



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

### Tuesday, 4 June 2013

| Subject   | Page        |
|---|-------------|
| <b>ASSENT TO BILLS</b> .....  | <b>1857</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 23 May 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, advising of assent to certain bills. ....                     | 1857        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 3 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, advising of assent to certain bills. ....                     | 1857        |
| <b>REPORT</b> .....   | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>Auditor-General</b> .....  | <b>1858</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 14 for 2012-13—<br>Maintenance of water infrastructure assets..... | 1858        |
| <b>SPEAKER'S STATEMENT</b> .....  | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>Absence of Member</b> .....  | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>PRIVILEGE</b> .....  | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee</b> .....   | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>PETITIONS</b> .....  | <b>1858</b> |
| <b>TABLED PAPERS</b> .....  | <b>1859</b> |
| <b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS</b> .....   | <b>1861</b> |
| <b>Thursday Island, Community Cabinet</b> .....   | <b>1861</b> |
| <b>Queensland Week</b> .....  | <b>1862</b> |
| <b>Queensland Plan Survey, Correction to Ministerial Statement</b> .....  | <b>1863</b> |
| <b>Galilee Basin, Projects</b> .....  | <b>1863</b> |
| <b>Health Services</b> .....  | <b>1863</b> |
| <b>Education Reform</b> .....   | <b>1864</b> |
| <b>Electricity Prices</b> .....   | <b>1865</b> |
| <b>Small Business</b> .....   | <b>1865</b> |

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 4 June 2013

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>MOTIONS</b> .....   | <b>1866</b> |
| Suspension of Sessional Orders.....  | 1866        |
| Amendment to Standing Orders.....  | 1866        |
| Order of Business .....  | 1868        |
| <b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE</b> .....  | <b>1868</b> |
| Cost of Living .....   | 1868        |
| Newman Government, Contract with Queensland .....  | 1869        |
| Agriculture Industry, Drought.....   | 1869        |
| Cost of Living .....   | 1870        |
| Government Administrative Precinct, Redevelopment.....   | 1871        |
| Budget.....  | 1871        |
| Budget Papers.....   | 1872        |
| State Schools, Closures.....   | 1873        |
| Queensland Health, Payroll System.....   | 1874        |
| Royal Children’s Hospital, Internet Access .....   | 1874        |
| Cost of Living .....   | 1875        |
| State Schools, Closures.....   | 1876        |
| DisabilityCare Australia .....   | 1877        |
| Mount Isa-Townsville Rail Line.....  | 1877        |
| Police and Community Safety Portfolio.....   | 1878        |
| Regional Community Association Moreton Bay.....  | 1879        |
| Road Safety .....  | 1879        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2013-2015 .....  | 1879        |
| <b>SPEAKER’S STATEMENT</b> .....   | <b>1880</b> |
| School Group Tour.....   | 1880        |
| <b>MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST</b> .....  | <b>1880</b> |
| Newman Government, Performance .....   | 1880        |
| Townsville Electorate, Crime.....  | 1882        |
| Volunteers.....  | 1883        |
| Budget, Regional and Rural Queensland.....   | 1884        |
| Bicycle Safety .....   | 1884        |
| Budget.....  | 1885        |
| Mates4Mates.....   | 1887        |
| Calliope High School.....  | 1888        |
| Reedy Creek, Quarry .....  | 1889        |
| Mount Isa-Townsville Rail Line.....  | 1890        |
| Queensland Plan .....  | 1891        |
| <b>MOTION</b> .....  | <b>1892</b> |
| Dissent from Deputy Speaker’s Ruling.....  | 1892        |
| Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to .....  | 1898        |
| Resolved in the negative.....  | 1898        |
| <b>HEALTH OMBUDSMAN BILL</b> .....   | <b>1899</b> |
| Message from Governor .....  | 1899        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor,<br>recommending the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013. ....  | 1899        |
| Introduction .....   | 1899        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Health Ombudsman Bill 2013.....   | 1899        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Health Ombudsman Bill 2013, explanatory notes. ....   | 1899        |
| First Reading .....  | 1901        |
| Referral to the Health and Community Services Committee .....  | 1901        |
| <b>APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL</b> .....   | <b>1901</b> |
| Message from Governor .....  | 1901        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Message, dated 4 June 2013, from her Excellency the Governor,<br>recommending the Appropriation (Parliament Bill 2013 .....   | 1901        |
| Introduction .....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013. ....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013, explanatory notes. ....   | 1902        |
| First Reading .....  | 1902        |
| <b>BUDGET PAPERS</b> .....   | <b>1902</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Budget Speech—Budget Paper No. 1 .....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Appropriation Bills. ....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Budget Strategy and Outlook—Budget Paper No. 2 .....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Capital Statement—Budget Paper No. 3 .....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4.....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Concessions Statement .....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Queensland State Budget 2013-14—At a glance. ....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Brochure of Queensland State Budget. ....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Queensland’s Natural Disasters. ....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of the<br>Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Governor, Public Service Commission, Queensland<br>Audit Office. .... | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper:</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Treasury<br>and Trade. ....  | 1902        |

## Table of Contents – Tuesday, 4 June 2013

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Legislative Assembly of Queensland.....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs.....  | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry.....   | 1902        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Community Safety.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Education, Training and Employment.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Energy and Water Supply.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Housing and Public Works.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Electoral Commission of Queensland, Office of the Ombudsman, Public Trust Office..... | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Natural Resources and Mines.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Health.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Police Service.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Transport and Main Roads.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Brisbane.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Cairns.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Darling Downs.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Fitzroy.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Gold Coast.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Ipswich.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Mackay.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Outback.....  | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Sunshine Coast.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Townsville.....   | 1903        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Wide Bay.....   | 1903        |
| <b>APPROPRIATION BILL.....</b>   | <b>1903</b> |
| <b>Message from Governor.....</b>  | <b>1903</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Appropriation Bill 2013.....   | 1903        |
| <b>Introduction.....</b>   | <b>1904</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Appropriation Bill 2013.....  | 1904        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Appropriation Bill 2013, explanatory notes.....   | 1904        |
| <b>First Reading.....</b>  | <b>1912</b> |
| <b>REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL.....</b>   | <b>1913</b> |
| <b>Message from Governor.....</b>  | <b>1913</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013.....                                 | 1913        |
| <b>Introduction.....</b>   | <b>1913</b> |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013.....  | 1913        |
| <i>Tabled paper.</i> Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013, explanatory notes.....   | 1913        |
| <b>First Reading.....</b>  | <b>1916</b> |
| <b>APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL.....</b>  | <b>1916</b> |
| <b>Declared Urgent; Cognate Debate.....</b>  | <b>1916</b> |
| <b>ADJOURNMENT.....</b>  | <b>1916</b> |
| <b>ATTENDANCE.....</b>   | <b>1916</b> |

## TUESDAY, 4 JUNE 2013

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

For the sitting week, Madam Speaker acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land upon which this parliament is assembled.

### ASSENT TO BILLS

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

The Honourable F. Simpson MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of assent: 23 May 2013

“A Bill for An Act to amend the Vegetation Management Act 1999, the Land Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Wild Rivers Act 2005 for particular purposes”

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

23 May 2013

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 23 May 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, advising of assent to certain bills [\[2716\]](#).

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The Honourable F. Simpson MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of assent: 3 June 2013

“A Bill for An Act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Casino Control Act 1982, the Civil Proceedings Act 2011, the Credit (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2010, the Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, the Keno Act 1996, the Liquor Act 1992, the Lotteries Act 1997, the Recording of Evidence Act 1962, the Supreme Court Library Act 1968, the Wagering Act 1998 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for particular purposes”

“A Bill for An Act to provide for the establishment of TAFE Queensland, provide for other matters relating to vocational education and training services, amend this Act for particular purposes, and make related consequential and minor amendments to other legislation”

“A Bill for An Act to amend the Forestry Act 1959, the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012, the Motor Racing Events Act 1990, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Tow Truck Act 1973, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes”

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

3 June 2013

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 3 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, advising of assent to certain bills [\[2717\]](#).

## REPORT


### Auditor-General

**Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General a report titled *Report to parliament No. 14 for 2012-13: Maintenance of water infrastructure assets*. I table the report for the information of members.

*Tabled paper.* Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 14 for 2012-13—Maintenance of water infrastructure assets [\[2718\]](#).

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Absence of Member

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, serving as an elected representative is a privilege and a responsibility. Accordingly, standing order 263A states—

- (1) If a member is absent, or intends to be absent, from the Legislative Assembly for more than 12 consecutive sitting days, the member shall notify the Speaker in writing of their absence or intended absence. The notification must state the length of the absence.


The standing order then goes on to state that—

- (2) Upon receipt of a written notification by a member in accordance with (1), the Speaker shall, on the next sitting day, report the member's absence, or intended absence, to the House.

Accordingly, I can report that I have received correspondence from the member for Redcliffe to that effect, along with medical certificates from a specialist and a GP. He has indicated that his estimated time frame of return to parliament may be late August or early September. Constitutional provisions for an absence of more than 21 consecutive sitting days may fall due in mid-September.

## PRIVILEGE

### Speaker's Ruling, Referral to Ethics Committee

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, yesterday, on 3 June 2013, I received correspondence from Mr Adrian Bloomfield, the Deputy President of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. This correspondence attaches documentary evidence which prima facie suggests that the member for Redcliffe deliberately misled parliament on 19 March 2013 when he stated in a prepared personal explanation that he ceased being a voluntary president of the Queensland Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association—also known as the United Retail Federation—in September last year.

Having considered this matter, I have decided that I will refer the matter under standing order 268(2). I have therefore referred the matter to the Ethics Committee.

## PETITIONS

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

### Southern Moreton Bay Island, Public Transport

**Mr Dowling**, from 947 petitioners, requesting the House to place the Southern Moreton Bay Islands into TransLink's Zone 8 [\[2719\]](#).

### Eventide Nursing Home and Ashworth House, Closures

**Ms Palaszczuk**, from 610 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse the decision to close facilities at Eventide Nursing Home and Zillmere's Ashworth House but if the facilities do close to rule out selling the land to developers for purposes such as high-rise units [\[2720\]](#).

### St Helens School, Flashing Signs

**Mrs Maddern**, from 742 petitioners, requesting the House to install flashing school signs to alert drivers to the reduced speed limit during school arrival and departure times at St Helens School, Maryborough [\[2721\]](#).

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

### Morven Outpatient Clinic

**Mrs Miller**, from 260 petitioners, requesting the House to guarantee continuation of vital frontline health services at Morven Outpatient Clinic located in Morven, South-West Queensland; protect the position and reinstate the Director of Nursing and reverse the decision to service the clinic from Augathella [\[2722\]](#).

**Home and Community Care Services**

**Ms Miller**, from 158 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate the Home and Community Care Services that have been recently closed [\[2723\]](#).

**State Schools, Resources**

**Ms Palaszczuk**, from 473 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate the model previously used to calculate staffing resources for Queensland State schools [\[2724\]](#).

**Energy, Pricing**

**Mr Pitt**, from 214 petitioners, requesting the House to keep the election commitment to Queenslanders to address rising energy bills [\[2725\]](#).

Petitions received.

**TABLED PAPERS****PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS**

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

24 May 2013—

- [2696](#) Overseas Travel Report, Report to Parliament, BIO 2013 Mission to Chicago, Illinois, USA, by the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts (Mr Walker) 20-27 April 2013
- [2697](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 24—Subordinate legislation tabled between 13 February and 16 April 2013
- [2698](#) Final response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2069-13) presented by Ms France, from 206 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the dangerous intersection at Bribie Island Road and Old Toorbul Point Road and look at options to minimise the risks posed

28 May 2013—

- [2699](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience (Mr Crisafulli) to a paper petition (2104-13) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 11,633 petitioners, requesting the House to conduct a referendum on the proposal to de-amalgamate the former Redcliffe City Council from the current amalgamated local government area known as Moreton Bay Regional Council
- [2700](#) Document, dated April 2013, titled 'CQU Rockhampton Urban Development Area: Development Scheme' [refer Economic Development Amendment Regulation (No. 1)-2013: Subordinate Legislation No. 55 of 2013]
- [2701](#) Document, dated April 2013, titled 'Toooloa Urban Development Area: Development Scheme' [refer Economic Development Amendment Regulation (No. 1)-2013: Subordinate Legislation No. 55 of 2013]
- [2702](#) Health and Community Services Committee: Report No. 23—Report on Subordinate Legislation tabled between 13 February 2013 and 30 April 2013

29 May 2013—

- [2703](#) Response from the Minister Health (Mr Springborg) to an e-petition (2086-13) sponsored by Mr Choat, from 419 petitioners, requesting the House to adequately staff the Ipswich Midwifery Group Practice so that all low risk women can continue to access continuity of midwifery care with all its health benefits to mothers and babies
- [2704](#) Response from the Minister Health (Mr Springborg) to an e-petition (1992-12) sponsored by Ms Palaszczuk, from 1,404 petitioners, requesting the House to reverse the decision to close facilities at Eventide Nursing Home and Zillmere's Ashworth House but if the facilities do close to rule out selling the land to developers for purposes such as high-rise units
- [2705](#) Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 14—Inquiry into the Operation and Performance of the Queensland Building Services Authority 2012 : Government response
- [2706](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Mr Seeney) to a paper petition (2100-13) presented by Hon Seeney, from 459 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that no mining applications are granted within 10 km of the township of Taroom and that a 10 km buffer zone is established around the town

30 May 2013—

- [2707](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2099-13) presented by Mrs Menkens, from 315 petitioners, requesting the House to consider a route for the proposed Townsville Port Rail Corridor that takes freight trains away from the southern suburbs of the city of Townsville

31 May 2013—

- [2708](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 25—Inquiry into the future and continued relevance of government land tenure across Queensland
- [2709](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2102-13) presented by Dr Flegg, from 552 petitioners, requesting the House to reconsider the proposed cut to the bus services to the Moggill electorate and in particular restore the 443 and 444 services as well as the 435 which currently is the only transport service to the Brookfield Village aged care facility
- [2710](#) Response from the Minister Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to an e-petition (2047-13) sponsored by Ms Trad, from 268 petitioners, requesting the House to allocate funds to allow for 500 car parking spaces at Springfield Central station

- [2711](#) Response from the Minister Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to an e-petition (2042-13) sponsored by Mr Judge, from 455 petitioners, requesting the House to require all coal trains operating on the West Moreton Coal System to be 'veneered' and take other actions to control the impact of coal dust and noise emissions as well as other forms of pollution
- [2712](#) Response from the Minister Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to an e-petition (2039-12) sponsored by Mr Bennett, from 28 petitioners, requesting the House to give consideration to re-opening the Isis Junction Railway Station for passengers from Buxton, Childers and surrounding towns to access train services, including the Tilt Train

3 June 2013—

- [2713](#) Premier's approval, dated 9 May 2013, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Financial Management of the Office of the Speaker, for overseas travel by the Speaker to the Scottish Parliament on 13-14 June 2013
- [2714](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 28—Inquiry into the Operation of Queensland's Workers' Compensation Scheme: Submissions received in relation to the inquiry
- [2715](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 31—Industrial Relations (Transparency and Accountability of Industrial Organisations) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2013

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

- [2726](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 70
- [2727](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 70, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000—

- [2728](#) Water Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 71
- [2729](#) Water Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 71, explanatory notes

Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013—

- [2730](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 72
- [2731](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, 2013, No. 72, explanatory notes

Industrial Relations Act 1999—

- [2732](#) Industrial Relations (Tribunals) Amendment Rule (No. 1) 2013, No. 73
- [2733](#) Industrial Relations (Tribunals) Amendment Rule (No. 1) 2013, No. 73, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

- [2734](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Driver Licensing) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 74
- [2735](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Driver Licensing) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 74, explanatory notes

Adult Proof of Age Card Act 2008, Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012, Tow Truck Act 1973, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, Transport (Rail Safety) Act 2010—

- [2736](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 75
- [2737](#) Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 75, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law as applied by the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 (Qld) and by the law of States and Territories—

- [2738](#) Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation, 2013, No. 76
- [2739](#) Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation, No. 76, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law as applied by the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 (Qld) and by the law of States and Territories—

- [2740](#) Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation, 2013, No. 77
- [2741](#) Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Regulation, 2013, No. 77, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law as applied by the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 (Qld) and by the law of States and Territories—

- [2742](#) Heavy Vehicle (Fatigue Management) National Regulation, 2013 No. 78
- [2743](#) Heavy Vehicle (Fatigue Management) National Regulation, 2013 No. 78, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law as applied by the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 (Qld) and by the law of States and Territories—

- [2744](#) Heavy Vehicle (General) National Regulation, 2013, No. 79
- [2745](#) Heavy Vehicle (General) National Regulation, 2013, No. 79, explanatory notes

Plant Protection Act 1989—

- [2746](#) Plant Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 80
- [2747](#) Plant Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 80, explanatory notes

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994—

- [2748](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 81
- [2749](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2013, No. 81, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[2750](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 82

[2751](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 82, explanatory notes

Environmental Protection Act 1994—

[2752](#) Environmental Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 83

[2753](#) Environmental Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 83, explanatory notes

Acquisition of Land Act 1967, Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Explosives Act 1999, Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988, Fossicking Act 1994, Geothermal Energy Act 2010, Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, Land Act 1994, Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, Land Title Act 1994, Land Valuation Act 2010, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, Petroleum Act 1923, Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011, Surveyors Act 2003, Valuers Registration Act 1992, Vegetation Management Act 1999, Water Act 2000—

[2754](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 84

[2755](#) Natural Resources and Mines Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2013, No. 84, explanatory notes

Electricity Act 1994, Gas Supply Act 2003—

[2756](#) Energy Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 85

[2757](#) Energy Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 85, explanatory notes

Local Government Act 2009—

[2758](#) Local Government Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 86

[2759](#) Local Government Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 86, explanatory notes

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991—

[2760](#) Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 87

[2761](#) Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2013, No. 87, explanatory notes

SPEAKER'S PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following Speaker's papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Speaker of the Queensland Parliament (Ms Simpson)—

[2762](#) Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia—Joint Standing Committee on Treaties: Report 133: Treaties tabled on 1 November 2012

[2763](#) Letter, dated 28 May 2013, from the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties to the Speaker, regarding a report tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament, Report No. 133: Treaties tabled on 1 November 2012

MINISTERIAL PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell)—

[2764](#) Non-conforming petition regarding the Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill 2013

MEMBER'S PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Barron River (Mr Trout)—

[2765](#) Non-conforming petition regarding a mental health ward at the Cairns Base Hospital dedicated to the care of patients up to the age of 25

Member for Inala (Ms Palaszczuk)—

[2766](#) Non-conforming petition requesting the House to reverse the decision to close facilities at Eventide Nursing Home and Zillmere's Ashworth House but if the facilities do close to rule out selling the land to developers for purposes such as high-rise units

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Thursday Island, Community Cabinet



**Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.36 am): The Newman government is a government for all Queenslanders. I am pleased to inform the House that we held another successful community cabinet last week, on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. It was our eighth regional community cabinet. It was great to visit this unique part of the world and gain a greater understanding of the region, whilst giving local citizens direct access to the cabinet.

At the outset I wish to commend the member for Cook, David Kempton, for the positive progress we are seeing in the Torres Strait. He has played a real hands-on role in a number of initiatives to benefit this area of his electorate. This government is committed to supporting local leadership and growing economic opportunities in the Torres Strait in order to provide access to great jobs, great lifestyles and great services.

It is appropriate at this time to acknowledge the 21st anniversary yesterday of Mabo Day during National Reconciliation Week and remember the 1992 High Court decision which laid the path to proper native title for this country's Indigenous people.


Following the community cabinet, I visited a number of gulf and Cape York communities to gain a greater understanding of local issues. I was impressed by the hive of activity in Weipa. Rio Tinto Alcan and the local town authority have been leading growth in this area. This is a fine example of how resources development can benefit local communities. The small community of Napranum has also benefitted from the activity. Mayor Philemon Mene is making huge inroads by working closely with Rio Tinto Alcan and the Weipa Town Authority to provide better jobs, better housing and real improvements for local people. I commend him and his councillors for the positive spirit of action that I witnessed there last week.

I also travelled to Far North-Western Queensland and visited Burketown, Century Mine and Doomadgee, where I met with local councils and townspeople. I was alerted to some areas of concern—which I am following up on—but I also saw great potential in the region. On Wednesday I visited Karumba, the heart of the gulf fisheries industry, before meeting with gulf Savannah region mayors to get an overview of economic prospects and key issues in that region.

On Thursday I was joined by the minister for agriculture and the member for Gregory in Richmond, where we announced a drought relief package for Queensland farmers. Worth up to \$11.2 million, the package includes a range of measures to help farmers in the north and west of the state to keep their businesses afloat in tough times.

Regional Queensland will get help and attention from this government. We will work with remote and regional councils, communities and businesses to back good leadership, growth and prosperity, because Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.

### Queensland Week

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.39 am): Queensland Week, 1-9 June, is now well and truly upon us. The Queensland government is hosting a series of programs and events in celebration of our state's birthday. We started Queensland Week celebrations last Saturday, 1 June, with a citizenship ceremony at Brisbane City Hall. More than 500 candidates from more than 70 countries were welcomed as new Australian citizens, which is a fantastic way to start the week.

Another highlight so far for me was announcing the 2013 Queensland Greats at Roma Street Parkland on Sunday, 2 June. These annual awards celebrate extraordinary individuals and institutions that have shown a lifetime of dedication and contribution to our great state. Each has strengthened and supported our communities, enriched our state in their own way and paved a brighter future for Queenslanders. Five outstanding Queenslanders and one institution were honoured. This year's 2013 Queensland Greats are legendary hairdresser and businessman, Stefan Ackerie.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr NEWMAN:** I am almost tempted to take the interjection from the Attorney-General. I think it was something along the lines that he does his hair. He certainly does not do my hair; he does not need to!

**Mr Nicholls:** You can't make bricks without straw!

**Mr NEWMAN:** I am going to ignore the Treasurer's interjection. It is his day, and I am not going to feel bad about it! Other Queensland Greats were the founder of the Hear and Say Centre, Dr Dimity Dornan AM; philanthropist and pastoralist, Mr Tim Fairfax AM; renowned nanotechnologist, Professor Max Lu of the University of Queensland; novelist and poet, Herb Wharton; and the well-respected humanitarian organisation which worked so hard in recent years for our state after disasters, the Australian Red Cross Society. What a great group of men and women and what a fine organisation were selected this year! On behalf of the House to every single Queensland Great, we thank you for your tireless efforts, your inspirational spirit and your dedication to enriching and strengthening our state.


The government has also provided state-wide funding support to community Queensland Week celebrations in Blackwater, Ubobo, Hughenden, Blackbutt, Eidsvold, Southern Moreton Bay, Charleville, Morven, Mackay, Charters Towers, Pentland, Homestead, Halifax, Trebonne, El Arish, Gold Coast, Point Cartwright and Whitsunday. That is a lot of celebrating across the state! This week we acknowledge the birth of our state as a separate colony in its own right, and throughout Queensland Week we have been celebrating what it is to be a Queenslanders. To this end, we are encouraging Queenslanders to wear maroon to work on Thursday and celebrate Queensland Day in the office. We are also running the Ultimate Queenslanders online competition. Entries for this competition have seen Queenslanders submitting a photo

or video showing their pride and love for our state. The winner and three friends will spend two nights on Hayman Island and get the chance to meet great Aussie cricketer and proud Queenslander, Matthew Hayden.


