



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

### Thursday, 21 May 2015

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## THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2015

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Parliamentary Precinct, Media Rules



**Mr SPEAKER:** On 7 May 2015, I tabled draft new media rules on the precinct, including the chamber, for the information of all members. I invited all members to consider the draft and advise me of any matters they believe should be addressed by 18 May 2015. I received a submission from the former Speaker and member for Maroochydore, Fiona Simpson, for which I thank her. I have taken on board her suggestions and made some minor adjustments to the guidelines. I now table the new media rules, which will replace the rules originally tabled on 28 February 2006.

*Tabled paper:* Rules for media access to parliamentary precinct and the Legislative Assembly Chamber—21 May 2015 [\[439\]](#).

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Gold Coast Commonwealth Games



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.32 am): In April 2018, thousands of people will flock to the Gold Coast and another 1.5 billion people will tune into their televisions as our state is showcased during the Commonwealth Games. This is Queensland's biggest chance to shine on the world stage since Expo in 1988 and will create about 30,000 jobs for Queenslanders. Today I announce that my government is taking the first major step in creating 1,000 of those jobs for Queenslanders who will work on the front line of games preparation.

Today we were opening expressions of interest for the provision of recruitment services to find those 1,000 people who will join the Gold Coast 2018 games and will work for the next three years to help on the games preparation and ensure Queensland delivers the best Commonwealth Games ever. Those paid staff will help in such areas as communications and marketing, finance and administration, and other areas crucial to get the Gold Coast ready for 2018. We are tasking the successful recruiter with pulling together a team comprised of people of all ages and with a wide range of skills. We are keen to find not only Queenslanders with games or other major event experience but also others from specialist areas of management to pull our games together.

My government is also opening expressions of interest for the ticket service provider for the games. The successful firm will be in charge of the seating inventory of 1.5 million seats for more than 250 sports competition sessions at the 2018 games. The contract involves the administration of the ticket allocation and management of the ticketing technology platform. That is a major service provision for the 2018 games and one that involves all aspects of ticket allocation and sale. It is a massive undertaking for a local company.

It was a Labor government that secured the games for the Gold Coast and it is a Labor government that will ensure that the games delivers jobs, economic benefits and international exposure, not just for the Gold Coast but also for Queensland.

#### Road Projects



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.34 am): My government is keeping Queenslanders connected as they travel throughout the state. This week we have roadworks underway right across Queensland. Not only is our multibillion dollar investment delivering a safer and reliable road network, it is also delivering jobs when job security is more important than ever. We are creating more than 14,500 direct jobs every year over the next four years.

In Townsville, work is underway on the final section of the ring-road. The state has provided \$40 million to sign, seal and deliver that important project. All up, there are 290 jobs for Queenslanders. Not far away, the Bruce Highway is being upgraded from two lanes to four between Vantassel and Cluden. We are investing more than \$27 million in a project that is delivering 228 jobs. In Rockhampton, works are underway to elevate the Bruce Highway across the Yeppen Floodplain. Queensland is investing \$34 million, creating over 200 jobs. In Gladstone, \$12 million is being injected into the Kin Kora roundabout, creating 78 jobs. It was wonderful to see the member for Gladstone on site, talking up the works. On the Sunshine Coast we are contributing \$245 million to upgrade the Bruce Highway between Cooroy and Curra, providing 340 jobs. On the Gold Coast we are spending almost \$120 million on the Smith Street interchange, providing 273—


**Mr Seeney:** \$400 million that we allocated and you opposed. You criticised me for it!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Speaker, what does the member for Callide have against jobs for Queenslanders? They are a bit upset today.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, do not provoke them. Member for Callide, thank you.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** West of the Great Divide, on the Warrego Highway the first stage of the Toowoomba to Oakey upgrade is underway with funding of \$21 million, creating 210 jobs. On the Mitchell Highway between Cunnamulla and Charleville, we are building a new bridge across Angellala Creek with \$10 million in funding, providing 24 jobs for locals. A year ago, the old bridge was completely wiped out by a massive explosion and last month I was there to announce the successful tenderer. As a result, the new bridge will be in place by the end of the year. My government knows the importance of a safe and reliable road network. We want Queenslanders, no matter where they travel in this vast state, to arrive safely.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Women

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): This government is for all Queenslanders and my cabinet is clear evidence of that. Eight of my 14 cabinet positions are held by women. That should not be remarkable given the gender breakdown of our population, but it is an historic level. It is a deeply significant breakthrough for women in leadership and it is something that I am immensely proud of. My government is now committed to ensuring women are equally represented at all levels of leadership on boards and committees for government bodies.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What do they have against women?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! I know we are excited. I call the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There are about 320 Queensland government bodies, each providing leadership and responsibility for various government processes. However, at the moment just 31 per cent of those board positions are filled by women. In 2015, that is unacceptable. Therefore, I am pleased to announce today that my government is putting a call out to women across Queensland to take the next step to represent their communities. This weekend we will start advertising for expressions of interest to build a strong register of women to fill vacancies as they arise across government bodies. We want to hear from enthusiastic Queenslanders interested in being appointed to government boards, committees and statutory authorities. We are seeking women—

**Mr Costigan** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, please desist your interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We are seeking women with expertise across a range of disciplines, including corporate finance and economics, commercial business, human resources, community, stakeholder engagement and legal. We want women to formally register their interest so we have a bank of women to approach as vacancies arise. That is vital to making our government boards truly representative.

Queensland government bodies are a critical link between government and the wider community. They range in scale and character from providing policy advice to overseeing multimillion dollar government trading enterprises. I appeal to women across Queensland to look out for these

newspaper advertisements this weekend and to submit an expression of interest. Queensland can only benefit from the expertise, skills, perspective and knowledge women bring to decision-making processes. It is time for Queensland to benefit from this wealth of untapped experience and set a positive example for industry to follow.

### Queensland Economy

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.39 am): The Queensland state accounts have been compiled since 1993, with a time series prepared by Queensland Treasury going back to 1985. These accounts provide a complete assessment of Queensland's economic activity each quarter. Within the state accounts, gross state product is the central measure of the state's economic growth. Since gross state product records began some 30 years ago, Queensland's economic growth has averaged one per cent each quarter. Strong economic growth of around four per cent annually more often than not has been the envy of Australia. This has defined Queensland's economic strength and our success.

However, when an economy records two consecutive quarters of negative growth, this is technically defined as a recession. There were just two periods over the 30-year history of the Queensland state accounts when the economy contracted in this way. The first was the December quarter 1990 and March quarter 1991—a result of the late 1980s stock market crash. The second was the September and December quarters 2009—in the midst of the global financial crisis.

It troubles me to advise the House today, that we add a third occasion in Queensland. Under the former Newman government Queensland's gross state product declined by 0.2 per cent in the September quarter 2014, followed up by a decline of 0.6 per cent in the December quarter 2014. The member for Clayfield, the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Southern Downs sat around the cabinet table at that time. Bad policies, bad decision-making, waste and mass sackings led to bad outcomes for Queensland. Their legacy is three years of economic mismanagement, underscored by mass sackings, rising unemployment, bumbling policies and subdued business conditions.

The difference between the contractions in growth of the early 1990s and the global financial crisis is this is a slowdown that Queensland did not have to have. In 2011-12 the economy was growing at 4.7 per cent under Labor and in 2013-14 growth had halved under the LNP to 2.3 per cent. To put this into context, the 0.6 per cent contraction in the December quarter—the dying days of the Newman government—was the single worst quarterly contraction in 30 years.

At the same time the national economy recorded 0.9 per cent GDP growth over six months. The former Nicholls-Newman government slammed the Queensland economy into reverse. The LNP narrative—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** This is a very serious matter and it is a shame those opposite are not wanting to listen. The LNP narrative was all about discrediting the former Labor government—an exercise in talking down the economy. Comments about Queensland being on a power dive into the abyss were not helpful. Sadly for Queenslanders and for the former premier it became a self-fulfilling prophecy. It was all pain and no gain.

But it is now up to our government to implement a positive economic agenda and one that is about delivering growth, confidence and job opportunities. Labor will deal with the legacy issues of the former government and we take that challenge head on. We know that economic growth is critical for jobs and prosperity, and it is historically stronger under Labor governments. Historical analysis of economic growth in our state draws this out, and the statistics are damning.

Over the course of the last Labor government, Queensland's GSP averaged—

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** One moment please, Minister. Member for Maroochydore, you will have a chance to make a private member's statement later if you want to take up that opportunity. I call the minister.

**Mr PITT:** Over the course of the last Labor government, Queensland GSP averaged 1.1 per cent per quarter. During the Goss government, growth averaged one per cent per quarter. Average growth under the Nicholls-Newman LNP government was less than half the Labor average, just 0.4 per cent per quarter.

The September and December quarters of 2014 reflect a weaker domestic economy—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** I will say that again. The September and December quarters of 2014 reflect a weaker domestic economy with falling public final demand. Declines in state and local government investment in the second half of 2014 contributed to this result. A primary driver of the weak domestic economy was a decline in business investment, reflecting a transitioning economy as the state's three large LNG construction projects reached completion. While the Queensland state accounts data is revised quarterly, these figures are very sobering.

But the slowdown overseen by the LNP represents a line in the sand. The Palaszczuk government does not subscribe to the zero sum game of deep cuts and mass sackings. That is not how you grow the economy. We will not let this data define Queensland, because there is cause for optimism.

According to the latest Westpac-Melbourne Institute consumer sentiment index, in May Queensland consumer confidence hit an 18-month high—the second highest rise in consumer confidence of any Australian mainland state.

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, you will have a chance to make a private member's statement later this morning if you choose to.

**Mr PITT:** It is another encouraging result which shows that Queensland consumers are growing in confidence and getting behind the Palaszczuk government's positive economic agenda. It is the latest in a series of positive economic indicators in Queensland.

Recent economic data shows that Queensland recorded the strongest retail growth of any mainland state in the March quarter at 1.9 per cent; dwelling approvals in Queensland rose 3.0 per cent in March—up 26 per cent on the same time last year; Queensland merchandise exports were up 10.8 per cent to \$11.4 billion in the March quarter; and 5,300 full-time jobs were added in Queensland in April.

In stark contrast to the former LNP government, we will present a responsible budget, with adequate funding for Queensland's service delivery needs—a responsible budget that shows fiscal discipline. In the coming weeks, I will release the independent Treasury's review of state finances, which I expect will draw out the challenges ahead of us, setting the pathway forward. My first budget will deliver on the outcomes we expect for Queensland which includes delivering on our election commitments, laying the foundations for growth and taking a responsible approach to debt reduction. Queenslanders can have confidence that the Palaszczuk government will get our economy growing again.


**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will have an opportunity to make a statement later this morning if you choose to. I call the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure—

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I call the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade.

## Trade

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (9.46 am): Trade means jobs. Trade means economic growth. As we move to turn the Queensland economy around, the Palaszczuk government is committed to working closely with Queensland businesses to help them grow and create jobs. In my portfolio, Trade and Investment Queensland is working hard to find new opportunities for Queensland exporters and to attract new investment to the state. This trade and investment development work is vitally important for Queensland as it creates jobs, especially in our regions.

TIQ has 13 overseas offices in key markets and eight regional offices in Queensland. TIQ targets several broad industry sectors: food and agribusiness, mining and resources, international education and training and urban infrastructure and knowledge industries. It helps Queensland

businesses in very concrete ways. It brings buyers and investors to Queensland to respectively meet local suppliers and find out about investment opportunities which are vital for our state. TIQ also organises trade and investment missions to overseas markets sometimes led by ministers.


In April TIQ helped organise a 20-strong North Queensland trade delegation to China, ably led by the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, to promote Queensland beef to one of the world's largest markets. This is part of delivering on the Premier's election commitment to support food and fibre producers through more trade missions and greater market access.

International education and training is also a critical export sector for Queensland. It accounted for \$2.4 billion for the Queensland economy last financial year and is the fourth largest export behind coal, beef and tourism. It has been identified by Deloitte as one of five supergrowth industries. I am determined to grow Queensland's market to create more jobs and more opportunities.

As part of this plan, TIQ this month brought 34 international education sector delegates from 16 countries to Queensland on a familiarisation tour of our universities and vocational training institutions. These delegates were from the government funded scholarship agencies and organisations directly responsible for meeting many of the training needs of their country. They were clearly impressed with what they saw—to the extent that three agreements have now been signed between Queensland and overseas institutions as a direct result of these visits.

On Wednesday last week, TAFE Queensland's SkillsTech signed a memorandum of understanding with India's Acharya Education Services in a collaboration that aims to model Australia's national training system for vocational education and training in India. A day later the University of Queensland and the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education signed a memorandum of understanding which will enable high-achieving students to undertake studies at UQ and support collaborative research activities. At a farewell dinner for the delegates last Friday which I attended, TAFE Queensland and SENA, Columbia's largest public training institute, signed a joint letter of intent to develop and strengthen vocational training, technical education and career mobility in Columbia. The Palaszczuk government will continue to drive economic opportunities in trade and exports, because we are determined and committed to turning the Queensland economy around.

### Hervey Bay Hospital, Legionella


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.50 am): I wish to inform the House of events at Hervey Bay Hospital, where preliminary testing has uncovered higher than normal levels of legionella. While regular testing for legionella is common practice, cases where levels are higher than usual warrant further investigation. Tests are now being undertaken at multiple sites within the hospital, and a process has been put in place to ensure the complete safety of all patients and staff. As part of that process, and to ensure a careful, precautionary approach is taken, I am advised by the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service that patients will receive sponge baths in all areas of the hospital, tap water will not be used for invasive procedures and bottled drinking water will be provided for patients.

Corrective action is being taken by the hospital to flush out the water reticulation system. I am advised that there will be multiple flushes of the water system with scalding water to ensure that there can be no systemic bacterial growth in the lines. The Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service will also examine existing maintenance and monitoring programs. It follows that there will be some inconvenience while we wait for results from the second round of testing, but water quality has to be one of our highest priorities.

There have also been reports of the death of a patient at Hervey Bay Hospital who was found to have had legionella. It is important to remember that legionella bacteria is always present in the environment and is often found in low concentrations in water supplies. It can be found in air-conditioning cooling towers, hot or warm water systems, showerheads, spa baths, creeks, soil and potting mix. Last year we saw 44 cases of legionella in Queensland, most of which were community acquired. The symptoms are similar to those of respiratory infections, and person-to-person transmission does not occur. In this particular case, the patient's death is currently being investigated by the Coroner.

I am sorry for any inconvenience to staff, patients and the community as the Hervey Bay Hospital undertakes its rigorous water-testing process and cautionary measures, but patient safety must be our top priority. I am advised that the Hervey Bay Hospital is doing all it can to get back to normal operations as soon as possible.


### Gold Coast Commonwealth Games

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (9.52 am): As the Premier said this morning, in just less than three years 1.5 billion eyes will be on the Gold Coast for the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games. We are getting on with the job of delivering the best Commonwealth Games ever. We know that it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to show the world our lifestyle, our culture, our love of sport and everything that makes us who we are, and to create jobs.

Today I very pleased to announce to the House that the search is now on for the opening and closing ceremonies provider. Today expressions of interest are open for this important part of the Commonwealth Games. The successful provider will be responsible for the creative design, production and delivery of two of the biggest, most spectacular and widely viewed ceremonial events ever staged in this country. The ceremonies provide two landmark occasions for the Gold Coast, Queensland and Australia to be celebrated around the world. Through the stories they will tell, the ceremonies will share the GC2018 dream and put Queensland on the global stage like never before.

An important component of the contract will be the power to create anticipation. All elements of the ceremonies will be closely guarded secrets right until the final moments to increase excitement and generate maximum interest in the games and in Queensland. Queensland has an amazing opportunity to create a spectacular event that will not only welcome the world like never before but also last forever in the memories of all of those who see it.

### National Disability Insurance Scheme


 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (9.54 am): The National Disability Insurance Scheme will create thousands of jobs for Queenslanders. The NDIS is one of the most important reforms since Medicare, and the Palaszczuk government is doing the hard work to make sure we have a smooth transition. An exciting aspect of the transition of the NDIS is the creation of 13,000 new jobs in Queensland's disability sector. That is not to mention the immeasurable entrepreneurial opportunity that will flow from the NDIS to other industries such as tourism, transport, recreation and the arts, just to name a few.

Take, for instance, the Tippy Toe Co., a dance studio for children with special needs. Tippy Toe was started by two students from the University of Queensland's School of Business as part of a class on entrepreneurial enterprise and is now an exciting and successful business. Job agencies need to start preparing now for that increased demand, and training organisations have to get on board and give people the skills they need to take advantage of these opportunities.

That is why on Monday while I am in Rockhampton for community cabinet I will host a workplace readiness forum for local employment agencies and training organisations. The two-hour NDIS 'Creating jobs for Rockhampton' workshop will be a great way for job and training agencies to explore how they can tap into immeasurable growth opportunities. The amazing Karni Liddell, former Australian Paralympian, a Rockhampton girl and Queensland's NDIS spokesperson, will be at the workshop to share her unique insight into what the NDIS will do for agencies, business, the community and people with disability.

Preparedness is the key to taking full advantage of the NDIS as we get closer to the rollout in July next year, and Queenslanders need to be ready to press go from day one. This is a very exciting time for Queensland, and I am pleased to say this government is working hard to finalise the bilateral agreement negotiations with the federal government. In the coming weeks I will announce a site for the early launch of the NDIS, keeping our election commitment. This government is committed to doing what we can to ensure a smooth transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

### Women

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.57 am): As Minister for Women, I am determined to improve the status of women in leadership roles and the role the government plays to assist them. I am so pleased that the Premier has announced today a strategy to increase women's participation on government boards across Queensland. It is another example of the Palaszczuk government restoring important initiatives dumped by the LNP. The former Labor government had the Women on Boards Strategy, which helped to increase women's representation on Queensland government boards and bodies from 33.5 per cent to 56.1 per cent over six years. The strategy

worked, but this strategy was dumped by the LNP in 2012—not keen on women on boards, apparently. Now Queensland's representation has dropped back down to 31 per cent. So it is important today that we commit to a strategy to boost women's leadership across—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, honourable members! Member for Nanango, you will have a chance to make a statement later this morning if you choose. I call the minister.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** A strategy for women in Queensland is something the LNP did not think was worth bothering with either, apparently.

The research shows that improving gender diversity on boards is good for business productivity. Alarming, a recent Australian diversity and productivity researcher revealed that there are more men named Peter on the top 200 ASX boards in CEO positions than there are women.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I cannot hear the minister.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana!


**Ms FENTIMAN:** I am committed to increasing the opportunities for women's leadership across government, industry and the community sector. As Minister for Women, I have had the opportunity to attend numerous events celebrating the successes of Queensland women. From rural women's innovation, to women in mining, women lawyers and Muslim women, I never cease to be amazed at Queensland's wealth of talent. There is no shortage of quality, qualified women ready to make a contribution.

**Mr Cripps** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, I do not need your interjections. If you want to make a statement, you can make a statement later this morning.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** The Palaszczuk government is leading by example with a majority of women around the cabinet table—a first for Queensland and the nation. Within our region, other countries are discussing these important issues. The Malaysian Prime Minister recently spoke of his commitment to reaching a target of 30 per cent of women on the boards of all public companies. Just last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with our Consul-General for Japan who was telling me about Prime Minister Abe's policies to empower women. He is actively trying to promote higher participation rates, with his goal for Japan to have 30 per cent of all their leadership positions filled by women by 2020—if only our own Prime Minister, the federal minister for women, would give this some thought.

### Raine Island, Green Turtles

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.01 am): Many members will know the story of Raine Island. One of the jewels in the crown of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area, Raine Island on the remote northern edge of the reef is the location of the world's largest green turtle breeding grounds. Up to 60,000 female green turtles nest each year on Raine Island, but tidal inundation, erosion and sand movement have dramatically changed the landscape, destroying significant numbers of eggs. The island's nesting site was on the brink of collapse.

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Callide! I call the minister.

**Dr MILES:** Over the past year—

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment please. Member for Glass House, I give notice that if you persist with your interjections I will make a ruling under standing order 253A. I call the minister.

**Dr MILES:** Those opposite are rightly aware that over the past year the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, along with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, have undertaken a trial sand re-profiling exercise on about 10 per cent of the available nesting area on the island.

**Mr Seeney** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** One moment, Minister. Member for Callide, I give notice that if you persist with your interjections I will make a ruling under standing order 253A. I call the minister.

**Dr MILES:** This was the most extensive adaptive management works ever undertaken by the Queensland government and the results were very promising. Over the past breeding season, 46 per cent of the breeding turtles successfully nested in the re-profiled area, compared with 27 per cent in other areas.

Today, I am also pleased to announce that our groundbreaking work on Raine Island will continue at greater speed thanks to the generosity of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and BHP Billiton. Thanks to our new partners, we will be able to invest \$5.4 million over the next five years to undertake more beach engineering works, replenish sand, erect new fencing to save adult turtles and build a knowledge base to assist guide conservation efforts elsewhere. We will also be able to monitor wave, tide and sea levels within the turtle nesting areas, and we will be able to erect remote cameras to record inundation events and turtle nesting and hatching success.

Let me acknowledge that the initial pilot program of recovery on Raine Island was commenced under the previous government. I especially acknowledge the work of the member for Buderim, who I know was personally passionate for this pilot, but I am especially pleased to announce today that the Palaszczuk Labor government can implement the full program thanks to this very substantial investment by BHP and the great work of the reef foundation. We are proud of our record on the reef and proud to deliver partnerships with Australian companies to deliver conservation outcomes. I acknowledge the ongoing work of my department's scientists and rangers who, along with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and traditional owners and now with the very significant assistance from the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and BHP Billiton, are saving this iconic ancient mariner for generations to come.

### Agriculture Industry

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (10.05 am): Tomorrow I will be travelling to Sydney to meet with fellow federal, state and territory agriculture ministers. This meeting comes at a critical time for Queensland agriculture. With over 80 per cent of our state now drought declared, a number of serious biosecurity challenges and several yet-to-be released federal strategic white papers, this meeting is important for Queensland and the country.

I will be perusing three clear issues at this meeting and in the weeks ahead with the federal government. First, I will be fighting to get our fair share of the recent funding out of last week's federal budget for drought support—not headlines, but hopefully results on the ground. Second, we are seeking a commitment to Queensland's biosecurity, including support for our banana farmers and a continuation of the response to red fire ants. Finally, I can also inform the House that I have written to Minister Joyce seeking his urgent engagement in discussions on another biosecurity matter. Under the LNP, one biosecurity lab was closed in North Queensland and another planned by Labor was canned.


The last few weeks have shown the need for strong biosecurity in all parts of Queensland, including the north. This government will seek bipartisan support and the support of the federal government for a new biosecurity lab in North Queensland. I have written to Minister Joyce and expect him to come to the table for the benefit of our state and our farmers. The Palaszczuk government stands ready to talk and I hope the federal government is as well. It is important that state and federal governments, regardless of the political parties in power, work together to deliver results for our food and fibre producers. I worry about the damage done to Queensland's agriculture after the last three years.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! One moment, Minister. Member for Nanango!

**Mr BYRNE:** Three years wasted on biosecurity reform, three years wasted on drought reform, three years wasted on R and D capacity—years of kowtowing to Barnaby Joyce rather than fighting for Queensland. I will be on the side of Queensland farmers, and tomorrow in Sydney I will fight for our fair share of the federal budget. There have been some very interesting headlines from the federal budget, but peel away the loans and there is very little information for Queensland.


## Queensland Building and Construction Commission

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.07 am): Queensland's building and construction industry employs around half a million people and contributes approximately \$60 billion a year to our economy. It is essential that we keep this sector strong. We need to give the industry enough freedom to respond to the market and prosper, while also having measures in place to protect consumers. That is the role of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. I can advise the House that between 1 January and 30 April this year, the QBCC issued 378 fines totalling \$676,027, including 128 for unlicensed contracting, 53 for failure to put a contract in writing and 38 for failure to rectify defective building work. The QBCC has also successfully prosecuted 10 cases which resulted in penalties of \$45,850. So far this year, 456 demerit points have been allocated to 158 individuals, 127 licences have been cancelled and 145 licences have been suspended for breaches of legislation.

