Nation. I believe this is another example of Premier Newman not being truthful and I believe it goes to the heart of the credibility of Premier Newman's statements in parliament and to all Queenslanders.

Broadwater Electorate, Christmas Card Competition

Miss BARTON (Broadwater—LNP) (1.13 am): As we get closer to Christmas and as some of my colleagues start distributing their Christmas cards—putting me to shame because I am certainly running a little bit late—it gives me great pleasure to announce the winners of the 2012 Broadwater Christmas card competition. Perhaps that might be why I am running a little bit later in sending out Christmas cards than some of my colleagues! Because I am unfortunately unmarried and unfortunately do not have any children, I was at a loss when it came to who might design my Christmas cards for 2012. I thought that I might take advantage of the gorgeous little prep students at the schools in my electorate of Broadwater and it gave me great pleasure to invite all of the prep students to enter the competition. Rather than having to choose one Christmas card design—it was hard enough having to choose three; choosing just one would have been that much harder—I decided that there would be a winner at each school and that each winner would receive a gift voucher for $50 to one of the local book stores because I believe that reading is so very important and it is a gift that we should give our children. I thought it would be important to impart that love and so I was given the opportunity to encourage a love of reading in three students. I had the great pleasure of going to three schools in my electorate to present certificates to all of the prep students who entered the competition. They looked so little! As someone who is not a parent, I had no idea how small children really can be!

I thoroughly enjoyed congratulating them and thanking them so very much. It gives me great pleasure to share with the House that the winner of the Christmas card design competition from St Francis Xavier was Lauren White, the winner from Coombabah State School was Bettina Doel, and the winner from Labrador State School was Rebecca Rangi. I have made a commitment to all of those students that they will receive a Christmas card from me with their own personalised design on it. I have not said which one of them will have their design go to the Premier, but the Premier will be receiving one of these beautifully hand-designed Christmas cards, as will all of my colleagues in this place. They will be receiving a beautiful, very colourful Christmas card that will impart what I hope is a message of Christmas cheer wishing everyone a safe and happy new year and reminding everyone why we should be enjoying our families and why it is that we celebrate Christmas and why it is that we take time at this time of year. I again congratulate those students.

SES Week

Mr COSTIGAN (Whitsunday—LNP) (1.16 am): I rise in the House to acknowledge the wonderful and committed work of those fine men and women around Mackay and the Whitsundays who are proud members of the State Emergency Service. As we all know, it was recently SES Week around the country and, due to a prior engagement in my electorate, I could not be here in the House to show off my orange ribbon. I have pinned it on my jacket this morning, the pin of course marking Wear Orange to

Work Day from a couple of weeks ago. Queensland and Queenslanders have been to hell and back in terms of natural disasters in recent years, of course with some tragic consequences. Luckily, my electorate has not copped the brunt of supercyclones or monster floods like other parts of the state, but many in the Whitsundays would well remember Cyclone Ului, a category 3 storm that hit the Whitsundays in March 2010. Back then I was living in the canefields of Strathdickie and our home was right in the path of Ului. I was actually out of the country at the time working in New Zealand and my eldest daughter and mother had to be evacuated in the middle of the night. When the sun rose the next day the clean-up started, and it was the SES that did much of the spadework in clearing the debris from roads and private property and other places and ensuring lunatic motorists did not drive across fallen powerlines or flooded creeks. The list goes on and on—as did life without power, something we endured for about a week or so.

Around Proserpine, Airlie Beach and Cannonvale the SES carried the can, and I want to take this opportunity to thank them and recognise members who have been donning the orange for a long time. I particularly wish to praise Harry Benjamin, a great worker for the Proserpine community via the local Rotary Club. He has been a member of the SES for more than 30 years. Others who deserve special recognition are Sarah Lethbridge and Andrew Sander from the Airlie Beach group, with 23 and 21 years of service to the SES respectively, and local controller from Proserpine Mark Connors, who this year chalked up 20 years with the SES. Cyclone Ului also wreaked havoc on the coastal community of Midge Point, as well as neighbouring Bloomsbury, and the SES in that part of the world has a real legend among them. His name is Bill Lade from a very well-respected family from my electorate and I warmly congratulate Bill on his 27 years with the SES. In Mackay those volunteers who deserve recognition include Roy Faulkner, who clocked up 30 years just recently, as did Neville Ross. John Landsdowne now has 26 years with the SES, and in a couple of days Chris Maes will bring up 24 years.

We should never take these fine men and women for granted, and I salute each and every one of them plus all of those who are members of the SES with the various groups around Mackay and the Whitsundays. Not only do they help our local community but others also in need, like people in the Far North after they copped cyclones Yasi and Larry, Rockhampton after its floods and The Gap in Brisbane after those storms. Now it is cyclone season, I wish all members in the Mackay-Whitsunday region the best for the coming months as we prepare for the north's wet season and what Mother Nature sometimes throws at us.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.19 am (Thursday).

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Driscoll, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young