**Mr Stevens:** Can we enter?

**Mr NEWMAN:** MPs are excluded. I think we can agree to that, although there are some good candidates here, I must say probably it would be the member for Gregory. To conclude an exciting week of events, the Great Queensland Week Adventure Trail will be held this Sunday, 9 June. Teams will solve clues and find checkpoints scattered around inner-city Brisbane for the chance to win great prizes. For those not participating in the adventure trail, there is also an exciting program of entertainment and activities happening in the Courier-Mail Piazza, including performances by Queensland musicians and artists. I encourage Queenslanders to continue to get involved in Queensland Week and embrace all things maroon in true Queenslander style.

### Queensland Plan Survey, Correction to Ministerial Statement

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.42 am): I want to briefly take the opportunity to correct a statement I made last sitting about the Queensland Plan. In my statement I mentioned that more than 2,300 people were already completing the online survey on the Queensland Plan website. I wish to clarify for members that the number of respondents who have submitted feedback is 1,455 as at 3 June 2013.


### Galilee Basin, Projects

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.43 am): Since coming to office, our government has been focused on growing our economy, rebuilding our state, creating jobs and laying the groundwork for future prosperity. Last week the Coordinator-General approved the \$4 billion Kevin's Corner coalmine in the Galilee Basin, reaffirming our government's commitment to boosting Queensland's economic development. The Adani project is also proceeding with the lodgement last week of an initial advice statement which will complete its pit-to-port solution. The development of the coal resources in the Galilee Basin has the potential to be a huge part of Queensland's economic future and their development is important to every Queenslander. In June last year the government made clear its preference for the consolidation of rail infrastructure into two corridors from the Galilee Basin to the port of Abbot Point. In January I wrote to Galilee Basin stakeholders requesting submissions for government consideration about project progress and the effects of changed international market conditions on projects in the Galilee Basin.

While the government will continue to do what we can to encourage this consolidation of the required infrastructure, we recognise that some proponents will be better able to progress their projects in the current investment climate than others. We also recognise the advantage that will naturally accrue to the first proponent able to establish rail and port infrastructure in that they will be in a position to provide access to other projects during their developmental stages. The government's support for a consolidation of infrastructure remains unchanged. However, we recognise that it is crucial to support proponents that have the capacity to be the first mover, especially in the constrained international investment climate that all proponents face. We will certainly ensure that every Galilee Basin project has the opportunity to progress if the proponent has the capacity and the appetite to proceed in that constrained international investment environment. We will fully support projects that have an ability to move forward those projects with pit-to-port infrastructure solutions, those projects with approvals in place and those that have a demonstrated financial capacity to commit to real development.

More importantly, though, it needs to be understood that while our government is considering a range of options to support these developments the bar has been set high with respect to state support. I want to stress again that state government land acquisition powers will only be considered if we have a high degree of confidence that a project is in a position to proceed. If we assist a proponent to acquire land for their project, we will also make sure that any infrastructure is developed on a multiuser basis and that there is minimal impact on landholders and the natural environment. This government is committed to getting Queensland back on track. We are committed to facilitating the Galilee Basin projects. They are crucial to boosting the resources sector—one of the state's four economic pillars that will be important for Queensland's economic future.

### Health Services

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.46 am): This morning the first full budgetary cycle since the election of the Newman government in 2012 is almost complete, and what a difference a year makes! We have witnessed a massive turnaround in our capacity to provide improved

health services to Queenslanders. The Newman LNP government is unashamedly pro growth. We are focused on rebuilding Queensland, building a better economy and making our communities more resilient in the future. Better health care through better design and cooperative strategies outlined in our policy document, Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland, is at the very centre of Newman government planning. A year ago, as the first Newman government budget was under preparation, the cost of providing essential health services in Queensland was 11 per cent above the national average. Labor mismanagement meant that every clinical procedure, every surgery list and every outpatients clinic carried an 11 per cent burden of waste, duplication or inefficiency. Today, as LNP policies of devolved decision making approach their first anniversary, Queensland Health is transforming. This financial year our hospital and health services delivered above their target for clinical activity as outlined in their service agreements. That is a big achievement given the impact of health cuts to Queensland by the federal Labor government and the legacy of hundreds of millions of dollars in unfunded costs left by the former state Labor government, the most famous of course being the Health payroll debacle.

Local hospital boards working with local clinicians have improved performance in our hospital emergency departments. Some 75 per cent of emergency department patients are now processed within four hours—a record compared to 64 per cent 12 months ago. Now, on top of increased clinical activity, improved efficiency and transparent public reporting comes a new achievement—the redirection of local savings into a sustained assault on elective surgery and other front-line projects. This is the LNP's \$100 million Better Healthcare Bonus. Local decision making drives a direct assault on Labor's unacceptable legacy of long surgical waiting lists. This includes \$80 million in local savings over the full budgetary cycle added to \$20 million from head office changes announced early last year. This health system is stronger, more efficient, more productive. It is a better healthcare bonus that was never possible under Labor.

After following developments in Queensland Health over the past 12 months, all members know that these changes are just an indicator of our potential. In fact, the Better Healthcare Bonus could have been greater but for the negative impact of federal Labor's health cuts of \$103 million retrospective in November last year. Through innovation and a commitment to better clinical design, the Queensland Health community has delivered a lasting structural improvement to benefit Queensland patients for years to come. Every cent of the money local boards contribute to the Better Healthcare Bonus they will allocate to the benefit of local services.

I thank our employees for their efforts and the many milestones they achieved in the 2012 financial year. This afternoon when the Treasurer hands down the Newman government's second budget, patients and health workers alike will once again be buoyed by this government's investment in health care and real health outcomes.

### Education Reform



**Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.50 am): When the Treasurer hands down his second budget today, it would be useful if Labor members both in this chamber and in Canberra paid close attention. They will understand that the role of a state government is about providing services and doing so with economic prudence. A good government does not simply throw money at problems because it is too lazy or weak to develop real solutions. A good government does not develop a marketing campaign and think about the policy later. A good government does not alienate its stakeholder partners and service providers.

Over the last few days the Prime Minister has been critical of the Newman government's stance on Gonski and the National Plan for School Improvement. These outbursts have shown the Commonwealth government for what it is: a crumbling vessel drifting towards the rocks, incessantly sounding the foghorn in the hope that that alone will save them. No amount of PR, no amount of branding and certainly not an expensive Sunday night advertising blitz with cute kids and concerned parents can save the Gillard government.

The Newman government announces policies and then implements them. We announced independent public schools before the election and as of day one this year 26 schools were revelling in the additional freedom to determine their own futures with more to come this year. When we arrived in office, we found Labor had left schools crumbling with a \$292 million maintenance backlog. Within months of this government taking office, schools were receiving payments to repaint walls and fix gutters and footpaths. We saw a desperate need to address the deep cultural issues within teaching that saw good teachers lost to the system, frustrated by a lack of reward and opportunity. So we announced Great Teachers = Great Results—a \$535 million initiative that commences next year.


I contrast that with the Gillard government. Here is a group of people that has had 18 months to get together a response to the Gonski review and we still have not seen the detail. They have had 18 months to come good on their promise of having no school worse off, but at last count there are almost 300

Queensland schools that will be worse off under their new model. At least we know where the money is coming from. They are cutting their commitment to kindergartens in half and they are pillaging our university sector. That is before we start looking at the existing commitments that they are repackaging as new money.

The hidden cost, the real sting in the tail, is the red tape and inefficiency that Labor wants to introduce to the system under the guise of the National Plan for School Improvement. Indeed, it was the Independent Education Union which said in its May newsletter, 'The raft of proposals announced by the government will only result in further workload issues.' You know you are struggling when unions are against your proposals.

The Commonwealth government operates no schools, is responsible for no teachers and educates no students. Today's budget will show clearly how a government that knows education and plans for education will deliver for education.

### Electricity Prices


 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (9.53 am): The Newman government understands that the cost of living is more than just a phrase. The cost of living is about the essentials of life, needing to put a roof over a family's head, to cook a meal and to stay warm. The cost of electricity is one of the most important issues facing Queenslanders today. Everyone in this chamber understands the struggles of Queenslanders in paying for the cost-of-living essentials and it is important that we recognise what is driving up our electricity bills so that we can act to reduce these impacts.

We face a serious challenge in relation to electricity prices and customers should know what is on their bills. Based on figures from the QCA, \$258 can be cut from average annual power bills right now if the carbon tax and green schemes were dropped. The reality is that, in addition, the solar feed-in tariff is putting up power bills. But the Newman government knows that people signed up in good faith and the government is very understanding and sensitive to that fact. Can I state: no changes to the feed-in tariff are being planned. I repeat that: no changes to the feed-in tariff are being planned.

We need to look at this challenge and we want long-term solutions to the problem of high power prices. That is what this government is working on. It is important to remember that \$258 could be cut by removing the carbon tax and federal government green schemes now. I ask members to compare this to the advice of the QCA that the typical customer's power bill will increase in 2013-14 by \$268—\$10 more than the cost of carbon and green schemes on the bill. If you add the impact of Queensland Labor's Solar Bonus Scheme, which will peak in 2015-16 at \$276 per customer, you start to get an idea of the impact of green schemes on the cost of living.

The government is investigating options to make the Solar Bonus Scheme more equitable and will consider these options seriously and carefully. The QCA has advanced that the Solar Bonus Scheme will cost \$3 billion by 2028. This government's concern relates to this poorly planned Bligh government policy, not the people who were encouraged to invest by a Labor government. We will continue to investigate options and we will expose these green schemes and their impact on Queenslanders' cost of living.

### Small Business

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (9.56 am): This morning I am delighted to inform the House of the inaugural Queensland Small Business Week to be held from Wednesday, 24 July to Wednesday, 31 July in conjunction with the National Small Business Summit to be held here in Brisbane. The importance to our state's economy of our 412,000 small businesses will be duly recognised—something that those members opposite failed to do when they were in power.

Queensland Small Business Week will include Buy Locally Saturday on 27 July, which will be the culmination of the Think Queensland, Buy Locally campaign, which is designed to encourage Queenslanders to support their local businesses by shopping in their communities. During this week, events, workshops and seminars will be held across the state in cooperation with industry partners such as CCIQ. Queensland Small Business Week is just one of the 32 actions from the Queensland small business strategy and action plan, which I recently launched at the Business Enterprise Centre's HomeBiz expo. The Newman government has committed more than \$1 million in funding for these 32 actions across 10 government agencies. This plan builds on the government's efforts to date and articulates the policy directions and actions to be delivered over the next two years.


We in the LNP understand that small business is the backbone of Queensland's four-pillar economy, underpinning our vital sectors of tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. When small businesses grow, our whole economy grows and Queensland benefits. That is why within 100 days of coming to office

the Newman government abolished the \$372 million industry waste levy—a tax on businesses right across our state, costing a small cafe or restaurant \$3,200 a year. This is just one example of the raft of changes that we are making to ease the regulatory burden on small business in Queensland.

Honourable members, in March I informed the House of the success of the business and industry portal—a one-stop shop for small business to seek guidance and information. I am delighted to update the House that, as of 7 am this morning of 4 June 2013, the business and industry portal has reached the million mark, with a total of 1,010,962 unique visitors this financial year. Last year alone, the portal reported benefits to business of \$155 million through increased efficiencies and accessibility. The Newman government is unashamedly pro small business.

## MOTIONS

### Suspension of Sessional Orders

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.00 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That so much of the sessional orders be suspended to enable government business to take priority for the remainder of this Thursday's sitting after question time is concluded.

I advise that private members' bills may be introduced on Friday after question time.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Amendment to Standing Orders

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.00 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That schedule 7 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly be amended in accordance with the amendment circulated in my name.

#### 1. **Schedule 7 (CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS)—**

*Omit, Insert—*


#### **'SCHEDULE 7—CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

In accordance with Standing Order 181(c), the following table lists entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executive at Estimates is to apply.

#### **Entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executives at Estimates is to apply**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland                   | GasFields Commission                                    |
| Australian Agricultural College Corporation                 | Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited                     |
| Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service           | Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation          |
| Cape York Hospital and Health Service                       | Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service                  |
| Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service              | Gold Coast Waterways Authority                          |
| Central West Hospital and Health Service                    | Health Quality and Complaints Commission                |
| Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service    | Legal Aid Queensland                                    |
| Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian | Mackay Hospital and Health Service                      |
| Coordinator-General   | Metro North Hospital and Health Service                 |
| Crime and Misconduct Commission                             | Metro South Hospital and Health Service                 |
| CS Energy Limited   | Motor Accident Insurance Commission / Nominal Defendant |
| Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service                   | North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Limited         |
| Electoral Commission of Queensland                          | North West Hospital and Health Service                  |
| ENERGEX Limited   | Office of the Governor                                  |
| Energy and Water Ombudsman                                  | Office of the Information Commissioner                  |
| Ergon Energy Corporation Limited                            | Office of the Integrity Commissioner                    |
| Family Responsibilities Commission                          | Office of the Queensland Ombudsman                      |
| Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited              | Port of Townsville Limited                              |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Prostitution Licensing Authority                                     | Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board) |
| Public Service Commission  | Residential Tenancies Authority                                |
| QIC Limited  | Screen Queensland Pty Ltd                                      |
| QRAA   | Skills Queensland  |
| Queensland Art Gallery   | South Bank Corporation   |
| Queensland Audit Office  | South West Hospital and Health Service                         |
| Queensland Building Services Authority                               | Stadiums Queensland  |
| Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority (Seqwater)                    | Stanwell Corporation Limited                                   |
| Queensland Competition Authority                                     | State Library of Queensland / Library Board of Queensland      |
| Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (Powerlink)  | Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service                     |
| Queensland Institute of Medical Research                             | SunWater Limited   |
| Queensland Mental Health Commission                                  | TAFE Queensland  |
| Queensland Museum  | The Public Trustee of Queensland                               |
| Queensland Performing Arts Centre / Queensland Performing Arts Trust | Torres Strait—Northern Peninsula Hospital and Health Service   |
| Queensland Rail Transit Authority                                    | Tourism and Events Queensland                                  |
| Queensland Reconstruction Authority                                  | Townsville Hospital and Health Service                         |
| Queensland Studies Authority   | West Moreton Hospital and Health Service                       |
| Queensland Theatre Company   | Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service'                          |

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.01 am): I rise to speak regarding this matter. The opposition supports those entities included in schedule 7 as it stands and will not be voting against the motion. However, there is a noted omission from the schedule and that is the Queensland Treasury Corporation. I have written to Madam Speaker, as the chair of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, to ask that the CLA give consideration to inclusion of the Queensland Treasury Corporation CEO for direct questioning at estimates. A meeting of the CLA is due to occur on Thursday. There is no material reason why this motion could not be considered on Friday after the CLA looks at this matter.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation is a statutory authority, just like those included in schedule 7, including the Motor Accident Insurance Commission/Nominal Defendant and, of course, the Queensland Future Growth Corporation. These are entities that are included in schedule 7. There is no reason why QTC cannot be included on the basis, in particular, that that entity has holdings of \$29.18 billion. It looks at the long-term debt and asset holdings of Queensland. It is a very important aspect in terms of looking at Queensland's finances.

The Manager of Government Business may not be aware that the Finance and Administration Committee met this morning to consider a proposal for inclusion of the Queensland Treasury Corporation in estimates this year. That committee resolved to write to the CLA for consideration of that matter which I would have thought would have been given the courtesy of actually having a hearing of the CLA. That is not to say that we knew what the outcome of that meeting would be. This is a question that should be put. Certainly it has been noted that the QTC was not included in direct CEO questioning in 2011 or 2012. As far as I am concerned an omission occurred in 2011. It should have been included. That happened under the former government. I am happy to stand here today and say that it should have been included. It was not included last year under the first term of the Newman government. That is why we have written to ask the question again. As I say, I have personally written to the CLA to request a hearing on this matter. It is of concern that I have not received any formal response and here we are in the parliament today with the Manager of Government Business moving this motion without this included. That is of concern to me. Of course, the government could not be aware that at the meeting this morning of the Finance and Administration Committee the committee had resolved to ask the CLA to consider this matter. This is a very genuine request and one, unfortunately, that has been knocked on the head before it has been given due consideration. Ultimately this motion could be put Friday. There is no reason why it needs to be put today. I am concerned that this has not been given the consideration it deserves by the CLA.

**Mr STEVENS:** To answer the concerns of the Manager of Opposition Business in relation to the motion here today, Queensland Treasury Corporation was not included in the list of entities for direct CEO questioning in either the 2011 or 2012 estimates process and is not proposed for inclusion in the 2013 process because QTC does not fit within the established criteria used to derive these entities, namely QTC is not listed in a budget SDS.

As background, the list of entities in schedule 7 is derived by including all government owned corporations together with any statutory body that does not report through a departmental director-general and which is separately listed in a budget Service Delivery Statement or is mentioned within a department's SDS as an administered item. There are commercial-in-confidence matters. The reason that the CEO of the QTC is not included is for the same reason the Labor Party did not include it when it was in government. Quite clearly there is nothing untoward about it. It is a matter of process.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Order of Business



**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.05 am): I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the sessional orders, the Notice of Motion—Dissent from Deputy Speaker's Ruling be moved after Matters of Public Interest today.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Cost of Living



**Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.06 am): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that every time Queenslanders pay their power bills, their fire levy and their insurance premiums next year they will be reminded that the LNP has broken its promise to lower the cost of living?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question and the opportunity to talk about the achievements of this government in relation to cost-of-living relief. While I acknowledge that there are some elements in the budget to be handed down today by the Treasurer which do increase the cost of living—and they were very difficult decisions to make—there is a broader picture which this government has delivered on which must not be forgotten. What I am referring to is the hard decisions that were made last year. Frankly, if we had done what the Labor Party said and not downsized the Public Service in the way that we have by around 14,000 positions then there would be a huge burden on Queenslanders today. Certainly the debt would have continued to escalate.

What have we done? I will tell the House what we have done. We have taken \$7,000 tax off the family home. Who put the extra tax on the family home? That is right: those opposite. In their budget two years ago their Treasurer, Andrew Fraser, who put us in this terrible financial position which we are working hard to get out of today, came in here in the midst of a housing crisis when the property industry was in the doldrums and slapped an extra \$7,000 tax on the family home. I could talk about all the red tape they put on real estate agents that were reflected through to administration costs and obviously the cost then on people buying their own home. What about the sustainability declarations and the fees involved in that? Where have they gone? That is right, they have gone. What about family car registration? That is right, it is frozen.

**Mr Pitt** interjected.

**Mr NEWMAN:** Do I hear an interjection from the shadow Treasurer, something about CTP? Guess what? He should not read the *Courier-Mail* editorial because it is wrong. CTP on motor vehicle insurance is not going up. It actually went down last year. So there is a freeze on family motor vehicle registration. What about the Leader of the Opposition's public transport fare increases? That is right, they have been halved. What about the concessional deal on go cards that we provided? That is right, they are there. Every week they are there for commuters in South-East Queensland. What about the \$80 water rebate that was provided due to the high cost of water that those opposite

imposed on people? What about the reduction in liquor licensing red tape which will save community groups? What about the end of the waste tax? What about the end to the environmentally relevant activities and the \$1,500 on smash repairers and motor vehicle garages? We continue to take this issue seriously. We are providing cost-of-living relief.

### **Newman Government, Contract with Queensland**

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to his contract with Queensland issued before the last election and his statement urging voters to 'please keep this contract so that you can hold us to account' and ask: as today's budget will break even more of his promises on lowering the cost of living, will the Premier now confirm that he has torn up his contract with Queenslanders?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for asking another question that allows me to talk about how we are saving Queenslanders money. I am happy to talk about this until the cows come home, because there has been no breach of any promise in relation to \$7,000 less tax on the family home. There is a freeze on family car registration. There is an ongoing saving for people who could have faced the former transport minister's fare increases of 15 per cent each year for two years and, of course, now we have the go-card concession so that, after nine journeys in a week, travel is free. Where was the Labor Party on that one? Across this state, people going to a restaurant or dealing with a builder—in so many ways—are no longer paying a waste tax that was a tax on the community, but now it is gone. When someone went to get their car maintained, struggling small businesses such as smash repairers and motor vehicle garages had to pay around \$1,500 a year for an ERA licence, an environmentally relevant activity licence. That is a reduction in the cost of living. We have done many other things to take away red tape to help business and reduce the cost of living for people.

However, the biggest thing we had to do was ensure that we controlled the poor and reckless financial management of the Queensland state Labor government. If we had continued to spend money the way that it had and if we had not addressed the run-away costs, I would say that the cost-of-living implications for Queensland families would have been without limit. It was a dire situation and we have addressed it. What have those opposite done? They are about taxing and spending. They say we should sign up to this thing called Gonski, even though we do not know what it means. They say we should sign up to all sorts of weird and wonderful federal government programs without any justification. They never tell us where they will find the money. They never tell us what they would do, because they are the party of no position.

The bottom line is that we know that the cost-of-living issue is an important one for Queenslanders. I say to Queenslanders that the only party in this parliament that takes it seriously, that is working hard to cut government spending and to make sure that we do not put unwanted imposts on families and business is this party; it is the LNP. The Labor Party got us into this situation. The only party that will get us out of the troubles is the LNP.

### **Agriculture Industry, Drought**

**Mr JOHNSON:** My question is one of real substance for Queensland and it shows that the Premier cares about Queensland. My question is directed to the honourable Premier. Will the Premier please update the House on what the government is doing to help drought stricken farmers in Queensland?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the member for Gregory for his question. This is the only government that is working practically and properly to help Queensland farmers in the drought. The federal Labor government created this crisis. It left the farmers in the north and the west of our state to fend for themselves in a massive betrayal for political gain, the ramifications of which continue to spread across the state like waves on a duck pond. Those farmers are facing drought without the benefit of an Indonesian export partnership that has been undervalued and ignored by the federal government. Our farmers had worked hard to develop and build that market and Labor simply dumped it for a partnership with the radical greens. That is what they did. Members opposite are quiet, because they know that that is true. I dare them to interject on this topic because the farmers will see them for what they are.

This government will do the federal government's job as well as our own, if that is what is needed. I am encouraged by Minister John McVeigh's recent visit to Indonesia and I thank him for doing that. He is working hard to re-establish the relationship and trust. I believe we have already seen some progress in re-establishing higher quotas for our beef.

In the meantime, this government will provide a direct package of \$11.2 million to support farmers through the drought. We have already legislated to allow stock to go into certain national parks and reserves that were former grazing properties. Only a few years ago, they were grazing properties. They have fences, bores and all the necessary infrastructure because they were cattle properties. We are providing around \$2.2 million worth of free agistment. Drought declared farmers will get a full rebate on their land rent increase, providing relief of at least \$1.2 million this financial year. There are transport concessions to enable road trains to ship livestock between Mitchell and Roma and Clermont and Emerald, and we are looking at opening up some other routes as well. We are providing freight subsidies for fodder and emergency water worth up to \$7 million, as well as mental health support workshops and DAFF mobile offices in drought affected areas to make sure that farmers can get advice and services to help them. In addition, the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme will provide farmers with 50 per cent freight subsidies on new water supply infrastructure. Subsidies are also available for restocking and returning from agistment when the drought is over.

The minister will continue his consultation work and we will look at any further assistance measures that might be needed. I say again that this is the making of the federal Labor government. The cowardice of Joe Ludwig, Julia Gillard and people such as Wayne Swan is ever present when in the north of this state.

### Cost of Living

**Mr MULHERIN:** My question is directed to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's election promise to cut the cost of living for households by around \$330 a year and the fact that higher taxes and charges in today's budget will cost households an estimated \$600 a year. I ask: will the Premier explain to householders this \$1,000 difference caused by his broken promise?