The industry regulator takes a tough stance against people doing the wrong thing so that home and property owners can trust that there are mechanisms in place to protect them and their properties. Beyond that, a compliant industry also benefits the vast majority—those hardworking licensees who do the right thing—as it results in fair and equitable outcomes for all. Since January, the QBCC has conducted targeted compliance audits in Brisbane, Cairns, Rockhampton and the Gold Coast, visiting nearly 500 building sites in total.

I can also advise the House of another QBCC initiative, this one in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Public Works. The two agencies have contributed nearly \$500,000 this financial year to provide free online access to the National Construction Code 2015 and to help fund the operation of the Australian Building Codes Board. The NCC outlines the minimum requirements for safety, health, amenity and sustainability in the design and construction of new buildings and new building work in existing buildings. Depending on the type of subscription, users previously paid \$315 to \$449 per year to access the code, but it is now available free of charge under a national initiative. This new free access means everyone, from builders to home owners, can be better informed and contractors can have no excuse for not knowing the statutory requirements. This initiative is good news for Queenslanders. It should help to boost compliance rates, which in turn will produce savings across the industry.

## Policelink

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.10 am): Although the Queensland Police Service is 151 years old this year, recently one of the Queensland Police Service's new additions turned five. I know members here today are probably thinking that it is one of our beloved police dogs or maybe somehow we have dramatically reduced the age requirements for our recruits. But no, it is the Policelink that has turned five.

We understand that front-line officers are busier than ever before, and that is why Policelink was set up—to free up our hardworking front-line officers and to make it easier for Queenslanders to report non-urgent matters. In its first year, the Policelink call centre at Zillmere took 33,917 calls from the public. That phone number is 131444. Since that time, Policelink has answered a staggering 2.8 million calls from Queenslanders.

Policelink continues to go from strength to strength. As technology has improved and the way Queenslanders communicate day to day has evolved, so has Policelink. More and more Queenslanders are now taking the opportunity to report non-urgent matters to police online or through their smart phones. In just one year, the percentage of people taking advantage of Policelink's online reporting tools has jumped by 66 per cent. Online contact now represents around 11 per cent of all public interactions with Policelink. That means no more waiting on the phone or having to drop down to the police station if people wish to report a non-urgent police matter.

Many Queenslanders might not realise that they can now report incidents such as petrol drive-offs, thefts and minor traffic crashes online. There is even a function for farmers to instantly report trespasses or property damage, including the ability to attach photos to the report straight from their smart phone. It is clear that this approach is working to help reduce the workload on our already very busy front-line officers. Online reporting is seeing reduced call-out and reporting burdens on our very busy police officers. What does that mean? It means a more efficient and improved service for the public. Policelink is also the only—

**Mr SPEAKER:** One moment, Minister. Are you close to finishing?

**Mrs MILLER:** Yes. Policelink is also the only—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members! I call the minister.

**Mrs MILLER:** Members opposite are obviously not supportive of our police officers in this state.


**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members! The reason for the comment is that it is getting close to the opportunity for private members' statements and there is other business before we get to that. Perhaps, Minister, you could resume your seat.

**Mrs MILLER:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank all officers at Policelink for their service to our community.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE


### Report

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (10.14 am): I lay upon the table of the House Ethics Committee report No. 154 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 16 October 2014 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the then Leader of the Opposition*. I commend the report and the committee's recommendations to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee: Report No. 154—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 16 October 2014 relating to an alleged deliberate misleading of the House by the then Leader of the Opposition [440].

## COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

### Report


 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (10.15 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 1 of the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

*Tabled paper:* Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 1, 55th Parliament—Portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 26 March 2015 and 18 May 2015 [441].

This report covers portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 26 March and 18 May 2015 and subsequently considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 17 July 2015. The committee did not identify any issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. I commend the report to the House.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### State Finances


 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.15 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House calls on the Treasurer to release the incoming government brief on the fiscal repair task.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, we will now have 15 minutes of private members' statements. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.16 am): We started this sitting week of parliament on Tuesday with a government that did not have a plan. We end the sitting week on Thursday with a government that does not have a plan. Indeed, today we see

a government that is turning into a caricature of Helen Demidenko, a government that is based on plagiarism, a government that cannot come up with one original idea, a government that keeps repeating the things which were put in place by the previous LNP government. We saw no greater example of that than the minister for environment seeking a little while ago to lay claim to what was a great initiative on Raine Island and also with regard to the further part of that announcement regarding issues with BHP in signing that particular agreement.

We also saw the Treasurer this morning laying claim to an increase in consumer confidence, as was outlined in the Westpac consumer confidence index. If he read a little bit further, he would have seen that it indicated that the reason attributed to that was a recent reduction in interest rates and also a consequence of the federal budget that was brought down only last week. This is another example of a government that has no original ideas and bases its full mantra on plagiarism.

This morning in this parliament we heard more about this government's so-called affirmative action policy to put more women in parliament and positions of power. I ask the Minister for Women and the Deputy Premier how they think Senator Jan McLucas would view this government's affirmative action policy. I ask because they ganged up on her and put one of their boys club mates, Murray Watt, into the Senate over the top of Jan McLucas.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!


**Mr SPRINGBORG:** If honourable members opposite want to see real affirmative action, they should turn up here at 2.30 this afternoon when the LNP will be asking for the support of this parliament to put Joanna Lindgren, an Indigenous female Queensland, into the Senate. This mob over here turfs one woman out of the Senate; the LNP puts a woman into the Senate.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Government members, the opposition leader does not need your assistance.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** The only other real winner from this government's actions this week is the union bosses. We now know that public servants' private details are going to be handed over to CFMEU bosses—an organisation which is currently under criminal investigation in both Queensland and around the rest of the nation. What we have seen this week is the Palaszczuk government make a very clear statement. This government has said that they want school principals to be union recruiters. It is not the role of school principals or other public servants to be union recruiters, to actually impinge upon the privacy and the independence of the public sector in relation to people's own private information.

### Net-Free Fishing Zones

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (10.20 am): I wish to inform the House of the government's progress in implementing three new no-net fishing zones, an election commitment taken to the people of Queensland. I wish to also inform the House of the growing bipartisan support for this policy. Unlike those opposite, who say one thing and then surprise Queenslanders with another, we will work constructively with the community to see strong policy outcomes implemented. We are consistent. Last week I released indicative maps for broad community consultation. This is after we have already conducted formal consultation with industry. We are getting on with the job.

I have been pleased to note that these plans for net-free fishing zones have support from some members opposite. Despite the opposition now running up and down the coast opposing these zones for recreational fishers and the tourism industry, local LNP members know better. In fact as I will rapidly reveal, the LNP is rumbling with supporters. Before the last state election the MRAG review received a letter of support from an LNP member saying that a net-free zone 'is something that should be embraced for the overall benefit of our region.' I thank the member for Whitsunday for his strong support of the government.

The growing bipartisan support for Labor's policy does not end there. In fact, the support is so strong that it has crossed our borders. I can report that the federal Liberal National Party government support our net-free fishing policies. They have signed a written agreement with the state to implement these policies. The reef 2050 plan, which was signed by the federal Liberal minister Greg

Hunt, specifically mentions this action when he says that they have agreed to, and signed off on, establishing three net-free fishing zones in the north and Central Queensland: Trinity Bay, Cairns; St Helens Beach-Cape Hillsborough, north of Mackay; and Yeppoon-Keppel Bay-Fitzroy River, Capricorn Coast.


I seek leave to table Mr Costigan's letter and the relevant signed excerpt from the reef 2050 plan.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 30 October 2014, from the member for Whitsunday, Mr Jason Costigan MP, to MRAG Asia Pacific regarding support for net-free zone proposed by Mackay Recreational Fishers Alliance [442].

*Tabled paper:* Extract from Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan, pp. iii and 94 [443].

Only Labor delivers on a sustainable fishing plan for Queenslanders, and for the benefit of the House I am pleased to note the growing support for this program from those opposite. Rather than running up and down the coast being political opportunists, it is important for Queenslanders to realise that, when asked prior to the last state election, the LNP members seeking re-election were entirely supportive of this plan. It is absolutely ludicrous for this opposition to now be trying to take a counterposition and do the backflip of all backflips.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance


 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.22 am): This morning we heard the Treasurer waxing lyrical about economic growth figures over the last quarter and the last couple of years, so let us have a look at the facts, because on Tuesday he was out here with rubbery coins, and today he has rubbery figures. When we look at economic growth figures, the Australian Bureau of Statistics does not even report quarterly. He has obviously taken the gross state product and deducted net exports to come up with some cleverly concocted figures. I am happy to look at the economic figures over the last six years.

As reported annually under the Labor government, at June 2009 economic growth was one per cent; June 2010, 1.4 per cent; June 2011—still the Bligh government, which I know is a bad memory for many of us—1.1 per cent; and June 2012, 4.7 per cent. That was when the LNP government had been in for three months. If we add the 4.7 per cent to those other three years, the average growth over the last four years of their government was two per cent. Economic growth is set to average more than four per cent in the years to 2016-17, and that comes from the 2014-15 MYFER. In June 2013—yes, the LNP government—it was 3.1 per cent, and in June 2014 economic growth in Queensland was 2.3 per cent.

The two times which the Treasurer spoke about recessions happening in Queensland were under the Goss government and under the Bligh government. The LNP government left Queensland on a strong trajectory of growth, and by next year Queensland is forecast to have the strongest economic growth of any state in Australia. That economic growth of 5¼ per cent is in the MYFER, but of course the Treasurer could not tell the facts this morning. He had to concoct some figures that are not even produced by the ABS. I challenge him to produce the papers that he read from this morning, because they are not ABS statistics. As he did on Tuesday, he is using it as a distraction because he has nothing but magic tricks. He is just like Mandrake the Magician: he has nothing. He does not want to talk about the promised budget that is supposedly going to reduce debt. Those opposite have jettisoned their election promises because they cannot tell us how they are going to pay for them. There are numerous instances where they have not been able to explain their strategy for merging energy companies, and Rod Sims has already called that into question.

This is a government that is on a path to nowhere with a Treasurer who is making up statistics as he goes along. I invite him to table those statistics so we can see that actual growth under the LNP government was stronger than it has been under the previous Labor governments which brought in those recessions under Premiers Goss and Bligh.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.25 am): I welcome the opportunity to immediately rebut the current shadow Treasurer. There is a bloke sitting next to him who would like to be the shadow Treasurer, but he is not allowed to be because he has such a stain on his approach to economic management in this state. The shadow Treasurer has just called into question the state accounts prepared by the independent Queensland Treasury.

**Mr Langbroek:** No.

**Mr PITT:** Yes, the shadow Treasurer is suggesting that the figures produced by the independent Treasury are incorrect. Let us put this into context, Mr Speaker. Queensland is the only state that produces these state accounts, and as I referred to this morning, we do that because it tells the story of some difficult periods in our national economy and our Queensland economy. Of course we had the late 80s stock market crash which saw the recession we had to have, according to the former treasurer and prime minister Paul Keating. We had two consecutive—

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! Pause the clock. Deputy opposition leader, the Treasurer listened to your comments in silence. I call the Treasurer.

**Mr PITT:** This is a statement from former treasurer Tim Nicholls, who oversaw a significant slowdown in Queensland's economic growth. As I said earlier, it was 4.7 per cent under the previous Labor government and it went down to 2.3 under the LNP. This talks about the percentage change. Mr Nicholls said, 'Recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth of Gross State Product', and that is a fact. That is how you define a technical recession. We are not here today to talk about recession in Queensland or to talk our economy down. We are trying to show that what Queenslanders felt over the last three years under the LNP—particularly the last year—showed very clearly that we have had a massive downturn in economic growth.

I cannot table the figures because I do not have them sitting in front of me right now. Unlike some, we are busy over on this side of the House and we cannot run around printing a whole bunch of things. The figures are online, and I will happily table those when I can get a copy in my hand; but I cannot table something that is online right now. They are on the Treasury website right now, and the ABS data has been revised to show that this is the case and there have been two consecutive quarters of negative economic growth in this state. That is the legacy of the LNP and it happened in the last six months of their government. What was contributing to that? Yes, there are other factors: yes, there was a downturn; yes, there was a transition in the economy in terms of LNG expenditure and investment—but clearly mass sackings and cuts to infrastructure spending by the former LNP government are major contributing factors—

*(Time expired)*

### Great Keppel Island

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (10.28 am): I have a couple of things that I want to talk about, but let me deal with the Treasurer and his numbers. The ABS produces figures once a year: not quarterly. The Treasurer is making those numbers up.

Let me turn to something of greater importance and greater moment, because we have an upcoming community cabinet on Sunday at the North Rockhampton State High School, Simpson Street, North Rockhampton. I am sure people will enjoy going to that—particularly the thousands of people who want to know what is going to happen on Great Keppel Island. They are wondering what is going on. They are wondering what this government thinks about Great Keppel Island. For the benefit of members I say that I like Great Keppel Island. Last year I had a holiday up in Yeppoon. I spent three days there. I got wrecked on Great Keppel Island. I actually walked around the island and down through the site and thought, 'Won't this be magnificent when it goes ahead?'

What we know is that we have a clueless ALP government that is riven by infighting that is destroying the prospects for jobs and employment in the Keppel and Capricorn region. We have the member for Keppel who is not getting on with the member for Rockhampton. We have the member for South Brisbane who is arguing with the member for Stafford. Do they want a resort there? Do they not want a resort there? Are they talking to each other? All we know is that the omnipotent member for South Brisbane is exercising her numbers and she is saying with her lefty greenie mates 'we don't want development on Great Keppel Island'.

The poor old hapless member for Stafford, handing in our homework again, is relying on the LNP's position and is not supporting the poor old member for Keppel. We know that the poor old member for Keppel is in trouble because last Wednesday the member for South Brisbane flew to Keppel. She met with the mayor of Livingstone Shire Council, Bill Ludwig, and she met with the deputy mayor, Graham Scott, who is a pretty good fisherman. Did she meet with the member for Keppel on her visit up there? Did she take a call from the member for Keppel, who said, 'I would like to talk about the most significant job-creating project in the region. Can we have a discussion?' Not a

word. She snuck in like a thief in the night on Wednesday and then snuck out again. She was at the truck show the next day. We have photographic evidence. She spoke about everything except developing it and left the poor old member for Keppel there.

The member for South Brisbane has form. She has left the member for Keppel in the dark once before. There were 200 people at a community meeting about a casino licence. The member for South Brisbane rings up just before the meeting and says, 'It's not going ahead.' The poor old member for Keppel was so embarrassed that she did not even front her own community to explain it. It will be interesting up in Keppel on Sunday!

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude at 11.32.

### Public Servants, Privacy

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (10.32 am): My question without notice is to the Minister for Industrial Relations, and I ask: as government policy stands today, will the minister detail what employee information can currently legally be sent to union bosses?

**Mr PITT:** It is nice to get a question about this from the Leader of the Opposition. Those opposite made a bungled attempt to debate this yesterday. Clearly they did not listen to your ruling, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Please, Minister, just respond to the question.

**Mr PITT:** Sadly, this was unable to be put on the record. The provision in the incoming industrial relations restoring fairness bill, which is before the House and which I will not speak to directly, of course does pertain to private information, as those opposite tried to make us debate yesterday. What we know is that, since we have had a situation in this state of circulars around information being provided to unions, that information is available. It has been available and has been made available for decades. There is no change.

I want to be very clear about this: there is an attempt by those opposite to suggest that we are somehow making available information that has not previously been made available. I cannot be any clearer that this has existed since at least 2000. In fact, if we want to look at the way information was made available to people we should cast our minds back to the Bjelke-Petersen government. What was the situation under the Bjelke-Petersen government? There was a situation where if there was no card there was no start. So under the most conservative premier this state has seen, I would argue, there was a situation of 'no card, no start'. Information certainly was provided.

Since 2000—right up until the last election—information has been provided in terms of a person's name and position and whether they are new starters. Those things are very important. That information is provided so that, in an industrial relations sense, people can be provided with information. The unions are able to see what that looks like and then go and approach new starters.

It is important to note that this is not just about what those opposite think is a mad conspiracy to have increased union membership in this state. For a start, every time they talk about unions and dominating workforces it is a slight on the teachers and the nurses, who have the highest rates of union membership in this state.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** My Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My question was not about the bill before the House. You made a ruling on that. My question was specifically about what information, under current government policy, can be currently legally made available to union bosses. That bit has not been answered.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I understand that the question is about the current policy. I ask the minister to be relevant.

**Mr PITT:** I think what the opposition is trying to get at is: the former government put in place legislation which actually overwrote the certified agreements we had in this state which had the provision in it. So legally we are unable to provide that information because those opposite took away the right to make the information available. What does that mean? This is not just about passing on to a union information for a potential membership; it is actually about service delivery. It is actually about making sure that people understand the service delivery requirements—ratios related to nursing—

*(Time expired)*

### Public Servants, Privacy

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** My second question without notice is also to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Given that current policies allow for public sector employees' private details to be given to unions such as the CFMEU, even though there appears to be no legal basis, can the minister outline what legally binding arrangements are in place about how union bosses can use that private information?

**Mr PITT:** This question is very similar to the previous question. This is about what is legally possible. Let us take for example the approach taken by those opposite whereby they put in place legislation which stopped a process that had happened for a couple of decades. I want the opposition leader to think about this for a moment. There was no situation in this state whereby we had massive complaints about people being approached to join a union, or being pressured and heaved into joining a union. Clearly they were not. We had a policy in place for well over a decade and there were not mass complaints.

This gives me the chance to finish what I was saying in answer to the previous question, which was very similar to this question. Those opposite are trying really hard to create a problem. This was not a problem until they made it one. They made it a problem because they no longer allowed that information, which had been readily available, to be sent to unions to assure workplace representation. This is about fairness in the workplace. This is about democracy in the workplace.

When it comes to public sector industrial relations, who is the employer? We are. We the government are the employer. We think—and we think we are pretty good; we are much better than those opposite in terms of the treatment of public sector workers. When they were in opposition they belittled public sector workers. Then they came to government and I did not think it could be worse. I thought that was just political puffery. When they came to government they sacked tens of thousands of people and then they took away all their rights.

We as a government are not like those opposite. What we do know is that every public sector worker deserves the right to have a voice in the workplace. They deserve a chance to actually talk to the government of the day about issues that are affecting them. That is exactly what unionism is about. That is exactly what workplace delegates are about. I think those opposite do not understand the difference between a union delegate and a union organiser. Delegates are actually public sector workers—nurses, teachers and so on. Those people tell the government about the positions they are concerned about and how we as an employer can improve things.

Those opposite are about taking away people's democratic rights. They are embarking on a privacy argument which is baseless. This is about choice, and people will decide whether unions have something to offer in the workplace. I come back to this point: service delivery. We are talking about shift approaches in Health and nursing-patient ratios. All of these issues are things that are raised by workplace delegates, and that is important. Those opposite want to stop that conversation flow. They tried it during the last term; we are going to fix it.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Business Confidence

**Mr KING:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier outline for the House what the government is doing to restore business confidence in Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Kallangur for his question. What we have heard this morning from the Treasurer of this state should be very alarming—that is, the fact that the former LNP government kept hidden from Queenslanders that we had two quarters of negative growth in this state. It is absolutely shameful that the former treasurer, the member for Clayfield, who is sitting opposite, kept this information hidden from Queenslanders but, more importantly, kept it hidden during the most recent state election campaign. My government will always stand up for jobs in this state and what we have seen from the Leader of the Opposition just now is an attack once again on workers in this state. The former government did not value workers and we saw massive public sector cuts. We saw massive public sector cuts where over 20,000 workers were axed. It slowed the economy down. It slowed the economy down by cutting services and cutting jobs. Where could workers turn to? They could not go to their workplace delegate because they were shut out of the workplace. The Leader of the Opposition comes in here and talks about privacy. Where were his concerns about privacy when the Leader of the Opposition and his staff circulated the private information of the member for Cook's children? Where were the concerns about privacy then? You

should hang your head in shame, Leader of the Opposition, because what you did is you breached fundamental privacy provisions. So don't you come into this House and start talking about concerns of privacy information when you do not understand the basic fundamental principles of privacy.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, one moment. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, what is your point of order?

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Mr Speaker, I seek your ruling about referring to members by their correct name and title and through the chair.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Well, it is important for the House, Mr Speaker. It is a rule.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is correct. I refer you to standing order 247. I call the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My government is determined to restore confidence in this state, and that is why my ministers are working hard each and every day. They have their charter letters. They know the priorities.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Unlike those opposite, my ministers will honour their charter letters because we believe in making sure that we develop jobs in this state, that we restore business confidence and that we enhance front-line services in Health and Education. What we saw over the last three years was a trashing of democracy—no care, no understanding for the people out there. Families were hurting. If you do not have a job, you cannot spend. You cannot spend at the local businesses in your area. You cannot pay the rent. You cannot pay the electricity bill. You cannot pay the water bill. That is the legacy of those opposite. What we have heard today from the Treasurer are the true facts that the former treasurer kept hidden from the public of Queensland.

### Government Owned Corporations, Dividends

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer rule out stripping more dividends out of the government owned corporations in order to live up to the government's debt reduction promises?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his question. Before I answer his question though, I want to respond to some of the earlier calamitous statements made by him around the data. I table—and this is obviously not the full tabling; we will be able to do that later—the website which details the Queensland state accounts. In that regard, the previous treasurer may have been too lazy to realise the release dates of some of this data. Of course we have his own statements on the record which talk about GSP figures which were sourced by this very data that we are using, so he can go online and have a look. I trust that the new shadow Treasurer is not going to be as lazy as the previous one.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from [qgso.qld.gov.au](http://qgso.qld.gov.au) website, dated 21 May 2015, Queensland State Account Tables [\[444\]](#).

**Mr SPEAKER:** Treasurer, I bring you back to standing order 118 to answer the question.

**Mr PITT:** In answering the question, he is talking about our government owned businesses—our energy businesses—which those on this side of the House and a few on the crossbenches supported keeping in public hands. I find it astonishing that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would come in here and ask a question about the dividends of those businesses. We would not have dividends from those businesses if those opposite had had their way. There would be no dividends to discuss. We had this debate during the election campaign. The former treasurer was talking about one-third, two-thirds. He was trying to discredit our plan. His plan was going to have the rug pulled out from under it every time he got on his feet to talk about it because he was going to sell these businesses off. That is the legacy of those opposite. We have two legacy issues today.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Mr STEVENS:** Again, under standing 118, the question is very clear to the Treasurer: will he rule out stripping more dividends? He has to answer the question, please.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the Treasurer and I ask—

**Mr PITT:** Mr Speaker, I thank you for that, because what I am doing is very clearly outlining that zero plus zero equals zero, because that is what we would have had under their dividend plan. They would have no dividends to speak of.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Treasurer, I draw you to standing order 118. It is not an opportunity to debate the question. The question is about stripping more dividends out of government corporations. I call the Treasurer.

**Mr PITT:** The question, as I understand it, is about dividends and whether we will see further reductions in those dividends. What we know is that we have a determination by the AER which talks about the sorts of profits that we will be able to see from businesses such as Ergon and Energex. What does that mean? It means that there is going to be, thankfully for most Queenslanders, downward pressure on electricity pricing in this state after we saw rises of 43 per cent under the previous government. That is the legacy of those opposite. That is their legacy. When it comes to the dividends, we will be managing our process going forward with the mergers, as we have said, which will provide \$440 million worth of savings over the forward estimates. Going forward beyond that, we know that we will have dividends from those businesses which will remain in public hands that those opposite wanted to flog off.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

**Ms GRACE:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier outline the government's key initiatives in its first three months compared to the former LNP government's initiatives in its first months?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Brisbane Central for a very important question about my government's first three months. I am very pleased to point out that we have delivered on our integrity and accountability commitments in terms of making sure that political donations are transparent. We know that those opposite did not like that. We have abolished directors-general bonuses. We have started the recruitment process for the new CCC chair. Just last night I honoured an election commitment in that we have now linked MPs' salaries to those of the public sector—another election commitment. We have reduced the size of the cabinet from 19 down to 14. We have introduced Skilling Queenslanders for Work and of course we have allocated in Health \$30 million to help those people who need, especially children, ear, nose and throat surgery. I went through the first three months of the former government, and it is a very sad state of affairs. One of the first things that it did was to in fact appoint its mate Michael Caltabiano to become—

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Do we remember that, colleagues? It appointed Michael Caltabiano to be the director-general of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Not only that, it axed the Premier's Literary Awards. We have talked about that and I have announced that I have now restored that. Then they lost the police minister. Do we remember that? That happened earlier. We had families hurt by electricity prices. I forgot this one: they kicked the opposition out of parliament. Do members remember that? That was early on. But the LNP's jobs purge began. Queensland public servants employed on temporary contracts were set to lose their jobs. That was the legacy of the former government. And, of course, the former minister for disabilities had said that the National Disability Insurance Scheme was not one of the government's priorities.