**Mr STEVENS:** Madam Speaker, that is a hypothetical question on figures that have not been released at this point in time.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I will allow the question. I take on board the point of order as to whether aspects of the question are hypothetical. There is a matter of public debate in the newspapers and I ask the Premier to answer the question as he sees fit.

**Mr NEWMAN:** They can bowl it out as much as they like today. I am happy to answer these questions because the runs are on the board. Let us go through it. Electricity: today across the regions Queenslanders are benefitting from \$615 million CSO payments to ensure that they get the same deal as people in the populous south-east.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** That has been there for years.

**Mr Mulherin:** Nothing new there.

**Mr NEWMAN:** It has been maintained; I take the interjections. We know why there are high electricity prices. They brought in the solar rebate feed-in tariff. We would love to see the advice that went to their cabinet about how that would impact on power bills. Today I challenge them to provide that advice to cabinet. Who was the bureaucrat in charge of that? That is right: the former Premier's husband was in charge of the program! Was there a briefing paper that said, 'We advise you not to go with 44 cents because it would put huge upward pressure on everyone else's power bills'? However, I will move on.

What about the cut to the former minister for transport's public transport fare increases? She was going to put fares up by 15 per cent over the next two years. We have halved that increase. What about the go-card concessions I have mentioned? There is the \$80 water rebate. There is the freeze on motor vehicle registration, which is saving people \$238 million. In 2012-13 that freeze will apply to the registration on over two and a half million family vehicles. What of the tax on the principal place of residence? For Queenslanders, their most precious possession is their home. What did the mob over there do? What did the Labor Party do? It imposed extra tax of \$7,000. We have taken away that tax. We have also provided a \$15,000 Great Start Grant for first home buyers buying a brand-new home, which also helps the construction industry.

What about the doubling of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme helping with the cost of living for people in Queensland? I note that the member for Mackay raised that. Maybe he should do his calculations again on the basis of what we are saving people who have to travel from his city down to South-East Queensland to get expert medical treatment. Then there is the Get in the Game initiative which gives \$150 vouchers to disadvantaged families so they can get their kids playing sport.

There are many initiatives that this government has implemented which continue to save Queenslanders money. But I make the point, again: these people opposite have no plan at all for dealing with the financial mess they created. The fact that we had to make hard decisions last year to cut the cost of the Public Service means lower taxes and charges on Queenslanders than would have otherwise occurred. But those opposite would have had none of that. They would have had all those people stay and higher charges on Queenslanders.

*(Time expired)*

### **Government Administrative Precinct, Redevelopment**

**Mr CAVALLUCCI:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Given the ongoing speculation regarding casino developments in Brisbane, can the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning inform the House of the government's intentions regarding the possible redevelopment of the government precinct?

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the honourable member for the question because the redevelopment of the government precinct is certainly generating some discussion, and so it should be. I think the development of the precinct bounded by George, Alice and William streets will be a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the people of Brisbane to create something that will be ongoing and revitalise this part of the Brisbane CBD.

Of course a central question in that redevelopment is the issue of a casino. There has been some discussion in the media in recent days about that. That is as the government would have it. We appreciate the fact that people are making a contribution to the debate. I congratulate the *Courier-Mail* for leading that discussion. Between now and September the government will consider the issue of the inclusion of a casino in the redevelopment of the government precinct and what that might be able to do for the development of that part of Brisbane.

I agree certainly with some of the comments that I read this morning that there is the potential to create a world-class tourist attraction here in the centre of Brisbane. There is the potential to create something that will put Brisbane front and centre on the world stage if we are able to get it right on this remarkable site that will become available.

I have written to the major casino operators and asked them to come and talk to the government about how they see the development of this precinct. That will be part of a consultation process that will involve a whole range of stakeholders. Nobody will be excluded. Everybody will have a chance for input. I and my officers in the department of state development are keen to talk to anybody who has a view, who has a suggestion about how we might frame the expressions of interest process which will begin in September. So between now and September we will consider these questions. We will consider that primary question about the role that a casino might play and how it might enable that site to be developed into a world-class facility.

When we look at what is happening at 1 William Street it is just the beginning of what will happen across this part of Brisbane. Already there is a hive of activity over at 1 William Street. Soon there will be a thousand people employed there to build a new high-rise building. That construction work will flow on and continue. For the next five or six years there will be construction activity in this part of Brisbane.

That is the sort of economic activity that the former government could never do. That is the sort of thing that they could never generate. That is the sort of economic activity that we need to underwrite the budget, to underwrite the Queensland economy to ensure that there is money for Queenslanders in future budgets that the Treasurer will introduce into this place. All we get from those in the former government is criticism. We never get any sort of input into these sorts of economic ideas that will drive the economic future of Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### **Budget**

**Mr PITT:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. In March 2012, just two days before the last election, the Treasurer said, 'We need to relieve cost-of-living pressures. That means reduced taxes.' Given the Treasurer has already admitted that today's budget will include increased debt, increased deficits, an increased cost of living and a raft of new and increased taxes, will he admit that he has broken his promise to Queenslanders?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I thank the member for his question. Can I wish him a speedy recovery from Ross River fever. In terms of the commitments that this government has made, the Premier has outlined comprehensively the position in relation to the delivery of cost-of-living measures and savings for the people of Queensland that have been implemented and were, in fact, contained in the first bill that was ever introduced into the House by the Newman government.

I just want to reflect on those opposite and what they did for the cost of living. Let us not forget their new-found concern for the people of Queensland; a concern that they have failed to show at any time up until now. Their concern was so great that they ripped away from Queenslanders the fuel levy that they promised would never be removed, saving them an additional \$750 million.

In their budgets after they were last elected they increased the cost of registration for a motor vehicle from amongst the lowest in Australia to the highest in Australia. That was how much concern they had. They introduced a solar feed-in tariff scheme so badly conceived that it added \$276 to the cost of electricity bills for everyone in Queensland. They did this in order to pay for a harebrained scheme run by a harebrained department under a harebrained government.

Let us not forget that those opposite cheered on Julia Gillard and the carbon tax each and every day. They wanted a carbon tax on Queenslanders adding \$180, as Leader of the House advises me, to the cost of living for Queenslanders and at the same time destroying the value in our state owned enterprises, that they protest so much about, by \$1.7 billion.

We compare that to the record of the Newman government in terms of what we have delivered. We have frozen car registrations for the first term and seen a decline in CTP insurance premiums—the first in over a decade—by \$4.10 in the last quarter. We have halved the rate of increase in public transport fares that were going up under the Leader of the Opposition. We have delivered on our commitment to reduce the cost of water. We introduced a price freeze for electricity last year, saving money at a time when people needed it and saving them from having to pay further and higher increases. When it comes to delivering on our promise, ours stands up every day of the week against those opposite.

### Budget Papers

**Mr SHORTEN:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House of any new budget papers that will be produced this year and the significance of these documents and whether there are any alternative views?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I thank the member for Algester for his question. In the budget papers this afternoon we will be releasing a new document. It will be a separate concessions statement. This is a document that has been produced in line with the independent Commission of Audit's recommendations so that people do have a clear understanding of how much support the Queensland government provides across a range of sectors and across the regions.

It will be a comprehensive, itemised list of all the concessions that are provided. It will outline the targeted measures provided specifically to Queenslanders with low incomes or special needs as well as the broader subsidies that are paid across the system—subsidies that go to such things as public transport and others.

This is the first time that such a complete and comprehensive statement of those concessions will be put forward. The previous government used to provide a concessions statement in the appendix to Budget Paper No. 2. However, it lacked purpose and clarity and did not describe what those concessions were being paid for, member for Algester.

To illustrate my point, the former government's concessions statement in its 2012-13 budget highlighted \$1.38 billion worth of concessions. It is with great pleasure that I inform the House that the value of concessions from the Newman government in 2013-14, outlined in our paper, will be over \$5.1 billion. This is around 3.7 times the value identified in the former government's concessions statement. Hardly surprising as we know that the former government failed to manage the state's finances and failed to understand what it is they were doing and how much it cost.

Some of the concessions are substantial: \$615 million to Ergon Energy for the uniform tariff policy so that regional Queensland continues to pay the same price as those in the south-east; over \$1.2 billion in general public transport subsidies; \$144 million for large stock and regional freight subsidies; and \$409 million in assistance under the government managed housing rental rebate scheme. Some of the concessional increases are important as well: \$97.7 million over four years to boost the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme—those opposite failed to touch it for a decade—so that

people in rural and regional Queensland can access specialists down here in the south-east corner; a doubling of the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed. That is on top of the \$132 million over three years to freeze car registration; almost \$1 billion to reinstate the principal place of residence concession, saving people up to \$7,000; \$92 million to deliver the one-off rebate to households in 2012-13 of \$80 while we sort out the mess that was the South-East Queensland water grid; and \$158 million over four years to halve public transport fares. Madam Speaker, we are delivering on our promise and we are telling the people of Queensland just how much—

*(Time expired)*

### **State Schools, Closures**

**Ms TRAD:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. I refer to the minister's request that the parents of the Fortitude Valley State School move their closure consultation meeting with him to the evening of 23 May, when he then declined to show up even though there was time during the parliamentary dinner break, and I ask: why is the minister so afraid to face this community over the closure of their school?

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. That is a hypothetical, Madam Speaker.

**Ms Trad:** It is not a hypothetical; it happened.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! I am going to call the Minister for Education, Training and Employment to answer the question.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I thank the honourable member for the question. This is an issue where I have attempted to get to these meetings. As I have found over the last week when I have been in regional Queensland, having been on Thursday Island for cabinet—

**Ms Trad:** You were in Brisbane. You were here.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I am actually very busy as the minister and, whilst I try to get to as many of these meetings as I can—and I have been to the meeting at Coorparoo State College and I have been to one at Everton Park—

**Ms Trad:** What about the meeting with Brisbane State High?

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I will also attempt to get to others, and I have made that very clear in the media and in talking to people about the concerns they have about the consultation process. But I think it is important to point out to those opposite that this is a process that the government has put in train to make sure that we can hear compelling arguments from people who are involved in these schools where they are concerned about potential closure and why we should consider what we are going to do in their communities.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I note, as I take the interjection from the opposition leader, that at the time she had schools close in her own electorate she did not attend consultation meetings. There is absolute hypocrisy coming from the opposition leader, who would not even attend her own schools in her own electorate.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Members, order across the chamber. I call the Minister for Education, Training and Employment.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Thanks, Madam Speaker. I do note that the Leader of the Opposition went to the electorate of the leader of the Katter party, the member for Condamine, when he could not make the consultation meeting and actually apologised on his behalf.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members! I call the minister.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** When it comes to the matter of the Fortitude Valley State School and the other schools involved in this consultation process that is ongoing, we have said, 'Let's make sure that we listen to everyone with their concerns.' Whether it is about small or large issues—such as transport, subject choice, subject selection, any of the issues including honour boards and leadership history, and uniform provision—they are all things that we want to hear about, and we will come to a decision that will give all of the people in these communities adequate time to prepare for 2014. But,

importantly, it is not appropriate to have members of parliament coming into schools and conducting political campaigns and adding to the stress levels of parents and students in these areas or to have the member for South Brisbane creating furphy stories about giant catchments in the areas of Coorparoo and Brisbane State High. There are lots of other schools there; they do not all go to state schools.

### **Queensland Health, Payroll System**

**Mr KING:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I refer to media reports that the Health payroll fiasco created by the previous Labor government will cost taxpayers another \$180 million in the forthcoming year, and I ask: are these reports true?

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I thank the honourable member for Cairns for his question. I would like to commend the honourable member for Cairns for his very dynamic, assertive and interested representation of his electorate. Indeed, he has done more in the last 12 months as the local member than the Labor Party did in the 100 years that they actually held the seat of Cairns—the 100 years of disinterest; the 100 years of apathy; the 100 years of being Brisbane's voice in Cairns, not Cairn's voice in Brisbane. I would like to commend the honourable member for the work he is doing there, ably assisted by the member for Barron River and the member for Cook.

Indeed, due to their very hard work and their very strong representations, on the weekend I was very pleased to be able to announce \$3 million to go towards the provision of a new PET scanner for Cairns Base Hospital—something which the Labor Party was never able to deliver in that area and something which will actually provide an enormous amount of certainty and indeed the most extraordinary imaging capability to the people of Cairns. That \$3 million will be complemented by \$800,000 from the local hospital board. I would like to commend the member for Cairns again and also the member for Barron River and the member for Cook for their very strong representation.

Yes, it is true that the legacy of Labor's payroll debacle continues to munch its way through the Queensland Health system and continues to munch its way through the Queensland Treasury and the amount of money which has to be made available to bail out yet another example of Labor's incompetence, another example that they were not happy to give over to the people of Queensland until they were so forced in this particular place. Indeed, when I became the minister I was most concerned to see the super brief that had been prepared for the previous Labor minister which actually pointed out that there was more than \$500 million worth of unfunded liability in the Queensland Health payroll—that is unfunded liability. Indeed, we know the human consequence of that last year when more than 1,500 jobs across Queensland had to be sacrificed as a consequence of the mess that was left by those opposite. They had no answer. They had no answer on how to fund it.

Indeed, due to the hard work which we have been able to do in the last 12 months we have been able to reduce the unfunded liability significantly this year by doing away with the issue of the moratorium on the re-collection of overpayments, by the separation of rostering from pay date—something which they were not prepared to do—and also with regard to a number of other changes. The unfunded component this year was around \$124 million, but I am very pleased to advise that the Treasurer, through his empathy, has made sure that that money will be forthcoming to Health so that we do not have to pass that impact through to Queensland Health staff and patients.

*(Time expired)*

### **Royal Children's Hospital, Internet Access**

**Dr DOUGLAS:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Children at the Royal Children's Hospital have very restricted access to the internet in only one part of the hospital for their schooling. Education is critical for all children. Will the minister please advise what protocols are in place to ensure that all children in Queensland's hospitals have internet access for their schooling?

**Madam SPEAKER:** I am advised that that question is to the wrong minister in respect of portfolio jurisdiction.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Well, I'll have a go at it.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The minister can answer it to the extent that it is within his portfolio. I call the minister.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In answer to the honourable member for Gaven and the parliamentary leader of the united democratic party of Clive, we have certainly seen a lot more puppy love in the last week or so as they have run around Queensland and Australia gathering together some high-profile candidates, and also there is the indication from the honourable member that he is now swimming in the 'Premier league', because he elevates himself much higher than his level of capability.

The honourable member is completely misguided in the way that he has targeted that particular question. That question should have been targeted to the honourable Minister for Education because we do share responsibility in these areas. One of the things that we provide is the day-to-day health care and health coverage to Queensland children who require very advanced health care. We make sure that we have the most proactive and beneficial arrangements with Education Queensland to ensure that Queensland children who have to undertake specialist health care in the state are also properly and adequately cared for with regard to their educational requirements. This is something which has been done at the Royal Children's Hospital over a long period of time. I want to thank everyone who has been involved in that work over such a long period of time including the Minister for Education and all of those support organisations and volunteer organisations which continue to do that.

I also want to assure the House that this is something which will continue in the future as we continue to develop more advanced child health services across Queensland. Towards the end of next year we are going to see the opening of the new Queensland Children's Hospital. It will be a magnificent hospital, albeit significantly overpriced—some \$680 million turning into a \$1.5 billion hospital in Queensland. I suppose that is the legacy of financial management from the Labor Party. We would have loved to have been able to invest that \$700-odd million in additional overspend into other health services across the state of Queensland, whether they be children's health services, cancer services, mental health services or a range of rural and remote health services across the state of Queensland.

Indeed, through efficiencies which we have put in place through a movement towards local hospital and health boards in the state of Queensland we are already seeing Queensland children's health services achieving some extraordinary results. Indeed, around 90 per cent of children who attend the emergency department at the Royal Children's Hospital are now being seen in under four hours. They are our achievements in those areas and we will keep going.

*(Time expired)*

### **Cost of Living**

**Mr HART:** My question without notice is to Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. Can the minister outline how he has helped to lower the cost of living for Queenslanders while cutting a swathe through Labor's mountain of green tape without lowering environmental standards?

**Mr POWELL:** I thank the honourable member for his question. The Newman government is unashamedly focused on economic growth, on rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. My focus has been on helping our economy, on lowering the cost of living by lowering the cost of running a business in this state, cutting burdensome green tape and assisting businesses to create jobs and opportunities for all Queenslanders while ensuring that the environment is protected and maintained. With some \$18 billion worth of projects under assessment by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, it is vital that we get the approval settings right and we cut through the myriad of nonsense green tape set up by the previous tired Labor government.

What have we done to get the settings right and to restore that balance over the past 12 months? The Newman government has introduced green-tape reduction legislation that has made it easier and cheaper for business and industry to obtain environmental approvals without diluting environmental protections or lowering environmental standards. This includes, as the Premier raised earlier, the deletion of some 20 environmentally relevant activity thresholds from the environmental protection regulation, which will save almost 10,000 businesses over \$6½ million in annual fees.

We have repealed the waste levy and we are actively working with industry to develop an industry led waste strategy which will seek to encourage investment in the state's recycled waste industry. We have also delivered the pilot program to release legacy mine water in the Fitzroy River system in accordance with strict environmental authority conditions. Independently assessed, this pilot will improve our understanding of the Fitzroy River system and provide a basis to develop a long-term solution for the management of mine water.

The Newman government's second budget will ensure that we continue to grow the economy by cutting green tape, helping create businesses, implementing practical programs that will uphold environmental standards and providing funding for grassroots environmental projects across the state. We will continue our work on reviewing burdensome administration such as protected plants legislation which will potentially save business and industry some \$50 million per year.

This year we will continue to streamline approvals of 19 licence activities. We will reduce the time taken to get a licence from months to weeks, if not days. We will work on model conditions for things such as animal feedlots, poultry farming, chemical manufacturing, tyre manufacturing, bottling and canning, meat processing, service coding and sewerage treatment plants. By streamlining the application process, by cutting green tape, the administrative role of environmental officers has been reduced allowing the department to focus more strongly on compliance to make sure our high environmental standards are met. In short, the last year has seen the balance restored to environmental regulation in this state. We will continue to deliver in this great state.

*(Time expired)*

### **State Schools, Closures**

**Mr HOPPER:** My question is to the Minister for Education. Due to the announcement of the proposed closures of Wyreema and Charlton state schools, Minister McVeigh and I met with these communities a week before the Leader of the Opposition did. I now invite the minister to meet with these communities. I can assure the minister that I will accompany him and there will be no hostility towards the minister. Minister, would you visit these communities?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Condamine, there is too much preamble. Could you just put the question?

**Mr HOPPER:** Minister, would you visit these communities?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Condamine, I have warned members that questions will be ruled out of order if they are not addressed through the chair.

**Mr HOPPER:** Would the minister please visit the communities of Wyreema and Charlton?

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I thank the honourable member for the question and say that this is a follow-on to the member for South Brisbane's question about Fortitude Valley. Whether it is Wyreema, Charlton, Toowoomba South, Stuart in Townsville, Fortitude Valley, Everton Park, Coorparoo or Old Yarranlea, in all of these cases we have a consultancy that is listening to all of these parents. There are over 1,000 students altogether who may be affected by potential closures. We have said that we want to listen to all of the concerns that these parents, students and teachers have.

By the way, I have no anticipation that should I go to Wyreema or Charlton I would face hostility in terms of the way that the meetings have been conducted. I want to thank the communities in Coorparoo and Everton Park for the way they conducted the meetings that I have been able to attend. That has certainly been appreciated by the local members, the Hon. Tim Mander and Ian Kaye, the member for Greenslopes. The meetings were well conducted. I noticed that Kevin Rudd, the local federal member, was there because he thought he might have a chance to get on his soapbox. When it was obvious that I was prepared to take questions for as long as it took—and it took a couple of hours—Kevin Rudd skulked out the front door because he did not think he was going to get the publicity that he thought he was going to get, including what he is doing about issues in his own electorate about land disposals.

As I say, I want to thank the communities for the way that they conducted themselves in those public meetings. I have made and will continue to make efforts to meet with those communities as I travel the state in my capacity as the Minister for Education, Training and Employment.

### DisabilityCare Australia

**Mrs OSTAPOVITCH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. Can the minister please inform the House how the introduction of DisabilityCare Australia will help to grow the Queensland economy?

**Ms DAVIS:** I thank the honourable member for her question. I also thank her for her great support of disability care and her support and advocacy on behalf of people with a disability in her electorate of Stretton. On 8 May the Premier and the Prime Minister signed the historic heads of agreement to establish disability care here in Queensland, but it is really important to note that prior to signing that historic agreement this government was already making inroads into enhancing disability services. In December last year the Treasurer, the Premier and I announced an increase of \$868 million into disability services—funding that came on top of an investment of \$959 million announced in the 2012-13 budget. The release of the budget later today will further outline our commitment over the coming years to disability services here in Queensland.

One thing that is becoming apparent is that when it comes to DisabilityCare it will not be just those living with a disability, their families and their carers who are set to benefit from the introduction of the scheme; the Queensland economy will also be a beneficiary of growth. It is worth noting that DisabilityCare will capture almost double the number of clients currently receiving specialist support in this state. So it follows logically that the workforce will also need to increase. In fact, a recent Commonwealth government report has estimated that by the time DisabilityCare is fully implemented in 2019-20 the sectoral workforce would need to have grown by a minimum of 13,000 people. There are some estimations that the workforce will need to increase by as much as 20,000 people.

It is in that context that I have established a DisabilityCare Australia planning implementation group across the disability sector including people with a disability, carers, sector service providers and advocacy groups to help. One of the key planning areas of this planning and implementation group will be focusing on building workforce capacity ahead of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I will be working very closely with my colleague the Minister for Education, Training and Employment to ensure that we capitalise on this very great opportunity.

Over the coming days, weeks and months I look forward to being out in the community explaining to Queenslanders the benefits of today's budget specifically as they relate to disability services in Queensland. The Newman government is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. By working together, we are ensuring Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity.

### Mount Isa-Townsville Rail Line

**Mr KATTER:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. From January 2010 to December 2012 there were 136 derailments on the Mount Isa-Townsville rail line. The government has announced \$50 million for rail loops around Toowoomba and a paltry \$9 million for the Townsville-Mount Isa line, which covers 1,032 kilometres and is laced with safety and speed concerns. Is the minister satisfied with the state of these operations and, if not, will he make a serious commitment to industry along this line by retaining and upgrading the asset, including retaining existing staff at Hughenden?

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. He is asking for an opinion in the question.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Mount Isa, it is very difficult to hear you when you are speaking. I have a point of order in respect of whether you were asking for an opinion in your question. I did capture the last bit where I think you were asking the minister whether he was satisfied about a matter. That would be out of order under the standing orders.

**Mr KATTER:** Madam Speaker, I will rephrase that.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I ask you to shorten your question and to put it again.

**Mr KATTER:** Will the minister commit to improving the operations along the Mount Isa-Townsville rail line with a serious commitment to industry along this line, including retaining existing staff at Hughenden?

**Mr EMERSON:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Yes, I am very pleased that he has mentioned the \$50 million that we have committed to those passing loops at Toowoomba. That is a great result for Queensland. We achieved that by renegotiating that contract that the previous government made with Aurizon and we got some extra money out of that. Not only did we

get that money and put it towards those passing loops, which I was very pleased to announce with the members for Toowoomba South and Toowoomba North, the Hon. John McVeigh and Trevor Watts—and I know that is going to make a big difference—but also that will take a lot of trucks off the road. As part of those negotiations, as the member for Gregory would know, we have also worked to increase the number of cattle trains going out. We have confirmed those trains coming out of Winton and Cloncurry and have increased the number of services as part of that.

The member has mentioned the Mount Isa-Townsville line. We were the first government to put that line to the federal government as part of our Nation Building Program commitment. We put that to the federal government saying, 'We think the line does need work. It can be better.' We do need that money from the federal government but, unfortunately, we have not heard back from the federal government on that. How unusual!

**Mr Newman** interjected.

**Mr EMERSON:** I take that interjection from the Premier because we are waiting to hear from the federal government. Why is that federal government still there? It is because of the member's federal leader, who decided not to vote them out. He has kept them in there despite the fact they continually fail to deliver for this state. They fail to deliver for Queensland and it is extraordinary that the federal leader of the Katter party comes from Queensland and keeps supporting a party that is so anti-Queensland, like the federal Labor Party. That is a disgrace.

I say to the member for Mount Isa to get out there and start fighting for Queensland. We put that line in our Nation Building Program 2 submission. He should tell his dad to get out there and fight for Queensland for once rather than supporting the Labor Party in Canberra. It was extraordinary to see the revelation from the Minister for Education that we saw the Leader of the Opposition, the Labor leader in Queensland, offering an apology for a member of the Katter party. That is extraordinary—the member there working with the Labor Party. We see them working together at a federal level. We now see them working together at a state level. It is an extraordinary situation. I tell the member to start fighting for Queensland rather than supporting the federal Labor Party.

### **Police and Community Safety Portfolio**

**Mr DAVIES:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Could the minister please inform the House of any achievements in the Police and Community Safety portfolio during this year?

**Mr DEMPSEY:** It is great to receive a question from the member for Capalaba. I know of the great effort he puts in to support his police and emergency service workers, both fire and ambulance, and the many volunteers. I have been there a number of times and witnessed his passion for his community.

When the Newman government took office we inherited a state in desperate need of action to get it back on track. The massive mandate afforded to us by the people of Queensland made it clear that things had to change and they had to change fast. That is why we have refused to sit on our hands. We are convinced that this is a great state with great opportunities for those willing to work hard and work together. Through that hard work we will also create great opportunities for the people of Queensland.

This government has launched a daring program of legislative change, not least in my portfolio, in which we have had a renewed focus on bolstering the front line and slashing needless red tape and bureaucracy. An additional 300 police officers were appointed in the first stage of a four-year plan to provide 1,100 extra police officers. The government has introduced tough new antihooning penalties that will see people who have been convicted of committing two serious offences have their vehicle confiscated indefinitely.

Under Labor, people who used firearms to commit crimes were given a slap on the wrist with sentences equivalent to those received for committing a minor traffic offence. This simply led to more brazen crimes. The Newman government, however, is cracking down on the illegal use of firearms. We introduced stronger penalties for possession and trafficking of illegal firearms and completed a firearms amnesty, which saw nearly 19,000 illegal firearms handed in. We have nothing against legitimate firearm owners. In fact, for the first time in Queensland I have set up a ministerial weapons advisory panel to give them a strong voice.

This government is a great believer in the power of volunteers to build resilient communities. Earlier this year, I launched the Malone review into the Rural Fire Service in Queensland, which the government has approved in principle. The upcoming Keelty review will also take an overview of the entire portfolio, its various agencies and structures.

We will not sit on our hands and we are not frightened by change. We are doing everything we can to help the economy grow and to create real jobs and real opportunities. While we work to grow the economy, we are also continuing the task we began last year to rebuild this state's finances—a task made all the more difficult after the January 2013 natural disasters. I look forward to hearing this afternoon how we will continue improving this great state for the benefit of all Queenslanders and all generations to come.

### **Regional Community Association Moreton Bay**

**Mrs SCOTT:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I refer to the town hall meeting held in Redcliffe last week where former workers from the insolvent Regional Community Association Moreton Bay reported that they still had not been paid and are facing the prospect of losing their homes, and I ask: what steps has the minister taken in the past two months to ensure former RCAMB workers receive the outstanding wages and payments to which they are legally entitled?

**Ms DAVIS:** I thank the honourable member for the question. This organisation is being looked into. The member is well aware that it is not for me to determine issues such as payment; it is a matter for the board. It is interesting to note that the Leader of the Opposition said she would have a representative present at the town hall meeting held in order for the people of Redcliffe to voice their views and opinions. I guess the question would be: who was that? It is like those opposite to attend town hall meetings, gee up the locals and get them concerned but deliver no outcomes and no policies—just political rhetoric.

When the issues surrounding the Moreton Bay regional association became a concern, I asked my department to ensure that those services funded by our department continued to be delivered to the Redcliffe area. That is exactly what we did. Those opposite do not care about the people of Redcliffe. They turn up to town hall meetings, but they have no—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms DAVIS:** This government is about delivering services. That is what we are doing. That is what is happening in Redcliffe. The Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre is delivering on behalf of the Department of Communities those services which were previously delivered by RCAMB. It is important to note that not all services delivered through RCAMB were funded by the Department of Communities. In fact, the majority of the services delivered through RCAMB were funded by FaHCSIA. The federal government funded the majority of services delivered by RCAMB, and I think the question could be posed: what is Yvette D'Ath doing in terms of representing her local constituency to ensure they are catered for into the future?

Those opposite do not care about the workers in Redcliffe. They care about political point-scoring. They care about having Yvette D'Ath, who is on the knife edge in Redcliffe, re-elected. But at the end of the day, Kevin Rudd will be the last one standing. We are about delivering services.

*(Time expired)*

### **Road Safety**

**Mr KRAUSE:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister please outline for the House how the Newman government is making all of our roads, including those in the Beaudesert electorate, safer?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Minister, you have two minutes.

**Mr EMERSON:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I am very pleased to table in parliament today the Queensland Road Safety Action Plan.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2013-2015 [\[2767\]](#).

This is a plan that we in the LNP are very proud of. This is a \$350 million, two-year plan to improve safety on our roads. This is an unprecedented Road Safety Action Plan which includes a number of significant initiatives: \$82 million per year over the next two years for Safer Roads Sooner;

an education program into our schools; and, significantly, the continuing rollout of our flashing-light signs at school zones. Sixty of these signs have already gone in at schools across the state. This is a significant program because, as we know, the previous government spoke about putting in flashing-light signs at schools, but they never achieved it. They spoke about it year after year, but they failed to do it. We have already installed 60, and we are on target for 75 in our first financial year. Flashing-light signs at school zones will be installed in all electorates. This is a great initiative from this government. In the budget today will be a \$350 million, two-year Road Safety Action Plan which will improve the safety of our roads.

I have also announced today that the state's speed limits will be reviewed. This is the first significant review in almost 20 years. We will be asking for feedback from the community and MPs about which roads need to be reviewed. We will nominate 100 of those roads and then have safety experts review them. That may mean that the speed limits on some roads will be reduced; others may go up; others may not change at all. We will leave it to the experts to make the decisions. We have not had a review for almost 20 years, so it is important that it be done. We want community feedback, and I am sure local members often receive community feedback on this issue. I am very proud of this document. It is a great achievement from the LNP.

*(Time expired)*

**Madam SPEAKER:** The time for questions has expired.


## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### School Group Tour

**Madam SPEAKER:** I wish to acknowledge the Durack State School from the electorate of Inala which is visiting the parliament today.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Newman Government, Performance

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.05 am): Today the opposition raised very serious questions in this House in relation to fundamental breaches of promise that this government made to Queenslanders at the last election. I want to draw to the attention of the House the *Contract with Queensland* issued by the Premier, Campbell Newman. This contract with Queenslanders was very clear. It says at the top in very clear, bold letters: 'Please keep this contract so you can hold us to account'.

One of the main election promises of the LNP related to lowering the cost of living for families. Let me repeat that: lowering the cost of living for families. Householders are struggling to meet the cost of household bills. One issue that people right across Queensland—and specifically in my electorate—are talking about is the massive increase in electricity prices of 22.6 per cent. People are saying to me, 'How on earth are we going to make ends meet? How on earth are we going to pay the bills?' And these costs keep increasing.

Let me address the issue of what a contract is. A contract involves an offer and an acceptance. What we have clearly seen from this government is a breach of promise. That promise was contained in this document, which also very clearly says that 'if we do not perform, you can hold us to account at the next election'. That is what I want Queenslanders to think about today when the Treasurer hands down his second budget. This is not the first budget of the LNP government; this is the second budget of the LNP government. The blame game ends today. This is the time that the LNP government takes full responsibility for its decisions and its actions, because when the Treasurer delivers his budget at 2.30 today he will hit every Queenslanders where it hurts the most: in the pocket. By doing that, this government will have carried out one of its biggest betrayals—the latest in a long and continuing series of betrayals.

I say this to the millions of Queenslanders who were promised a decrease in the cost of living, only to be betrayed. When you open your electricity bill and note the massive increases, blame Campbell Newman. When you receive your insurance bills and are shocked by the spiralling premiums, blame Campbell Newman. When your rates notice arrives complete with an increase in the fire levy, blame Campbell Newman. Blame Campbell Newman for the increasing cost of living. Blame Campbell Newman for delivering little more than pain to families.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I would ask you to refer to members by their appropriate title.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Blame the Premier for delivering a budget which breaks fundamental promises he made in the lead-up to the election. This is a man who looked Queenslanders in the eye and told them that he would reduce their electricity bills. He even named the price—a reduction of some \$330. I remind members what the member for Caloundra promised when he said—

The Government understands the cost of living pressures that Queensland households are under, and increases like this are just not acceptable. The Newman Government will ensure it is reduced to the lowest level possible.

And now the truth comes out that this government wants to avoid blame and avoid taking responsibility. As I said previously, this is the government's second budget—not the first budget when it sacked 14,000 public servants. This is a budget that will focus clearly on the cost-of-living increases that the Newman government is imposing on Queensland households right across this state. Did this government ever have any intention of following through on its lofty promises to reduce the cost of living? Did this government ever have the sincerity and the decency to deliver on its promises? Rightfully Queenslanders everywhere are asking these questions, because nothing this government has done over the past 14 months reflects what the Premier said he would do during the election campaign. History speaks for itself—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr Mulherin:** The truth hurts.

**Ms Trad:** He's awake now!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** A cabinet minister is awake!

**Mr Mulherin:** Yeah; the truth hurts!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take the interjection from the deputy leader: the truth hurts, and the truth is going to hurt Queenslanders today as they face the rising costs of living. Earlier today the Premier talked about the huge burden that would have been left to the government if it had not downsized the Public Service. Let us go back to that election campaign when the Premier said that the Public Service had nothing to fear. Well, the last budget was the first clear broken promise when we saw 14,000 jobs being shed, and now those 14,000 sacked workers will face the burden of paying higher costs of living. I can remember members standing up in this House talking about the cost of living and how they were going to reduce people's bills. So far we know that electricity is going up 22.6 per cent—the largest increase that Queenslanders have faced in seven years.

**Mr Choat** interjected.


**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Your policy was to lower the cost of living. There is your contract. The member for Ipswich West should read that contract. That is the contract that every single LNP member made with their constituents. I say to Queenslanders today: send this government a message. Send it a message. People should phone their electorate offices and go to see their local member; make an appointment and tell them what you feel and what you think about how they have failed to address the cost of living. A new fire levy increase is going to be in this budget today. Not content with higher electricity prices and the fire levy, but insurance premiums are going up as well. How is this bringing down the cost of living? I cannot forget the water rebate—the water rebate that all of Queensland thought they were getting from this government but it was a one-off water rebate for South-East Queensland only. What about Rockhampton residents? Did they get the water rebate?

**Mr Mulherin:** What about Mackay?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What about Mackay residents? Did they get the water rebate? No! What about Cairns residents? Did they get the water rebate? No! Once again, broken election promises. Today the Treasurer will bring down a budget—the budget of broken promises—and every Queenslanders has a right to send this LNP government a message that it promised to lower the cost of living. In its first budget its cornerstone piece was the sacking of 14,000 public servants. Now the cornerstone of this budget is the rising cost of living that this government promised families that it would bring down. It has failed dismally and it should be totally and utterly ashamed. It does not care about Queensland. It does not care about people at all.

*(Time expired)*

### Townsville Electorate, Crime

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (11.15 am): Today I rise to speak on the action that the Newman government is taking to tackle crime head-on, particularly in my electorate of Townsville. Almost a year ago the Townsville Crime Action Plan was launched by myself and my colleague the member for Thuringowa, Sam Cox. We have worked closely with our police minister and the Attorney-General to put a real dent in crime activity in our local area. The chamber will recall our commitment to put 1,100 new officers on the beat, and we are on track. We have put more police on the beat in Townsville. Before the election there were 115 officers and as at the end of April there were 131 within our district. That is an increase of 14 per cent. In 2011 under the previous government only 42 officers graduated from the North Queensland Police Academy whereas this year alone the LNP government has provided funding for 161 officers to graduate from our police academy.

I also note that successful, ongoing special police operations are having good effect. Two months ago Operation Amber commenced in Townsville. In just the first month of Operation Amber, break and enters and vehicle thefts dropped by more than 50 per cent compared to the same time last year. Just over a week ago there were more than 250 arrests, more than 700 court imposed orders checked, more than 400 charges laid and, as of yesterday, there was a total of 6,150 people intercepted by police for a variety of reasons. This is a government with demonstrated action on getting tough on crime. I also note the review that the Attorney-General has commenced into the Youth Justice Act and remind all members that submissions close on the 30th of this month. Adding another arrow to our quiver, the Newman government is committed to tackling juvenile crime through the introduction of boot camps, with one, I am happy to say, soon to commence in Townsville. Applications from organisations to register interest close in two weeks—that is, on 21 June—with the aim of having the Townsville boot camp ready to accept participants by the end of this year.

I now want to read into the record an email I received on 23 April from Colin White with regard to youth boot camps. The email states—

Hi John

I am writing to you about youth crime in Townsville.

I have just received your Get Tough On Crime flyer and in this morning's news we learnt of the hiccup at the Cairns Boot Camp.

I can speak with some authority about offenders, both old and young, I was a Crown Prosecutor for 10 years and then practised at the defence Bar in Townsville for 10 years. I was President of the Townsville Regional Community Corrections Board for 5 years and a Commissioner on the Queensland Community Corrections Commission for 3 years.

If you want to reduce crime you have to accept that one solution does not fit all. Identify the criminal types and tailor appropriate measures for each type.

For example, the professional criminals (drug dealers, bikie gang members, serious thieves and the like) and sex offenders plan their criminal activity to reap reward, you need a detection regime which makes apprehension and conviction likely, coupled with a penalty regime which makes the punishment outweigh the reward of the criminal activity.

For the young offender, things are different. Penalty does not mean much, they don't think ahead, they don't think that they will be caught, and if they think, they think that if they are caught and sent to a detention centre they will become a hero among their mates.

The only way to reduce juvenile crime is to change the juvenile, doing anything else is futile.

In the last 10 years or so the number of detainees in Cleveland Detention Centre has risen three fold but the juvenile crime rate has not dropped; the number of juveniles using mind altering substances has increased. Each detainee at Cleveland costs about \$250,000.00 a year.


Your government is about to trial a Boot Camp programme in Townsville. I think that this is an excellent initiative and I hope that you will not be spooked by the recent Cairns experience.

The programme will deal with youths who are seriously damaged by their environment, substance abuse and often suffering cognitive impairment.

Recovery will be a long term process and not all will be recoverable. Long term government commitment will be essential and at times will attract public criticism. Criticism is legitimate only when a better solution is offered, and so far, nobody has come up with a better solution, so hang in there.

Regards Colin

## Volunteers

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (11.20 am): I rise in this chamber to speak about the importance of volunteerism. However, firstly, I will share with the House some very wise words from the former American President, the Cold War warrior himself, Ronald Reagan. He stated—

No matter how big and powerful government gets, and the many services it provides, it can never take the place of volunteers.

When it comes to volunteerism, these wise words from one of the world's greatest leaders could not be truer. I take this opportunity to congratulate all volunteers not only within my electorate of Chatsworth but also throughout the whole state of Queensland

The year 2001 was hailed as the International Year of Volunteers and at the time was seen as an opportunity to develop direction for the future of volunteering. Volunteerism comes in all shapes and sizes—whether that be informally by doing a few hours behind the school canteen or going to the greater lengths of becoming a volunteer firefighter. In order to keep volunteerism alive in our local communities, it is crucial to provide flexible and varied ways to volunteer. Every contribution, whether that be great or small, saves the economy untold millions. As the old saying goes, many hands do indeed make light work.

Volunteerism is an important concept that our younger generation should not lose sight of. It is crucial to find dynamic ways to engage our future generations by broadening communication techniques via social media. As we all know, Australia has an increasing ageing population and volunteer renewal is now something that needs to be taken seriously. Through the younger generation embracing volunteerism, it gives the older members of our community a golden opportunity to pass on their pearls of wisdom to their younger counterparts.

In this day and age there may be different ways to embrace volunteerism. However, there is no change in the overall need for individuals to become volunteers. In many of the sporting and service clubs I visit, it is the same unsung heroes who step up to the plate to undertake voluntary roles. In many cases, they have performed admirably for many years, but find it ever increasingly harder to seek active members from the community to take over roles or to join up and volunteer time, whether that is as a coach, to assist with Meals on Wheels or become a scout leader. Unfortunately, in many ways society is turning into living a two-button lifestyle, as I call it. People press a button to open their garage door when they get home from work and drive in their car. Then, once settled, they press the second button to turn on the plasma TV so that they can chill out, escape and retreat into their castle.

A report compiled by Volunteering Australia in 2012 found that, when it comes to making the decision to indeed become a volunteer, early experiences of volunteerism is a major influencing factor. A person is more likely to see the importance of volunteerism if there is a strong culture built up early on. One of the most important gifts that a parent can give a child is to instil the virtue of volunteerism—thinking of others and giving something back.


It comes as no surprise that Australia is considered to be one of the world's most giving nations, ranking in the top three in the World Giving Index 2011. When you live in one of the greatest countries on the globe, it is no wonder that Queenslanders are so giving of their time. However, the essence of volunteerism needs to be maintained to ensure that the various clubs and organisations throughout the state continue to prosper in coming years. Mateship is a strong foundation and cornerstone of volunteerism. In recent years we saw that demonstrated time and time again when natural disasters struck our great state. It was heart-warming to see the mud army banding together again, turning up at a stranger's house with the intent of lending a hand when the chips were down.

Being a volunteer is beneficial not only because of the important contributions that are made but also because it gives people a sense fulfilment. Volunteerism promotes greater social inclusion, harmony and acceptance of different social groups in the community. This concept does a great deal in promoting positive interpersonal relationships for all the parties involved. It cultivates a sense of belonging to a community. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said—

When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die.

It is my great pleasure to pay homage to the individuals who selflessly give up their time to make such valuable contributions to our great state of Queensland. I commend all volunteers from Coolangatta all the way through to the cape and everywhere in between for their contribution—and not only in the past but also undoubtedly what they will make in terms of the essence of volunteerism throughout this great state in the future. I commend to the House each and every one of the men and women and boys and girls who so effortlessly give up their time.

## Budget, Regional and Rural Queensland

 **Mr MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.25 am): We are just three hours away from finding out the full horror of the second budget of the member for Clayfield. His first budget was built on the broken careers of 14,000 government workers. That was in direct contravention of the Premier's pre-election commitment that public servants had nothing to fear from the Newman LNP government. Now, in 2013, the Treasurer is preparing to deliver a budget that will be built on a raft of more broken promises, particularly in relation to the cost of living.

Further, today's state budget will provide even more evidence that the LNP under Premier Campbell Newman has no regard for the residents of regional and rural Queensland. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the latest promise broken by the LNP—the promise to lower the cost of electricity bills. Last Friday we found out via the Queensland Competition Authority that the LNP government's commitment to help with the cost-of-living pressures in relation to electricity has now been officially abandoned. Of course, we had to find that out from the QCA because the Premier, the Treasurer and the energy minister were too cowardly to face the media themselves last Friday. Obviously, the Premier's commitment to ministerial accountability has also fallen by the wayside.

The QCA has determined that the cost of electricity for 2014 will on average soar by a staggering 22.6 per cent. So regional residents, who are almost all customers on tariff 11, will have to pay the full effect of this enormous price rise—an increase of some \$268 a year for a typical consumer. The cruel irony is that part of this increase is due to the catch-up that is required for the rebate imposed by the LNP in the last financial year. As the opposition warned in the last financial year, all the LNP managed to do was to defer part of last year's price rise to this year, meaning that consumers will get hit with a double whammy.

In the 2012 election campaign the LNP promised to lower electricity bills by more than \$300 a year. Instead, in the first two LNP budgets the average bill has gone up by about \$400. On top of high electricity prices, regional residents will be paying higher fees and charges such as the emergency service levy and higher insurance taxes. In all, household bills will surge by about \$600 next financial year. When you consider the LNP's pre-election commitment to lower power bills by more than \$300, we can put a price on the LNP's broken election promise. That price is almost \$1,000 for every Queensland household. But the impact of the LNP's poor economic management goes beyond just paying the bills. As a result of the LNP's policy, the Queensland economy is flatlining and we have seen growth drop to near recession levels.

This state budget, which will be handed down this afternoon, will no doubt include even more mistakes and mismanagement from the Treasurer, the member for Clayfield. No doubt, he will try to have some sweeteners in the budget to make up for all the sour news that has come out to date, but I doubt that there is enough sucrose in the cane fields of North Queensland to sugar coat the bad news in this year's budget. That is not just the opinion of the Labor opposition; I note that Mayor Peter Blundell of the Southern Downs Regional Council has written to MPs about the budget. He particularly criticises the Treasurer's plans to do away with the urban fire levy and replace it with the emergency management fire and rescue levy on all rateable properties. In his letter Councillor Blundell says—


This is surely a most inequitable means of raising this money. In fact, it would appear to be an even worse outcome than the previous ambulance levy.

Councillor Blundell then goes on to say—

I would strongly urge all members of parliament to consider all ramifications of the proposed changes, and to vigorously oppose the introduction of the levy in such an inequitable form.

I also urge every LNP member of this House, particularly those who represent regional electorates, to think hard about this year's budget. Every one of the regional members here needs to stand up for their constituents, not just parrot the lines given to them by the Treasurer, make their own assessment and vote accordingly. They each made a commitment to their electorate to deliver on their election commitments. They need to send a strong message to the Premier and the Treasurer that the broken promises have to stop.

## Bicycle Safety

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (11.30 am): Just recently the people of Cairns were horrified by the heart-rending loss of a vibrant, much loved community member, Tanya Roneberg, in a cycling accident made all the more distressing by the fact that it was caused by a P-plater driving under the

influence at 7 am. Tanya was the sixth cyclist to be killed on Far North Queensland roads in just three years. Her death has sparked a huge debate over cycling safety in our region and elicited high emotions and finger pointing from both sides of the white line.

Our local newspaper, *The Cairns Post*, has begun a Share the Road campaign, the Facebook site for which has prompted hundreds of comments from both cyclists and other road users. I commend this initiative, which has significantly boosted awareness of the need for motorists and cyclists to recognise their equal right to the road and positive measures to increase safety. The fact is that any road, whether it be a small side road or a major highway, is an unsafe environment for cyclists, but of course cyclists unquestionably have every right to be there and to expect that fellow road users will deliberate on the effects of their actions.