I know that coming up very shortly we will soon find out what happened in the LNP, because the former member for Kallangur is going to hold a seminar titled 'How the LNP snatched defeat from the jaws of victory'. It is \$49 to go along and they are going to unpack the inner workings of the LNP and give us the inside story of the rise and fall of the Newman government. He promises—I am quoting—'to provide an opportunity to learn from other people's failures and save you time, money and heartache'. This should be the hottest show in town. I want to go along. I can tell them what happened.

### Government Owned Corporations, Dividends

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Treasurer. The recent AER draft determination for Energex and Ergon has indicated that the revenue earned by these entities will be substantially lower, which is likely to result in lower profitability. Will the Treasurer explain how the government will be able to pay down debt using dividends from these government owned corporations when returns will be lower?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the honourable member for the question as it allows me to say a few more things about those opposite and the way they dealt with the issue of future dividends in this state. The member for Glass House is quite right: the AER determination shows that there is going to be a reduced yield by those two energy businesses, which does talk about—

**Mr Nicholls:** And you knew that last December.

**Mr PITT:** I take that interjection. The member for Clayfield says that we knew that last December. That is interesting because, I think if you have a very close look at the very heroic midyear assumptions of growth in this state, those opposite would have had a lot of things that we and they knew last December. I think they were very, very cagey with Queenslanders. As we have seen from the figures released today for the state accounts—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Clayfield, please desist with your interjections.

**Mr Nicholls:** He took the interjection, Mr Speaker.

**Mr PITT:** I did.

**Mr SPEAKER:** He has taken that. I now call the minister.

**Mr PITT:** I will just continue to respond to the member for Clayfield, who very clearly did not provide all of the information available to Queenslanders through the midyear review—a drop of six per cent forecast growth for 2015-16, going down to five and three-quarters at the midyear. Very clearly, when you see Deloitte's coming out with forecasts in the threes as opposed to the fours—

**Mr Langbroek:** So now you're questioning Treasury.

**Mr PITT:** No, what we are doing is showing that those opposite did anything to try to paint the previous government in a bad light. At the same time they forgot to keep a good look at what they were doing.

Going back to the question asked by the member for Glass House, we are talking about the AER determination. Yes, it says that there are going to be diminished returns to the business. That is no secret. That is on the public record. That is not unexpected, because the AER changed its approach to focus more closely on getting electricity pricing outcomes and that is something that it had been very public about.

So that presents a challenge because, of course, we are going to have to consider what our dividends look like. There are going to be some revisions to those and that is also on the public record. So none of this is any surprise. There is no 'gotcha' here from those opposite today. But I will say again that they can carp on all they like about the dividends from electricity businesses and from our government owned businesses across-the-board, but the LNP would have had none—no dividends. So we cannot worry about whether there is going to be a one-third, whether there is a 10 per cent reduction in the dividends, because we will be able to use those dividends to pay down debt when those opposite would not have been able to do that as well because, guess what? They would not have owned them. You cannot use the dividends from a business that you do not own. The members opposite will have to just wait until the budget where we will clearly outline how our approach will work.

### Queensland Economy

**Mr PEARCE:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier advise the House what the government is doing to boost economic activity, investment and jobs in Queensland?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I know that the member for Mirani is keenly interested in how investments in our state can deliver economic opportunity and growth right throughout Queensland, particularly in regional Queensland. So I thank him very much for the question.

This morning, we heard some pretty sobering news from the Queensland Treasurer. It should be sobering enough to attract the attention of those opposite, to reflect upon the statistics and to think about their contribution to the current economic state of affairs in Queensland. But instead they want to go back to the old warhorse, that old chestnut about unionism and the role of unions in Queensland. Let me say this very clearly. The best union encouragement activity that occurred in

Queensland occurred through Campbell Newman and Jarrod Bleijie. Let me say that they were the best recruiters to the trade union movement in Queensland, because Queenslanders knew that, if they wanted their jobs protected from the Newman government, they had to join a union. So I thank Campbell Newman and Jarrod Bleijie, the member for Kawana particularly, for their role in increasing union membership in Queensland.

Can I also say that major projects in Queensland mean boosting business and economic confidence—something that this state sorely needs. What major projects mean in Queensland is that we can build the necessary infrastructure that communities right across this state need and the Palaszczuk Labor government understands this very fundamental principle. That is why, when the LNP came to government, there were significant public infrastructure projects underway, which it took credit for. Let us talk about the northern busway. Let us talk about the Gold Coast light rail. I am talking about the Springfield rail line extension and the Queensland children's hospital. These major public infrastructure projects were important to the state, but they were also important to the economic activity of the state and they delivered jobs.

What did the LNP do when it came to government? It cut \$5 billion out of the infrastructure spend. Then when the federal government told it that it wanted to give it money for the second river crossing, what did it do? It walked away from the deal. Why? To deliver Tony Abbott federal government. Where has that left Queensland? It has left Queensland in a parlous budgetary position, because they are cutting so much out of health, education and infrastructure spending.

### **Government Owned Corporations, Ownership**

**Mr CRIPPS:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. I note the Treasurer's answers to earlier questions today from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Glass House, and I ask: will the Treasurer rule out any changes to the ownership structure of Queensland's government owned corporations as part of the 2015-16 state budget?

**Mr PITT:** If I understand the question correctly, the member for Hinchinbrook, who was part of a government that wanted to sell our government owned businesses that would have absolutely changed the management infrastructure and ownership arrangements, wants to know whether we would change those arrangements in the budget. My first response and the very easy response to the member for Hinchinbrook is that he is just going to have to wait for the budget, because I can tell him that no-one has ever decided to get anything out before then.

We are not being cagey. There are very few opportunities in this very intrusive and very public life where everything is on social media. There is just so much information out there that it is nice to have a few things that you can keep to yourself until the appropriate time and make an announcement.

Today, what we have heard from those opposite is a desperate attempt to deflect a couple of things. They are desperately attempting to deflect the fact that they oversaw two quarters of negative growth in this state which, of course, is a terrible situation that this government is committed to pulling ourselves out of. They are also trying to deflect, in a very strange way, from the fact that they were going to sell government owned assets and, of course, have no dividends to speak of. They have no truck at all with trying to hoodwink Queenslanders for three years with a Strong Choices program that cost more than \$70 million—and could have cost upwards of a quarter of a billion dollars—but they are very happy to come in here today and ask, 'Will you be changing anything with these businesses?' You know what, member for Hinchinbrook? What we will be doing is speaking to the workforce and to the chairs and CEOs of these organisations and we will be working with them to make sure that we deal very carefully through our merger process that we have said is going to yield savings over the forward estimates of more than \$400 million. That, of course, is the first part of our debt reduction plan that we went to the election with. It is about those outcomes, it is about those savings, in terms of running those businesses more efficiently. Our approach is guaranteeing that we will not have forced redundancies, unlike those opposite who, when they were in opposition, said public servants have nothing to fear. Government owned corporation workers are technically the same as public sector workers. Those opposite had no problems assigning tens of thousands of people to the scrap heap.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Stop the clock. Treasurer, I would urge you not to debate the question. Make sure your answer is relevant. I call the minister.

**Mr PITT:** What we very clearly said before the election was that we will be conducting mergers of our energy businesses. That is a process that must be done carefully and in a considered way. Very clearly, we have had some public conversations about what that could mean from a competition perspective with the generator businesses and we will be working continually with the ACCC on those issues. I come back to the point: this is about outcomes and we have been clear to Queenslanders what those outcomes will be.

### Consumer Confidence

**Miss BOYD:** My question is to the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Treasurer inform the House how the Palaszczuk government is restoring the consumer confidence that was lost in the final months of the LNP government?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for the question. She is doing a great job in her local area picking up after difficult circumstances. In the first three months of the Palaszczuk government we have put our shoulders to the wheel. We have had a lot of cat cries from those opposite about what projects we are working on, and I will get to that a little bit later. This is about stimulating our economy. What is one of the best ways a government can help stimulate the economy? It is to talk the economy up. That is not what we heard for three years under those opposite because they had a narrative about attacking the previous government to create a picture that there was no other choice except to sell assets. We know that that is what they have done.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, one moment please. Member for Clayfield, you will have an opportunity to put a question shortly so I would urge you to allow the minister to answer. I call the minister.

**Mr PITT:** The abject failure of those opposite to paint a confident picture in this state is a reason we have seen some of the figures that we have had to look at over the last couple of months, and certainly what we saw in the last six months of the previous government. Our approach is working. We have seen, as I said earlier, consumer confidence improving. We have seen consumer sentiment rise to the second highest of any Australian mainland state. It is the highest in 18 months. This is a sign that people are feeling more optimistic than pessimistic about the economy in Queensland. That is what the Westpac-Melbourne Institute consumer sentiment index says. It says very clearly that we are now more optimistic than pessimist about our economy going forward. That is a vote of confidence in this Labor government as well. Before the election we provided certainty to business by saying that there would be no changes to the revenue policy settings in this state. We said that there were going to be no new taxes, fees and charges to provide a three-year window for business to plan on not having those changes thrust upon them as part some budget process. We also put in place certainty around mining royalties and said that they were not going to be changed over the three years of a Palaszczuk Labor government. All of these things are helping to engender confidence.

We also know that Queensland is exporting again. We know that merchandise exports grew by nearly 11 per cent. We know that LNG exports are roaring to life with \$328 million worth of exports in the March quarter shipped from Gladstone. This is a great news story because it is a Labor legacy. That is the sort of legacy you get with Labor—not, of course, talking the economy down and overseeing two consecutive quarters of negative growth in this state.

I do not think those opposite are really getting the gravity of what they did, but I can tell members that Queenslanders get the gravity of the situation we are facing now because of what those opposite did. We are determined to produce a budget that is fiscally responsible. We are determined to deliver on our election commitments. We are determined to get our economy growing again. This government is a pro jobs, pro growth government and is making sure that we are talking the economy up instead of doing what those opposite did for political purposes and talking the economy down.

### Government Owned Corporations, Ownership

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Treasurer. Other than the announced policy to merge electricity companies, is the government planning any other changes to the ownership of government owned corporations?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for Clayfield for the question. It is a shame he has not been listening this morning because I think what we have been able to outline clearly is that those opposite were all about changing the ownership structure of these businesses—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. What is the point of order?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I have been listening with some amusement to the Treasurer, but the question is quite specifically in relation to the issue of is the government planning any other changes to the ownership of government owned corporations.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Clayfield. That is not a point of order.

**Mr PITT:** I can advise the member for Clayfield that these government owned businesses are called government owned businesses and they will continue to be government owned businesses. They will be in public hands. They will be owned by the government. The flow-on from that is that they are owned by the people of Queensland. That is the overwhelming message we got—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I rise to a point of order under standing order 118. The question was any changes to the ownership of the government owned corporations. The Treasurer is being somewhat tricky in his answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Clayfield. No point of order.

**Mr PITT:** It is somewhat amusing to hear the former treasurer talk about someone being tricky, because that is exactly what we saw for three years. He was tricky with all of his responses. He was tricky with the people of Queensland.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, I draw you back to standing order 118. I would ask you not to debate the question, I would ask you to have your answer relevant.

**Mr PITT:** The key word here is ownership. Ownership is about who has control over those businesses, who is managing those businesses to ensure that they are returning dividends to Queensland. Again, I stress for the member for Clayfield—if the message from the election was not enough for him around people's view of government ownership of these businesses—we wish to have the situation in Queensland as Queenslanders want it. They told the previous Labor government that they did not want a change of ownership of these businesses. They have now told those opposite that they do not want a change of ownership of these businesses.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Member for Clayfield, you have had a pretty good go this morning with interjections. I give you notice that if you continue I will then proceed to issuing an order under standing order 253A.

**Mr PITT:** It is hard sitting over that side. I have been there and it was not good.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you not to debate. Do not be provocative.

**Mr Nicholls:** You already reckon I've got more hair than you.

**Mr PITT:** Onto the hair, are we? Ask the member for Indooroopilly. What we know is that those opposite are clearly still in denial about the fact that they took a plan to the people of Queensland that Queenslanders rejected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Treasurer, perhaps you might like to resume your seat.

*(Time expired)*

### **Community Care Units**

**Mr BROWN:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on the progress of commissioning community care units across the state?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Capalaba for his question. I know that mental health issues are important to him, as highlighted in the very strong and emotional first speech he gave. I commend him for that and for his commitment to mental health issues. Community care units are important facilities in our community that often help people with severe mental illness or people who have had

acute incidents transition back into the community. The units allow those people to develop community and life skills so that they are able to move back into the community. It is a very important initiative that was implemented by the Bligh Labor government through the Queensland Plan for mental health. It is the sort of investment state Labor makes. Capital investment stimulates the economy—and heaven only knows we need that now considering what the Treasurer said this morning about what was left behind by those members opposite. It stimulates construction and each of those community care units employs about 17 full-time equivalents in the burgeoning health services industry. It is a very important investment.

Previously in the parliament I have reported on the \$50 million cut to mental health that is the legacy of the member for Southern Downs. That was a record-breaking cut. However, I must give credit where credit is due: when he was the minister for health he continued the Labor government's program. He also took from the Gillard federal Labor government, which wanted to invest in this area, money to build more community care units. He took that money to invest, as he took federal Labor government money to reduce elective surgery lists. Unfortunately, I have to report to the House that the Leader of the Opposition's wait-time gimmick affected the operation of those community care units. I will explain how the wait-time gimmick impacted on mental health in Queensland.

For the Logan Community Care Unit, building contract works were completed on 22 July 2013. When did residents move in? Eighteen months later on 16 February 2015. For Logan residents recovering from severe mental illness, the member for Southern Downs's guaranteed wait time was 564 days before the unit could be accessed. However, that is not the worst of it. For the Redlands Community Care Unit, which services that part of the community served by the member for Capalaba, construction completion was January 2013, but services did not start there until December 2004. There was a guaranteed wait time of 23 months or almost two years before people could get in there. In fact, it was vacant for so long that I am advised the department of health had to employ a caretaker to look after the premises for 10 months. I do not know what the caretaker did. Maybe he did PowerPoints for the Leader of the Opposition. What a waste of money and a waste of resources when we know there is pressure on people who need to recover from mental illness. That is the legacy of the Leader of the Opposition: wasted resources, wasted facilities, warped priorities and people waiting longer than expected to receive their services.

We are going to stop the waste. We are going to focus on front-line service delivery, because that is what Labor governments do.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the member for Kawana, I inform honourable members that students from the Graceville State School, in the electorate of Indooroopilly, are in the public gallery.

#### **Nuttall, Mr G**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services. Can the minister explain how, under her watch, her mate and mentor Gordon Nuttall, convicted for corruption, now has been transferred from the Wolston prison to the cushier Palen Creek work farm?

**Mrs MILLER:** The answer to that question is simply that this is an operational matter for Queensland Corrective Services. I will not involve myself in the operational matters of the Queensland Police Service, I will not involve myself in the operational matters of Queensland Corrective Services and I will not involve myself in the operational matters of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. I am unlike the LNP members opposite, who believed that while they were in government it was their right to involve themselves in operational matters that they should never have stuck their noses into. They also stuck their noses into tender processes and they should not have done that, either. I have here the Queensland Audit Office report that outlines the meddling of the member for Kawana when he was the attorney-general in the operational services of juvenile justice. That is a great shame on the former attorney-general.

I want to point out issues relating to privacy matters. This morning I have heard that lot opposite talk about privacy issues, when they had the hide and cheek when on this side of the House to table documents and to talk about the privacy issues of the member for Stafford and also myself as the member for Bundamba.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members. Minister, one moment. Standing orders do not allow you to engage in a debate about the question. I ask you to come back to answering the question, which relates to the transfer of a person to Palen Creek.

**Mrs MILLER:** I would like to place on record here today that my role as the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services is to never meddle in operational matters; never, ever. Furthermore, I will always ensure the privacy of individuals, unlike those opposite who do not give a toss.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Bundaberg, Minister, those concluding words were unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs MILLER:** I withdraw.

### Working Holiday Visas

**Ms DONALDSON:** My question is for the Minister for Tourism, Major Events and Small Business and the Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister outline to the House the impact that the federal government's proposed changes to the tax-free threshold for working holiday visa holders will have on Queensland's local economies?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for her question because, like me, she wants to see a growing tourism industry in Queensland. We know that when tourism is growing it means jobs in regional communities such as hers of Bundaberg, that of the member for Noosa, that of the member for Surfers Paradise, those of all Gold Coast members and that of the member for Whitsunday, who comes into this House claiming to be a passionate advocate for the tourism industry. When it comes to the federal budget and tourism, we have seen a brand-new tax hit on tourism. The new backpacker tax is expected to raise \$600 million. It is bigger than the new Google tax. It means that \$600 million is being ripped out of local Queensland communities that rely on tourism and tourism jobs. What have we seen from their apologist mates here in Queensland? What have they said against the LNP's new fat tax on backpackers, which is a tax on tourism? Nothing! The silence speaks volumes. We have heard absolutely nothing.

I thought that maybe the reason they have not been lobbying to abolish the tourism tax is that they have not had access to their leaders, that they have not been able to see the honourable Prime Minister or the honourable Treasurer from the federal parliament, to get into their ear and say, 'Please do not tax our local communities; please do not put a tax on tourism in Queensland that will get rid of jobs,' but no. Instead of standing up for tourism jobs in their communities, we have seen the exact opposite from the Gold Coast members. The tourism sector has come out strongly against the tax, supporting 160,000 Queensland jobs and generating a \$700 million spend. However, the member for Surfers Paradise did see the Prime Minister. He saw him at breakfast yesterday. I know the member for Callide does not do this, but the member for Surfers Paradise put this beautiful fan photo of the Prime Minister on his Twitter feed. He was like a Swiftie at a Taylor Swift concert, singing love songs and taking fan photos. The people of Queensland expect better than fan photos on his Twitter feed. What they expect is that the LNP, which claims to be all about small business—

**Mr Langbroek:** None of you were at it. Small business—not interested.

**Ms JONES:** Yes, 1.5. We gave them five per cent. Thank you for that. They come in here and pretend to be fans of tourism when in actual fact they are more interested in taking fan shots of their leader who will slug us with \$600 million in new taxes.

### Biosecurity

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Agriculture. Minister, the recent fault test that initially confirmed TR4 on a banana farm near Mareeba, coupled with the outbreak of cucumber green mottle mosaic virus near Charters Towers, has been devastating for both industries. As a result of this, will the minister urgently move to reopen the biosecurity unit in Townsville?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. I spoke about this earlier this morning. I note the member's keen interest in the important role of Biosecurity Queensland—unlike those opposite, as I pointed out this morning. Campbell Newman's team cut thousands of jobs from front-line services and the previous minister for agriculture oversaw a 26 per cent cut to Biosecurity Queensland's workforce. That is a fact.

The sheer brutality of the LNP when it comes to this damning legacy is pretty obvious. A case in point is that in 2012 Biosecurity Queensland inherited 662.9 FTE positions in biosecurity. Some 350 of those were listed as front-line positions. By December 2014 there were only 490.5 left. Of

those, 244 were listed as front-line positions. That is an axing of 70.8 FTE front-line workers. This is also the same mob who decided that their minister for agriculture was not much chop and is not sitting opposite in that shadow role.

The legacy of those opposite is a mismatch of poor policy decisions and a roughshod heavy-handed approach which is that if you are not with them you are against them. Thankfully, Queensland has delivered a decisive verdict on all of those opposite. We, however, are determined to provide a strong and decisive approach to governing. Already we are delivering on those commitments.

I can confirm for the member for Dalrymple and all other members that we are keen to progress the development of restoring biosecurity labs to North Queensland, as I said this morning. The LNP closed one lab and canned another. That is a shameful record. As I said, tomorrow I will be meeting with the federal minister, Barnaby Joyce. I have written to him this week and told him that Queensland wants to restore a biosecurity lab in North Queensland with his help. This may be a bit of a long campaign, but it is one that I am determined to pursue for reasons that should be plainly obvious to everybody.

I thank the member for the question and for his support of a strong biosecurity presence in the north. I thank him for his advocacy on this important issue. I hope to work closely with him and others from the crossbench in making the case for Canberra to support this joint investment. We will be working with the community to have a debate to consider the options and provide the leadership necessary to replace those capabilities.

### Infrastructure Projects, Mining Royalties

**Mr BUTCHER:** My question is to the Minister for State Development. Will the minister detail methods used to allocate mining royalties for infrastructure projects?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I would like to thank the member for Gladstone for his question. I was up in Gladstone last week. What a fine community. What a fine, strong resource community the city of Gladstone is for the people of Queensland.

Let me open by clarifying exactly what the former government's Royalties for the Regions program was all about. I have a departmental fact sheet on this program that describes the Royalties for the Regions purpose as 'to help regional communities meet critical infrastructure needs that have arisen as a result of resource sector activity.' I table that fact sheet.

*Tabled paper:* Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning: Royalties for the Regions Round 3—frequently asked questions [445].

Based on this criteria, there are a number of projects whose origins are dubious. In conversations with my department they are unable to tell me who exactly applied for the funding. These projects are so-called strategic projects. Mysteriously, the majority of these strategic projects fell into a few key electorates—electorates such as Townsville, Thuringowa and Hervey Bay. These examples beg the question: strategic for what and for whom? This is a blatant example of pork-barrelling, sandbagging seats those opposite thought they just might lose at the state election, and some they did. I quote from the *Townsville Bulletin* dated 16 January 2015 in which the former member for Townsville, John Hathaway, said—

This government will deliver, if I'm re-elected, a kiss and ride or drop off lane for the largest school in the electorate.

I table that newspaper article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 16 January 2015, titled 'LNP pledges \$2m for road upgrades at Pimlico State High School' [446].

The people of Townsville and Thuringowa did not buy it. We have two great representatives here today.

We are not only honouring the previously approved council projects under the final round of the Royalties for the Regions program, we will implement our own more equitable program. During the election we committed \$200 million over a two-year period for a new regional infrastructure program called Building our Regions.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Dr LYNHAM:** The shadow minister for agriculture, fisheries and forestry, like those who have just interjected, claims that the government has cut the Royalties for the Regions program in half. I do not wish to embarrass the member for Nanango, but she may like to just check her maths.

Over the same two-year period, the previous program provided similar funding. Regardless, providing an additional \$200 million over a two-year period on top of the \$495 million already provided over a four-year period means regional areas have even more opportunity to obtain much needed funding for a critical infrastructure projects.

### State Finances

**Mr LAST:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer, and I ask: will the Treasurer rule out taking a contribution holiday or raiding the assets put aside to fund the superannuation entitlements of hardworking public servants to pay down debt?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the honourable member for the question. As I said to the member for Hinchinbrook in response to his question, we will be releasing the budget on 14 July. In that budget we will be providing a way forward for Queensland. Importantly—and this may have been something that was potentially lost on those opposite this morning because of the gravity of the news around the slowdown in the economy that has come through from the state accounts—there was a section of the statement I made which referred to the fact that we have a review underway of state finances that we promised before the election would be undertaken. I take the opportunity now to stress again to those opposite that the way we would see a review of state finances being undertaken is by the independent Treasury.