Of course, wider roads would be the ideal, but the costs are astronomical and the money has to come from somewhere. It is often said that cyclists, and indeed motorists from southern states, are appalled at the state of our roads, but it tends to be forgotten that those states have a large populace over a far smaller area and thus a smaller road network compared to our huge state with a far smaller revenue-producing population. In today's *Cairns Post*, a local consulting engineer conceded that roads designed decades ago did not take into account the growing number of cyclists and pedestrians and that retrofitting the Captain Cook Highway would be costly.

There are those who argue that accidents would not happen if cyclists used bike paths. While there are, indeed, miles of bike tracks throughout the region, cycling enthusiasts, particularly those practising for events or cycling for fitness, contend justifiably that they cannot get up speed on a bikeway shared by pedestrians. Racing bike owners would also argue that the expansion joints in the concrete of bike paths cause rapid deterioration of expensive bikes.


Share the Road has excellent intentions, but those on both sides of the argument need to accept the part they have to play to ensure Tanya's untimely death was the last. How do they do this? The only solution is shared recognition of danger, mutual respect between cyclists and drivers, and working cooperatively towards measures that will prevent any further tragedy.

Last week I spoke to the manager of one of the largest fleets of coaches in Cairns, Down Under Tours, whose vehicles travel all over the region, including north to Port Douglas along the coastal highway and west up the single lane, winding range roads to the Atherton Tablelands. He was quick to point out that there were some roads around the area that are, without a doubt, best avoided by cyclists. As both a cyclist and a driver of huge vehicles, he certainly sees both sides of the coin. While excusing himself for the pun, he insists cycling safety is a two-way street with cyclists and motorists needing to show each other due respect. As an operator of a fleet of coaches, Down Under Tours has taken the safety message on board literally, utilising the rear of their coaches as a travelling billboard to push the safety message, reminding road users that everyone on a bike is someone's loved one and they are expecting them home tonight.

Overseas students around our city pedal their way to language schools or other learning facilities seemingly oblivious of the road rules: jumping red lights, riding facing the traffic on the wrong side of the road and around roundabouts, no hand signals, with helmets perched on the back of their heads. Unfortunately the traffic in Cairns does not travel as slowly as it does in the congestion of Far Eastern cities where bikes are prevalent as an alternative and sometimes faster means of travelling from A to B through stationary vehicular traffic. I would suggest we examine options of educating these young people, either through warning notices presented to them when they utilise bikes given to them at their accommodation houses or even on entry into the country as students.

So where do we go from here in preventing further tragedy? What are the essentials of safety that will prevent another Far North Queenslander from going home to their family? Road signage, safety awareness initiatives, efficient road sweeping to ensure removal of potentially hazardous rubbish, suitably visible clothing for cyclists and compulsory cycling proficiency tests for young or overseas cyclists are all suggestions for greater safety. Adequate cycling lights, increased penalties for those who breach the rules and, in an ideal world, wider roads—which would involve revenue funding strategies such as bike registration which is not a popular choice for our cyclists—have also been suggested.

## Budget

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.35 am): Later today the Treasurer will hand down a budget that breaches the LNP's now infamous Contract with Queensland signed by the Premier and every single one of his MPs. Last year the Treasurer said that the 2013-14 budget would not contain new taxes, yet it will include the most tax increases and price rises in living memory. It is a budget that will lock in

risers in household bills of \$500 on average and new tax hikes of more than \$100. It is a budget that sees the average cost of living increase in total more than \$600 per year. The costs for regional Queenslanders are even higher, with average increases of \$690 per year. The increases are potentially even greater for people in cyclone and flood impacted areas, with increases ranging between \$610 to more than \$785 per year. This was after the LNP promised at the election to save each household \$330 per year.

It is a budget that will lock in an historic rise in electricity prices of 22.6 per cent on average, or \$268. For elderly people living alone this increase is even worse, averaging 27.9 per cent. This increase follows a rise of 11 per cent, or more than \$140 on average, this financial year—nearly double the increase last financial year. The Treasurer yesterday described this budget as easier than the last. I do not think Queenslanders agree with him.

The impacts of the LNP's new tax hikes in this budget are particularly concerning for regional Queenslanders. The increase in the rate on insurance duty is nothing short of a tax on hardship and misfortune. Insurance premiums have increased by up to 1,000 per cent in parts of North Queensland since Cyclone Yasi hit in 2011. Nearly a third of insurers are failing to provide quotes in North Queensland. These tax hikes are hitting hardest those Queenslanders who can least afford it. In Roma, where the average premium is now over \$3,400 according to Suncorp, the LNP's insurance tax slug will be more than \$50 on home and contents insurance. The average flood insurance premium from Allianz insurance is reported to be \$8,200 per year in Queensland and can reach as high as \$19,000. The LNP's insurance tax slug here would equate to another \$123 to \$285 per year. This is in addition to a new fire tax for regional Queenslanders of at least \$90 per year. This may well be to pay for the Ted Malone review, but the Premier is on his Pat Malone if he thinks Queenslanders will be happy about it. There will be increases in insurance premiums on a motor vehicle of \$28 per year. These calculations do not include other LNP tax hikes, including on mortgage duty, life insurance riders and professional indemnity insurance.

These broken promises on cost of living come just weeks after the Treasurer assured that he would not tax Queenslanders into their graves. It also follows a \$2 million taxpayer funded commission led by lifetime Liberal Party member Peter Costello, a commission that recommended in its final report that assets should be sold as an alternative to increasing taxes. Now this LNP government is doing both without seeking any permission from Queenslanders. In the last sitting I tabled an interim response to the final Costello report that exposed the dire assumptions being used by this government to abandon its election promises. The Treasurer in his response to this report did not take issue with any of its content. The Treasurer tried to claim that a budget black hole was found in the interim Costello report despite this being refuted by numerous independent sources. Not only this, but his criticisms were of updates of the budget position performed by Queensland Treasury under his own government. His only riposte was to continue selectively quoting from sources, including Queensland Treasury Corporation, about debt, while disregarding the assets the state owns.

You will not hear the Treasurer quote from the Queensland Treasury Corporation investor booklet he handed to investors last year when overseas that stated that—

Queensland's ratio of financial assets to total liabilities indicates its relative financial strength compared with other Australian states.

Or that—

The amount of money spent by Queensland on interest payments, when expressed as a share of revenue, is also low relative to its international peers ...


Or that—

Queensland has a far lower level of General Government net debt, relative to operating revenue—

compared with international peers.

In this very same investor booklet, the Queensland Treasury Corporation confirmed that there was no budget black hole, with a graph showing a return to surplus in 2014-15 without mass sackings and privatisation. It was a return to surplus without mass cuts and selloffs because it did not involve the \$4 billion in unfunded election promises from this Premier and this Treasurer. Those are unaffordable promises that they continue to break day in, day out since they were elected. They are promises that they never intended keeping. Queenslanders deserve a fact based economic debate, not one based on a politically motivated sham that is being used as a platform to sell off assets and sack Queensland workers.

## Mates4Mates

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (11.40 am): Unbreakable bonds, unshakeable support: those are the key words that are uniting a new generation of veterans within our community. They are mates looking out for mates. An RSL Queensland initiative, Mates4Mates provides a variety of rehabilitative support for returned servicemen, servicewomen who, with honour and distinction, served our country across the globe in operational theatres such as Afghanistan, Iraq and East Timor, and their families. Mates4Mates ensures that current and former service men and women are not without the trust, humility and strength of mateship in times of need.

Since 1998, when Australians first deployed to East Timor, over 65,000 men and women in uniform have served our country abroad. They are mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, each with their own experience. They now form a large part of our veteran community. When someone becomes a sailor, soldier or airman in the Australian Defence Force, they become a highly trained and professional member of a unique community. They are trained to deal with every aspect of their chosen profession. However, one aspect of life many are not prepared for is assimilation into civilian life. Often this can be a very hard and challenging ordeal, in particular for ill or wounded returned service men and women. The challenges faced when re-assimilating to the civilian world can be both physically and mentally challenging but, like all challenges faced in the military, they face it together.

Mates4Mates supports the veteran community through four initiatives: the Family Recovery Centre, soldier recovery centres, adventure challenges and mental health research. With the many challenges that face our diggers when they return from hostile areas, it is vital that throughout all communities awareness is spread and support grows for this organisation. The Family Recovery Centre is a facility that provides valuable services and support to current and former service personnel and their families. The adverse physical and psychological effects that modern warfare has on our service men and women can seriously affect the family unit. The Family Recovery Centre in Brisbane plays a vital role in helping the families of our returned service personnel to work through the many challenges they may be facing. The services include psychological counselling, career coaching programs, wellbeing workshops, physical rehabilitation and conditioning, adventure challenge training and family support meetings.

Mates4Mates currently operates two soldier recovery centres, one at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, and the second at Lavarack Barracks, Townsville. Those purpose-built facilities aid in a soldier's recovery process before either returning to service or transitioning into civilian life. Each of the centres comes equipped with specialist programs and activities tailored to the individual needs of each soldier, thus ensuring the best possible outcomes. We need to grow community support and awareness so Mates4Mates can continue to support our Defence Forces and establish further centres across Australia.


Mates4Mates is also undertaking training to participate in a series of adventure challenges to be held throughout the year. Adventure challenges provide the participants with an opportunity to undertake a challenge and achieve a unique goal, which will help them in their recovery. Those carefully designed Mates4Mates challenges focus on psychosocial and physical rehabilitation, which helps performance in life. In July, Mates4Mates will be tackling the Kokoda Track. Mates4Mates will take up to 50 wounded Australian service personnel and the families of those who have been killed in Afghanistan on an adventure of a lifetime. For the wounded who take on the journey that follows the footsteps of Australian diggers and heroes of years gone by, it will be an uplifting and rewarding experience. The unique and challenging environment and the sheer beauty of the Papua New Guinea jungle will help to unite wounded soldiers and families of our fallen.

Another challenge that Mates4Mates is embarking on is a monumental physical voyage from Sydney to Brisbane in a kayak on the open seas. When young fit soldiers lose the use of their legs through severe injuries, the impact can be devastating. That is why the Sydney to Brisbane kayak challenge is so important to our young wounded soldiers. It will be a fulfilling and uplifting adventure that would be impossible for most able-bodied Australians. The sense of achievement in undertaking such a journey is equal only to the challenges the young wounded soldiers will face in their lives. Huge waves, sharks and 21 gruelling days at sea await those young men.

Furthermore, Mates4Mates is fighting side-by-side with our wounded heroes on one of the greatest battles a returning soldier faces, that is, PTSD. Mates4Mates is the beneficiary of a post-traumatic stress disorder study funded by the Returned & Services League of Australia, Queensland branch. The research findings will be put into practice through programs delivered by the Family Recovery Centre. This exciting and worthy initiative, carried out by the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation, forms an integral part of what Mates4Mates is all about.

None of the initiatives would be possible without the support of the community. Five minutes is not sufficient time in which to raise awareness of the magnificent work Mates4Mates is accomplishing. I say 'thank you' to Mates4Mates and to the brave men and women they support, our brave mates. We must look after those who put themselves in harm's way to look after us.

### Calliope High School

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (11.44 am): I rise to speak again on behalf of the Calliope community in relation to the proposal to sell the Calliope high school land. Although I live at the back of Calliope, my kids have well and truly passed high-school age and, therefore, I cannot claim to have a vested interest. Calliope is approximately 24 kilometres from Gladstone and is a rapidly growing community. Many families purchased or moved into the area believing that the high school would be built and that their children could attend it. At present, 240 high school students travel into Gladstone to attend state government high schools. That number does not include private school attendees, home schoolers or boarding school students, which would push the number up to around 400. The number will increase by an additional 100 when the year 7 cohort joins the state high schools in 2015.


Parents in the community are extremely concerned. They have stated that their students begin their school day boarding the bus at seven o'clock in the morning. Some travel over 70 kilometres each way to get to school. On a good day, the journey can take up to one and a half hours each way due to road and traffic conditions. Many of the buses carry the maximum passenger limit and some carry over the maximum passenger limit, meaning that even when travelling on the highway doing highway speeds some students are standing. The high school bus travels the Dawson and Bruce highways, through the heavy road works at the Calliope crossroads. Hundreds of heavy vehicles travel the highway many times a day. The community is aware of approximately 670-plus quarry runs alone that use that road. That number does not include the average daily Gladstone regional vehicles and heavy vehicles that use the highway.

Parents and some students are concerned about issues such as fatigue and time management. The students complain heavily that they are tired and they do not have enough hours at home to do homework, study, sport activities, and enjoy social and family time. They feel that the travel times and the conditions seriously jeopardise their study capabilities. Indeed, one community member has spoken with local industry representatives who stated that those travel conditions are completely unacceptable for their employees to travel to and from work. The industry representatives have said that they cannot fathom how it is acceptable or even legal for children to have to do the same. I know with workers on the island, there are constraints on the times worked by adults, mainly males but also females.

The minister has stated there was not enough growth in the area. I do not believe that the modelling for the growth that has been accessed by the minister appropriately reflects the growth and does not include areas outside of Calliope such as south towards Benaraby, the Boyne Valley, Yarwun, Nagoorin, Ubobo, Builyan and Many Peaks. In 2011, ABS statistics stated that the analysis of the five-year age groups of Calliope, including Beecher and Burua, compared to Gladstone Regional Council areas showed that there was a higher proportion of people in the younger age group, under 15, and a lower proportion of people in the older age group, 65 plus. Overall, 25 per cent of the population was aged between zero and 15 and 7.8 per cent was aged over 65 years, compared to 22.9 per cent and 9.1 per cent respectively in the Gladstone Regional Council area. From 2006 to 2011, the population of Calliope, including Beecher and Burua, increased by 2,211 people, which was a 64.6 per cent increase. That represents an average annual population change of 10.48 per cent, which is well over the state's average. That growth has continued at least at that current rate, I believe exponentially. Calliope State School currently has 480 children attending. When you break down the total into grades, there is a concentration of numbers in the lower years, that is, prep through to grade 3. Within the next five years, as those children continue through, a larger number of children will require high schools.

The community is extremely disappointed and disheartened that the Education Department has made the decision to sell the land. At the recent auction, the land was passed in after a ridiculously low price of \$400,000 was offered. For the government, the holding price for that block of land is infinitesimal compared to the cost—if it could find such a block—of a comparable block of land in the Calliope area that is central and accessible, out of the wet weather effect and available for the department to purchase. I believe well within the next few years a high school will be needed and I ask for that land to be retained.

### Reedy Creek, Quarry

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.49 am): Last week I attended a meeting organised by the Stop the Gold Coast Quarry group, a group who have been absolutely motivated to protect their community from the establishment of a quarry close to their homes. I have previously spoken in this place about the quarry and I have encouraged members of the public to become part of the environmental impact statement assessment process by putting in a submission to the Coordinator-General.

Today I wish to update the House on the efforts of my constituents in this regard. The community has truly embraced the need to make their views known. I have now received more than 1,000 signed letters which the residents of Reedy Creek and those in the Tallebudgera Valley in my electorate have entrusted me to bring to the attention of the Coordinator-General.

There are only 2,000 people enrolled to vote in Reedy Creek. To be able to say that more than half of the constituents of Reedy Creek were motivated enough by their opposition to the quarry that they were willing to put pen to paper is quite extraordinary. We know that this is only part of the story. Of course, some residents have decided to communicate directly to the Coordinator-General. Some have banded together and submitted EIS responses developed as part of a group. The Gold Coast City Council has produced its own submission as has the Stop the Gold Coast Quarry group. Some may be opposed but have not yet motivated themselves to become part of the process. I urge residents in this position to act now as the cut-off date of 11 June approaches fast.

So how much vehement opposition to this quarry exists in those suburbs surrounding the proposed quarry site? More than 1,000 residents of Reedy Creek have seen fit to record their opposition to the quarry on paper and send it to me. More than 600 people braved one of the wettest and coldest nights we have seen on the Gold Coast for quite a while to turn up to a public meeting to record their opposition to the quarry.

The mayor of the Gold Coast, Tom Tate, is opposed to the quarry. Local councillors Daphne McDonald and Chris Robbins oppose this quarry. My state parliamentary colleagues the members for Burleigh, Currumbin and Mermaid Beach oppose this quarry. Local federal member Karen Andrews opposes this quarry. My office is contacted every day by someone who wants to place on record their opposition to this quarry. I have never met any constituent in person who is not directly linked to the quarry or Boral who is not opposed to this quarry. I have never seen an issue that is so broadly opposed and has such little support. There is a reason for this. There will only be one winner if this project goes ahead and that winner will be Boral.

There will be thousands upon thousands of losers. Firstly, those whose views are damaged by what is essentially the establishment of an open-cut mine in suburbia. There will be those whose health is put at risk through additional dust being launched into the atmosphere by this project. There will be those who have to brave the traffic in Reedy Creek as they go about their day.

I have spoken about Reedy Creek traffic issues in this place recently. There is already a congestion problem. Adding one truck a minute to our local roads will only exacerbate the problem and the solutions being worked on will then not address the existing problem but simply serve to maintain the substandard status quo.

There are those who see the value of their greatest investment fall. There are those affected by noise pollution. But we did see the federal Labor candidate for McPherson come to the meeting and try to link herself to this issue in order to ingratiate herself with the public who are so incensed that this quarry remains a possibility.

**Mr Stevens:** Labor mates put it up.

**Ms BATES:** Exactly. I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. She was right to say at the meeting that this is not a federal issue. I agree with her on one point. So the question then is: what was she actually doing there? The federal government can only intervene if a rare and endangered species is discovered on the site. The only rare and endangered species I have


witnessed anywhere near this quarry is the former failed state ALP candidates and would-be ALP candidates who, prior to the election, were nowhere to be seen and who were not willing to stand up for locals and fight against the Bligh government's position on this quarry. They were silent then. That is why they only managed to get 16 per cent of the primary vote in Surfers Paradise and only 17 per cent of the primary vote in Mudgeeraba. Surely they are an endangered species, if not close to extinction.

Amazingly there has been a mysterious development where the species seems to have returned to greater levels. We now have the Labor candidate for McPherson complaining on Facebook that we have not done enough to stop the project and the former failed Labor candidate for Surfers Paradise doing the same. I ask where they were when Labor was kicking this project along. They must remember that we are in this position thanks to Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser trying to call this project in.

During the election campaign the LNP's state members and candidates did not shy away from addressing this issue. The former failed ALP candidate for Surfers Paradise—who I believe has moved to Burleigh so maybe he is looking at a tilt there because he did not do very well against the member for Surfers Paradise—has not been seen. But apparently now he is claiming to be an affected local. I think at the meeting he called himself Matt from Burleigh. I was very glad that the member for Burleigh thanked the ALP for the question on the night.

*(Time expired)*

### Mount Isa-Townsville Rail Line

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.55 am): I rise in the House to discuss some significant issues surrounding the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line which is known as the great northern rail line. Currently I believe the line is suffering as a result of the corporatisation and now commitment to the full privatisation and continuous removal of maintenance staff along the line and general reductions in maintenance spending over the last 20 years. If this requires, as mentioned earlier today, a commitment from the federal government then I look forward to the day—in the event of a change of government at the federal level—that the Queensland government ensures this critical investment is made.

The Mount Isa System Rail Infrastructure Master Plan 2012 indicates that there is currently 380 kilometres of steel sleepers and light rail on the north-west corridor that was laid in the 1960s that require replacement to bring the rail network up to a suitable standard. Traditionally, a railway line has a working life of around 50 years before it is due for replacement. In the case of the north-west corridor, much of this rail line is coming to the end of its life. This may be one reason we are experiencing so many derailments across the corridor.

Modern heavy haul rail systems, like our coal network, comprise heavy rail laid on concrete sleepers. This is what is needed on our corridor. We have witnessed train sizes increase from an average of 4,000 tonne to 7,200 tonnes of distributed power trains with the introduction of the Pacific National Queensland magnetite trains between Townsville and Cloncurry in recent years. This trend will possibly increase as we need to get heavier trains in the future to meet potential growth in the north-west minerals province.

The LNP's proposal to outsource the maintenance on this track is a recipe for disaster, particularly if we look at past history of what has occurred with UK, New Zealand and, more recently, Tasmanian rail. In all these cases, the private operators who became responsible for the below rail maintenance of the network never invested enough of the returns into maintaining the track to a suitable standard. With TasRail, Pacific National/Toll ran the network into the ground and then walked away from it, with the government left to pick up the bill of returning the state's rail network to an efficient and safe operation. Looking at the amount of investment that is required to bring the north-west corridor up to a suitable standard—which I believe is some \$3 million a kilometre—and to meet the growing demand, it is highly unlikely that once the network is outsourced to a private company the required upgrade work needed to meet future tonnage will be forthcoming.


Under right to information I obtained the following information on disturbances along the line. From 1 June 2010 to 31 December 2012 there were 136 derailments including 31 running line derailments. This represented a large increase from the two years previous. There is a significant increase here. Why? I will offer a suggestion. We are seeing here the reduction of the maintenance of rolling stock along this line following part privatisation of QR National as it was previously called. With the advent of that, we have seen maintenance crews taken off this line. Again we are looking at more reductions in staff at Hughenden.

In 12 of the line derailments mentioned earlier, faulty rolling stock or rolling stock issues were to blame including broken axles, defective bearings and flange climb. Significant track damage was done with the majority of these line accidents ranging from 100 metres to more than two kilometres, with delays from one day to two weeks. That represents a significant hole in revenue to the state government every time that happens. Every time that rail line is interrupted it means Queenslanders are missing out on revenue that we desperately need.

The speed of the trains in those accidents ranged from 10 kilometres an hour to 56 kilometres an hour. The agreement signed by most states some years ago was that trains in every state would travel at 80 kilometres an hour. So as members can see, we are well below that capacity on that line due to the slow speeds trains can travel at.

The number of train wagons hauled is difficult to assess given the different companies along the line, although Aurizon is the largest hauler with varying weights of train wagons and loads. I think the government now has a very strong responsibility to take note of the problems on this track and to look at what is causing the problems we are facing now. I believe that the problems started back in the 1990s when the Goss government decided to sack over a thousand rail workers on that western line. It is a path that this government seems willing to continue to go down, because it keeps happening. Rail workers in Hughenden are now facing job cuts when they are the ones who keep this rolling stock maintained. They have the local knowledge and they keep those towns alive. Yet these blokes are looking at losing their jobs right now. So I call on this government to stop that from happening and to keep this line viable and efficient to keep industry going.

### Queensland Plan

 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (12.00 pm): One thing on which the Newman government should be congratulated is their effort to put in place a 30-year concept plan for where the people of Queensland today want to see this state go and what sort of state they want their children to be living in. This is a very determined effort to get past short-termism and to make it a bipartisan plan that survives the various changes of government that will happen. As part of that, within my electorate of Moggill I am convening a number of seminars for different groups within my community. I held the first of those on Sunday, 2 June at my home in Brookfield, and the subject of our first seminar was education. We had representatives from early childhood, from local primary, from local secondary, from tertiary institutions and a research scientist.

There were a number of things that everyone at this meeting—and they were people of great experience and great passion when it came to the education of our children—were in agreement on. The first was that the critical component of education is early childhood and that what we are training our young people to become is education for life. They need to learn not just facts and figures and teach to a test but they need to learn resilience; they need to learn negotiating skills that are critical to our interpersonal relationships; they need to learn empathy for those around them; and they need to develop an awareness that not everybody has a life that is comfortable, that people live with disabilities, with family dislocations and with other adverse circumstances. Part of that critical component for teaching children those sorts of skills is the hands-on activity that children engage in with their peers and with adults. There was universal agreement that we did not want to see our young children, our prep year children, simply sitting at a desk being taught at but that they should be in small groups with adults being involved with them and the discussion and the hands-on activities that become part of that.