The independent Treasury is a group of people I respect greatly. They actually provide information to the government of the day. I think they do that in a very professional way.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** I can hear the member for Clayfield trying to interject, yet again. This morning we had the Deputy Leader of the Opposition talking about rubbery figures. He is trying to get thrown back under a bus because he has clearly thrown the member for Clayfield under a bus a few times since he has taken over as shadow Treasurer. What we need to understand is that the ABS national accounts, which I think is what the former treasurer was referring to, is where we get the state accounts from. They do overlay work on that.

I raise those issues because those opposite are trying to get gotchas today and there are no gotchas to be had. We listen to Queensland Treasury. We listen to the independent advice that they provide. We are certainly very keen to continue to do that because that is what we are about. We ensure that we listen to their advice.

In terms of the question that has been asked, I point out that we will be awaiting the outcome of the review of state finances. Of course, that is integral leading into our state budget. That independent review of state finances is done by the independent Treasury. Who did those opposite get to do a review? They got former Liberal Treasurer Peter Costello, the architect of massive asset sales—more than \$80 billion worth from memory—and mate to ensure that they achieved an outcome that they desired. We will await the independent review and the recommendations and challenges that that document may present to us as a state and as a government will help us frame our budget. They would like to get a sneak peek at the budget, but they are not going to get one today.

### Fraser Coast Boot Camp

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Will the Attorney-General please inform the House of ongoing lessons from the awarding of the contract for the Fraser Coast boot camp?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the honourable member for his question. I know he has a deep, ongoing interest in the Fraser Coast boot camp and the failings that his community and his region are still grappling with because of the legacy of the former premier and attorney-general. What a relief it is to have a strong voice in the Maryborough electorate. We met locally in Maryborough and in Brisbane and discussed many policy areas, and the member has already proven to be a fine representative.


In relation to the Fraser Coast boot camp, the House would be aware that the independent Auditor-General delivered a report that highlighted significant failings of the former attorney-general, and serious questions remain about the awarding of contracts. I can advise that an independent review is occurring right now by KPMG that is due to report back to my department next month.

As I have said, the Auditor-General's report speaks for itself. There was political interference in the awarding of multimillion dollar contracts. What we found in relation to the Fraser Coast boot camp, which the member is particularly interested in, is that the then attorney-general's decision to award contracts for the Fraser Coast boot camp was not the best choice. There were suitable lower cost service providers available. In fact, in awarding the Fraser Coast boot camp, the then attorney-general rejected the panel's independent advice and awarded the contract to one described as unsuitable. It was the 10th ranked and the most expensive.

For the Fraser Coast the Auditor-General noted the state is paying \$2,900 more per participant than it is for the Rockhampton early intervention youth boot camp and \$5,500 more per participant than the evaluation panel's preferred tender—again, appalling behaviour and waste by the former attorney-general that the Leader of the Opposition still will not answer for.


## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 71, the notice of motion relating to report No. 13 has lapsed.

## QUEENSLAND TRAINING ASSETS MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY REPEAL BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (11.33 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Further Education and Training Act 2014 by inserting provisions that repeal the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Act 2014 and provide for transitional matters. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015 [\[447\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015, explanatory notes [\[448\]](#).

The Palaszczuk government was elected on a commitment to jobs. We are focused on reducing Queensland's unemployment rate, creating jobs and training individuals to meet industry demand today and into the future. Many of the government's election commitments highlight the crucial role of the vocational education and training sector in building the Queensland economy by delivering well-trained workers to address the needs of industry. One significant commitment made by this government is our plan to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier public training provider of VET in Queensland. Unlike those opposite, we believe that the public provider plays a vital role in the delivery of VET in Queensland, and we need to ensure that it is able to deliver quality training now and into the future.

This government has committed \$34 million over the next three years through our Rescuing TAFE policy to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state as well as internationally. Our Rescuing TAFE package includes many significant commitments over the next three years including creating 100 new full-time equivalent teaching and support staff positions; investing \$5 million to establish a fully independent training ombudsman; providing \$4 million for training in emerging innovative industries as designated by Jobs Queensland; and the repeal of the QTAMA Act 2014.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the House, and I am struggling to hear the Attorney-General.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Today I table the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill 2015. This bill is the first step in our Rescuing TAFE commitment. QTAMA was created by those opposite to enable the sell-off of Queensland's training assets to the highest bidder and removing access of TAFE to its own premises, its own equipment and leasing it out directly to the competitors of TAFE. This legislation was introduced with no consideration by the former government for the long-term survival of TAFE Queensland and no thought to the Queenslanders who rely on TAFE for training or the businesses who benefit from a well-trained workforce. Once these assets are sold, once there are long-term leases in place, there is

no getting them back. This means that any future growth by TAFE Queensland would be restricted by a lack of facilities. Those opposite claim they are committed to the survival of the public provider in Queensland, yet they created QTAMA as a body to flog off our public training assets and give private registered training organisations the inside running. We opposed this act when it was introduced last year, and we made it very clear that we would repeal it as soon as the opportunity arose.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I was not just wasting my breath the last time. There is too much audible conversation in the House. I am struggling to hear the Attorney-General. If you want a conversation, please take it outside.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I travelled around the state last year, I, like many members on this side of the House—and I would find it surprising if those on the other side did not hear the same issues being raised by their communities—heard concerns about the attack on TAFE teachers, the running down of our campuses, the cutting of subsidies, the increasing of fees and the systematic attack on our TAFE system in this state. The member for Everton appeared surprised that we were preparing to repeal this legislation. It is another example of why they sit on the opposite side of the chamber. The arrogance they showed in government continues to exist today. The lack of listening to the community continues.

Did the member for Everton or any other members of the LNP even bother to read the Labor government's election commitments in relation to education and training? Did the former minister for public works bother to read the committee report or listen to the concerns of stakeholders? In that same speech the member indicated there would be a significant cost to taxpayers if the assets were to be transferred back to the Department of Education and Training, but the reality is quite the contrary. Repealing this legislation will save the government over \$430,000 per year in wages paid to the board whose sole purpose was to sell off public training assets. The QTAMA board members were very well paid.

The former government had an agenda to sell our training assets, privatise VET delivery in Queensland and force TAFE Queensland out of the training market. The Palaszczuk government has a very different agenda. We want TAFE Queensland to continue to deliver quality vocational education and training far into the future, because Queenslanders rightly believe that we need a strong public training provider of VET. It benefits individuals by helping them attain the skills and training they need to get work. It supports families, strengthens communities and is vital to give the productive and skilled workforce it needs to grow and prosper into the future. We will enable this through our Rescuing TAFE package, of which the repealing of the QTAMA Act is just the first step. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (11.40 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

### Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (11.40 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Queensland Training Assets Management Authority Repeal Bill by 7 July 2015.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 20 May (see p. 774).

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (11.41 am): Madam Deputy Speaker, congratulations on your appointment to your role. I rise to give my speech during the address-in-reply. First, I reconfirm my allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia and head of the Commonwealth. I would also like to congratulate the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the recent birth of Princess Charlotte. I acknowledge in this House His Excellency the Governor for opening the 55th Parliament of Queensland. I would like to congratulate the Speaker and all of the temporary Speakers on their appointment. It is a role I proudly filled in the 54th Parliament. I would also like to congratulate the Premier, the new ministers and the new members of this House, particularly my colleagues on this side who won their seats for the first time.

I would like to acknowledge someone who spent a long time in this House, Mr Kerry Shine. He is the former member for Toowoomba North and a man who is well respected in the electorate. Since 1998, he has offered himself for public service to the electorate, winning four elections and losing three. The Labor Party can be proud of the effort that he and his team put into Toowoomba North and I thank him for his time in public office.

Toowoomba North was interesting during the campaign. We really got to see up close and personal democracy in action. On that note, I would like to thank all of the ETU members who came in from their outlying depots to campaign on the streets in Toowoomba. I hope the government are true to their word and they do not close their depots in the merger. About 100 of those ETU members are relying on this government and the members they backed to be in this place. The battle in Toowoomba was very much hand to hand, street to street, and both Labor and the union movement were very well represented—but so were we, and I would like to thank some of my team. My team put in a great effort to make sure that no stone was unturned and that I got returned to this place so that Toowoomba can have a local voice who can deliver for our region and for the people of the Darling Downs.

Whilst I do congratulate Kerry Shine for his service in here, I have to say that he got an 18.5 per cent swing during his time representing Labor in this House, yet he still could not deliver the second range crossing, he could not deliver a school at Highfields and he could not deliver a ring-road. These were all projects that waited between 15 and 30 years to get on the books in Toowoomba. Despite his big efforts and despite his big swing, Kerry could not interest the former Labor government to spend any money in our electorate—but back to my team.

There were some great members of my team. First and foremost was 'Big Jim', who hails from Barcaldine originally. He has been a tireless worker for many, many years on many, many campaigns. He is now in his late seventies but he put in a great effort on the ground for me and I sincerely thank him for it. There was also Mike Hogan, John and Nicole White, and the Goodwins, in particular Jenny, who all put a lot of time in. There were lots of members who have particular interests in families and making sure that we have strong representation for families in this electorate. I thank Jeff and Pat Eacersall and their family. Some days there were three and four generations out on the street campaigning for me up against the ETU movement—paid organisers who were standing on the other side of the road.

My thanks also go to these people: Matthew Costello, who was out there all of the time working hard for me; Delis Kelly, who has had a fall this week and I hope she is feeling much better—she will tell me off for mentioning that she is in hospital at the moment but I hope she is feeling much better; Glenis Batten, who also came out and worked hard; and Neil Munroe, for his letters to the editor. I also thank my staff, Donna and Wendy, who do a fantastic job keeping the office operating. I sincerely thank all of those people and many others, including Dave Nicholls. They gave up plenty of time and plenty of their own resources in terms of trailers, cars and other things to try to make sure that the people of Toowoomba North are well represented in this place by someone who will ensure that we deliver for our region and that the government of the day understands the needs of Toowoomba and the Western Downs.

I would also like to thank my wife, Sue, and my children, Bri, Shan, Mason and Jordy—all of whom hit the streets hard campaigning. My wife would get a little embarrassed out on the streets so she would often hold the sign up in front of her face to make sure no-one could see it was actually her standing out there on the street, but I thank her for going out there. I know it is something that does

not come naturally to her, particularly when there are 30 union officials standing over the other side of the road shouting at her. But, like I said, those guys had their opinion and they made sure they were heard in the electorate. I do thank my family for being there for me at that time.

**Mr Pearce** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** I did not quite catch that but say it again. He does not want to say it again. If you are going to interject, do it loud so I can take the interjection. I would much rather you did that.

I would also like to thank a very special person and team who helped get me here in the first place and who I enjoyed working with in the last government. A lot has been said about Campbell Newman and the team that led the state for three years, but I would personally like to thank Campbell, Jeff and Tim for being our leadership team. For the first time in history, and really since the very first member for Toowoomba, John Watts, stood in this place and said we need a better range crossing than the one that existed—and that was in his very first speech, so we are talking about over 150 years ago—we had a Premier, a Deputy Premier and a Treasurer who not only listened to the people of the Darling Downs but also put their money where their mouth was and said they would fund and build the second range crossing. The second range crossing is the most significant issue that has been outstanding not just for the people of Toowoomba but for the people of the Darling Downs for at least 30 years. An efficient crossing means that the wealth that is produced west of the divide can arrive at the port and be exported so all Queenslanders can benefit from that industry and that productivity gain.

It is a road that took a little bit of vision, but it also took a special leadership team, led by Campbell, who was willing to say, 'Yes, we will commit to this.' We live in difficult financial times. We understand that we have inherited \$80 billion worth of debt. We understand that the interest bill is \$450,000 an hour. I would like to point out for those who were so concerned about the money spent on coins that that equals about 90 seconds of the interest bill that Labor left that just rolls on—on and on, every 90 seconds. Whilst they might talk about a few thousand dollars that were spent so that dignitaries can receive items of memorabilia when they visit Queensland, I would like to put it in some perspective for those opposite. Every 90 seconds the taxpayer of Queensland pays that amount of money to ensure that the interest bill for the debt that was incurred in their name by former Labor governments is paid. They should just think about that the next time they are standing here saying, 'There has been a terrible waste of money.' I am not suggesting that there should be any waste of money by government. We should treasure the taxpayer's dollar. We should make sure that when the people of Queensland, who work so hard to earn their money, pay their tax, they get the services and the facilities they deserve. That is why I am proud to be the member for Toowoomba North who was the representative when the second range crossing was announced. It should have been announced when I was in my twenties or late teens, but Labor governments left the people of Toowoomba and the people of the Darling Downs languishing on a road that is dangerous, that is inefficient and that reduces the productivity of every business west of the divide. I certainly would like to thank those from the former government who put in so much time, energy and effort as well as their families who sacrificed time with them to do all of those things.

Let me talk about a few of the things that we did achieve in the 34 months of the 54th Parliament in which I was the representative for Toowoomba North. I have already spoken about the first and foremost, the second range crossing. We waited 30 years for someone to stand up and do something about it. Labor governments found loads of projects in Brisbane, the south-east corner and other places where they could spend money. When Kerry Shine first stood, it was No. 10 on the infrastructure priority list for Queensland. When he left office, it was No. 11. We have to ask why it was not moving up the list. It was because Labor governments do not care about people west of the divide.

Another project, which was not a sexy project, was a substation for the CBD of Toowoomba. When I was first told that we were going to spend \$74 million upgrading the power supply to the CBD of Toowoomba, I thought, 'How do you make the consumers, the Joe Public, the voters out there, actually realise that this is important?' Building a big substation is not the sexiest thing in the world. As good community members do, I asked by barber, 'What do you think?', and he said, 'That's amazing. That's fantastic,' and I was like, 'Why?' He said, 'Because when I turn on all the hair dryers at the same time the clippers won't work because the power supply to the CBD of Toowoomba is so antiquated that it drops to 180 volts at peak demand.' That is a piece of infrastructure that had not been upgraded since the early 1980s. It was originally established in the 1960s. Queensland's biggest inland city was wholly dependent on this antiquated piece of infrastructure that could have fallen over at any time. I certainly found it very interesting that that \$74 million was available.

Another project was the high school at Highfields. We hear from the other side, 'Oh yes, but we bought the land.' I just remind people—

**Mr Ryan:** Kerry Shine got the land.

**Mr WATTS:** That is right; Kerry Shine did get the land. Does the member opposite want to get the facts? I take the interjection and I thank him very much for it. In 2009 when I was the candidate for Toowoomba North we announced that we would be buying the land for the high school at Highfields. Bear in mind that at that time there was a member who had been in office for eight years and people had been asking him for the land. For eight years they waited. A week after we announced it, guess what? Magic pudding—'Oh we'll buy the land. We were always going to buy the land.' I put it to members opposite that they were not going to buy the land until such time as we announced it.

Let me go one step further. What happened then with that piece of land, because it was such a priority in the lead-up to 2009? What did they do with the land? They took 18 months to buy it and then they left it sitting there with no plan. In fact, the previous Labor government's 30-year infrastructure plan for the Darling Downs did not have listed a school at Highfields. They bought the land as a cynical move to try to secure votes in the 2009 election. It worked because I lost that election by 3.22 per cent. But the people of Highfields were not fooled so easily a second time. They knew that if they wanted a school built for the growing community out there, for the over a thousand children who were catching a bus every day into the centre of town, they needed an LNP representative who would have a strong local voice and who was capable of delivering for the region with a government that was willing to listen to people who live on the other side of the dividing range. Guess what? The school is open. It is a fantastic school. It has great—

**Mr Russo** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** That is right, the Highfields Ambulance Station. For nine years it was announced that they were going to put an ambulance station at Highfields. 'We're going to put an ambulance station at Highfields.' Guess what? The election came around, 'We'll do it soon.' Let's wait til the next election. 'We'll put an ambulance station at Highfields.' What happened after the election? 'We have not found the money for it.' I appreciate the interjection because that ambulance station now has 24 hours coverage, something it did not have before. It had three part-time staff. Now it has full-time coverage for all of the people of the north of my electorate. If members opposite have any other things that their member did not do while he was the local member, let me know and I will tell them how we fixed it up. They can keep them coming. I might need an extension of time or I will never get through.

Let me turn to a couple of other things. We did flood mitigation works. As everybody knows, Toowoomba suffered terribly in the 2011 floods. All of those works are nearing completion. It will not flood-proof the city, but it will certainly make it much more resilient and able to deal with flood. That was a Royalties for the Regions project. It was a \$45 million spend that went through the old rail yards, has redirected all of the water and smoothed East and West creeks and the confluence of those creeks. It also included \$5 million for an upgrade of a rail bridge to stop it acting as a dam when water does come down. I certainly thank the former deputy premier for that \$45 million. I look forward to hosting the new Minister for Main Roads to come and open it for us. The people of Toowoomba certainly deserve it, and it was a project that was very much needed.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** I had ambulance upgrade on my list, but we have already covered that. So I will be able to leave that.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** There is also great growth in Toowoomba North—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! Okay, members. The member has the call. Thank you.

**Mr WATTS:** It is interesting because there has been a mention of closing schools. In my electorate we did not close any schools. We opened up a school in an area where the former member left a thousand children catching a bus and travelling for over an hour every day in order to get to school. We built a school where it was needed. Where there were very low numbers we reviewed that because taxpayers' dollars need to be treasured and not wasted on doing things that are inefficient and ineffective. They need to be treasured because they have been hard earned by the general

public. If people do want a local member who will deliver and will treasure that taxpayer dollar, they should make sure that at the next election they vote LNP. Clearly, we can see from those opposite that debt and deficit are still part of their DNA. I look forward very much to our 'tossing' Treasurer outlining his campaign and his budget.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, I believe there was a ruling that that language was unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw, please.

**Mr WATTS:** I withdraw the comment that the Treasurer is a 'tossing' Treasurer and say that he is a 'coin-flipping' Treasurer.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, it has to be unreservedly withdrawn. I ask you to withdraw.


**Mr WATTS:** I unreservedly withdraw that comment. One of the hardest things for me on election night was when I realised that our government was not going to be returned as the government of the day. Let me tell honourable members why. There is a school campus in my electorate which has over 800 students—Toowoomba State High School at Wilsonton. They have been waiting for around 12 years to get an indoor sports facility and an arts facility so they do not have to stand out in subzero temperatures to do things.

I realised that, because we were not going to be returned as the government, those students will be left languishing and waiting again. I might just point out to those opposite, particularly to the education minister, that that is one of the highest Labor voting booths west of the great divide and has been for a very long time. There are over 800 children at that school who deserve the same facilities that exist in every other school in Toowoomba. Every other school in Toowoomba has one and they do not. It is one of the highest voting Labor booths, and Labor has left them to sit out in the cold and rain for their performances.

I will continue to fight for those people and I will present a petition on their behalf. I will insist on making sure that their voices are heard in this place. I will be a strong local voice for the people of Toowoomba—even those who do not vote my way—because they live west of the divide too and they deserve representation in this place, and that is what they will get from me.

I am sorry there are only 40 seconds left, because I would have liked to speak about the priority development area that was announced just prior to Christmas and the opportunity that that presents for inner-city renewal. I really hope that the now Deputy Premier has an opportunity to come and look at the rail yards precinct and the possibilities there. It might take some of the pressure off the inner-city living desires of those in the deputy chair's electorate, because we have an opportunity to create that atmosphere in Toowoomba. It is going to need a little bit of catalytic investment from the Deputy Premier. I would invite her to come up to Toowoomba and have a look at it, because people west of the divide deserve just as much attention from this government as do the people who live east of it.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. JR MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (12.01 pm): I would like to thank the people of Bundamba for re-electing me to this House for the seventh time. It is a great honour, and I am very humbled to be their representative in this House. I am very honoured as well to be the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and the Minister for Corrective Services. It is a great shame for me personally that my mum did not live to see me re-elected for the seventh time and appointed as a minister in this chamber.

All members in this House know that I fight for what is right, for what is fair and what is just. My community is a strong and vibrant one, but it does face many challenges. The residents of my community know very well that it is only Labor governments, Labor administration and Labor members of parliament that fight day in and day out to reduce social inequality and to meet the demands of a growing and very diverse population. It is only Labor that gives fair and equitable access to quality education and health care, and it is only Labor that delivers jobs and training in communities where I reside.

It is clear to the people in my electorate that during those dreadful Newman LNP years they were forgotten by George Street and, worse still, they were punished for voting Labor. They were sacked, TAFE was downgraded, education was cut back and it was a time of sheer horror for the people in my electorate because they were frightened for their jobs and they were scared for their future. It was clear to them that the LNP cared little for working families, single mums, pensioners and the battlers of Bundamba. After years of record infrastructure spending in our local community this

work dried up under the LNP, along with the LNP promises to reduce their cost of living. Simply put, Campbell Newman fibbed and he rubbed our noses in it day after day with punishments galore. It was a cruel and horrible three years for people in our communities. The LNP delivered nothing. People often said to me it was like living in the Dark Ages.

In contrast, Labor delivered the Springfield railway line, the Centenary motorway extension, new schools, new health programs, new police and ambulance stations, more police and ambulance officers, more funding for community groups, money for new sports facilities, and funding to cater for the healthy growth that was taking place in our community. They saw results under Labor with the bricks and mortar of new facilities, and they saw it in the eyes and the friendly smiles of our public servants, community workers and church workers who were out there delivering services for the people in our electorate that were so badly needed. It is what they absolutely deserved as a hand up and a handout in life. In a lot of circumstances our people have nothing, and it is only Labor governments that give them the skills and the training to be able to get a job.

Under Newman it was completely different: they were forgotten and Ipswich was forgotten—and when I say forgotten, I mean completely forgotten. In that area we were targeted like we were on the bottom of a balance sheet. When they looked to see where savings could come from, they looked at areas like my electorate and their cuts were cruel and callous. Of course the savings meant less people and fewer services. They chopped out that many jobs that it caused severe distress in my community. People in my community are not necessarily senior officers; they are not senior public servants. The people in my community who are lucky enough to have a Public Service job are AO2s, AO3s, AO4s and AO5s. In my community they are not up in the SO and SES ranks. In fact, I do not know of anyone in my community who has actually been in the chief executive officer ranks. They are average toilers and they do an excellent job.

What the LNP did not realise was the demoralisation of the committed staff, which was absolutely appalling. Our staff was left high and dry. They were left out in the cold. They were forced to sell their houses. Some of them were forced to live with their parents. It was shocking. School kids were forced to move schools from different areas. It was just simply callous and cold. Approximately 24,000 government workers lost their jobs—many of whom are in my electorate—after Campbell Newman told them that they had nothing to fear. Then, even worse, the LNP stripped away the rights and entitlements of those who were left. I can remember being out front with a lot of protesters and Public Service workers, and any protests fell on deaf ears. It was shocking. Right up until the last state election the LNP government did not listen. It was then that the people in my electorate and the people of Queensland had the chance to tell Campbell Newman and the LNP what they really thought of them, and in my community they came out in droves to say, 'We have had enough. We have had a gutful. It is over.'

I want to make a couple of comments in relation to the Ipswich Motorway. It was the federal and state Labor governments that delivered the upgrade to the Ipswich Motorway. Not long after the state election, what did we have? The new Minister for Main Roads, the member for Indooroopilly, came out and tried to say that it was the LNP government that delivered it, yet the planning and the delivery of the Ipswich Motorway had been undertaken for some eight years. To this day I would like to say that the members of our community still thank Mango and his team in Main Roads and the Origin Alliance for building that road, because it has made a great difference to us. We will probably have to wait for a federal Labor government to come into power to deliver the remaining upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway, and we certainly need it.

One thing that we certainly learned in the three years of the previous government is that the LNP say one thing and they do another. Unless you have been part of the big end of town and unless you go to all of their fundraisers, you have absolutely no hope out in my electorate. It is only now that Labor is back in government that I can see some confidence returning to the community, and to me this is really important. After being sworn in at Government House I can remember driving into the State Law Building. When I drove into the State Law Building and came up in the lift, there were public servants in that lift who gave me a hug and said, 'Thank God Labor is back.'

I used to work in the State Law Building and I was sacked by those from the other side of the House. I think they called it some sort of voluntary redundancy or however they spun it. When I was sacked by their lot in 1996 I took the view that one day I would come back. Guess what? I came back to the State Law Building as a minister. I tell you what: it felt really good. To this day, public servants whom I talk to on a daily basis in my building are absolutely delighted that we are back in government.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mrs MILLER:** I take that interjection. The member for Burleigh just said, 'The gravy train is back.' You have no respect for the public servants who do a great job in this state. You have no respect for the police or the firies who do a great job in this state.

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those remarks and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! Member, would you withdraw, please.

**Mrs MILLER:** I withdraw. We are focused on creating jobs for Queenslanders. We are focused on making sure the workers—whether they be police, firies, emergency services workers, correctional officers or public servants in our main agencies—are treated with dignity and respect because they never got any of that under the LNP when it was in government.

I heard about public servants who were vomiting on their way to work, such was the state of their nerves because every day that they turned up to their floor they did not know if they would have a job. That is disgraceful. We will not go back to that. We will never have that under our Labor government. We will also govern for all Queenslanders. We will build our economy and we will reintroduce fairness, transparency and accountability to our great state.

One of the programs that I am very proud will be restored is Skilling Queenslanders for Work. When the LNP got rid of Skilling Queenslanders for Work they took away the training and the job opportunities for literally hundreds of people in my electorate. One of the cruellest things the LNP government did was take that money away from the Salvation Army. When they took that money away from the Salvos they also sacked the Salvation Army officers who worked on Skilling Queenslanders for Work. Those opposite do not have a clue.

Some 8,000 Queensland jobseekers will benefit as the government allocates \$60 million to revamp Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs. I dearly hope that these programs will come back into my local electorate—at the Riverview Neighbourhood House, the Goodna Neighbourhood House, the Shiloh Community Church and the Anglican centres. I hope that the Salvos also apply for this money because it would make a huge difference in my electorate.

In my portfolio area we have delivered more police on the beat to help keep Queensland communities safe. We have also delivered more firefighters. These are new jobs for Queenslanders. We will be training more police and more firefighters because we want to make sure our communities are safe. We are also determined to give more young Queenslanders the opportunity to join the workforce as apprentices and trainees. Once again, this will have a huge impact in my electorate.

We will also have more teachers in our schools. Particularly, we will have more guidance officers in our schools. I am very proud that we hope we will be able to build new schools in my electorate at some time in the future. That is unlike what happened with the previous education minister, who got up in this parliament and announced I think five or six new schools in my electorate. And guess what he did? He delivered none—zero. I could not believe my ears when he said in this place that there would be new schools right across my electorate. I knew that he was telling porkies because he has delivered absolutely none. They delivered nothing in my electorate because that is just what they are like. What did they deliver? 1 William Street. That was Campbell Newman's new palace. That is what he was building for himself. That will be his legacy.

I want to talk about the Newman government's shameless spending on self-promotion, whether it be 'Campbell's coins' or his failed multimillion dollar advertising campaign to sell Queensland's assets. Let us also look at the failed supposed health campaigns. In my electorate, no matter where I was—Coles, Woolies, Aldi, K-Mart or Big W—people would say to me all the time, 'We don't believe anything this government is saying.' A case in point is the waiting list for the waiting list. I came across heaps of people who said to me, 'Yeah, I'm supposed to be on that waiting list but no-one can tell me where I am. I'm not even on it.' It was just absolute rubbish. The people in my electorate basically got to the point where they did not believe anything Campbell Newman was saying.

I want to talk about the Redbank Rifle Range in my electorate. In the state election campaign in 2006, former premier Beattie and I announced that the Redbank Rifle Range would be saved for our local people and that there would be a miners memorial and an RSL memorial. This had the full support of the resources community, the mining community—that is the miners resource council—the CFMEU, the AWU and the related unions. It also had the full support of the retired coalminers in my

area. It had the full support of the Goodna RSL and the Redbank RSL. It was reported on very strongly. I will outline the reason it was reported on across the country. There is a back track that goes between Goodna and Redbank, and on the day Peter Beattie came to the electorate and announced this wonderful new initiative the postie cut through the back track and nearly ran over the then premier and his wife. That actually made the news and put our electorate on the map, so we were pretty impressed with that. Of course, not long after that I had to go in and defend the postie because the postie nearly got the sack for taking a shortcut! I have a proven track record of standing up for members in my local community, including the local postie. I was able to save his job.


Today I am absolutely delighted to announce that the trusteeship that was put in place to turn the Redbank Rifle Range over for a criterium track and open it up to other sporting ventures will not happen. That trusteeship will be revoked and the area will be saved from wanton destruction. It will go back to what Peter Beattie had announced in 2006—that is, a miners memorial and an RSL memorial. We also plan to have a memorial to our Aboriginal ancestors. The trusteeship will be revoked as soon as we can do that.

The important thing about this is that the Redbank Rifle Range is now the only green space between Brisbane and Ipswich. It is very important that we save it—not only for the coalmining history but also for the history of the diggers in our area. I think it is extremely important. That process is underway. We know that our local people will be very delighted with this.

We need to ensure that our coalmining history in Ipswich is saved. At the moment it has faced destruction all over the place, but we will save it. We will also save our military history and ensure that the Goodna and the Redbank RSLs are involved in this process. In environmental terms, we are also going to save a number of mammals and birds such as the spot-tailed quoll, the tiger quoll, the long-nosed potoroo, the Coxen's fig parrot, the red goshawk, the squatter pigeon, the swift parrot, the painted snipe, the collared delma, the giant barred frog and all sorts of plants that Lloydie Bird identified through the area when he was alive. We will ensure that the Redbank Rifle Range land will never be used for a criterium track and never be used for sporting fields. Rather, we will ensure that it will be maintained as green space whilst also having the appropriate memorials in place in our local area. I certainly know that the Redbank and the Goodna RSLs were absolutely disgusted when the former government handed over a trusteeship so that this land could be used for purposes which they did not know about and which no-one else in our community was consulted about. It was a secret deal and it is over, it is has gone and it will not happen.

In conclusion, I want to thank all of the members of the Labor Party in my local area, all of our schools, community groups, our organisations and our churches. I particularly want to thank my father, George. I love him dearly. He has been sick lately. I also want to thank my husband, Stephanie and Gregg, Brianna and Chris and their families. I particularly want to thank Steve Axe and Tracey Bradley, my long-time electorate staff, and Michael Bertram. I thank all of the staff in our opposition office who for three years fought the great fight from over there. I also thank the staff of my ministerial office and I thank all of the public servants who suffered under the previous regime.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.21 pm): It is with pleasure I rise to add my contribution to the address-in-reply debate. I first want to acknowledge the Kombumerri Yugambah people of the Gold Coast—the saltwater people so appropriately named given our city's great affinity with the beach and the Broadwater. Although it has been some time now since the 31 January election, this is the first opportunity I have had to place on record my sincere gratitude to the constituents of Southport for re-electing me as their representative in this House. I am extremely humbled to have earned their trust and faith for a second term. I am confident that I have represented their best interests in this state parliament and have demonstrated a track record of working hard for Southport. Southport is my home: I was born there, I grew up there and I have raised my family there. I love it and am just so proud of what a great place it is to live and work.

I want to take a moment to thank a few people. Everyone in the House knows that campaigns are a team effort and I am fortunate enough to have had the support of many amazing people. I want to acknowledge Reg Williams, my campaign director who has been a great supporter and did an exceptional job of overseeing the 2015 campaign. He also continues through his audit practice to provide tremendous support to many community organisations, including his generous work with the Gold Coast Titans Community Foundation and Bravehearts, to name just a few. Thanks to Kiel Sinclair, my amazing branch treasurer, and his partner, Kate, who were among the small group of

people who ditched their Friday night plans to set up booths across the electorate before polling day. Thanks also to Glenn and Angeline Ayrton, who have done an outstanding job with campaign logistics and volunteer coordination not only for this most recent election but also previous elections, both state and from my time in council. Thanks to my SEC chair, James Kennett, my great friend and probably the most tireless and enthusiastic volunteer I have never known. James was out—

**Mr Costigan** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** He was here the other day. He also helped Sid and a few other members on the coast. He was out every day with me for the 14 months prior to the 2012 election and again this year when the election was called he was out every single day on the campaign trail. He finally got the hint that I really do not like muffins all that much and prefer custard tarts, so I thank him for the constant supply of coffees and custard tarts. I also want to acknowledge the tremendous support of Kathy Quinn and Lisa Westra van Holthe, my electorate officers, who not only worked so hard on my re-election but have consistently been just so responsive, respectful and caring to the many people who come by my office and who attend my weekly roadsides and my Saturday morning listening posts. I also want to make special mention of Stephen Petith, my former electorate officer who could not be with us for this past election.

**Mr Costigan:** 'Big Red'.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** 'Big Red' has been a great supporter and served the people of Southport so well through the last election and my first few years in office. Stephen resigned last year to take up a job working in Malta, the UK, North Africa, Hong Kong and China with a Chinese group that we met here one evening at Parliament House by chance when they were here with a visiting delegation. I also want to thank the many volunteers who put in hours during the campaign at roadsides, those people who came and stuffed envelopes and pushed things into letterboxes. I also especially want to acknowledge my enduring office volunteers—Rose Gray, Laurie Stokes and her wonderful husband Colin, and Nicole Barnaby and her carer Judy Wishart from FSG Southport. I also need to say a special thanks to William Ricketts, Sophee Smith, my older brother John and sister Connie, my niece Lynda and my dear friends Ken and Lisa Stanley for turning up many days in January to help out with roadsides and the daily putting out and retrieval of campaign signs and banners.

Thanks to all of my booth captains: Hayden Whitworth; Steve Lutz; Dewayne and Angie Montey; Warren Bray, or 'Wazza' as he is better known; Kiel Sinclair; Reg Williams; William Ricketts; Craig Devlin; David Lister; Tanya Bell; Peter Yeomans; and Rowan Steer. Thanks for all of your hard work both during the prepoll and then on polling day. I should also thank the many people—the army of volunteers—who came out on election day, many of whom survived that vicious storm during the afternoon and continued to hand out how-to-vote cards right up until six o'clock. At this juncture I also want to acknowledge and thank the many members of my Young Leaders Group. It has been such a privilege to speak into their lives and so pleasing to share in their achievements. I want to make special mention of Nicole Willis, who last year won the Planning Institute of Australia Young Planner of the Year Award and was also a finalist in the Gold Coast Young Entrepreneur Awards. Along with fellow young leader Georgia Canning, they both were finalists in the Gold Coast women in business excellence awards. A special mention must also go to Simon Brook whose exceptional work ethic and motivation have seen him become a partner at Burling Brown, one of Southport's oldest architectural firms. Simon's community spirit is encouraging and he has inspired many of his fellow young leaders.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the local business community for its continuing support. Special thanks must go to Laird Marshall from the Southport Chamber of Commerce; John Howe from the Committee for Southport; David Lister, the producer of the Southport book; and Luke Atlschwager from Parkwood International Golf Course for his support for so many events and functions. I particularly want to thank Luke for donating the function in support of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre and the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence last year where we were privileged to have Lisa Newman attend as our special guest.

Of course, I need to say thanks to my family. I am immensely proud of my four sons—David, Tim, Matthew and Andrew. I am grateful for their patience and long suffering, for their help during the election and the great job they do of keeping me humble and challenging my thinking. Of course I need to thank Melinda, who, in spite of our separation last year, continued to provide very practical and enduring support and encouragement during the hectic three-week campaign. This is the fourth family election for the Molhoek household and I am thankful for Melinda and appreciate her hard work in rallying volunteers and standing with me at our many prepolls and polling days. I also need to make special mention of two of Melinda's dearest friends, Liz Crouch and Jodee Litzow, for their support

and friendship. Of course I cannot complete the list of thanks without making special mention of our extended family from across the street, so special thanks go to Cristale, Ben and little Oscar for their enduring love and support.

Earlier in this debate my colleague the honourable member for Surfers Paradise touched on the Gold Coast election result, but I think it is important to acknowledge the message from the people of the Gold Coast. As a city, they spoke with one voice. Although not everyone agreed with all of our policies or all of our decisions, there was an overwhelming endorsement of our achievements on the Gold Coast. I know we spoke a lot about law and order in the campaign and I know nobody wants to listen to campaign rhetoric, but the changes we have seen on the Gold Coast in terms of law and order are significant.

The LNP's crackdown on criminal motorcycle gangs in September 2013 not only kicked the bikies out of town but also made some serious headway in the fight against organised crime. I have had many constituents stop me in the street to thank me for what our government did. I need to mention the success of RAP, the highly trained rapid action patrol squad, and the tough legislation that our government introduced not only to clean up our streets but also the flow-on of which there has been a dramatic effect on tourism and business confidence. Despite the best efforts of the union backed Labor campaigns and lobby groups to unseat the sitting LNP members on the Gold Coast, we saw an overwhelming endorsement of these laws. The new government has offered vague support for RAP and its role on the Gold Coast. I believe that it is in everyone's best interests that the government continue to support the resources necessary to allow Superintendent Jim Keogh and colleagues of his calibre and this squad to continue tackling serious crime in our city.

Speaking of our achievements on the Gold Coast, and more specifically my electorate, I was incredibly proud to have worked with the council, Mayor, Tom Tate and Councillor Dawn Crichlow to deliver the priority development area for Southport and its designation in the new draft planning scheme as CBD Gold Coast. Some 38 new approvals, representing an increase in commercial office space of 30 per cent, and an additional 7,000 apartments with a developed value of more than \$2 billion have been lodged and approved all because our government committed to the PDA and sent the strongest possible signals to the business and development communities that an LNP government was serious about getting the Gold Coast going. The revitalisation of Southport and the jobs that come with a vibrant, productive and thriving CBD focused on business, health and knowledge was and will continue to be my highest priority. Southport is already a hub of activity for the city. Almost 20 per cent of all jobs on the Gold Coast occur in the Southport CBD, the health and knowledge precinct at Parklands and within the industrial estates of Molendinar and Arundel, also within my electorate.

During the last sitting week and then again this week we heard the Deputy Premier taking credit for the light rail. How audacious! How unbelievably arrogant! The light rail has been a collaborative effort going right back to the time when Ray Stevens was the mayor of the Gold Coast. It was subsequently championed by mayor Gary Baidon and then councillors David Power and Ted Shepherd and then my fellow council colleagues and I continued to fight for it through the early 1990s. It was not until a delegation from the Gold Coast sat with then minister John Mickel that the state government finally made a commitment to this project. I am not sure, but I do not believe that the current Deputy Premier was even an elected member back when the crucial decisions and commitments were being made about this important piece of infrastructure.

I am sure also that in the coming years much will be made of the potential of the 2018 Commonwealth Games. No doubt there will be many who will want to take credit for securing the event. But let me place on the record that the Gold Coast owes a huge vote of thanks to Paul Broughton, founding chairman of the Gold Coast Titans, and Bob Gordon, former editor of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, for their persistence in getting the bid going and sowing the seeds of what will be a great event for our city and for my electorate of Southport.

There is just so much happening in Southport. I am very fortunate to be the elected member of such a wonderful area. Aside from the brilliance of Ian O'Connor and his team at Griffith University and its spectacular growth in stature as a world-class university, we have the new \$700 million games village underway, the newly opened Gold Coast University Hospital and the massive new Healthscope 450-bed private hospital. We also have a newly renovated and thriving TAFE right in the main street of Southport with nearly 5,000 students, many of them undertaking studies in allied health services, tourism and hospitality. Thanks must go to the commitment of our deputy leader and member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, for the work that he did in securing the funds to make the renovation of that TAFE happen.

There are major upgrades underway in Smith Street and Olsen Avenue. There is also the new Labrador hockey centre and, thanks to the hard work of our former tourism minister and member for Currumbin along with Mayor Tom Tate, our fantastic new \$48 million Gold Coast Aquatic Centre. But that is not all. The—

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I am not going to take that interjection. But that is not all. The Broadwater Parklands will be even further enhanced after stage 3 was recently commenced, with the development of new boat ramps and parking at the northern end of the precinct. It is great to see the dredging and general improvements that are being made to the Broadwater. These improvements are as a result of our government's commitment to reinstate the Gold Coast Waterways Authority and provide the funding and the teeth to get things done.

I am also delighted to see Chinatown developing within the Southport CBD. It has been such a pleasure to work with the council and the local business community on the evolution of Chinatown. Although the precinct still has a long way to go—another two restaurants opened last week—it sends a very clear message to the many Asian visitors and delegations coming to the Gold Coast. I am so pleased with this month's announcement of direct flights from Wuhan in Hubei province, China, to the Gold Coast. I have to say well done to the member for Currumbin, because the growth in the number of Chinese visitors to our city and our state has been spectacular. This service to Wuhan simply builds on the other services that the now shadow minister Jann Stuckey was able to secure, with direct connections to Asia with Scoot, AirAsia and China Southern and improved connections with Jetstar, Virgin and Qantas.

I also want to acknowledge—and it would be remiss of me not to do so—the courageous leadership and example our former premier, Campbell Newman, and his amazing wife, Lisa. I especially want to say thanks to the member for Callide and the member for Aspley for the privilege of working with them as an assistant minister while a part of the Newman government. I am honoured to have been taken into their confidence and extremely thankful for their mentorship and encouragement. I am also very proud to have worked alongside each of them in the many reforms and safeguards that we delivered in respect of child safety and also the progress that we made in economic development through planning reform, in particular the achievements of SARA—our single assessment referral agency—that saw the unravelling of so much unnecessary red and green tape that spared the development industry and councils from the unnecessary drama of running the gauntlet of up to 14 state government departments and which resulted in the delivery of thousands of approvals but, more importantly, jobs for Queenslanders through the construction and development industries.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I thank the member for Coomera for that interjection. I also want to touch on our criminal law reforms and particularly those with regard to child exploitation and dangerous drugs, the two-strikes legislation and, of course, the Carmody inquiry into child safety and protection practices. These are all reforms of which our government can be very proud. Our government's commitment to Queensland families and children was to make Queensland the safest place in Australia to raise a child. We increased maximum penalties for child exploitation offences and afforded further protection to Queensland children. But there is still so much more work to do. As at 30 December 2014, sadly, 8,722 children are still living away from home, 11,437 children are still subject to ongoing intervention and 9,219 children are still subject to ongoing child protection orders. Last year alone, we received 124,913 calls or contacts to our intake centres in Child Safety. That is 342 calls, emails or notifications every day—every day—for an entire year. There is still so much work to be done with regard to child safety.

I am humbled to be part of this Assembly. I would have to say that I was delighted to have been asked by our leader, the member for Southern Downs, to be the shadow minister for housing and public works. I have already had the privilege of meeting with many stakeholders around the state in this new role—

**Mr Costigan:** And in the north.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** And in the north. I thank the member for Whitsunday. I am committed to working with our many housing providers and community based providers to deliver sustainable, better and more affordable housing options for those many Queenslanders in genuine need. Over the past three months, as I have met with some of these community service providers, industry associations, housing providers, mayors and councillors, I can say that there is one message that

they would like to deliver to the House and that is that they are very concerned about how things will play out under the Palaszczuk government. They are concerned about how they will meet the future maintenance costs of public and social housing, and what a mess that was in when we came into government in 2012. They are concerned about the need for new housing. Under the previous government, there was no money for new housing, but it has been interesting to see the now Minister for Housing and Public Works out turning sods on programs and projects that we announced and that we found the funding for. Service providers are also incredibly disappointed that the government has placed on hold the stock transfer program, which would give them the equity, the resources and the balance sheets that they need to go out and independently fund additional housing to meet some of the growing need.

So here we are, six months after this government came into power, yet it is still to meet with many of these service providers. They want to know what the government's plans are to deal with problem tenants. Just last night on *ABC News* the minister was saying, 'We have to be kind and fair.' I understand that, but those on the other side of the House want to wind back the three-strikes legislation. They want to take away the teeth from the housing service providers so that there is no power to deal with problem tenants, there is no power to deal with people who want to run methamphetamine labs or conduct illegal activities from public and social housing. I wait in anticipation to hear just where those on the other side are going to go in respect of some of these challenges.

I am looking forward to serving the people of Queensland and Southport as best I can in this 55th Parliament. My goal, as it has always been, is to see Southport the best place ever to raise a kid and to make sure that there are great pathways and opportunities for our young people. I will also continue to work to make sure that those often overlooked areas—our parks, our sporting fields, our other community assets—are not overshadowed by the larger infrastructure projects. I will also continue to work and support the many local clubs, community service organisations and non-government service providers in my electorate.

As I do have a little time left, I would like to table a letter that I received from the chairman of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board prior to the election because I think it is important to correct the record. We have heard those on the other side of the House talk about their commitment to additional nurses. I was subjected to Labor lies in the election campaign when Rowan Holzberger, the Labor candidate for Southport, claimed we had sacked 22 nurses in three years. Here are the facts: we actually added 562 new nursing positions in three years to the Gold Coast and we increased spending by over \$400 million—up 40 per cent in three years. I am proud to have been part of a government that was serious about front-line service positions and I challenge those on the other side of the House to get serious about better services for Queenslanders and cut all the rhetoric.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 19 January 2015, from the Chair of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board, Mr Ian Langdon, to the member for Southport, Mr Rob Molhoek MP, and others regarding nursing numbers employed by Gold Coast Health [449].

Interruption.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### School Group Tour; Photographs in Chamber



**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! I welcome the students and teachers from the Graceville State School in the electorate of Indooroopilly who are in the gallery.

Mr Speaker has advised that there is a photographer from the *Courier-Mail* who will be around the chamber over the next little while taking some photographs of members in the chamber.

Before calling the honourable member for Cook, I remind honourable members that this is the member's first speech and it should be listened to with the courtesies reserved for such occasions. I call the member for Cook.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed.



**Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (12.42 pm): It is with a huge sense of pride that I stand before you in this place today. I am humbled by the trust placed in me by the voters of the great electorate of Cook. As is the custom of my people, I wish to start by acknowledging the Aboriginal owners of this land, the

Turrbal people. I acknowledge the tens of thousands of years that they have lived on this country, the care that they took of their land and the magnificent culture they practised in absolute harmony with their homeland. I acknowledge the suffering that resulted from the loss of their land, the violence of that loss and the pain and hardship that resulted from their dispossession. I acknowledge their survival and their resilience. Despite everything they endure, the Turrbal people continue to live on their country today, practice their culture and raise their children and grandchildren as proud members of the Turrbal nation.

I stand here today in the shoes of a great man and a great parliamentarian, the late Eric Deeral, a Guugu Yimithirr elder, mentor and fighter for his people and the first Aboriginal man to be elected to this parliament. When Mr Deeral was elected as member for Cook in 1974 I was just one year old, too young to know the historic nature of that achievement. As I stand here now I have a true sense of what he was feeling 41 years ago as he delivered his maiden speech. Like Mr Deeral, I stand tall and proud to speak of my commitment to the people of Cook. The year Mr Deeral was elected was only nine years after the repeal of the infamous Queensland Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act. It is hard to imagine the strength that must have been required for an Aboriginal man to successfully fight an election campaign and win it in 1974. Mr Deeral is a beacon for me as I focus on the enormous responsibility and obligation now facing me as only the second Aboriginal man elected to this place.

It has been a most remarkable 17 weeks as a parliamentarian. I have been in politics long enough to know that the gibes, attacks and name-calling are often part of the theatrics of this place and no malice meant, but there have been claims and judgements cast that have painted a picture of a person that I am not. My story and my life does not make for the typical member of parliament. I have no doubt that my life has been vastly different from most of my colleagues here in this place. Indeed, I am most certainly an improbable politician. I am a Barbarrum man from the western tablelands of Far North Queensland. I was born at a time when my skin colour would determine the level of education I would receive, the employment opportunities that would be available to me and even the quality of health that I would enjoy. I was born to parents who were battlers. My father worked hard as a canecutter and on the railways and my mother was a hardworking nurse. Indeed, I was born working class.

Growing up we lived in railway freight wagons, sheds with just a curtain partition around the toilet and shower and even in an old green bus converted into a caravan. Like so many similar families, we followed my father around to wherever he could find work. I got involved in politics because I got frustrated with people, politicians and bureaucrats making important decisions about issues that impacted upon my family, my life and my community that had absolutely nothing in common with my life, my family and my community. I say that my life was vastly different from most others in this place, but it is a life that is similar to many thousands of Australians for whom the wealth of this country seems to have passed by. Sadly, many of the hardships that I experienced in my life are also experienced by many of the voters of the great electorate of Cook.