So the first great challenge is to overcome the social change that means families in our society do less together. Many children have only one parent. In many cases parents work away from home on a fly-in fly-out basis. In many cases both parents need to go to work and are tired at the end of the day. In some cases people are separated for various reasons from extended family. So let's make our schools hubs of community and involve parents and citizens in the education of children. Let's engage local groups. If we are in a rural area, let's engage local farming groups, scientists and people from the services sector or the resources sector. Concerns were expressed that big schools meant fewer parents became involved and that there was a trend to teach to the test to get measurable results which are important but which will not always build what we want to build.


The second great challenge was to deal with the changes of technology. Parents simply do not know what they do not know when it comes to technology, and we are on the brink of revolutionary change that will make things that are new today, such as social media, as out of date as black and white or silent movies. So children need to learn how to learn and adapt to the future. We are without doubt at a most critical time in social change when it is quicker, more challenging and more

perplexing than ever. Those who follow us in this place will be standing here in the future talking about a gap that has grown between children who have good educational background, good engagement and good experience with technology and those who are disengaged, who drop out and who are unemployable unless we deal with those issues from a young age from now on.

*(Time expired)*

## MOTION

### Dissent from Deputy Speaker's Ruling

 **Mr HOPPER** (Condamine—KAP) (12.05 pm): I move—

That this House dissent from a ruling by Madam Deputy Speaker on 22 May 2013, appearing at page 1737 of the *Record of Proceedings*, that the point of order raised by the member for Condamine requesting that the Attorney-General withdraw offensive words in reference to the member for Condamine was not a point of order.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this motion. I have at all times respected this institution in my 13 years of being an elected member, and I must say that that is the first time I have ever been asked to leave the chamber.

There is no doubt that it was a very, very heated debate that night. The debate that night was on the clauses of a bill that the Attorney-General had before the House. The time for debate on the clauses is the only time when we can consider the bill in detail, and it is the right of every member of this institution to go through those clauses in detail and expect an answer from the minister. On that night the Attorney-General continually abused me—continually—and under standing orders that gave me the right to take a point of order. When you get abused in this House, you can take a point of order and ask for that abuse to be withdrawn. The Speaker then rules on that point of order and the member has to withdraw the abuse. That is what I have seen happen over the last 13 years in this institution. Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, I do not want to set a precedent by moving a motion of dissent from a Deputy Speaker's ruling. I think the Deputy Speakers do a wonderful job in this House, led by yourself.

Madam Speaker, that night, as I rose, we could hear from members opposite a 'woo' in the room. That more or less was very, very rude. Then every time I tried to speak I could hardly hear myself speak and it was a very, very robust debate. If I offended the House in any way, I do now apologise. At all times I will respect the chair.

Madam Speaker, with the numbers in this House, an arrogance has taken over this institution and it is an arrogance that has to be dealt with now by this motion. We have seen that arrogance from the Attorney-General, as he sits over there and grins. I have never in all my time seen a minister sit in this House and throw so much abuse at members opposite—never in my whole time here. I have sat here under Matt Foley and I have sat here under Mackenroth of all people, yet the Attorney-General beats them hands down.

Madam Speaker, I would ask you to closely look at this in the future, because this House is for debate; it is for bills to be debated where every member gets their say and we do not expect to be abused. Later we saw the Treasurer stand up and move that I be suspended for seven days. They used the weight of their numbers once again. The 75 members voted that I leave this chamber for seven days. I believe that I was quite within my rights to rise to take a point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to point of order, Madam Speaker. This dissent motion is quite clearly in relation to the point of order that the member for Condamine called, not on the naming.

**Madam SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Mr STEVENS:** It is not on the naming.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Condamine, I would ask you to address the motion and how your dissent relates to that.

**Mr HOPPER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will now address that. Thank you, Leader of the House. Madam Speaker, the Attorney-General, in the paragraph before, called me incompetent. He had called me incompetent many times that night. I had taken a point of order to ask for that to be withdrawn. I do find that clearly offensive. I rose and said—

I rise to a point of order. The minister has made another offensive comment.

Madam Deputy Speaker said—

That is not a point of order.

That is the clear reason this motion that I am speaking to at this moment is before the House. I rose and said—

I find it offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Madam Deputy Speaker said—

I have already ruled that is not a point of order. Please resume your seat.

I said—

Madam Deputy Speaker, I dissent from your ruling.


Then Madam Deputy Speaker said—

If you wish to issue a formal dissent to my ruling I suggest that you put it in writing.

I said—

I will put it in writing. I will issue a formal dissent from your ruling. I was totally disgraced by the minister and I did not have the opportunity to raise a point of order.

That is what this dissent motion is about. This government has used its powers to do what the standing orders clearly state it cannot do. The standing orders are written for our protection as members of this institution. That is exactly what I was doing on the Thursday night of the last sitting week. This ruling I clearly believe, and we clearly believe, was wrong. That is why we had that debate. If this sort of behaviour continues in this House, we will not have the right to follow our principles and our beliefs as elected members of this chamber. I ask that this dissent ruling be upheld.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (12.11 pm): It is very unfortunate that I was here in the House to bear witness to this unsavoury scenario which took place after dinner in the debate on the liquor bill. It is ill conceived, ill founded and without one iota of merit in terms of its very poor reflection on the office of the Speaker in this House. Whether it was the member for Broadwater who was the Deputy Speaker or whether it was the member for Rockhampton who was the Deputy Speaker, it is not about politics. It is not about what side a member comes from. It is about the Speaker's position in this House. That is so important to our Westminster system of democracy. It is so important to the dignity that we have in this House. We pride our reputations on the fact that we respect the Speaker as the umpire of what is fair and appropriate behaviour, what is debate according to the standing orders in this House and what is behaviour that is consistent with respectful behaviour to other members.

This dissent motion from the member for Condamine is clearly a reflection that the chair was incompetent in this particular declaration against the member for Condamine. I would say that on reading *Hansard* no-one would be in any doubt that the matters declared by the Deputy Speaker at the time to be personal reflections were personal reflections. She asked the Attorney-General, who was making the speech at the time, to withdraw those personal reflections which the Attorney-General did when they became personal.

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

**Madam SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Mr HOPPER:** The motion I moved was—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! You cannot debate—

**Mr HOPPER:** Madam Speaker, the Manager of Government Business was clearly speaking about the page before in *Hansard*. The motion I moved is about the page after.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Please take your seat. We will hear the Manager of Government Business.

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Clearly, this dissent motion is about the point of order raised by the member for Callide in being linked with incompetence.

**Mr Bleijje:** Condamine.

**Mr STEVENS:** Condamine, sorry. It is lucky he is not here. I quote from *Hansard*—

While we are on incompetence when we are talking about the member for Condamine ...

I got it right that time. After all his time in the House—he was elected in 2001, I believe—that was the time that the member for Condamine, if he was personally offended, should have taken a point of order on a personal reflection. He has been here for 12 years and he knows very well when he should take a point of order, as he did previously which was accepted by Madam Deputy Speaker and was quite clearly the right and proper ruling. I do not think there is any dispute from the member about that. I again quote from *Hansard*—

... and the member for Gaven, honourable members may not have seen the member for Gaven, a member of PUP, getting advice from the opposition leader's adviser on this bill.

It may well be that the member for Gaven could have taken personal exception to those matters then, but he did not and the conversation continued—

Have we got an opposition or have we got a concoction of incompetents—

it is not personal; concoction means more than one incompetent—

that cannot work out what is going on?

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence to those comments made by the Manager of Government Business and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr Bleijie:** He is quoting me.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! The member is quoting *Hansard*. That is a direct quote from *Hansard*. I am reading the *Hansard* before me and I can confirm it is a direct quote from the *Hansard*. I call the Manager of Government Business.

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is amazing to see that the members have finally woken up—they were in the House at the time—to the fact that there may have been a personal reflection when incompetence was mentioned. I again quote the *Hansard*—

Have we got an opposition or have we got a concoction of incompetents that cannot work out what is going on? They cannot read five words in a clause of a bill.

It is 'they' as a group rather than a personal reflection. Quite clearly, under the standing orders there was no capacity whatsoever for the member for Condamine to take a point of order. The fact that he did so led to other unsavoury matters which eventually moved to his expulsion from the parliamentary precinct for seven consecutive days. That was a very unfortunate event not related to the particular motion which we are debating here today.

What we are debating here today is the ruling of the Deputy Speaker at the time who has done an excellent job in learning her role as Deputy Speaker. I congratulate the member for Broadwater on what I believe has been a wonderful commitment to learning the Speaker's role and on doing a great job. By the way, the Clerk of the Parliament was sitting on her right-hand side and Speakers normally take advice from the Clerk and the officers of the Clerk. The Deputy Speaker in her learning role had every capacity to go forward and make a correct decision. What we have here in this dissent motion is the unfortunate result of a member trying to justify his unjustifiable position in relation to a debate that we had on a particular issue which went much further and was much more animated than it should ever have been. We have all seen rants in this House from members on both sides.


**Ms Palaszczuk:** Speak for yourself.

**Mr STEVENS:** I can quote some good ones if I need to, Leader of the Opposition. But what we have is an independent adjudicator on the matter, and that is the Speaker of this parliament. Madam Speaker, I find it a great affront to the position of Speaker that this dissent motion in all its worthlessness is being put before this House to reflect poorly on one of the great groups of deputy speakers that we have and that you are overseeing to make sure that we have people competent in future times to make sure the behaviour in this parliament is of the nature of and in accordance with what is expected by the electors who put us in here.

We all understand the theatre of parliament. We have all ramped up certain performances to equate with the necessity of the moment in terms of the passion involved with a particular debate. But what those of us who are concerned with the reputation and the ongoing respect for the parliament do not do is take into question the rulings of the Speaker. Whether it is Madam Speaker in the chair or her representatives, this side should have and will have respect for that position. Personally, I take great heart when I am warned by Madam Speaker. I feel very naughty. Some others work the system a little bit stronger than I do and will take it further down the track. However, to maintain the grace and dignity of this precinct at all times we need to make sure we respect the Speaker. This motion is 100 per cent about the Speaker. We are not going to put up with petulant rhetoric in any shape or form from any member in this House.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** I see the Leader of the Opposition is very animated in her speech. I hope that the opposition joins with the government in opposing this motion against the Deputy Speaker, which is the Speaker's representative, and maintaining the propriety and dignity of this office against inappropriate questioning of the Speaker's decision. If this is not upheld we will see a precedent created and we will see behaviour that is not becoming of parliamentary representatives. We cannot allow this motion to proceed.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (12.21 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on this motion, which states—

That this House dissent from a ruling by Madam Deputy Speaker on 22 May 2013, appearing at page 1737 of the *Record of Proceedings*, that the point of order raised by the member for Condamine requesting that the Attorney-General withdraw offensive words in reference to the member for Condamine was not a point of order.

I was present that night. I should state from the start that I agree with many of the points made by the Leader of the House; I think we should have immense respect for this House and the position that the Speaker holds. However, that is not all we are talking about here. The LNP government was given an overwhelming majority in this parliament and I say congratulations to it. The people of Queensland voted for it, and that is what we were left with. However, with this comes a responsibility for the government to act with fairness and equality, and that is very important. It behoves it to demonstrate to the public that it will do that and to signal to the public that it will govern with fairness and equality. I believe that words to that effect were delivered by the Premier after the election. The actions of the last sitting were in stark contrast to this intent. This was a demonstration of a large majority government using its numbers to be judge, jury and executioner in its approach—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Mount Isa, I would draw you back to the specific motion before the House. This is not the time for a broad-ranging political debate but to address the issue of the motion.


**Mr KATTER:** The member for Condamine had every right to defend himself in the House after continued derogatory references to himself, his party and his colleagues. This opportunity is afforded to all members of parliament, but the government is saying it should not be afforded to the member for Condamine. I am perplexed as to why he cannot draw personal offence when the *Hansard* states—

While we are on incompetence when we are talking about the member for Condamine and the member for Gaven ...

I think that is pretty clear. If you cannot draw an inference of personal offence, I would have to question that. There is no disrespect meant to anyone; I think we are entitled to question any decision that goes against us. That takes me to the motion of dissent, which is about the House demonstrating fairness and equality in the order of its conduct. If passed, the motion will send a signal to the people of Queensland that the government is not going to use its large numbers to control the House and that its business will be conducted with fairness and equity. I urge the members of this House to support this motion.

The Leader of the House also talked about the 'ref's decision'. Casting my mind back, I played rugby league for 20 years and I had immense respect for referees on the field. They keep the games going and they do a wonderful job. However, I questioned their decisions many times, and I had that right. I had a wonderful relationship with refs and often received awards from them. I was entitled to question the decisions they made and their conduct and they probably appreciated that sometimes.

That is all we are talking about here: we are questioning a decision that was made. In the interests of fairness and equity, we should all be allowed to have our say in this House. I strongly urge all members to consider that and to send a signal to the Queensland public that we are about fairness and equity in the House. I support this motion.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (12.25 pm): I support the dissent motion moved by the member for Condamine. I believe this motion has been moved because we need to uphold the integrity of the parliament. Earlier the member for Mermaid Waters pointed out that there must be respect for the chair and that we do not question the chair. However, here we have the member for Condamine challenging the chair over a decision and, as we can see from *Hansard*, he had every right to do so. However, straight afterwards the Treasurer moved a motion and also challenged the chair's decision. That motion stated—

That the member for Condamine be suspended from the services of the House for seven days.

But only—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Take your seat.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. The member for Dalrymple has moved again to an issue that is not being discussed or debated in this dissent motion. That is another issue that was a follow-on issue from this particular motion. I ask him to stay relevant to this particular motion.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The member for Dalrymple is to address the specific motion that is before the House and not stray beyond the specific issue that is being addressed by the House.

**Mr KNUTH:** Just repeating the words of the member for Mermaid Beach, it is about a reflection on the chair. However, at the same time the Treasurer also had the opportunity. After the Deputy Speaker had ruled that the member for Condamine would leave the chamber for one hour, the Treasurer then—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Dalrymple, that is not the motion that is before the House. You are addressing another issue. I ask you to address the specific issue of dissent from a specific ruling and not another issue.

**Mr KNUTH:** I do not condemn the Attorney-General in the position that he took when he said—

While we are on incompetence when we are talking about the member for Condamine and the member for Gaven ...

I do not necessarily blame him for that because of the culture that is being passed down through the government and its leadership to its members. This is the direction that the integrity of the parliament is heading in. It concerns me that we saw a dissent motion moved by the member for Condamine expressing his feelings and the Treasurer then displayed an act whereby he would become judge and jury and the LNP would become—

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. The member for Dalrymple is talking about another issue completely which came about as a result of this point of order.

**Mr Hopper** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Members, this is a motion about a specific issue: moving dissent upon a specific matter of order. I ask the member to address that and I ask other members to cease their interjections.


**Mr KNUTH:** We must uphold the integrity of the Queensland parliament because parliament is about representation and scrutinising legislation. At the same time, it is also about members having an opportunity to bring issues before this parliament. The member for Mermaid Beach spoke for 10 minutes about how the member for Condamine cannot show disrespect for the chair—and I totally agree with that—but it is very important that we bring the issues of the electorates and the people to this parliament. It is of great concern when a motion is moved and then the government becomes the judge and jury and we do not have the opportunity for—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Dalrymple, please take your seat. I am warning you. I have given you ample opportunity to state the issue of dissent. I remind the House that what subsequently happened is not the issue of this dissent motion. I also remind the member that what subsequently happened with respect to the motion to remove the member for Condamine was actually as a result of a ruling of the Deputy Speaker. It was as a result of the member being named. These matters occurred subsequently and are not the matter of the dissent motion, but they were in fact as a result of the ruling of the chair. I ask the member to stick to this specific issue.

**Mr KNUTH:** Yes, Madam Speaker. The member for Condamine obviously has every right to bring issues before the parliament. He also had every right to challenge the minister on that night on the grounds that he was defending himself in taking a stand because he believed that the policy that was being debated that night, that the community benefit fund was going to be removed—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member, I will sit you down if you do not stick to the motion your own colleague has moved.

**Mr KNUTH:** I wholeheartedly support the member for Condamine, and I believe that this is an opportunity for us to bring this before the House. I believe that this is a very important issue, and I believe that we need to maintain the integrity of the parliament through and through. We need to also respect the decision of the Speaker. Likewise, government members also need to respect decisions from the Speaker. I wanted to ensure that the government acknowledged that it is important to respect the ruling of the Speaker at the last parliamentary sitting.


 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (12.33 pm): I rise to speak to this dissent motion. It is always challenging when the important decision is taken to dissent from the ruling of either Madam Speaker or a Deputy Speaker. I have had the privilege of being a member in this House for some years and also the privilege of acting as a Deputy Speaker. It is not an easy row to hoe. When I am in the chair my hope is that it will be nice and gentle, thank you very much.

I have had a very close look at the incident being referred to in this dissent motion. The member for Broadwater was the Deputy Speaker at the time. There was a lot of heat in the debate. I was in the chamber at the time and can confirm that things happened very, very quickly. The member for Condamine rightly took offence to things that had been said, and I think he has a reasonable right to challenge the ruling if he feels that it is unfair. That procedure is incorporated in the standing orders, so I support his right to question the ruling via a dissent motion.

I have looked at the words very carefully, bearing in mind that once you are in the chair things happen very quickly and you cannot always hear everything that is said. But when considering this motion, based on the *Hansard* record I understand that the member for Condamine believed that the reflection was on him; however, the debate by the Attorney-General had moved on from the member for Condamine to a personal reflection on the member for Gaven. Obviously, at the time the member for Gaven was not able to take a point of order. I am sure he would have.

The dissent motion today relates to the ruling of the chair in relation to the comments and the accuracy of that ruling. On the basis of the information that is before me in terms of *Hansard*, I believe that the reflection was more on the member for Gaven than it was on the member for Condamine. I believe that this debate brings into sharp focus the need for all of us to behave in a way that is not personally offensive. I do not believe that personal criticisms reflect well on us as individuals or as members of this House. We 89 members are privileged to be here. If at all possible, we need to use our time constructively.

So whilst I cannot support the member's challenge to the ruling, the dissent motion, I understand why he felt it was a reflection on him. Having read *Hansard*, I believe it was more a reflection on the member for Gaven. I believe that the member for Broadwater carries out her duties well, respectfully and independently, and I certainly wish her well. I again say to each and every member that this debate draws into sharp focus our need to deal with the issues and not focus on personalities.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—Ind) (12.36 pm): I concur with parts of what was said by the member for Gladstone, particularly in relation to me. I was present at the discussion that night, and I think it was a disgrace. I note what previous non-government speakers have stated, and I have also noted what was said by the Manager of Government Business.

On the matter relating to the member for Condamine and what occurred in the last sitting of parliament, I wish to clearly state that I have no argument with any of the actions or rulings of the Deputy Speaker at the time. They were—and are—the impartial umpire of sorts in debates which will occasionally become very heated. Debates such as this do occur, and emotions will certainly run high when they deal with matters which are of great community interest and go to the core of our democratic principles.

The dissent arose after this very heated debate in which components of an omnibus bill were not agreed to by non-government members. I say to the Manager of Government Business that that is what occurred. The inference raised today by the Manager of Government Business that the time of the debate is of special significance—it was after dinner and it was a liquor amendment bill—is obviously offensive. This is coming from a member who no doubt knows of these matters—

**Mr RICKUSS:** I rise to a point of order. This has no relevance to the debate we are having at the moment.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I will ask the member for Lockyer to take his seat. The Manager of Government Business did make a passing reference to the time of the debate. I would ask the member for Gaven to come back to the dissent motion and specifically address the issues of the dissent motion. This is not a wide-ranging political debate.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Certainly, Madam Speaker. I take your ruling and your guidance. Today the Manager of Government Business has quoted parts of speeches and then paraphrased statements of other members after quoting those statements. I will also quote the critical phrase from the

Attorney-General that led to this: ‘... I will start ...’ the abuse, after being asked by the member for Condamine to not ‘start the abuse’. If this was about reflecting on the Speaker and the Manager of Government Business that to use such inflammatory words is a challenge, both to the parliament and the Speaker’s position themselves—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, I have before me the *Hansard* relating to the issue of the dissent motion which has been moved by a member. Those comments are not actually relevant to the dissent motion. I ask you to focus on the issue of dissent which is before the House and not to enter into a broad-ranging political debate.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I take your guidance. There is nothing about abusing your opponents that actually does you any good, and it does not help the parliament. The mere fact that the Attorney-General when in the position of an overwhelming majority—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member, I will sit you down if you do not respect the fact that this is actually a specific motion moved by a member of the parliament. It is not a broad-ranging political debate. Address the issue or I will sit you down. Have respect for the motion that is before the House.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Thank you. There is a pervasive culture of using false statements and provocative language and personal abuse, and it leads to matters such as these dissent motions. What has the government got to hide? It has an overwhelming majority—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member, I now warn you under standing order 253A. You have been asked to address the motion before the House. You have had the opportunity to do that. You are now casting aspersions that are beyond the matter before the House and it is out of order. I name you under 253A.

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (12.40 pm): I move—

That the member, for disrespecting the House, be suspended from this House.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The member has time on the clock. He can continue in respect of the motion that is being debated.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will take your guidance and I will continue no further.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I will correct the record. I meant to say I warned the member under standing order 253A, just so I am quite clear if I used the wrong word. I apologise to the House. I call the member to continue. He has time on the clock. That was the intention of my warning under 253A, but I ask the member to stay to the dissent motion.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Madam Speaker, I respect your guidance on the matter. I believe that I have been given a very fair chance by you and I would like to now take my seat. Thank you.

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

*In division—*

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Members, order! I am going to warn members. It is not helpful to have interjections during a division and I remind members that the chair can still in fact warn members if they are unhappy with behaviour during divisions.


**AYES, 13—**Byrne, Douglas, Judge, Katter, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott, Trad, Wellington. Tellers: Hopper, Knuth

**NOES, 70—**Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Woodforth, Young. Tellers: Kaye, Menkens

Resolved in the negative.

## HEALTH OMBUDSMAN BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (12.51 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

HEALTH OMBUDSMAN BILL 2013

*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 establish a health ombudsman and to provide for a system for dealing with complaints and other matters relating to the health, conduct or performance of health practitioners and the services provided by health service organisations, and to amend this Act, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 and the Acts mentioned in schedule 1 for related purposes


(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 4 JUN 2013

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 [[2768](#)].

### Introduction

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (12.51 pm): I present a bill for an act to establish a Health Ombudsman and to provide for a system for dealing with complaints and other matters relating to the health, conduct or performance of health practitioners and the services provided by health service organisations, and to amend this act, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 and the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for related purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health and Community Services Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Health Ombudsman Bill 2013 [[2769](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Health Ombudsman Bill 2013, explanatory notes [[2770](#)].

As I outlined to members on 16 April 2013, a public interest disclosure about the conduct, regulation, registration and discipline of medical practitioners in Queensland and three subsequent reports arising out of those initial allegations do not instil public confidence in the way in which complaints about health services and providers are managed in this state.

This bill takes on board the findings and recommendations made by Mr Chesterman and Dr Forrester in their inquiries that followed the public interest disclosure. The bill seeks to rectify the dysfunctional handling of health related complaints in Queensland and establishes a Health Ombudsman as the lynchpin of a new and accountable health complaints management system.

The Health Ombudsman is a statutory position, which will replace the Health Quality and Complaints Commissioner. The Office of the Health Ombudsman will replace the Health Quality and Complaints Commission. The Health Ombudsman's functions as prescribed in the bill will be—

- to receive health service complaints and take action to deal with them under the act;
- to deal with systemic health service issues;
- to oversee the performance of the national boards and the national agency in their health, conduct and performance roles;
- to provide information to the public, health service providers about minimising and resolving complaints; and
- to report to the minister and the parliamentary committee.

The key outcomes of the bill are to—

- remove the role confusion between complaints entities;
- strengthen the way in which serious allegations against registered health practitioners are managed in Queensland;

- enable immediate action to be taken to suspend or place conditions on registration where there is a serious risk to the public;
- enable action to be taken against health practitioners who are not registered, including taking these persons to QCAT; and
- strengthen the transparency and accountability in the health complaints management system.

The bill will also address the issues of the poor performance and lack of oversight of the Queensland Board of the Medical Board of Australia.

The bill provides better oversight of the administration of the health complaints management system by the Minister for Health. This includes requirements for the Health Ombudsman to publish regular performance reports on the complaints management system. The Health Ombudsman, national boards and the national agency must also report to the minister on particular matters, such as allegations of professional misconduct. The minister may direct the Health Ombudsman to undertake an investigation or inquiry.

Under the bill, the relevant parliamentary committee also has the role of monitoring the operation of the health complaints management system and the performance of the Health Ombudsman, the national agency and national boards. The parliamentary committee also advises the minister in relation to appointment of the Health Ombudsman.

A guiding principle of the bill is that the health and safety of the public are paramount. This principle must be taken into account by the Health Ombudsman, QCAT and other authorised persons when administering the legislation.

In addition to an Office of the Health Ombudsman, the Health Ombudsman will be supported by advisory committees and panels comprising appropriate qualified persons to advise the Health Ombudsman about clinical matters or health consumer issues when required. The Health Ombudsman may also appoint Deputy Health Ombudsmen to assist with performing statutory functions. In deciding appointments, the Health Ombudsman will give due regard to the need to receive sound clinical, health and legal advice and support.

Another key role established under the bill is the Director of Proceedings, a lawyer within the Health Ombudsman's office who is appointed by the Health Ombudsman to make decisions about referring complaints and other matters to QCAT and whether to prosecute those matters.

The bill repeals and replaces the Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006 and the Health Practitioners (Disciplinary Proceedings) Act 1999. The bill also amends the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law so that Queensland becomes a coregulatory jurisdiction for the purposes of the national law.

This will not affect the national registration of health practitioners, but enables Queensland to vary how the disciplinary provisions of the national law apply in Queensland. In particular, the bill provides that complaints—called notifications under the national law—will be received by the Health Ombudsman and all serious disciplinary matters will be dealt with by the Health Ombudsman.

The bill also provides for the exchange of relevant information between the Health Ombudsman and the national boards and national agency.

Targeted consultation with key stakeholder groups was undertaken when developing the legislative framework for a new health complaints management system and then again when the bill was being drafted. The bill takes into account valuable feedback received during these consultation processes.

Stakeholder consultation revealed strong support for improvements to the health complaints management system in Queensland. Role confusion, delays in complaints handling and investigations, and inadequate communication and transparency were highlighted as issues in most submissions.

The key matters that received support from stakeholders were—

- the establishment of a single entry point for complaints;
- investigations being primarily undertaken by the state health complaints entity, with the timeframes for investigations being expedited;
- a requirement to keep complainants and health service providers better informed of the handling of complaints, including investigations;
- the power for the health complaints entity to take immediate action in relation to health practitioners where the public is at risk;

- a requirement to notify employers of serious matters concerning their employees;
- standard setting being addressed through national arrangements; and
- strengthened oversight of the health complaints management system by the minister and the parliamentary committee.

Consultation also occurred with other jurisdictions, in response to which positive feedback was received.

I am grateful for individual health consumers who have taken the time to write to me since my announcement to overhaul the health complaints management system in Queensland. I am encouraged by their words of support for my government's commitment to transform the health complaints management system in Queensland, by establishing a system that is transparent, accountable, and expeditiously deals with health service complaints.

I welcome further input from these stakeholders and the broader public during consideration of the bill by the Health and Community Services Committee.

This bill underpins an improved health complaints management system, which seeks to—

- protect the health and safety of the public;
- promote high standards of practice and service delivery by health service providers; and
- maintain public confidence in the state's health complaints management system.

I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (1.00 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 Health and Community Services Committee

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

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.30 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2013

*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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2013 and 1 July 2014


(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 4 JUN 2013

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 4 June 2013, from her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Appropriation (Parliament Bill 2013 [\[2771\]](#)).

## Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.31 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the financial years starting 1 July 2013 and 1 July 2014. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013 [\[2772\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2773\]](#).

This bill provides appropriation for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the 2013-14 budget and interim supply for 2014-15. Interim supply for the 2014-15 year will allow normal operations of the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service to continue until the 2014-15 Appropriation Bill receives assent.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill will provide the funding to ensure the continued operations of the Legislative Assembly and the Parliamentary Service. It also adheres to the recent convention that the Legislative Assembly's appropriation be contained in a bill separate from the Appropriation Bill for the other activities of government reflecting the government's commitment to the continued independence of the Legislative Assembly. Funding will cover the range of advisory and information services to assist the parliament, its committees and members to fulfil their constitutional and parliamentary responsibilities, including the Parliamentary Library, Committee Office, Parliamentary Reporting Service, Chamber and Procedural Services, and Security and Attendant Services as well as the provision of accommodation, hospitality and members' entitlements. I commend the bill to the House.

## First Reading

**Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.33 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.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The bill is set down for its second reading in accordance with standing order 177.

## BUDGET PAPERS

**Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.33 pm): Madam Speaker, I lay upon the table of the House the following documents: Budget Speech; Appropriation Bills Booklet, Budget Strategy and Outlook; Capital Statement; Budget Measures; Concessions Statement; Queensland State Budget 2013-14 at a Glance; Queensland State Budget Brochure; Queensland's Natural Disasters Budget Paper; Service Delivery Statements, including statements for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland; and Regional Budget Statements.

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Budget Speech—Budget Paper No. 1 [\[2780\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Appropriation Bills [\[2781\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Budget Strategy and Outlook—Budget Paper No. 2 [\[2782\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Capital Statement—Budget Paper No. 3 [\[2783\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4 [\[2784\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Concessions Statement [\[2785\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Queensland State Budget 2013-14—At a glance [\[2786\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Brochure of Queensland State Budget [\[2787\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Queensland's Natural Disasters [\[2788\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Governor, Public Service Commission, Queensland Audit Office [\[2789\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Treasury and Trade [\[2790\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Legislative Assembly of Queensland [\[2791\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs [\[2792\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry [\[2793\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services [\[2794\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Community Safety [\[2795\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Education, Training and Employment [\[2796\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Energy and Water Supply [\[2797\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Environment and Heritage Protection [\[2798\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Housing and Public Works [\[2799\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Electoral Commission of Queensland, Office of the Ombudsman, Public Trust Office [\[2800\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience [\[2801\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing [\[2802\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Natural Resources and Mines [\[2803\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Health [\[2804\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Queensland Police Service [\[2805\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts [\[2806\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning [\[2807\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games [\[2808\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Transport and Main Roads [\[2809\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Brisbane [\[2810\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Cairns [\[2811\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Darling Downs [\[2812\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Fitzroy [\[2813\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Gold Coast [\[2814\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Ipswich [\[2815\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Mackay [\[2816\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Outback [\[2817\]](#).


*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Sunshine Coast [\[2818\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Townsville [\[2819\]](#).

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2013-14: Regional Budget Statement—Wide Bay [\[2820\]](#).

## APPROPRIATION BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.34 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

APPROPRIATION BILL 2013

*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 authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2013 and 1 July 2014


(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 4 JUN 2013

*Tabled paper.* Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Appropriation Bill 2013 [\[2774\]](#).

## Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.34 pm): I present a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2013 and 1 July 2014. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation Bill 2013 [\[2775\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Appropriation Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2776\]](#).

### INTRODUCTION

In March 2012, the Queensland people voted overwhelmingly for change. They voted to break the cycle of waste and mismanagement, together with the debt and deficits that were the hallmark, indeed the habit, of the former Government.

Queensland had lost its way, surrounded by a fog of deficits and beset by a storm of debt, imperilling our future prosperity and future generations.

Madam Speaker, on the 11th of September last year I stood in this place and delivered the most important Budget in a generation.

That Budget charted the journey back to financial responsibility. It set out the way points to get Queensland's finances back on track and back in the black. That Budget was to see us landing at a fiscal surplus in 2014-15. And at the time I said:

*"Maintaining that balance, in the absence of extraordinary events, will complete the first stage in repairing Queensland's finances".*

We are well on our way on that journey now, but we have run into extraordinary events. And our journey back to a fiscal surplus will be, perhaps, longer than we first planned and hoped for.

We know now with some accuracy that we were blown off course by ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald and the summer of natural disasters to the extent of \$2.5 billion in damage and between \$500 million and \$750 million in lost economic production.

More broadly, we have also been beset with falling revenues, as has much of Australia. And like the albatross around the neck of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, we still have the burden of Labor's debt and the loss of the triple A credit rating.

While we meet this afternoon in the shadow of the natural disasters and a battered world economy, it is not the time to lament these misfortunes; it is time to pay the bill. We knew that this would be a long, sometimes treacherous journey but, Madam Speaker, if it was easy those opposite would have done it. That they failed to do so shows the magnitude of the task. But we would be letting Queenslanders down if we didn't continue with the journey and see it through to safe harbour.

In many respects this journey has become harder since last year's Budget. This year's Budget has again been framed in a challenging external environment. The revenue environment is weak and Queenslanders have again had to deal with the devastation of natural disasters.

The national economy is trying to manage the transition from an unprecedented peak in mining investment back to consumption in the broader economy on a more normal basis. It is a fine balancing act and confidence is the key.

Last year I concluded my first Budget speech around the theme that "confidence is everything". That is as true today as it was then. The Queensland Government will do its part in building confidence by being unashamedly pro-growth. We will make Queensland the best place to invest and do business in the country.

Last year we took the steps necessary to improve our finances. I said that my hope was that no Queensland Government would need to undertake a repair task of such magnitude again. It would be disrespectful to Queenslanders if we simply threw those gains away. This Budget locks in those gains. It makes good on our promise to deliver frontline services. It is not a frivolous or fanciful Budget. It does the hard yards up the middle that Queenslanders need to get their State's finances sorted out.

The Government will continue to be upfront about the challenges we face and take the community with us on the choices we need to make. The one thing we won't do is kick the can down the road for our children to solve our problems.

In 2013-14, our focus rightly turns to growth, rebuilding and the resilience of people and their communities.

## **THE ECONOMY—GROWTH**

Madam Speaker, the Queensland economy grew strongly in 2011-12, recording growth of 4 per cent.

In 2012-13, spending by businesses and households is expected to contribute a little less to growth, as mining investment approaches its peak and the impact of the 2011-12 one-off boosts to consumption pass.

Despite these changes, a strengthening in exports will see overall economic activity ease only slightly in 2012-13, to 3.5 per cent.

Economic growth in Queensland's major trading partners in 2013 is estimated to be 2.75 per cent, similar to that recorded in 2012. Growth is anticipated to strengthen to 3.25 per cent from 2014 onwards, with non-Japan Asia continuing to be the main driver of growth. However, these rates remain below the annual average of 3.7 per cent in the decade to 2007 immediately preceding the global financial crisis.

Looking ahead in Queensland, sustained low interest rates and stronger population growth are expected to strengthen spending by the household sector.

The pending completion of \$60 billion in LNG projects will see business investment fall from its historic highs each year from 2013-14 to 2015-16. Business investment will continue to feature prominently, but not in the way it has in the previous decade.

This Budget forecasts economic growth of 3 per cent in 2013-14. This places Queensland with a State growth rate second only to WA and above the national average of 2.75 per cent. Over the forward estimates economic growth is predicted to average over 4 per cent.

The ramp up in LNG production by 2015-16 will lead to growth in overseas exports of 23 per cent in 2015-16 which, combined with a stronger domestic sector, will boost economic growth to 6 per cent in that year. While these figures underpin our confidence for the future we need to recognise they are the product of the export of gas. We need to continue our work to strengthen and grow the other pillars of the economy that employ so many Queenslanders.

In this Budget, we see a strengthening household sector and increasing exports which will support a recovery in employment growth from 2013-14 onwards and a steady improvement in the unemployment rate, from 6 per cent in 2013-14 down to 5.5 per cent in 2015-16.

Employment growth is forecast to rise to 2.75 per cent per year by 2015-16.

The Queensland economy remains strong and is growing.

## **2013 NATURAL DISASTERS—REBUILDING**

Madam Speaker, early this year, Queenslanders were once again cruelly confronted with the hardship and challenge of natural disasters.

Ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald and the flooding that followed brought destruction to 57 Queensland local government areas from January to March 2013. Many of these same areas were just recovering from the loss and damage brought by the natural disasters of 2010 to 2012.

There was a substantial impact on agricultural production in the Wide Bay-Burnett, Lockyer and Fassifern Valley areas, including sugar cane, fruit and vegetable production.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority estimates the cost of the disaster to be \$2.5 billion, of which the State's contribution is in excess of \$620 million.

The size and scale of the 2013 disaster is often misunderstood because it did not feature as prominently as earlier disasters but its scale and reach was equally as devastating to those affected. In fact, in terms of cost it was second only to the December 2010 and January 2011 disasters.

Over 2,000 residents were evacuated in the Bundaberg region, over 4,300 properties damaged, 750 businesses affected across the State, 390,000 homes and businesses left without power, 22 per cent of State controlled roads affected and 3,100 kilometres of the State rail network damaged.

The additional cost of repairs comes on top of the cost of other recent significant natural disasters. As a result, this Budget allocates total disaster spending over the three years from 2012-13 to 2014-15 of \$9.3 billion.

The total cost of disasters since 2010 now stands at over \$13.8 billion. This represents enough funds to have built two cross river rail projects and a second range crossing for Toowoomba or \$3,010 per man, woman and child.

## **RESILIENCE**

Madam Speaker, this Budget provides funding of \$40 million, matched equally by the Australian Government, towards a Betterment Fund.

The Newman Government stood ready to make a contribution of \$100 million to a Betterment Fund but the Australian Government was unwilling to match the funding. A fund with \$200 million in it would have made a real dent in the backlog of betterment projects that local governments have put forward. But it was not to be.

There are obviously sound economic and public finance reasons to advocate for a new approach to disaster funding—we are about to repair some infrastructure for the second and third time in ten years.

Let's take just one example. In 2011, the Gayndah water intake plant on the banks of the Burnett River was damaged. The intake is the only source of water for the town. At a cost of \$1.22 million the water intake was repaired in its original place, to its original standard and specification. No flood proofing occurred. Along came the January 2013 floods and again, the Gayndah water intake plant, only a year old was severely damaged.

It is said that the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing but expect a different result. That was the Labor way.

This time it will be different, in partnership with the North Burnett Regional Council a new pumping station and intake will be built upstream at the Claude Wharton Weir, at a slightly greater cost, but a cost that is an investment in the future. It's a smart investment.

Betterment makes sense, it is better that the town gets clean drinking water and it is better that both the State and Australian Governments don't have to rebuild the same infrastructure twice.

This Budget puts a down payment on resilience, but it is unfinished business for the Newman Government and the Queensland community. It is the discussion we need to have and will continue to have over coming years.

## **DEBT**

Madam Speaker, with fiscal deficits since 2006-07 totalling \$45.3 billion, no one can deny that we inherited a debt and deficit problem from Labor.

The Budget sees that Labor debt in the General Government sector rising by \$9.4 billion over the forward estimates but, importantly stabilising in 2015-16. From 2013-14 onwards debt in the General Government sector rises by only \$800 million, as we rein it in.

Total debt will reach \$80.1 billion in 2014-15. This compares to Labor's last projection of \$85.4 billion, which the Commission of Audit found to be unrealistic. We have stopped the rot.

The General Government fiscal balance is estimated to be a deficit of \$8.7 billion in 2012-13, compared to a forecast deficit of \$11.2 billion in the 2012-13 MYFER.

The improvement in the forecast 2012-13 fiscal balance since the 2012-13 MYFER primarily reflects a government that can keep a tight rein on expenses, as well as a result of changes in the timing of disaster expenditure.

A fiscal deficit of \$7.7 billion is budgeted for 2013-14, compared to a forecast of \$4.6 billion in the MYFER. This largely reflects the incorporation of extra costs associated with recent flooding, a change in timing of Australian Government disaster recovery funding as a result of the changed expenditure profile, and lower royalty revenue.

As I have said consistently since becoming Treasurer, there is no magic pudding. Government must strive to live within its means, not simply because it's a good thing to do, but to ensure we have the funds available to invest, create jobs and grow the Queensland economy.

The reality is Labor's deficits are now catching up with us. They are restricting our ability to act.

Madam Speaker, in 2005, before the great debt binge began in earnest, a Queensland teenager leaving high school and commencing their adult life would have done so with a State debt burden of a modest \$3,900. A student in Grade 9 this year, who will be leaving school at the end of 2016—the point at which we finally stabilise the debt, will commence his or her adult life with a State debt burden of \$16,000. That is Labor's legacy.

In 2012-13 the interest payments on debt in the Government sector will rise by over 23 per cent. This robs the Budget of over \$2.1 billion, which could have been spent on service delivery and infrastructure.

So we have to be smarter about delivering infrastructure because Labor has maxed out the credit card. We will continue to drive partnerships with the private and non-government sectors to use the limited funds that we do have to invest in new infrastructure and revitalise services, because the people of Queensland deserve better from their leaders than decades of debt.

Strong expenditure control means the forecast level of borrowings at 30 June 2015 is expected to be \$6.2 billion lower than the comparable estimate in the Independent Commission of Audit's Interim Report and \$5.2 billion lower than final forecast by the previous Government. We are saving \$750 million in interest. That's money we can use to invest and deliver services.

We have brought the previous Government's debt spiral under control as we said we would before the election.

## **REVENUE & SAVINGS**

Forecasts of key own source revenues such as taxation, GST and mining royalties have fallen by \$5.3 billion since we were elected in March 2012 and \$2.6 billion since the 2012-13 MYFER.

To illustrate, land tax is down 6.4 per cent in Queensland—the first time a fall has been recorded since 1996-97. Gaming revenue from casinos has also fallen by 2.8 per cent since the last Budget.

This downturn also reflects the ongoing weakness of export coal prices, downward reductions in the GST pool distributed by the Australian Government and the impact of the slower than anticipated property market recovery on transfer duty and land tax.

If collected, the \$5.3 billion in revenue would have negated the need for any tax increases. The Government would have had the funds to expand infrastructure and deliver new services.

We may lament this loss of revenue, but that won't fix the problem. We have to toe the line and find ways to fix it. As the Premier often says "find the solution, don't fight the problem!".

Given the loss of revenue, the rebuilding task and the need to fund new services the Government has made the balanced and responsible decision to delay reaching a fiscal surplus in 2014-15. Instead we forecast a small fiscal deficit of \$244 million that year and project a fiscal surplus of over \$1 billion a year later in 2015-16. This is our best prediction but Madam Speaker I haven't, this Government hasn't, given up on reaching a fiscal balance sooner if we can.

In practical terms, the 2014-15 Budget result will depend heavily on the timing of payments from the Australian Government for its share of natural disaster costs.

The delay in reaching a fiscal surplus, means that the Government will not have to raise taxes or cut spending by as much as it would have otherwise had to do.

The State Government has only a small range of taxation measures at its disposal. These are usually inefficient and are unpopular at the best of times, but when revenue falls, expenditures increase and debt is your problem, there is only one option.

In this Budget we implement a small number of measures to help deal with the loss of revenue.

Remedial measures will improve the budget on average by \$450 million per annum.

The rate of duty applicable to insurance premiums for general insurance products will increase to 9 per cent from 1 August 2013. There will be no increase in the duty rate applicable to workers' compensation insurance premiums or Compulsory Third Party motor vehicle insurance premiums. Queensland's insurance duty regime will, along with New South Wales, remain the most competitive of all the States.

This measure will assist in meeting part of the State's contribution to the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, known as DisabilityCare Australia.

Queensland has a highly competitive payroll tax regime, with the lowest rate of payroll tax in Australia and the highest threshold of any mainland State. The Government has committed to further enhancing Queensland's competitiveness by increasing the payroll tax threshold to \$1.6 million. The next increase in the payroll tax threshold, to \$1.2 million, which had been intended to take effect from 1 July 2013, will now be deferred until 1 July 2015.

The Government will break with the past and recast the Urban Fire Levy first introduced in 1984. Currently, the cost of supplying Emergency Management, Fire and Rescue Services across Queensland is \$587.3 million. The current levy raises \$346.9 million, leaving a shortfall of \$240 plus million.

From 1 January the renamed Emergency Management, Fire and Rescue Levy will be extended to all properties receiving a rates notice. It is appropriate that as all Queenslanders potentially benefit from the work of emergency management services across Queensland, whether it's a helicopter rescue, water bombing, disaster co-ordination or swift water rescues they must make a contribution to those services. The Levy will also rise by 6.5 per cent from 1 January 2014. The lowest category of the existing Levy, Class D, will apply to those areas in Queensland who are currently not making a contribution.

In 2013-14 the Levy will fund approximately 60 per cent of the operational costs of these services. More importantly, it will provide a more sustainable funding base for services into the future.

The Government will await the recommendations of the Keely Review and detailed consideration of the review undertaken by the Member for Mirani before making any further changes to emergency services and related matters, as outlined in the Government's response to the Independent Commission of Audit's report.

As a result of these balanced changes Queensland will retain its competitive tax status, with per capita state tax estimated at \$2,528 in 2013-14, compared to an average of \$3,003 for the other states and territories. A saving of \$475 per capita.

## **EXPENSES**

General Government expenses in 2012-13 are estimated to be only 1.1 per cent higher than in 2011-12. This is the lowest rate of expenses growth since the introduction of accrual accounting in the public sector in 1998-99, and contrasts with average rates of expenses growth of 8.9 per cent over the decade to 2011-12.

Employee expenses in 2012-13 are estimated to be only 0.9 per cent higher than in 2011-12. This is the smallest increase since 1998-99.

Total General Government expenses in 2013-14 will increase by 4.1 per cent over the estimated actual for 2012-13, primarily as a result of natural disaster reconstruction works and for increased service delivery, including the provision of health and education services.

Expenses overall are projected to grow on average by 2.6 per cent over the period 2012-13 to 2016-17.

We value the taxpayer's dollar and we will continue to ensure we keep a tight rein on expenses. This expenditure constraint comes at a time when we are still investing in core services like health, education and disability services.

## **COST OF LIVING & ELECTRICITY**

Madam Speaker, this Government took to the last election a Contract with Queensland. This Government has delivered on that Contract and kept its promises.

We said that we would "Lower the Cost of Living for Families by Cutting Waste" and we have. In the Contract we said the following:

- We will abolish Labor's \$7,000 tax on buying the family home—it's been delivered
- We will freeze family car rego for our first term—it's been delivered
- Our four point plan will reduce household water prices—it's been delivered
- Cut Labor's public transport fare increases by half in our first term—it's been delivered,
- Reward regular commuters by reintroducing discounted weekly fares for go card users—that's been delivered, and

- We will reform electricity tariffs to save families money and ensure the cost of carbon tax and green energy schemes are listed on power bills—we have started that process and work is well underway to deliver on this commitment, including the freeze to tariff 11 last year.