My life experiences have shaped me and my view of the world. I have had blistered hands and an aching back from swinging a cane knife in cane fields in Far North Queensland. I have pulled pots of beer and listened to locals discuss life and bush politics in Normanton's famous purple pub. I have learnt true mateship from proudly serving as a member of the 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment. I have worked as a builder's labourer, youth social worker, a cleaner and been a public servant. I have shared the vision and steps towards achieving a more united, reconciled Australia while working with Reconciliation Australia in Canberra. I have been inspired by young people who have dared to dream big and succeed while working with the Foundation for Young Australians. I have worked in education and most recently in the private sector for local regional airlines, Skytrans.

All through these varied life and work experiences I have been driven by the greatest influence in my life, my late grandfather. My grandfather, Jack Congoo, was what was known as a gun cutter in the sugarcane fields in and around the Innisfail district. In his later years he turned his hand to tin scratching, or tin mining, around the Irvinebank, Stannary Hills and Herberton regions. His spirit is ever present and with me now as I stand here delivering this speech. His voice rings loud, giving me strength, pride and a great sense of purpose. 'Billy', he once said, 'there are no shortcuts in life. "Good luck" is spelt "H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K".' But it was not just hard work that has brought me here; it was also hope and self-belief. It has been well publicised that I have made mistakes—a big mistake when I was a teenager. I chose to buy into the expectations society had of an Aboriginal boy. I caved in to peer pressure. I hung around with the wrong crowd. I made excuses. I wondered, 'Was this it? Was this my lot in life?'

I also believed in myself. I did not want to let those who expected nothing more from someone like me to be right. I will not be defined by my worst moment. I did not want to be the typical black story: a juvenile troublemaker who ended up knowing too well the inside of a cell block, a courthouse or worse. American philanthropist Rick Warren once said that we are products of our past, but we do not have to be prisoners of it. Therefore, I chose not to be resigned to the same position in life.

In the year 2000, when I attended the Queen's Trust Forum for Young Indigenous Leaders at Banyo here in Brisbane, I was only 28 and it was a turning point in my life. I realised I was not going to be shackled to society's low expectations of someone like me. I knew that I had more to give than to take from this world. As years passed, my resolve became stronger that I could make a difference; that no matter how or where you are brought up you still have an opportunity to excel in life.

The great Australian union movement shared my hopes and dreams for my life and my vision for North Queensland. As sure as the sun will rise in the sky tomorrow, I will be a proud member of that great Australian people movement.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge my time as a member of the Australian Labor Party and how being a member of that party has contributed to my very presence in this House today. Across two elections, a federal election and a state election, rank and file members of the Labor Party have believed in me, bled for me and stood shoulder to shoulder with me in standing up for that very Australian ideal of a fair go. I thank those who rolled up their sleeves as I contested those two elections and helped me through to an honest hard-earned victory on 31 January this year. Whilst I am no longer a member of the Labor Party, I have a fundamental union with the Labor Party on issues of social justice, the rights of workers, the environment, and the rights and interests of First Australians. There will always be more that unites us than divides us.

I want to thank members of my campaign team and electoral staff who have seen me elected to this House. To Ken Schaumberg, my campaign manager: your inner strength, calm demeanour, patience and wisdom have been the backbone of my election to this House, Kenny, and I will never forget that. Stacey Mundraby and Lynette Creswell are my dedicated, loyal and hardworking electorate staff. I know they are watching this speech. I feel humbled and blessed that you have stood by my side in these troubled times.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the support and guidance of a number of key people in my political life: Dr Lesley Clark, the former member for Barron River; Senator Jan McLucas; former members for Mount Isa, Betty Kiernan and Tony McGrady; former mayor of Mount Isa Ron McCullough and former mayor of Cairns Val Schier; former members for Cook Jason O'Brien; former members for Leichhardt John Gayler and Jim Turnour; former member for Tablelands and current Mayor of Mareeba Shire Council, Tom Gilmore; Mayor of the Torres Shire Council, Pedro Stephen; Mayor of the Douglas Shire Council, Julia Leu; my good mate and Northern Territory Chief Minister, Adam Giles; and former member for Townsville and former Speaker of this House, the Hon. Mike Reynolds.

Last, but definitely not least, I pay my respects to the first politician I ever had the privilege of meeting, a former member for Mourilyan, the late Andrew George Eaton, better known as Bill Eaton. Bill served in this House from 1980 to 1992 and was the minister for land management under the newly elected Wayne Goss Labor government. I recall visiting Bill's office in Innisfail's Centre Point Arcade with my grandfather Jack. I was 13 years old. The impression that Bill made on me was that of a humble man, a man of the people, genuine and sincere in his duty and steadfast in his support for working-class men and women. Today I stand here and salute Bill Eaton. Bill and I are products of the great sugarcane and rain township of Innisfail. If only he knew how much of an impression he made on me and how one day we would share a unique bond.

Those people believed in me and I believed in them. I believed that I could be an improbable politician. My grandfather once told me that, if you have the ability to do good things for people, you have a moral obligation to do so.

Cook is bigger than Victoria and it is geographically challenging with a diverse and expansive array of issues. In Mareeba primary producers are concerned about getting better prices for their produce and government definitely has a critical role in supporting that industry. I am committed to supporting primary producers in Mareeba and on the Tablelands. In Port Douglas tourism operators seek tourism infrastructure to support the industry's growth. In the Torres Strait there is a need for better primary healthcare access. On Cape York cattlemen, miners, environmentalists and Indigenous people strive for an uneasy coexistence.

There is unacceptably high youth unemployment. I have been unemployed in my life and I know how hard it is to get by without a job. My time as the member for Cook will be spent fighting for jobs and services in this region. I will work hard to find ways to reduce the high cost of living for my constituents. In an electorate containing some of the country's most impoverished people and communities, it is a cruel irony that the cost of basics such as food, fuel, transport and power are so high. For the people of Cape York and particularly the Torres Strait, the cost of air travel, which is often the only option, is enormous. I have worked in the local aviation industry and I will work hard to use my connections in that industry and the remote communities to find a sustainable solution to this problem.

I want to ensure that infrastructure projects such as the upgrade to the Peninsula Developmental Road go ahead and are funded properly. I want to work to ensure that important resource projects such as Rio Tinto's South of Embley Project go ahead with the best environmental and cultural protections and contributions possible.

At the same time, as someone who lives in and represents an electorate with some of the world's most significant and beautiful natural ecosystems, I am very committed to the protection of those environments. The Wet Tropics, which included Australia's largest surviving rainforest and the magnificent Great Barrier Reef, is under threat from a variety of sources and I welcome the government's commitment of \$100 million for the protection of the reef. Many of the island homelands of the Torres Strait are threatened with saltwater inundation and are in urgent need of sea walls to protect them from king tides and other threats from changing weather. I will work with the leaders in those communities and at all levels of government to address the issue as a matter of urgency.

I will work hard to represent the diverse industries of coffee, sugar, maize, peanuts, vegetables, tea, tropical fruits and aquaculture. Tourism brings great social and economic benefits to the region. I will work with operators, big and small, to support this crucial industry. I will serve the families in Far North Queensland. My utter commitment to improving the quality of life of those families is driven by my own experiences and that of my parents, who battled to keep food on the table and a roof over our heads. I will be driven not by ideology but by a passion for justice tempered by a pragmatism to do what it takes to make change.

As a parliamentarian in this place, I will work with all those who share a passion for Far North Queensland, regardless of who they are and what political party they support. I reiterate my deep gratitude to the people of Cook for the trust they have bestowed in me. I will work hard for them and ensure that I am worthy of the honour they have given me.

As I come to the end of my speech, I want to mention my immediate family: my mother and father, my brothers and sisters. My older sister, Kerrie, is a hospital liaison officer at Townsville Hospital, my younger sister, Megan, is a firefighter in Ingham and my younger brother is a trade assistant in Goodna. I love them all dearly and I am proud of them, as I know they are proud of me as I stand here today.

I want to mention my five wonderful children. I love them more than anything else in this world and my concern for their future is the reason I am here today. My driving motivation is a desire for their lives to be different from mine. For them I want a Queensland and an Australia where all people have the opportunity to meet their full potential. For them I want a world where poverty, racism and oppression are no longer the things that define so many lives.

To my beautiful partner, Melanie: you have stood by me in these difficult times. I feel so blessed that you are the last person I see when I close my eyes at night and the first person I see when I open them again in the morning.

Finally, I will read a poem from the late great Oodgeroo of the Noonuccal people and great aunt to the member for Algester, Leeanne Enoch. I read this in tribute to my grandfather, whose wisdom and love helped shape me into the man I am today; into the politician I am today. It is titled *A Song of Hope*—

Look up, my people,  
The dawn is breaking  
The world is waking  
To a bright new day  
When none defame us  
No restriction tame us  
Nor colour shame us  
Nor sneer dismay.

Now brood no more  
 On the years behind you  
 The hope assigned you  
 Shall the past replace  
 When a juster justice  
 Grown wise and stronger  
 Points the bone no longer  
 At a darker race.

So long we waited  
 Bound and frustrated  
 Till hate be hated  
 And caste deposed  
 Now light shall guide us  
 No goal denied us  
 And all doors open  
 That long were closed.

See plain the promise  
 Dark freedom-lover!  
 Night's nearly over  
 And though long the climb  
 New rights will greet us  
 New mateship meet us  
 And joy complete us  
 In our new Dream Time.


To our fathers' fathers  
 The pain, the sorrow;  
 To our children's children  
 The glad tomorrow.


Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.30 pm.

## VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

### Nomination

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that this meeting has been summoned for 2.30 pm this day under the provisions of standing order 288 for the purpose of the election of a senator. I note that a quorum of members is present. Before calling for nominations, I remind members that every nomination must be accompanied by a declaration by the nominee of qualification and consent to be nominated and to act if elected. I now call for nominations.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.30 pm): I nominate Joanna Lindgren, principal project officer of Jimboomba, for election to hold the place in the Senate rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator Brett Mason. I produce and table Ms Lindgren's declaration of qualification and consent.

*Tabled paper:* Declaration of qualification and consent for casual vacancy in the Senate, dated 16 May 2015, from Joanna Lindgren [450].

**Mr SPEAKER:** Are there any further nominations? If there are no further nominations, I call the Premier.

### Election of Senator

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.31 pm): I move—

That Joanna Lindgren be elected to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator Brett Mason.

It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak in this debate to elect the candidate to fill the casual Senate vacancy caused by the resignation from the Senate of the Australian parliament of Senator Brett Mason. I take this opportunity to congratulate Senator Mason on his appointment as ambassador to the Netherlands and wish him well in his new posting.

The Liberal National Party has confirmed its preselection of Ms Joanna Lindgren and formally notified that she should be nominated for election to hold a place in the Senate. I have therefore produced and tabled Ms Lindgren's declaration of qualification and consent.

Today the House is now being asked to elect a senator for Queensland to fill the casual Senate vacancy. In accordance with the conventions of our federal system of government, since the commencement of the Constitution Alteration (Senate Casual Vacancies) Act 1977 and in accordance with the Constitution, the person to fill the vacancy caused by Senator Mason's resignation should come from the same political party.

The election of a replacement senator is an important constitutional function and the conventions of our federal system of government and our Westminster system are things that I take very seriously and treat with the upmost respect. The Labor government also respects the conventions of our Westminster system and therefore we will not be opposing the nomination of Ms Lindgren to fill the casual Senate vacancy.


Ms Lindgren was born in Brisbane and attended Brigidine College in Indooroopilly. Ms Lindgren grew up in and around Inala, where her parents still live. Her parents and family are here today and I know that they would be immensely proud to see their daughter elected to fill this very high office.

Ms Lindgren later studied at Griffith University where she received a graduate diploma in education after her initial arts degree. Ms Lindgren has worked as a high school teacher in Brisbane and has been a member of the Australian Army Reserve. She is currently a principal project officer and lives at Jimboomba.

Ms Lindgren is, of course, known to me. She was one of my opponents for the electoral district of Inala at the 2012 state election. While Ms Lindgren's candidature was unsuccessful at that election, I have the pleasure of moving in this House today that she be elected to fill the casual vacancy in the Senate.

As many honourable members will know, Ms Lindgren is an Aboriginal Australian and is the great-niece of the first Indigenous member of the Parliament of Australia, Neville Bonner. Mr Bonner had a proud record of service to this state as a senator for Queensland for over 12 years. I am confident that Ms Lindgren will similarly be a strong advocate for Queensland in the Senate of the Parliament of Australia.

I have spoken previously about what the characteristics are that people look for in a good politician. I believe a number of qualities are invaluable—qualities such as honesty, integrity, compassion, humility and honour. I have every confidence that Ms Lindgren will bring these qualities to her representation of the Queensland people in the Senate of the Parliament of Australia. I commend Ms Lindgren's nomination and this motion to the House.

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.34 pm): It is a great privilege to stand here today and have the opportunity to join with the Premier in speaking very favourably and positively to the motion to endorse the nomination of Joanna Lindgren to fill the casual Senate vacancy which was created by the resignation of Senator Brett Mason.

As the Premier did, I would also like to place on record my personal appreciation and that of my team for the wonderful service of Brett Mason over such a long period of time. I also indicate that we believe that he has the values, capability, dedication, experience and diplomacy to take up his new position in the Netherlands. We wish him all the very best.

It is also important to reflect on the fact that the role of a senator is extremely important for the state or territory that they represent. It is a privileged position and a position which carries with it high expectations of fearsome representation of the state or territory the senator is from.

I join with the Premier in acknowledging in the public gallery today Joanna's husband, Peter, other members of her immediate and extended family and her friends. There is no doubt that they would be very proud today of the extraordinary achievement of Joanna in being brought before our parliament to be officially nominated and endorsed to fill the casual Senate vacancy.

I am also proud to stand here as the leader of a party which has been able to achieve a number of firsts in Queensland and break new ground. I reflect on the situation in 1929 when the great Irene Longman became the first woman to be elected to the Queensland parliament as part of the then progressive National Country Party. We can fast forward to 1974 and the election of the first Indigenous person to the Queensland parliament, Eric Deeral. He is someone who is held in very high regard not only for his career in here but also for his fantastic work in later years as an elder within his local and extended Indigenous community.

As the Premier said a moment ago, the late, great Neville Bonner was a person of extraordinary dignity. He was someone who had a small amount of formal education in his early years—some three years—but he went on to become one of the greatest statesmen and most outstanding senators that this state has ever seen. The distinction with which he served his state and people and the way he championed a great road forward for Indigenous people provides another great first for the LNP.

I was given the privilege in 1989 to be the youngest person elected to this parliament. Joan Sheldon was the first woman deputy premier of this parliament. I acknowledge that today we have a female Premier and Deputy Premier. Fiona Simpson was the first female speaker.

From our perspective as the LNP and our predecessor parties, we have always believed in being able to meritoriously appoint or select people who are not only able to break new ground but also stand on their record of achievement. I think we see that again today with the nomination of Joanna Lindgren. We look forward to her outstanding service. Today with this nomination what we will be doing is placing in the federal Senate our first female Indigenous senator from Queensland. I think that is fantastic.

I did not know Joanna until I met her a couple of weeks ago. I knew her by reputation. She was known to many of my colleagues, and obviously known earlier to the Premier as one of her contestants in the election in 2012, but I was immediately impressed by her down-to-earth nature and her passion for the job. A casual Senate vacancy position is much sought after and the people who seek to fill it do so with a great deal of gusto. We had an outstanding field of quality candidates who stood for election to fill this casual Senate vacancy. I must admit that I thought it would be extremely difficult to choose amongst that outstanding field, and many people know who they are.

Without giving too much away, the simple reality is that Joanna connected and she won it on the day. She brought an extraordinary personal touch to her presentation. She was able to connect with a range of people who had not met or spoken to her before. She showed empathy and genuineness in her presentation and answered questions in a down-to-earth and very honest way. As I said to her briefly beforehand—because it is best to never show your hand in these things. I genuinely have always said that when I go to such elections I want to see how people present on the day. Because I have seen any number of people in Senate contests, whether it be at a normal Senate election or a casual vacancy, who have come in and won it on the day. I indicated to her and gave her encouragement that this could very well happen again today, and that is what happened only about a week ago. A fantastic job, Joanna.

She has an extraordinary record of commitment and achievement within the LNP and its predecessor Liberal Party and, as the Premier mentioned, standing for public office previously. There is no doubt that when she commits to something she gives it her absolute best. It comes back to her very strong personal, family and community values. I know that she has extraordinary pride in being the great-niece of our fantastic former elder statesman Neville Bonner. That, in itself, provides great encouragement for me with regard to Joanna and her commitment not only to our cause but also to the cause of Queenslanders and what is required to be a senator.

Joanna has been a teacher, a public servant and is a senior officer, as I understand it, within education in this state. She proudly says that one of her first roles was being a member of the Army Reserve. It was one of her first jobs. She is someone who was prepared to serve her country in another way—probably the most significant way.

She has already referred to her great mentors including, as I mentioned, the late senator Neville Bonner and wants to be a woman of her generation which will champion the aspirations of a whole range of Australians, particularly those who work, aspire and wish to save—all very important parts of the values of aspiration, entrepreneurship and making sure that government reflects the desires of Queenslanders and Australians to have their concerns properly heard.

She also believes that Australia can be something bigger and greater than what it is. She has dedicated her life to good public policy, working within her community, raising funds, working with charities in so many ways and giving to those people who are in need.


Currently there are 150 members of the lower house, or the House of Representatives, and some 76 senators and only five come from a teaching background. So Joanna will be able to use her skills not only as a very passionate Queenslanders but also as a former teacher to provide a greater insight for many other members of parliament. She indicates that she would make education, training

and employment a special interest area in Queensland, because her belief is that education and training are absolutely essential for people to take advantage of the opportunities which learning brings.

She is also the wife of a police officer, as I mentioned before. She indicates that that in itself is a troubling thing because, whilst she is very proud of the role of her husband, she lives in constant fear of having a knock on her door from a senior officer who may report a situation which could be a sad or tragic one.

She supports strong law and order initiatives. She supports a strong Defence Force and is very strongly supportive of those serving our nation. She is very committed to action, not theatrics. Anyone who saw Joanna's presentation to our almost 240 delegates the other day would see that she not only says that; she lives that and she carries through with regard to it. I think that gave her an extremely special edge in a very strong field on the day.

She is very interested in practical, not grand, gestures to support the needs and requirements of Indigenous Australia. She is not for tokenism; she is for action. I think that is an important thing which Queenslanders and Australians are very much looking forward to. Proudly with her Aboriginal heritage she is positioned to support Senator Scullion in implementing real policies to help close the gap. My team and I, and I think many Queenslanders, increasingly as they get to know Joanna will find that she is a fantastic champion because of her experience, her values and her commitments. She is a very worthy nominee of this parliament on behalf of the LNP to fill this casual Senate vacancy.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (2.45 pm): I rise to support Joanna Lindgren's appointment for the casual vacancy in the Australian Senate following Queensland Senator Brett Mason's resignation. Like me, Ms Lindgren is an Aboriginal woman with a strong heritage and a strong family history of political involvement. Like me, Ms Lindgren lives in Logan City. I am sure the community is pleased to be the home of so many achievements.

As we have heard, Ms Lindgren is the great-niece of the great Neville Bonner, who served as a senator for Queensland from 1971 to 1983. As we are doing here today, Mr Bonner was initially chosen by the Queensland parliament to fill a casual vacancy in the Senate. He became the first Aboriginal Australian to sit not only in the Australian parliament but in any parliament in Australia. Neville Bonner went on to win elections in his own right repeatedly in 1972, 1974, 1975 and 1980. In doing so, he blazed the trail for so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the years that have followed.

On taking her place in the Senate, Ms Lindgren will join the ranks of so many of those who have followed that trail all the way to our nation's capital. In the federal parliament she will join Nova Peris in the Senate and Ken Wyatt, who sits in the House of Representatives—two other proud Aboriginal people in the parliament. Senator Nova Peris was the first Aboriginal woman to ever take a place in the federal parliament, and I am certain she will be pleased to see another Aboriginal woman take a similar path.


We are seeing more and more first nation Australians than ever engaging in all levels of government and entering state and federal parliaments across our country. It is pleasing to see that all political parties are beginning to appreciate the value of diversity in our political processes and the value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, our perspectives, our experiences and our approaches bring to the parliament and to political debate. Ms Lindgren's appointment to the Senate helps to sustain that appreciation and builds on the expectations and hopes of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and those in our community who value and seek out diversity in our civic society. I certainly hope that in the years to come many more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will follow this same path and that at some point down the track the election—or, in this case, the appointment—of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to political positions will be seen as quite normal and even expected.

Ms Lindgren, like me, worked as a high school teacher here in Brisbane. What better or more noble profession to have had? Teachers are often those who can have the greatest impact on our young people and are often the best representatives of our communities. They are also advocates for the importance of good quality education. I want to see the next generation of young people in my electorate of Algeria and across all communities throughout Queensland fulfilling their dreams and aspirations. Good education is the best and often only chance in achieving this.

It is clear that investing in quality education makes our communities stronger, fairer and more prosperous. That is why I am pleased to hear Ms Lindgren has said that education and training will be her main priority in Canberra. I know that she will be committed to helping our young people get jobs, which give them dignity, a stake in society and the opportunity to contribute to their community.

Ms Lindgren also has a keen interest in community affairs, and I anticipate she will be supportive of initiatives we are implementing to help the community services sector to deliver services here in Queensland. I also hope to work with Ms Lindgren in building capacity of community organisations and businesses in regional, rural and remote Queensland to be able to deliver services locally and provide much needed jobs, particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

I am pleased to see the LNP has put forward not only a woman but an Aboriginal woman for the Senate position. I am sure Ms Lindgren will live up to the legacy of her great-uncle, the great Mr Neville Bonner. He would be so proud of you—as I am sure your family here today are very, very proud of you. I support Joanna Lindgren's appointment to the Senate.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.50 pm): It is my pleasure to speak on the motion to select a candidate to fill a casual Senate vacancy. I want to welcome Joanna here today, as well as John and Gloria Lindgren, Kerry Lee Lindgren-Smith, Peter Anderson-Barr and Bruce Smith, the family members. It is also fitting that tomorrow is the anniversary of the first calling together of the first 26 members of the Queensland parliament in 1860, and they met where the Myer Centre now is. It is interesting to think that those 26 members were selected by about 2,000 voters, which is something that not many of us are aware of. So 2,000 voters chose 26 members, but to have the franchise in those days you had to be male, over 25 and a landowner. That shows how far we have come. I think today's motion reflects that in the choice of Joanna Lindgren. I spoke to Joanna earlier this week when I asked for a copy of her speech from last week—what a whirlwind it has been, Joanna. She said she was going into Education House to resign, to tell them she would not be going back to my former department. That certainly has been a whirlwind.

As I have already mentioned, Queensland formed its first parliament 155 years ago tomorrow. Subsequently after federation, under our Constitution we have this system where we nominate a casual vacancy in the way that we do. As the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier and the member for Algeester have already mentioned, we think Joanna is a wonderful choice. She certainly did well amongst the eight other candidates all day last Saturday at the convention centre.

I also want to pay tribute to Dr Brett Mason, the former senator whose vacancy we are here to fill today. He is a great friend of mine; he was one of my first supporters when I ran for the seat of Surfers Paradise in a fruitless attempt at the time. He used to ask a question when interviewing potential staff: 'As a senator I have many stakeholders,' he would begin, 'but which stakeholder is my most important: the Senate itself, the people of Queensland or the members of the LNP?' To some extent, this question could be asked in relation to any elected representative, because to some extent we must have due respect and consideration for the party we represent, the people who elected us at polling booths and the institution to which we are elected.

The process of the convention of this motion which we take part in today—slightly refined from that which may have taken place in this House when the House considered these questions in decades past—highlights the balance and relationship between these three important influences. Strictly, of course, senators are elected by the people of Queensland when we place a number above or below the line on that unwieldy white sheet that looks more like a tablecloth than a ballot paper. In this respect, senators are no different to the House of Representatives members who are elected in those same booths. However, when voting above the line in the Senate, a citizen is voting for a party and not an individual. They are endorsing the process undertaken by a party in ordering their candidates and in allocating their preferences, despite having the option to order those preferences themselves.