Madam Speaker, the Government understands the shock and dismay of Queenslanders at the electricity price increase. It is indeed a kick in the guts for households and businesses. Frankly, it is also probably the single most difficult issue the Government has had to grapple with to date.

At its heart, the problems that we are dealing with are the consequences of decisions taken over a number of years where governments have either ignored, or papered over, the fact that those decisions would ultimately be paid for by electricity consumers. The truth is that when governments in Australia, be they State or Federal, pass laws or introduce schemes that move away from supplying electricity based on least cost, then under the rules that govern the Australian electricity market there can only be one outcome—consumers pay more.

The Beattie Government's decision in the middle part of the last decade to spend billions on the network in the name of reliability—is being paid for by consumers now. The Federal Government's 20 per cent Renewable Energy Target—is being paid for by consumers now. The former State Government's so-called Solar Bonus Scheme—it is effectively a \$3 billion solar tax being paid for by guess who?—Queensland consumers now. By 2015-16 the Solar Bonus is going to cost Queensland households an extra \$276.

And the latest and most unnecessary increase of them all—the Carbon Tax.

We have to stop loading up the electricity industry with policies that increase costs only to be surprised when those same policies increase prices.

Faced with the latest increase, the Government had two choices—it could introduce a new subsidy for electricity prices. However, with a \$7.7 billion deficit next year we would have to borrow the money to pay for it—meaning we would be asking taxpayers years down the track to pay off the debt for the electricity we are using today. That's not fair.

Alternatively, we could have increased taxes to pay for the subsidy. That is, increase taxes on people only to recycle it in the form of a subsidy to those very same people and make it sound like a virtue—straight out of the Julia Gillard and Wayne Swan play book.

What we are doing is controlling what we can control. We are making sure those electricity businesses we control are operating as efficiently as possible. The savings we are asking Ergon and Energex to find from their capital and operating budgets are for the express purpose of delivering better price outcomes for consumers over the long run. We have found capital and operating expenditure savings totalling \$3 billion out to 2019-20, but we are dealing with a massive network and that can't be turned on a dime.

## **KEY EXPENDITURES**

Madam Speaker, this is the Budget that invests in key frontline services—the education budget increases by \$707 million, or 6.6 per cent—the disability services budget is up \$64 million, or 4.7 per cent and the health budget is up \$533 million or 4.5 per cent.

Being a Government for all Queenslanders is vitally important to those of us on this side of the House. The Government will again invest heavily in our regions, through both specific programs like "Royalties for the Regions" as well as ongoing expenditure directed to where it is needed most.

Again in 2013-14, over 75 per cent of the Government's capital expenditure will take place outside Brisbane.

## **Disability Services**

In December 2012, the Government announced a commitment to provide an additional \$868 million over a period to 2018-19 to address the historical under-funding of disability services in Queensland and to support implementation of the NDIS in Queensland. This funding, coupled with the Australian Government's commitment to provide the State with a share of the proposed 0.5 per cent Medicare Levy increase will contribute to the Queensland Government funding of \$2.03 billion of scheme costs in 2019-20. This Budget makes the first allocation for the NDIS.

It also provides additional funding of \$106 million over four years to assist with existing Disability Services demand pressures. This funding will help to ensure that young people with a disability exiting the care of the State, or leaving school, get the support they need. It will also help people with spinal cord injuries to leave hospital and live in the community.

This Budget brings forward \$25 million into 2013-14 from 2015-16. This money will provide additional care packages in line with DisabilityCare Australia concepts.

### **Great Teachers = Great Results**

The Queensland Government understands and values the contribution made by teachers—many a young life has been turned around or inspired to greatness through the intervention of a caring, motivated, teacher.

The Budget provides additional funding of \$537 million over five years from 2013-14 to focus on professional excellence in teaching and increasing the autonomy of our schools. It comprises a range of initiatives such as mentoring for beginning teachers; accelerated progression and bonus payments for high performing teachers; paid post-graduate study and strategies to strengthen discipline in our schools.

### **Fixing our Schools and Hospitals**

Madam Speaker, good managers everywhere know how important it is to keep on top of your asset base and to make sure your equipment is properly maintained. We also routinely tell our children that we aren't going to buy them something new until they look after what they already have.

The former Government found looking after the asset base all too boring in comparison to the excitement of new project announcements. For this reason, some of our schools and hospitals have toilets that don't flush, windows that don't shut, broken air conditioning—the list goes on. It borders on negligence.

This Government is making major inroads into the maintenance backlog in our schools and health facilities. This Budget allocates a further \$100 million to fixing our schools, bringing the total additional funding under this Government to \$300 million over three years. We also provide an additional \$147 million over four years as part of a \$327 million program to address the health maintenance backlog.

### **Queensland Health Rostering and Payroll System**

Madam Speaker, it is not with any pleasure that I announce that the Government has had to provide increased funding of \$384 million over four years to enable the Department to operate and improve the Queensland Health rostering and payroll system.

The Health payroll system will cost an estimated \$1.25 billion, over seven years, since its failed implementation under Labor in 2010.

I know the Minister and departmental staff are working incredibly hard to enhance the payroll environment, improve pay outcomes for Queensland health employees and stem the financial bleeding. They need, and will continue to receive, our support.

### **Revitalisation of Regional, Rural and Remote Health Services**

The Government is providing increased funding of \$83 million over four years to support and enable better access to health care services for Queenslanders in regional, rural and remote communities. This will be achieved through the development of improved ambulatory and primary health care models, delivery of enhanced outreach services and establishment of the Rural Telehealth Service.

### **Hospital in the Home**

As identified in the final report of the Independent Commission of Audit, hospital avoidance and substitution programs that drive a vastly improved community health care outcome are desperately needed. Hospital in the Home is one such program. Studies have shown that Hospital in the Home is associated with reductions in mortality, readmission rates and cost, and increases in patient and carer satisfaction.

The Government will provide increased funding of \$28 million over four years for additional Hospital in the Home services to be provided by the private sector. This provides acute care by health professionals in the comfort of home as a substitute for inpatient care received at a hospital—better for patients and better for the system.

### **Economic Development and Reform**

The Government is focussing on making Queensland the best business environment in Australia.

We are working hard on reducing the regulatory burden on industry and the timeframes for project approvals.

With support from the Deputy Premier, the Coordinator-General has made 145 statutory decisions since April 2012, a decision rate 3.25 times greater than the previous Government achieved in its last 12 month period in office.

Queensland is world famous for its mining resources and expertise, but there is much that remains to be known about the geology and mineral potential of the State. We want Queensland to be the exploration capital of Australia, and for quality geological data to be there for the world to see.

The Government will provide new funding of \$30 million over three years for a range of initiatives to upgrade the Geological Survey of Queensland. This is a sound investment in Queensland's future prosperity.

Trade and Investment Queensland, a function treated like a prize by the previous Government and catapulted from department to department, will be given the stability it deserves and Queensland business needs. It will be established as a separate stand-alone entity, governed by a Board that has practical export business experience.

Now more than ever, it is vital that Queensland businesses and industries maintain and develop their relationships with our major trading partners. Importantly, we need to focus on assisting small to medium enterprises establish footholds in new markets across Asia and the Americas.

We have great natural advantages within our trade exposed industries. We grow healthy and safe food in a region that is increasingly demanding food security. We supply world class primary products; our research and education industries take knowledge to the world and our manufacturers use Queensland's smarts to deliver products to the world.

Queensland needs to be outwardly proud and promote our achievements and unique characteristics—effectively pushing our 'Brand Queensland' to the world. The Government sees Trade and Investment Queensland as an important driver of economic growth through export opportunities.

We are also proceeding with the implementation of our response to the independent Commission of Audit recommendations—recommendations for better services and a more dynamic economy. This Queensland Government wants to work with, not compete against, the private sector. We look forward to existing Queensland business growing to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise.

Whether it's Economic Development Queensland, within the Deputy Premier's department, or the Tourism Investment Attraction Unit within Minister Stuckey's department, or the Contestability Unit within Queensland Health established by Minister Springborg or Projects Queensland in Treasury, the Government is determined to diversify the Queensland economy and grow its four pillars.

Fundamentally, the Government is moving from being the "doer" to the "enabler".

### **Federal Financial Relations**

Madam Speaker, there once was a Federal Member for the seat of Griffith who became Prime Minister in 2007. We were promised an end to the blame game.

The early signs showed some promise—over 90 specific purpose agreements were collapsed into just five. There was to be a very small number of national partnership agreements, focussed on outcomes and not red tape.

Well guess what. Today we have nearly 74 separate national partnership agreements that are highly prescriptive—more and more Government red tape. The great news is that there are another 28 of these agreements under development now. More public servants in Canberra watching public servants in Brisbane—lead in the saddle bags of the teachers and nurses in the field who are just trying to do their jobs.

Many of these reporting requirements are designed by undoubtedly well-meaning people, but who are often far removed from the realities of Queensland life. Attending Floriade does not qualify you to lecture a grazier in north-west Queensland about keeping cattle alive during a drought. The drive from Queanbeyan to Capital Circuit does not qualify you to understand the tyranny of distance faced by the people of Longreach.

The way the current Commonwealth Government conducts its federal relations is based on the politics of the fiscal wedge. The Commonwealth makes an announcement via press conference and demands that States magically “find” the extra money. The States look bad if they don’t agree, so then have to raise taxes or reduce spending—both of which the Commonwealth publicly objects to—in order to fund the spending that the Commonwealth wanted in the first place.

Government finances right around Australia are clearly stressed. In these difficult times, the most sensible thing we can do is to sit down and have an adult conversation about who is best placed to be responsible for what.

The Queensland Government is ready for that conversation. Governments have no right to be preaching to businesses about productivity and efficiency until they get the basics right themselves.

The best part about this reform is that it won’t cost taxpayers a cent, but it does take courage and a grown-up attitude as well as an acknowledgement of the reality that Governments can’t solve every problem. We really need a grown up in government in Canberra. Let’s hope we get that after September 14.

## CONCLUSION

Madam Speaker, in March last year the new Government said how it would go about fixing Queensland’s finances and delivering services for Queensland. How we would be a “can do” Government for a “can do” State.

Last September, in our first Budget, I laid out the chart for the journey back to sound State finances, while at the same time supporting the four pillars of the economy and boosting confidence. I said it was the most important Budget in a generation. It started the hard work and reforms necessary to make sure Queensland is a better State, a stronger State, a great State.

This Budget is another way point on our journey.

It supports the growth we need to pay off the debts of the past while providing the jobs of the future.

It builds resilience, not just in our finances, but in our community. By lowering interest bills we can spend more on services and strengthen our communities by giving them the help they need when they need it.

It rebuilds not just the State’s balance sheet, but the facilities and infrastructure that we all need and rely on every day—roads, schools, hospitals, parks and playgrounds. It empowers people to invest and grow with confidence.

Madam Speaker now is not the time to waver or change course. This Budget continues the journey of ensuring Queensland is a Great State with Great Opportunity.

I commend the Budget to the House.

## First Reading

**Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.11 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.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! The bill is set down for its second reading in accordance with standing order 177.

## REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.12 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL 2013

*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 Duties Act 2001, the Electricity Act 1994, the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Payroll Tax Act 1971 and the Taxation Administration Act 2001 for particular purposes, to repeal the Future Growth Fund Act 2006, and to provide for an Act to establish Trade and Investment Queensland and to amend the Industrial Relations Regulation 2011 for related purposes


(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 4 JUN 2013

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 4 June 2013, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013 [\[2777\]](#).

### Introduction

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.13 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the Electricity Act 1994, the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Payroll Tax Act 1971 and the Taxation Administration Act 2001 for particular purposes, to repeal the Future Growth Fund Act 2006, and to provide for an act to establish Trade and Investment Queensland and to amend the Industrial Relations Regulation 2011 for related purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

*Tabled paper:* Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013 [\[2778\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013, explanatory notes [\[2779\]](#).

Madam Speaker, the bill I have presented amends a series of acts that are consequential upon the announcements that I have made in the budget. Details in relation to the changes and the reasons for those changes are contained in the speech which has been presented to your office, and I seek leave to have the remainder of the speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Madam Speaker, the Bill will give effect to the 2013-14 State Budget measures and amend Queensland's revenue legislation to maintain its currency and ensure its proper operation. The Bill also provides for the establishment of a new statutory body, Trade and Investment Queensland ('TIQ'), to become the lead agency responsible for facilitating and promoting trade and investment opportunities for Queensland, and in particular, between Queensland and foreign countries.

Insurance duty is imposed under the Duties Act 2001 on contracts of insurance relating to Queensland. Different duty rates apply depending on the nature of the risk insured against.

As a budget initiative, the rate of duty on insurance premiums for Class 1 and Class 2 general insurance products will increase to 9 per cent. This change will apply to premiums paid on or after 1 August 2013 for policies entered into on or after that date. The new rates will be equal to the standard rate in New South Wales and lower than the standard general insurance duty rate applied in all other States.

There will be no increase in the duty rate applicable to premiums for workers' compensation insurance, compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance or life insurance. Existing exemptions will continue to apply including for charitable institutions and private health insurance.

The Bill makes amendments to the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, refocussing the urban fire levy to ensure a sustainable funding base for emergency services. The levy will be increased and its coverage broadened to deliver a more equitable way of sharing the cost of these services across the whole community. The amendments ensure that the Act supports the implementation of levy changes by addressing the way levies are applied to farming land, strengthening appeal provisions and clarifying how the levy may be expended. The amendments also give some flexibility to local councils to ensure implementation of the levy changes can occur smoothly in the first year.

Also included in this Bill are amendments to the Electricity Act 1994 to insert a power for the Minister for Energy and Water Supply to set the retail electricity prices for 'transitional and obsolete' tariffs, which generally supply farming and irrigation customers, for the 2013-14 tariff year.

On 31 May 2013, the Queensland Competition Authority released its Final Determination on regulated retail electricity tariffs for 2013-14, which indicated that many customers on transitional and obsolete tariffs would face average price rises of between 14 and 24 per cent, depending on the tariff.

Given the importance of the agricultural industry to this State and this Government's commitment to grow agriculture as one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, this Government has taken action to limit the increases in transitional and obsolete tariffs, which include farming and irrigation tariffs, to no more than 10 per cent for 2013-14.

To achieve this, amendments to the Electricity Act, as contained in this Bill, are required to insert a power for the Minister for Energy and Water Supply to set these particular tariffs. This amendment will only apply to the 2013-14 tariff year, commencing 1 July 2013 until 30 June 2014.

This Bill, Madam Speaker, also provides the platform to revitalise the Government's premier body for advancing Queensland's trade and investment interests in overseas markets.

Late last year, I commissioned the Hon John Mickel and Mr Geoffrey Thomas to undertake a comprehensive review of Trade and Investment Queensland (TIQ)—a division within Queensland Treasury and Trade.

In keeping with the wide terms of reference, the Report made a total of 86 recommendations across all facets of the organisation, with key recommendations focussing on TIQ's role and operations domestically and overseas, including the alignment of resources in current and emerging markets, and its corporate structure and governance.

The review found that successive machinery-of-Government changes and departmental hosting arrangements have contributed to a progressive erosion of organisational capacity, direction and systems capable of dealing with global operations. In short—the reviewers found an organisation under considerable stress.

The reviewers concluded that, if the Government is to continue promoting the states' trade and investment interests, it is essential to establish a corporate model that allows TIQ to fulfil its mission without undue administrative burden. To this end, it recommended creating a statutory authority with a board drawn from appropriately qualified business people to:

- promote Brand Queensland globally;
- identify new business opportunities and partners for Queensland exporters;
- attract global companies to invest in Queensland; and
- co-ordinate the Queensland Government's global presence to maximise the impact of its overseas activities.

The Bill will establish TIQ as a new statutory authority, and facilitate the transfer of assets, liabilities and employees from Queensland Treasury and Trade's (QTT) Trade Office.

The Bill gives effect to the key institutional and governance features recommended by the Review. The object and functions for TIQ reflect its core, dual export and investment roles. A board will be established to oversee the entity, comprising a senior-level representative from each of QTT and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning the Government's foremost central economic development agencies and independent members appointed by the Governor in Council. A chief executive officer role for TIQ will also be established. The new entity will operate in accordance with the highest standards of governance and accountability—without being hamstrung by over-administration.

As Treasurer and Minister for Trade, I will retain a reserve power of direction—providing a mechanism to ensure the strategic objectives and priorities of Trade and Investment Queensland match the Government's economic development priorities.

The Bill also requires regular reporting to the Minister on TIQ's operations, and that the board keeps the Minister informed about TIQ's operations, financial performance and financial position and the achievement of strategic and operational objectives.

In addition, the Bill provides for the preservation of rights and entitlements of employees transferred from QTT to TIQ. The Bill confirms that, among other things, the transfer of employment does not affect an employee's total remuneration, or prejudice existing or accruing rights to superannuation, and recreation, sick and long service leave.

Madam Speaker, several of the amendments contained in the Bill relating to revenue legislation extend or provide additional exemptions. Other amendments clarify the operation of the legislation which will assist taxpayer compliance and the administration and enforcement of the revenue laws by the Commissioner of State Revenue. The remaining amendments protect the integrity of the tax system.

Many of the amendments to the Duties Act 2001 deliver benefits to taxpayers with retrospective effect, reflecting the fact that they have been operating under administrative arrangements. The majority of these amendments respond to changes in the way business is done in the banking and finance sector, and superannuation industry, including changes in Commonwealth legislative regimes.

The first of these will enable a pooled superannuation trust or "PST" to qualify as a pooled public investment unit trust. PSTs are trusts in which regulated superannuation funds, approved deposit funds and other PSTs invest. PSTs have similar characteristics to certain registered managed investment schemes and exempt managed investment schemes as defined in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cwlth), which may already qualify as pooled public investment unit trusts under the Duties Act 2001. This entitles unit holders in those schemes to concessional transfer duty treatment. The amendment allows PSTs to qualify if they meet the conditions for exemption.

A related amendment enables unregistered managed investment schemes with members comprising only wholesale clients also to qualify as a pooled public investment unit trust. This will be achieved by extending the definition of exempt managed investment scheme.

Developments in securitisation practices have prompted another amendment extending the existing transfer duty exemptions for asset-backed and mortgage-backed securities to particular covered bond transactions under the Banking Act 1959 (Cwth). The Banking Act 1959 (Cwth) was amended in 2011 to enable authorised deposit taking institutions such as banks, credit unions and building societies to issue covered bonds. This Bill recognises that there are similarities between covered bonds and securitisation transactions which currently benefit from the transfer duty exemptions. Conditions apply to ensure equitable duty treatment of covered bond arrangements with securitisation transactions.

The Bill also extends an existing exemption for certain dutiable transactions between trustees and custodians of public superannuation entities which enable transfer of fund property between these parties without incurring a duty liability. Public superannuation entities are regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) under the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 (Cwth) and consequently required to appoint a custodian to hold the fund property. However, other superannuation entities become subject to similar requirements if they exercise an irrevocable election to be regulated under that Act. The amendments differentiate between cases where regulation by APRA is the result of an election, and when another approved regulator is nominated. In the latter case exemption is only provided where the appointment of a custodian is in compliance with the limited recourse borrowing arrangements under the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993 (Cwth).

Madam Speaker, the Bill extends transfer duty relief for particular transactions to correct certain clerical errors in a previous dutiable transaction. Under the existing exemption, a transaction that corrects a clerical error in a previous dutiable transaction about the same property does not attract duty. In some cases, however, this exemption does not go far enough. This happens when there has been a misdescription of the property which requires more than one transaction to correct the error. The amendment provides additional relief to ensure that, in these cases, only the corrected transaction is liable to duty. Conditions will apply.

The Duties Act 2001 obliges taxpayers in receipt of a transfer duty home concession to notify the Commissioner of certain events which may result in loss of the concession and reassessment of duty. This assists in ensuring that taxpayers who fail to meet ongoing conditions for concessional treatment do not receive a benefit to which they are not entitled. The Bill amends the notification obligations to ensure consistency between reassessment events and notification obligations, and thus protect the integrity of the home concession.

Amendments directed to clarifying the operation of the Duties Act 2001 include the provision of a regulation making power for remaking the regulation dealing with duty payable on outbound travel insurance; an amendment confirming that a charge over land for unpaid landholder duty is a first charge; and a clarification of record keeping obligations in the context of landholder duty.

A further amendment ensures an exemption provided under the Duties Act 2001 in relation to the distribution of trust property to a beneficiary applies as intended. The amendment ensures protection of the duty revenue base.

The First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 is also amended. The amendment clarifies the eligibility requirements for grant applications relating to the purchase of company shares entitling the applicant to exclusive occupation of a specified home owned by the company. Though these company title arrangements were mainly adopted before the introduction of strata title to enable buyers to acquire home units, they continue to be used in some cases. The amendment clarifies that the grant is payable only if the home is in existence at the time the shares are acquired or agreed to be acquired.

The Payroll Tax Act 1971 will be amended to align the payroll tax treatment of wages paid to part time employees with that for full time employees where parental, adoption or surrogacy leave is taken on less than full pay. This beneficial amendment will apply retrospectively in accordance with a current administrative arrangement. The amendment harmonises the position in Queensland with that in other jurisdictions.

Finally, an amendment of the Taxation Administration Act 2001 will clarify that the special rule for working out the limitation period on reassessments increasing tax arising out of certain investigations also applies to interstate investigations conducted under reciprocal arrangements with other states and territories.

Finally, this Bill also abolishes the Future Growth Fund by repealing the Future Growth Fund Act 2006.

The Queensland Future Growth Fund was established under the provisions of the Future Growth Fund Act 2006 as a fund to hold the net proceeds from the sale of the State's Government Owned energy corporations—that is Allgas, SunRetail, Sun Gas and Powerdirect. The net proceeds from the sale of Mackay and Cairns Airports and the State's holdings in Brisbane Airport were also deposited into this Fund. It was intended that, by establishing the Fund, the former Government could illustrate how it used the proceeds from these sales.

However, there are no real financial benefits to the State in establishing a separate fund. Proceeds can be treated in the same way and allocated to specific projects without the need to establish, maintain and account for the proceeds in a separate fund. Further, there are additional administrative and audit requirements associated with the Future Growth Fund that have created additional unnecessary work for my Department. In this context, maintenance of the Queensland Future Growth Fund does not align with current Government priorities, including the commitment to reduce red tape.

Accordingly, I propose that the Queensland Future Growth Fund be closed, the Future Growth Fund Act 2006 be repealed with all remaining funds being transferred to the Consolidated Fund, until required by the departments responsible for delivering the remaining Queensland Future Growth Fund projects. Relevantly, budget allocations for these projects have already been made within the Forward Estimates of the relevant departments.

Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a first time..

### First Reading

**Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.14 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.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### APPROPRIATION BILL

## REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL

### Declared Urgent; Cognate Debate

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (3.14 pm), by leave, without notice, I move—

- (1) That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill be declared an urgent bill to enable the bill to be passed through all remaining stages at this week's sitting; and
- (2) That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill, having already been treated as cognate bills under the provisions of standing order 176, be also treated as cognate with the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill for the second reading debate, but with separate questions being put with regard to the second reading of (a) the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill and (b) the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (3.15 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 3.15 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArde, 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