When a senator resigns, it is convention that the party which the resigning senator was a member of at the time of their election may choose their successor and that this House endorse that choice. In this respect, even though the state parliament has ultimate power—which is appropriate given the person being endorsed will represent Queensland in the state's house in Canberra—in practice the power is with the body that chooses that new senator from within their party. To this extent, the new senator should perhaps have a greater eye to their own party as a stakeholder, while still recognising they are in Canberra to represent Queensland. Joanna has already said to me that she is already thinking about her next preselection, which I think is due in November next year. I think she will be okay.

In relation to the Senate itself, once there, the senator should have a necessary respect for the Senate and the important role it has to play in being a house of review for the passage of legislation. The important role of an upper house, with essentially equal powers to their lower house counterparts, is in acting as an effective restraint on the excesses of majority government in a two-party system and the improvement of proposed policy by a broader base of elected representatives.

I have mentioned the fact we had nine candidates last week in the LNP—the party of democracy, merged and founded democratically, built and sustained by members in branches across the state. This nomination today is the culmination of a democratic process—a process that has produced a thoroughly deserving candidate with the credentials to suggest she will be a strong and effective representative for Queensland in the Senate.

Joanna Lindgren was born to Roman Catholic factory workers and grew up in Inala in Brisbane's south-west. She became a teacher and worked in Queensland schools with high proportions of students from low socio-economic backgrounds. It was here that she developed an understanding of challenges facing children from disadvantaged backgrounds and then a passion to do something about it. As I have mentioned, she worked most recently in the Department of Education, Training and Employment, dedicated to improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students. It is a matter of great pride for me that, since the national apology was made, Queensland has made greater advances, even though there is a long way to go, than any other state amongst the 50,000 Indigenous students we have in our system. This was acknowledged by former minister Peter Garrett, Bill Shorten and of course the current minister, Christopher Pyne, and it is something that the relevant section in the Department of Education, Training and Employment was very proud of. These achievements were made thanks to a lot of hardworking people, and the other states have been looking at the things we have been doing as well.

In 2010 Jo was appointed to QCAT and is one of only a few teachers who assist that body in dealing with teacher disciplinary matters. She has a political pedigree, as has been mentioned today. Her great-uncle, former Liberal Party senator Neville Bonner, was the first Indigenous representative to sit in any parliament in Australia when he was chosen to fill a casual vacancy by this House 44 years ago. It is worth noting that the casual vacancy was to replace Dame Annabelle Rankin, selected by the Liberal Party 24 years earlier as the first woman from Queensland to sit in the Parliament of Australia. I asked my wife, Stacey, about her memory of Neville Bonner. She said that, even though she was not particularly aware of who he was at the time, he came to St Joseph's at Bardonia and she got his autograph. She said she did not know why she got it but she knew that he was a very nice fellow.


Jo has shown the same commitment to public service as both these Liberal Party icons and she sought to represent the seats of Inala and Oxley in 2012 and 2013 respectively, pushing the now Premier to preferences on the former occasion. I remember walking around the Inala civic shopping centre with Jo on that day before that election. I was not really expecting that I would be in the seat of Inala campaigning, but I was working hard on the south side with candidates there and we were certainly copping a bit of grief from other people in the shopping centre who were saying, 'What are you doing here?' It is interesting that at the election that seat did actually go to preferences, so it just shows how volatile the electorate can be and that Jo was prepared to put her hand up. At that stage, I think she was teaching at Woodridge state high and she was prepared to stand up in a seat that we would not traditionally think we would have a chance in.

This motion seeks endorsement as a Queensland senator for the daughter of Roman Catholic factory workers from Inala—a teacher who identifies as Aboriginal and has worked throughout her career in low SES schools and on Indigenous education policy. Jo mentioned in her preselection material that a prominent Labor figure had at one point approached her to join and run for the ALP. With a CV like hers, those opposite would be salivating at the prospect of ticking their diversity boxes. But as Jo said to preselectors on Saturday, 'Don't vote for me just because I'm a woman. Don't vote for me just because I'm an Aboriginal.' She implored people to vote for her because she is passionate about education and wants to improve educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged students. She implored people to vote for her because she understands the pressure of a working family. She implored people to vote for her because she shares hopes and aspirations for this state and this nation with people just like her—Howard's battlers, the same people who are members of our party and the same people who voted for the person they wanted to represent them in the Senate in that room on Saturday. They did just that. They voted for Jo because the sum total of her experiences had brought her to believe in a set of beliefs and built a set of expertise that they thought would be

valuable in the Senate. They did not vote for her because she was diverse; they voted for her, as the Leader of the Opposition said, because she told them her story, she told them what she believed in and they saw that she was willing to stand by it.

The Jo Lindgrens of this world—people with her background, her CV, her passion and her connection to the beating pulse of Australia—are increasingly finding a home in the Liberal National Party. We have preselected—and we will continue to preselect—candidates who, in other times, may have been considered typical Labor stock. We will continue to be a home for people with an ambition and commitment to providing energy and ideas that will keep this state and country as great as it is or make them greater than they are. Jo will make a wonderful contribution to the Senate for the remainder of the term of this vacancy. I give her a commitment to stand with her as she recontests her seat at the next election. I commend the Liberal National Party membership for their astute and democratic choice of a candidate.


Before I conclude, I want to pay tribute to a man whom I recognised in my maiden speech to this place as a mentor, the retiring senator, now Dr Brett Mason. He will leave a mark on the Senate as an outstanding orator and fierce defender of intellectualism and classical liberalism in Australia and overseas. His contribution consistently reminded us of the freedom we enjoy and should fight to preserve. Others have had longer on the front bench and have been recognised more. It is perhaps a shame that Brett's talents were never fully realised. In my view, his greatest contribution has been as a mentor to the next generation of young party members, and this legacy will endure. He is loved by the youth wing of the party because of his passion, his beliefs and his ability to engage them in the idea that there is value in public service, honour in ambition and pride in civic contribution. This is manifest in his mentorship of his former staff, which includes the current federal members for Moncrieff and Bonner, the deputy mayor of Brisbane and the former member for Mount Coot-tha in this place. I wish Brett all the best in his new role as Ambassador to the Netherlands, a role close to my heart. His previous diplomatic experience and outstanding credentials make him well suited to the role. With that, I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.01 pm): I rise today to support the nomination of Joanna Lindgren as the replacement candidate for the casual vacancy of the Senate created by the resignation of Senator Brett Mason. Joanna is proudly a resident of the growing community of Flagstone, one of the growing communities on the edge of Logan City and very much one of the great communities of the electorate of Logan. I look forward to working with future Senator Joanna and hope she is a strong voice for the families of Logan. She knows that there are fantastic families in the area seeking a better life through hard work, pioneering a new community and, indeed, a new city.

Joanna is no novice to politics. She took on the tough task of taking on the Premier in Inala. I am glad to say that she was not successful—my apologies. It could be said that she has politics in her blood, noting that her great-uncle was also a senator for Queensland, Neville Bonner. Like Minister Enoch and me, future Senator Lindgren is a former high school teacher. We have all seen how education can transform those families, such as my father and mother's families, accessing a new world through education. I know she will stand up for Queensland families to get the funding that our state needs to make that transformation for a new generation of families. I know she will be the champion of the needs of our local high schools: Flagstone State Community College, Park Ridge State High School and Browns Plains State High School.

As a new member of parliament myself, I know the apprehension and daunting task that is in front of Joanna. I think every politician who enters this place or any other representative chamber does so with a great weight of responsibility to do better for all who they represent. In this Joanna has all of the people of Queensland to represent, while I have the more humble task of representing our shared community in the state electorate of Logan.

I am proud that today we act in a bipartisan fashion in this place to fulfil the will of the voters as best we can to select the representative chosen by the party processes of the party of the retiring senator, in this case the Liberal National Party of Senator Brett Mason. Joanna lives in the street where I went door-to-door to introduce myself three years ago. I hope to be on her street again in the future. I will again be visiting friends and supporters of mine who live further up the street nearer to the roundabout. I wish Joanna Lindgren the very best in her new role as senator. I urge every member of this House to support her nomination as the replacement candidate for the casual vacancy in the Senate.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (3.04 pm): I rise today with pleasure to speak to the appointment of Joanna Lindgren to the casual Senate vacancy for Queensland. I acknowledge president Bruce McIver; her husband, Peter; her sister, Kerry, and her partner; and all the people here supporting Jo today. As I look up to the gallery and see the senator elect's parents, John and Gloria, simply brimming with pride, I have to acknowledge the part that they played, for it was their values of hard work and morality that were instilled into Joanna while she was growing up; it was their encouragement for Joanna to strive to be the best she could be through education and service to not only the community, but also the nation. This is a truly great Australian story unfolding that we are witnessing here today.

Joanna grew up in Inala and her parents were factory workers. She worked hard to put herself through university to become a teacher and for over 25 years has been educating Queensland children in a number of schools across South-East Queensland. I met Joanna when she was teaching year 9 at Woodridge State High School. The first thing that struck me was what a genuine, caring person she was.


Joanna has demonstrated her commitment to Queensland not only as an educator but also as an Army reservist serving for a number of years. She is very passionate about her commitment to the welfare of animals and her active participation in this cause. However, it is the many other volunteering roles that she has been involved in that gives us a glimpse of her strength of character: assisting local Rotary clubs and charities; organising donations for the wonderful organisation Project: Love and Care of Inala, which supports kids in out-of-home care; tutoring students who could not afford a private tutor; and helping the unemployed with resume writing. Combine this with her QCAT experience and policy project work for Education Queensland that she was recently undertaking and one cannot help but be impressed.

Joanna has the ability to listen to the concerns of the people of Queensland from the perspective of having a very real and very grounded background. This is an asset that this side of the House welcomes with open arms. Over her years as a member of the LNP, Jo has continually supported our grassroots membership, our candidates and our elected members through the tough times and the good times, but her belief has never wavered. She married Peter, a police officer, in 2007. Between the both of them they have a great understanding of the challenges and the opportunities that are facing communities. As with everything else in Joanna's life, she has worked hard for this position and she has earned the right to continue the next chapter of her life, which is very much like the first: the service of the people of the community.

The LNP held a preselection and all of the candidates were outstanding with varied backgrounds, experience and qualities that each brought to the role. The LNP membership voted on merit and the best person for the role was selected—as it should be—and that person was senator elect Joanna Lindgren. I will take this opportunity to thank Senator Brett Mason for his faithful years of service to Queensland and to the Senate.

Personally, Jo and I have become good friends over the years and I have found her help and that of her family's ongoing and genuine. This is the same way that they would treat everyone. This is the same way they would treat anyone else. This is a family that believes that everyone deserves a fair go.

I am so proud to see Jo join the ranks of our Senate team because the values that she holds, the principles she believes in and the work ethic that she lives by will benefit the people of Queensland and Australia. Congratulations, Jo.

 **Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (3.08 pm): As a former Queensland senator in the federal parliament, it is with pleasure that I make a contribution to this motion in the House today on the appointment of Joanna Lindgren to the Senate. Joanna's appointment to the casual vacancy in Australia's Senate results from the Queensland Senator Brett Mason's resignation. I pause there to comment briefly on the success of Senator Brett Mason. I join my colleagues opposite in commending his period in the Senate. Brett led a distinguished career as parliamentary secretary to the minister for health and ageing in the Howard government from 21 March 2007 to 3 December 2007. He was also the parliamentary secretary to the minister for foreign affairs in the Abbott government from 18 September 2013 to 23 December 2014.

Quite often in the mornings I would see Brett in the gym of the federal parliament under a leg press pushing up weights, and he and I developed a reasonable bond and on many occasions worked out together.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** Yes, I was. As we have heard today, before entering politics Joanna worked as a high school teacher, and there is no better or nobler a profession. Educators understand the needs of our young people and are often the best representatives of their community and, as we have seen from contributions in this House, in parliament as well. Educators advocate for the importance of quality education. It is clear that investing in quality education will make our community stronger, fairer and more prosperous. That is why I am pleased to hear Ms Lindgren say that education and training will be her main priority in Canberra. I know she is committed to helping our young people get jobs, which gives them dignity, a stake in society and the opportunity to contribute to their community.

Ms Lindgren also has a keen interest in community affairs, and I anticipate that she will be supportive of initiatives we are implementing to help the community services sector in Queensland, particularly the focus on building the capacity of community organisations in regional Queensland to deliver services locally and to provide much needed jobs in smaller towns. I know it is a question of vacancies, but I do hope that she makes her way onto the Community Affairs Senate Committee to assist in those areas. As a member of that committee for many years, I was very fortunate to travel to copious numbers of Indigenous communities to see the need to address some of the issues in those areas. I also hope to work with Ms Lindgren in building the capacity of community organisations in Queensland's Indigenous communities.

I was keen to hear that she has an interest in defence through her current position, and I do encourage her to join some of the parliamentary defence programs that are available there. There is one in particular called Norforce, which is a program where Indigenous people protect our shores in the northern part of the nation.

I am also glad to see that the LNP has put forward not only a woman, but a second Indigenous woman for a Senate position. Joanna will join another great Australian, the senator for the Northern Territory Nova Peris. Senator Peris has made a significant contribution to this country and her territory in reaching out and being a strong voice for our first people. I am sure she will assist Joanna in finding her feet when she navigates the halls of the Senate in Canberra. Both Nova and Joanna will no doubt make a clear case for ensuring that Indigenous people are finally recognised in the Australian Constitution, which is something that we in this House all look forward to.

I am sure Ms Lindgren will live up to the legacy of her great-uncle Mr Neville Bonner, who would have been proud of her achievement. I support Joanna Lindgren's appointment to the Senate.




**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (3.12 pm): It is with great pleasure and pride that I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier to endorse the nomination of Joanna Lindgren as the new Queensland senator. In that regard I pass on my thanks and congratulations to retiring senator Dr Brett Mason and wish him well in the future.


It is wonderful to see Joanna's husband Peter and other family and friends up in the gallery here today. Just prior to this I had an opportunity to speak with them, and the obvious pride that they have in Joanna is wonderful to see. As has been said many times today, Joanna's great-uncle, Liberal senator Neville Bonner, was the first Indigenous Australian to become a member of the federal parliament. I congratulate Joanna on her appointment as Queensland's first female Indigenous senator. She is following in her family's tradition of strong passion for community and public service.

Joanna Lindgren is a person of very high integrity and the courage of her convictions, and she is exactly the right candidate to fill this high office. At heart she is a community member who has always worked hard for her community. She has spent time as an Army reservist, she assists local Rotary clubs and she works very hard for local charities. What impressed me most about Joanna was her dedication to the improvement of our educational services. Joanna's background in education has seen her work with Indigenous communities to develop and implement policies and programs that have been trialled and implemented at a statewide level. We are all aware of the difficulties that our communities face with youth engagement and the importance of education at ground level working with communities—not against them—and delivering programs based on a hand up, not a handout.

My husband Jason spent some time with Joanna talking about their shared passion of Indigenous education, and it was he, as a great judge of character, who said to me, 'Joanna would make a perfect senator.' I believe that this understanding of Indigenous education will assist Joanna to become a very strong and valuable member of the Australian Senate. I pass on my congratulations and sincere best wishes, and with that I support this nomination.


 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.15 pm): I too would like to congratulate Joanna. It is great to see her here today and, of course, the people in the public gallery who have come to support her. Scott Buchholz, the member for Wright, is also up there and her husband, Peter Anderson-Barr and other family members. It is great to see so many people come in. I have known Peter and Joanna for a number of years now. If people would like to look up *Hansard* in 2008, Peter got a couple of mentions from me about some issues with the Public Service in Queensland.

I know that Joanna will make a great representative. She understands the issues in public life. She is also just a good, honest down-to-earth person, and that really came through during the selection process the other day. I do wish to support this nomination with my wife Ann and I also congratulate Brett Mason on a job well done.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.16 pm): As a descendant of the Jagera and Mununjali people, Joanna Lindgren is a lady with a past as ancient and vibrant as the land we meet upon, and her future is committed to using her considerable ability to help our state and our nation prosper for the benefit of all. It is an honour to endorse this motion in the Queensland state parliament to install Ms Joanna Lindgren as our senator elect. After the passage of this resolution she will be sworn in and will take her place in the Australian Senate where she will fill the very able shoes of the Queensland LNP senator Brett Mason, who has resigned to take up an ambassadorial post.

Ms Lindgren stands tall on her own talents and qualifications; however, it is historic that we are today endorsing a woman of Indigenous heritage who stands taller still on the wonderful legacy of her great-uncle, the late senator Neville Bonner. Neville Bonner was, of course, Australia's first Indigenous MP who was much loved, much respected and a member of the Liberal Party. We can all be proud of him, and I am sure we will also be proud of Joanna Lindgren. Ms Lindgren successfully won the LNP nomination to fill this vacancy against eight other strong candidates. It was a worthy competition and a good process. More than 250 delegates listened and weighed up who would best fill this spot.

Joanna has served Australia as a soldier, a community volunteer and as a teacher. Education in particular is her passion. Her hard work to put herself through university to become a qualified teacher meant that she mainly worked in schools which were located in lower socio-economic areas, where she was able to have a positive influence on our young people. Ms Lindgren has impressed me greatly with her ability to communicate and to connect and her commitment to service. I believe it is a great qualifier for higher office to first serve in the community. I believe Joanna is a very qualified for higher office, and she has certainly demonstrated service to her community. I have no doubt she will serve Queensland as well, and with great pleasure I endorse this motion.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (3.19 pm): It is my great pleasure to speak in support of this parliament's motion to appoint Joanna Lindgren as a new senator for Queensland. I have known Jo and her husband, Peter, for several years now, going back to the time before I was seeking preselection for the federal seat of Wright before the 2012 election. We did not succeed with that one. I thank both of them for all of their support over a significant period of time for their community and the LNP, including assisting on a number of campaigns, state and federal, and thank Joanna for putting herself forward. I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Scott Buchholz, federal member for Wright.

It is a huge honour to be nominated by the LNP as a representative of our state as well as the party. I am sure that Joanna will work hard for Queensland—for all constituents, wherever they are—in dealing with federal government issues. I am sure that her experience as a teacher will stand her in good stead. As someone who has a few teachers in the family—my mother, my brother and a couple of cousins—I know how hard they work and how important a role it is, not just to educate children but also to mould them as citizens. In her new role I am sure she will have a part to play in that as well. I am proud to say that Jimboomba, part of my electorate, can now claim a senator for Queensland, although she does live just across the road in the electorate of Logan. I hope that we can work together on local issues.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the great contribution to the Australian Senate of Brett Mason—to the Senate, to the LNP and to the people of Queensland. I call him a friend and thank him for his advice, his encouragement and his counsel over the time that I have known him. For 16 years Brett was a fierce advocate for freedom and for the LNP—and the Liberal Party before that—and was a very active supporter of the Young LNP. I know that many young people who have joined the Young Liberals and then the Young LNP will recall his enthusiasm. He always lent them an ear and he was always so enthusiastic to help them get into politics, into fighting the Labor Party and into standing up for freedom. I wish Dr Brett Mason all the best in his future endeavours.

It is an honour for all of us to be elected to any representative position in our nation. As elected members we carry with us every day the faith and trust of our community. I convey my congratulations to Joanna Lindgren, her family and her friends on her appointment as a senator for Queensland. I wish her all the best for her time in the Senate.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.



**Mr SPEAKER:** The motion has been agreed to and Joanna Lindgren has accordingly been elected to fill the vacancy in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

### Notification of Election



**Mr HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.22 pm): I move—

That Mr Speaker inform His Excellency the Governor that Joanna Lindgren has been chosen to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator Brett Mason.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Domestic and Family Violence



**Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (3.22 pm): 'Thirty four and counting: The shocking number of women who have died so far this YEAR from violence ... with no end in sight'. This was a chilling headline reflecting some devastating statistics. As members would be aware, this month is Domestic Violence Prevention Month, when we raise community awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence—impacts that have far-reaching consequences and, as the headline disturbingly states, can result in death.

I have previously said in this House that the call to action to address this insidious crime has never been as high as it is right now. In government the LNP worked hard to address this serious problem and to bring it to the attention of the community. When in government we recognised that, while general crime was decreasing across the state, the reported incidence of domestic and family violence was in fact increasing. To address this we launched the successful Make the Call awareness campaign and we initiated a special task force headed by Dame Quentin Bryce.

The task force handed down its report in February this year with 140 recommendations dealing with prevention, community awareness and the importance of a coordinated approach to addressing the crime. The government is now tasked with considering this report, but we know that there is more we can do—more actions we can take as a community to combat domestic and family violence and, in particular, actions we can take to prevent further victims and further deaths from this crime.


One initiative we have been watching is one that was established in the United Kingdom. It is a domestic abuse disclosure scheme known as Clare's law. It stemmed from the tragic murder of Manchester resident Clare Wood in 2009 at the hands of her partner. Clare Wood met her partner on Facebook. Little did she know about this man's three previous convictions involving violent behaviour. In the case of Clare Wood, having the information of her partner's violent history disclosed to her could possibly have saved her life. It is fitting that we canvass the merits for Queensland of a disclosure scheme similar to that of the UK model. This is just as our New South Wales coalition counterparts have done so that they, too, can empower people with that information. Today I table a copy of an exposure draft bill to provide for the disclosure of convictions for domestic violence or sexual offences.

*Tabled paper:* Domestic and Family Violence Protection Amendment Act (No. ...) 2015, exposure draft [\[451\]](#).

The exposure draft bill provides for the provision of powers for police to receive an application for disclosure and for police to initiate a disclosure of convictions for domestic violence or sexual offences. Having been part of a government that raised the bar on tackling domestic and family violence, I am proud to say that all LNP members continue to stand up against domestic and family violence.

*(Time expired)*

### Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Maternity Services

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (3.25 pm): Last week I was lucky enough to accompany the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital for the launch of a new model of maternity care. This model will provide women with continuity of care throughout their entire pregnancy by simply providing the option of a personal private practising midwife at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. Women who are booked to give birth at the RBWH can be admitted as a private patient to be cared for by their chosen midwife for labour and birth as well as for their antenatal and postnatal care. Importantly, this innovative model of maternity care is woman focused and provides high levels of satisfaction for our future mums.


RBWH currently has several eligible private practice midwives accredited with full visiting access who go through a detailed qualification process, with consultation and referral guidelines in place to ensure any complications that arise during the pregnancy are referred to RBWH for specialist treatment. At all stages of the woman's journey RBWH midwives will provide support and care in the event that medical conditions arise. Therefore, all expecting mums are fully cared for at the great RBWH.

The first phase of the model of care was implemented in 2013, and in November 2014 the model expanded to include labour and birth care by the private midwife to a private patient. This model is all about giving pregnant women the choice of their midwife. The new model allows mums at the RBWH one-on-one antenatal care with a private midwife who visits them at home. We heard firsthand from a mum and a family who have used the program, complimenting it as a far superior continuity-of-care model in a great public hospital facility.

Over the past few weeks I have had cause to visit the RBWH on a few occasions, purely as a visiting MP. I just remind members about the professional job carried out by all health workers at this great hospital. It must be said that we would be hard-pressed to find a more dedicated, hardworking, compassionate group of people than the staff at our health services, not only at the RBWH but also at all hospital and health services throughout Queensland.

I compliment the hospital on delivering this great initiative. My thanks go to all of those hardworking nurses and midwives in the executive area of the hospital who made this happen. This is a good initiative for expectant mums. It will be a great model that will give them continuity of care. We will provide safety for patients. I am also looking forward to all of the new nursing positions that we hope to have at the RBWH.

### Volunteers Week


 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.28 pm): It was my honour last Wednesday as part of National Volunteers Week to roll out the red carpet and host the Glass House version of the Logies, the Emmys or the Oscars: our 6th annual Glass House Volunteer Awards.

I want to read into *Hansard* all of the recipients. Unlike the Logies, everyone nominated wins a prize at our Glass House Volunteer Awards: Elwyn 'Curly' Petersen from Maleny Bowls Club; Michelle Lederhose from Elimbah State School P&C; Sheree Baguley from Montville State School and Kate Beard, the Montville State School P&C President; Denny Barry, Jill Hertrick and Thea Williams from Mount Mee Garden Club which assisted the Mount Mee State School with its fantastic sensory garden; Valli Benoit from the Conondale State School P&C committee; Jeff Bodley, Robert Morris and Desrae Woolley from Glasshouse and Montville visitor information centres; Libby Brown and Judy Tomlinson from Glasshouse Mountains Chamber of Commerce; Harvey Bryce from Maleny Historical Society; Ben Calder, Anita Webb, Jodie Gibbons and Ashley Murray from Chevallum State School and Chevallum State School P&C; Colleen Clarke from Glass House Mountains Neighbourhood Centre; Phil Costigan, Rowena Crouch and Jill Warschau from Mount Mee State School; Kay Farrell and Patricia Jutila from Sunshine Girls; Tanya Fitzpatrick from Wamuran State School P&C; Les Hall from Maleny District Green Hills Fund; Daphne Hawkins from Quota International Maleny; Peter Kluver from Glasshouse Mountains Advancement Network; Steven Land and Peter Stevens from Lake Baroon Catchment Care; Kate Lanphier from Maleny Swimming Club; Peter Leary and Judy Tilley from Maleny Arts and Crafts Group; Lauren MacDonald Parker from Maleny Neighbourhood Centre; Tom Malone from St Vincent de Paul; Natasha McDonough from Woodford Lions; Joane Morish from Woodford school and community; Byron Moss, who volunteers in my own electorate office; John Nisbett from Community Recycling Inc.; Neil Pedwell and Howard and Jenny Walters from Wamuran Sporting Association; Emma Pryer from Caboolture Montessori P&F; Sammy Ringer

from WILVOs; Rodney Skerman from Maleny Blackall Range Lions Club; Dell Somerville from Meals on Wheels; Ilia Starkovsky from Rotary Club of Glasshouse Mountains; Shaun Toohey from Eudlo Rural Fire Brigade; and Greg Williams from Maleny District Sports and Recreation Club.


Each of those individuals has one thing that differs from the Emmys, Logies and Oscars: they do not do what they do for big bucks and for short periods of time. They do it day in and day out because they love doing it, because they love receiving the compliments and they love seeing the smiles on the faces of members in our broader community who appreciate each and everything that they do as a volunteer in the electorate of Glass House. It is an honour to represent them. It is an honour to pay my respects to them in this way today as we did last Wednesday.

### Moreton Bay Rail Link, Dohles Rocks Road Closure

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (3.31 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak today about a recent successful outcome for local residents and businesses in my electorate of Kallangur. I had not even properly moved into the Kallangur electorate office when I was asked by local residents and businesses to assist in the matter of the potential closure of Dohles Rocks Road. The potential closure of this major road through my electorate for six months was met with a great deal of distress by locals. The Moreton Bay Rail Link project is a great Labor initiative but requires a partial upgrade of Dohles Rocks Road and the contractor had applied to completely close this road for a six-month period to expedite the work. The Moreton Bay Regional Council had initially approved this proposal to progress to a consultation phase. Following a social media campaign, we were inundated with contact from community members, schools and local businesses who found this closure unacceptable. Investigations showed that several local businesses could have potentially had to close their doors as they rely on mostly passing traffic and ease of access to their premises. These businesses employ over 50 people in my community. That is 50 families in my electorate. In addition to this devastation, it became clear that two local schools could have had up to 14,000 extra vehicles passing them daily.

Both of these issues made the request for closure for a minimum of six months unacceptable to my community and me. I am happy to report that, due to our quick action and help from the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Jackie Trad, we were able to move swiftly to progress the consultation process, reassure our community and ultimately keep the road open with the upgrade occurring, as originally intended, under traffic flow conditions. The Department of Transport and Main Roads project team was very professional to work with. I am happy to report that the businesses involved—Acanthus Marble and Granite, Goodyear Autocare, The Landscaping Yard, Murrumba Auto Care, Elite Soil Testing and Eternal Signs—as well as the local schools were most appreciative of our quick action. I want to thank the Deputy Premier and her team for their swift and decisive assistance and the local residents and businesses, in particular the group that spearheaded the social media and organising campaign, the No Closing Dohles Rocks Rd team. Well done to the Kallangur Business Association for its efforts. It has been a pleasure to help in resolving this matter quickly and ensure that we are all able to take advantage of the great benefits that will flow from the new Moreton Bay Rail Link project.


### Drought

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (3.34 pm): I rise to advise the House how disappointed I was by the response from the agriculture minister to my question on the ARDB yesterday and bring to the attention of the House the severity of this rural crisis and the plight of the townspeople who have been forgotten in this rural crisis. There is a crisis out there. We jump when there is a cyclone or a flood. This is something that has been strangling the people in my electorate for three years now. Even if we get rain at the end of this year, no-one has any money to buy cattle. If they do not have money to buy cattle, there is no cash flow and there is no money being spent in these towns. People are scratching their heads and a hopelessness prevails and people are starting to get angry. We need to give them answers. If we are not going to throw them \$1 billion in exceptional circumstances funding because we do not call it a natural disaster—even though it is—and if we are not going to throw money at them, we should be cost effective and give them a reconstruction board as governments have done in the past. That is the answer. The federal government has just failed us on that. It rejected it out of the Senate committee for the second time. We can do it here in this state, and it must happen. It is the most cost-effective solution we can provide.

The number of people living in my electorate is declining because of the drought. We do not have a strong voice, but this is a \$4 billion industry and there is no alternate use for this land. Do not think that magically all of this capital is going to flow and those people will stay out there working the

land for someone or something else such as superannuation funds or foreign owners. It does not work like that. The most frequent people who visit these places are the mailman and the Salvation Army providing charity and even they say, 'Don't bother going up that road because there's only this family left. There's no more families up there.' These towns and their surrounds are dying and crumbling around me. I am trying to give members a picture of what is going on out there. It is not a matter of these people just selling up and then they are sitting on a huge super fund. That would create a vortex in property values. The banks know about it and that is why they are not foreclosing right now. The ARDB or some such reconstruction board could go in there and have the ability to make money by taking a first mortgage on these places and stick with that lending mechanism. It is a cost-effective solution for the taxpayers and it can maintain and rebuild that industry. Before debt, this was a viable industry. If we choose to keep these smaller families in the industry and they are viable and we are globally competitive, they have the best land husbandry. They are the best people to look after that land. If we want to do that, we need to give them some assistance. At the moment that is not happening. The drought concession loans are useless. Hardly anyone has taken them up, and for good reason. They are giving up on them. People need help by way of a reconstruction board.


### DVConnect

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.37 pm): Last week I was warmly welcomed into the DVConnect helpline state office. DVConnect has a women's line, men's line, pets in crisis and sexual assault line. In 2014 it received 64,000 calls. This is a free and confidential service that provides emergency assistance, advice, crisis counselling, information referral and support to women and men who have experienced domestic violence. The service in Queensland is the busiest service in the country. It is even busier than the national service. From October 2014 DVConnect had a notable spike in calls and averaged between 140 to 260 calls overnight. The service has been in perpetual crisis due to the demands of the community. The Palaszczuk government recently announced additional funding of \$1.5 million over two years for DVConnect. The service informs me that it has already spent the first allotment of these funds providing for direct client needs and services. DVConnect represents an important first port of call for those most vulnerable in our community who have nowhere else to go. I am confident that this extra funding will start to equip DVConnect with resources to meet the challenge that domestic and family violence represents in our community. When I met with DVConnect it asked me to pass along to this House and to our Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, its profound thanks and gratitude for the much needed funding provided within the first three months of office.

In addition, the Palaszczuk government has also announced \$17 million over the next three years for domestic and family violence support services, including in my electorate of Pine Rivers. This funding will strengthen our local capacity to respond to the needs of people affected. Minister Fentiman has identified that the new services will give families affected by domestic violence better access to specialist counselling, court based services, information and support and intervention programs.

Our government is taking very seriously the issue of domestic and family violence. The 'Not now, not ever' Dame Quentin Bryce task force recommendations are being considered carefully to see how improved support can be provided to families and individuals experiencing family violence. I look forward to speaking in this place about the positive impact that these recommendations will have on my community and local capacity improvements in Pine Rivers as well as our great state with successful services like DVConnect.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.40 pm): Charter letter? What charter letter? That sounds like a variation of that insurance advert where they are looking for a charter boat. Perhaps the only thing those two phrases have in common is that they are both a bit of a disaster. This government has been dragging its heels. The Palaszczuk government finally coughed up the charter letters for its ministers—that is the to-do list, the job contracts of the cabinet ministers of government—and, wait, they are dated this week. Seriously!

They have been spinning their wheels for the first 100 days of government and now we know why the car of state is not going anywhere. Is it any wonder that the driver does not have a road map and has left the brake on while the cabinet ministers are like passengers who have been checking out the leather seats, but they are not sure where they are heading or how they are going to get there?

After 100 days of taking office the cabinet ministers who make up this Labor government got their formal to-do list only this week. The election was held at the end of January and ministers were sworn in on 16 February 2015. What a nightmare on George Street!


We have the biggest super portfolios that we have ever seen in this state, with the largest machinery-of-government changes, and there is no strategic implementation plan for the changes, not even a to-do list given in a timely way for those ministers who are supposed to be driving change. Pity anyone who is not a union official trying to get an appointment with a minister. These are the biggest super portfolios, the biggest inertia and the biggest mother-of-all bottlenecks because of what they have done. There are 14 super portfolios, but there certainly are not 14 super ministers. There is no evidence of a real plan, other than a glossy brochure for the media, about how they are going to clear Queensland's debt and build the infrastructure and deliver the services that this growing state needs. They are absolutely swamped and they are directionless.

But they have the unions to outsource their decisions to. This is the most union controlled Labor government that I can remember seeing in this House. The unions are stakeholders and, as stakeholders, they have a legitimate role to play in our state. But the difference is that, with the Queensland parliament and Labor, the unions are not just stakeholders; they own this Labor government lock, stock and barrel. They also probably own their first-born children as well as being named as beneficiaries in their wills.

I go back to the ministers who were chosen by their factions—not on ability but chosen by their factional alignments. The Premier's charter letter—

*(Time expired)*

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.43 pm): I rise to speak of my first 100 days representing the people of Ipswich as a proud member of the Palaszczuk government. During the past 100 days I have had the pleasure of meeting with school principals, sporting clubs, businesses and arts communities, community organisations, churches and charities and I have met with hundreds of Ipswich people. Everyone I have met has shown an optimism for the future of their city of Ipswich. This optimism has been echoed at events like the Harmony Day festival and the citizenship ceremony that I attended. This optimism has been particularly echoed by the women and girls I have spoken with from the PCYC and Ipswich Girls' Grammar School at International Women's Day events in March. It is no surprise that there is optimism from the women and girls I speak with when the Palaszczuk government has women numbering more than 37 per cent of its members, providing a truer representation of our general population.


I am proud to be part of a Labor government that has reinstated the Premier's Literary Awards. Recently, I spoke at a breakfast titled 'Can the arts transform Ipswich?' and when I mentioned the Premier's announcement, which had just been made the night before, there was resounding applause from everybody. I also was outraged when the Newman government axed the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards as one of its first moves upon attaining government. This groundswell of support for the awards is echoed by everybody and I am very pleased that, once again, Queensland has a government that values the arts, including literature, as part of the cultural life of Queenslanders.

This Labor government has committed to rescuing our TAFEs, with a \$34 million statewide package and the allocation of more guidance officers and more teachers to local schools. I have also had the pleasure of launching an information forum in my electorate for restoring the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

Accountability and transparency are not just the words of this government; they are actions, as are integrity and fairness. This Palaszczuk government is a government of accountability, transparency, integrity and fairness. This government is committed to good governance through the reforms to political donation rules, restoring the lower disclosure rate of \$1,000, unlike those opposite who did not want anyone to know where their large donations of up to \$12,800 came from. We have made these donation rules retrospective from November 2013, when the former LNP government introduced the changes.

This government has committed to restoring funding to tenancy advocacy and to wonderful organisations such as the Ipswich Regional Advocacy Service, which helps around 600 tenants a month in the Ipswich and wider region. I look forward to continuing to represent the people of Ipswich as part of the Palaszczuk government.

## Tourism

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.46 pm): Unlike Minister Jones, who showed her disrespect for Queensland's tourism industry by calling it a 'leaning tower of Pisa', the LNP recognised tourism as one of the four pillars of Queensland's economy. We established a tourism cabinet committee as part of our whole-of-government approach to tourism. We merged Tourism Queensland and Events Queensland to deliver a coordinated super entity to attract visitors and events to Queensland. For the very first time we made tourism a state interest in the planning system.

The former government held three annual DestinationQ forums. That was the first time in 27 years that government and industry had come together to plan for the future and a formal agreement was signed with QTIC as the industry's voice. We launched Destination Success, a 20-year plan for Queensland tourism. We delivered 13 Destination Tourism Plans in partnership with our RTOs and we doubled funding to RTOs. We delivered \$49.5 million in new state funding to TEQ. We invested over \$51 million in domestic marketing activity and over \$31.5 million in international marketing activity. We produced the sensational It's Live! In Queensland campaign, which supported 106 major events and 246 regional events through the regional development program and attracted several new airline routes to Queensland.

The industry noticed what we were doing. On 13 February this year QTIC's Daniel Gschwind wrote—

Tourism is a matter of bi-partisan interest and I acknowledge the commitment and innovative approach that the LNP Government has brought to working with us and the tourism industry.

Under the leadership of the former Premier, the Tourism Minister and other members of the Tourism Cabinet Committee, the focus on our industry in the last term of government has been strong and we hope that the strategic direction that has been set will be continued.

Take note, Labor. On 27 March 2015 John O'Sullivan, head of Tourism Australia, wrote—


I know you will continue to be a passionate advocate for tourism in Queensland. I would like to acknowledge your work on behalf of the industry during your time as Queensland Minister for Tourism and Major Events and I can assure you that Tourism Australia is committed to partnering with Tourism and Events Queensland to achieve their 2020 targets.

But of real concern is whether this government will respect the hard work done by the industry and Tourism Australia and align itself with these targets. Judging by the minister's comments, the government will not.

Tourism Australia set an aspirational goal to double overnight visitor expenditure by 2020 and in the spirit of collaboration the LNP also set its target along those lines. The Auditor-General's tourism report acknowledges the LNP's hard work creating initiatives like DestinationQ and the setting of benchmarks and better reporting measures, which were lacking under Labor. In his report the Auditor-General comments about not being on track to reach the 2020 targets, but I make no apology for setting ambitious stretch targets with Tourism Australia.

This government has not set a target for anything. It has no plans. It has to call up its union bosses to make any decisions—job destroyers, job cripplers who use heavy-handed standover tactics to get their way. Tourism deserves better than that.

## Springwood Electorate, Federal Budget

 **Mr de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to place on the record the overwhelming sense of frustration that has emerged across Springwood in the past week. The Tuesday before last thousands of Springwood families tuned in to hear coalition Treasurer, Joe Hockey, deliver a budget. Unfortunately, it simply showed that the LNP, whether they are in Canberra or in Brisbane, are not interested in investing in job-creating and economy-building infrastructure in our community. For months before the last election the former LNP member for Springwood touted a plan to 'fix the M1'. Remember the 're-elect the LNP or you get nothing' campaign? What we saw though was a cruel hoax perpetrated by my predecessor who promised that if elected he would allocate funds to fix the M1.

Now we know the truth. With no contributory funding from the federal Liberal National coalition this project was never going to happen even if they were re-elected. It is just lucky that voters saw through the thinly veiled attempt at blackmail. We know those promises were on the basis of the sale of vital publicly owned assets. Asset sales have been overwhelmingly rejected by the community. The upgrade to the M1 and the South East Busway is a \$2 billion project. It amounts to a nationally significant link in the national land transport network. Therefore, the primary funder is the federal government. Federal government inaction on this overdue project is hurting our local economy.

The Abbott government failed our local economy last week when it failed to announce funding to plan this project's finalisation. This failure reinforces an unnecessary barrier between Springwood residents and their jobs and educational opportunities. What is worse though is that it keeps families apart. That is why I and every resident of my community who uses that road was looking for leadership from the federal government on this matter. This federal budget not only failed my community on infrastructure but also failed it on health, education and jobs.

Springwood residents refuse to have a gun held to their head on asset sales. These days there is apparent bipartisan support in this House for not selling income-generating assets so why then does the Abbott coalition continue to withhold federal infrastructure funding? Why is the only way to progress vital projects through its so-called Asset Recycling Fund? Such a philosophy has been rejected by the mums and dads and families of Springwood. On the other hand, this Palaszczuk government believes the people of Queensland deserve real new Commonwealth funding for infrastructure projects as opposed to concessional loans that may have a range of unknown and potentially restrictive conditions attached to them.

Nonetheless, we are willing to work with the Commonwealth to ensure Queensland gets its fair share of infrastructure funding. The residents of Springwood join an unreasonably congested highway every day, but we have heard nothing from those opposite. The people of Springwood and the electorates to the south will judge the Abbott government at the next federal election. They will judge it on whether it has even the slightest genuine interest in infrastructure projects, just as they judged those opposite who used to sit on this side of this House.

## MOTION

### Order of Business



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (3.52 pm): I move—

That government business order of the day No. 1 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## EXHIBITED ANIMALS BILL

Resumed from 27 March (see p. 238).

### Second Reading



**Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (3.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 will streamline regulation of animal exhibits. It will repeal provisions regulating exhibition which are currently spread across several acts and create a single coherent framework for regulating the exhibited animals industry.

I would like to thank the Agriculture and Environment Committee for its report tabled on 8 May 2015 regarding the Exhibited Animals Bill.

*Tabled paper.* Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 2—Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, government response [\[452\]](#).

The government proposes to act on each of the committee's recommendations and I will be moving relevant amendments during consideration in detail. However, the amendments I move when the bill is considered in detail will not go as far as the committee recommended with respect to category C animals under the bill so I will spend some time explaining the reasons for that.

There is potential for these animals to become established as pests in Australia which is why they are generally prohibited in Queensland. The bill, in effect, requires category C animals to be based in a fixed exhibit. This reflects that mobile exhibition increases the risks posed by these species, and it is more difficult and costly to ensure risks are being mitigated where animals are kept out of public view. Some wildlife demonstrators argued to the committee that they could manage the risks associated with these animals just as effectively as a zoo. They argued that if they have to minimise biosecurity risks under their licence anyway then there is no need for a requirement for

category C animals to be based in a fixed exhibit. I have some sympathy for their position and their desire to enable many more people to experience exotic wildlife. Clearly the committee was also sympathetic to their view.

The committee's second and third recommendations were directed at enabling mobile exhibit of these species. Their second recommendation was effectively to have no requirement for category C species to be based in a fixed exhibit. Their third recommendation was to change how the minimum requirement for exhibition of a category C animal can be met. The amendments I will move when the bill is considered in detail will facilitate access by wildlife demonstrators to some category C species. The amendments will allow species of authorised animal—category C—that have a low risk of establishing to be prescribed in regulation. These category C1 animals will not be subject to clause 73 of the bill which is the clause that currently would require them to be based in a fixed exhibit and requires a special exhibition approval for their exhibit away from that site. Clause 76(4) will also not apply to category C1 animals ensuring that any length of eligible exhibit can be counted towards meeting the minimum requirement for exhibition of these species. There are also a number of amendments that are consequential to these two substantive changes that I will need to move when the bill is considered in detail.

Obviously there are exhibitors who would like the government to go further and I note the committee supported their view. However, it is wholly appropriate that the government should be cautious about liberalising licensing of pest potential species. Think of the impact that cane toads and feral deer have had on our environment and that rabbits have had on our agricultural industries. It is necessary to err on the side of caution when it comes to decisions that may have very serious and irreversible outcomes. The number of pests that are thought to have become established in Australia as a result of escape or release from exhibition is negligible precisely because pest potential animals have not been widely available to exhibitors.

The committee's fourth recommendation was also about category C animals. The committee proposed a one-third reduction in the minimum requirement for exhibition of these species. I note that comments in the report suggest the intent was to enable wildlife exhibitors to more easily meet this requirement. The government accepts this recommendation for all category C animals. The intent of the minimum exhibition requirement for category C animals in clause 76 is to ensure sufficient exhibition to justify being able to keep these high pest potential animals. A one-third reduction means exhibition equivalent to 600 hours each year. This is still significantly more than the 12 occasions per year minimum exhibition requirement for most other animals, category B, kept under a licence. The government agrees the reduced requirement is still sufficient to justify the keeping of these animals. When the bill is considered in detail I will move amendments to implement the committee's recommendation.

The committee's fifth recommendation was to provide exceptions from the minimum requirements for exhibition in some circumstances. In response, I will move two amendments when the bill is considered in detail that will insert an example for subclause 77(5). The example will make it clear that the need for prolonged handling or training out of public view may be a circumstance in which a special condition may be imposed on a licence to temporarily exempt the licence holder from the requirement to exhibit that species.

Clauses 75 and 76 only impose a requirement at species level, so that not every animal of the species must be exhibited for the required periods. This would accommodate acquiring an animal to provide companionship to an exhibited animal and many other circumstances where an animal might need to be kept without display. Clause 85 already provides that the relevant offence is not committed if the holder has a reasonable excuse. Also, it is a defence to prosecution if there is a signed veterinary certificate stating that it was necessary to contravene the minimum exhibition requirement to prevent or minimise a relevant risk or relevant adverse effect associated with exhibiting or dealing with an authorised animal.

The committee made two other recommendations in the report directed to my department that I will now address. The sixth and seventh recommendations concerned the compliance burden associated with management plans. Licensing in response to a management plan will maximise flexibility for the industry under the bill. A management plan provides an opportunity for an exhibitor to propose how they will manage the risks associated with their activities, rather than have the government forced to decide this.

The committee recommended that the department consider amending the bill to alternative licensing requirements such as a tiered proportionate-to-risk application process and to limit the impact of requiring management plans for all species. It also recommended clarifying the use of the terms 'significant relevant risks and adverse effects' and 'relevant risks and adverse effects' within the bill. Further, it suggested developing application guidelines to assist authority holders undertake risk assessments of their activities and develop the appropriate management plans.

The management plan informs and supplements the licence. It also forms many of the conditions of the licence. For these reasons it would be very difficult for the licensing scheme under the bill to operate if some exhibitors had no management plan. The bill already provides for the management plan to be proportionate to risk. The management plan for a hopping mouse, for example, might be very short while that for a tiger, for example, might need to be quite extensive.

Today I announce that my department will develop template management plans for very commonly kept species. An exhibitor can adopt these plans if they are willing to exhibit and deal with that species and manage the associated risks in the way proposed. An amendment to the bill is not required to authorise the development of template management plans.

An exhibitor must minimise all relevant risks and adverse impacts. However, the management plan needs to address only those that are significant. When the bill is considered in detail I will move an amendment to clause 37. The amendment will clarify that a management plan must state the ways in which the applicant intends to prevent or minimise the significant relevant risks and relevant adverse effects identified in the plan.

The report also sought clarifications and assurances on what consultation would occur on various things and on the meaning of certain terms. I will provide an overview on each of these. The committee invited me to inform the House how my department will consult animal exhibitors, including mobile exhibitors not represented by a peak body, during the development of regulations, guidelines, codes and template documents related to the provisions of the bill. In this industry it is relatively easy for the department to communicate with all authority holders. This addresses some of the difficulties posed by some sectors of the industry not being represented by a peak body. An invitation can be issued to all exhibitors to comment on a proposal. Typically the department uses email for this purpose. All industry members will be consulted individually in this way at important steps in the implementation of the bill, including during the development of regulations, guidelines, codes and template documents and everything else in relation to the provisions of the bill.

However, it would be inefficient for the department and exhibitors if the department were to consult with every exhibitor in detail at every step in the development of regulations, guidelines, codes and template documents. Many exhibitors are small businesses that cannot spend all their time responding to emails or attending meetings on a regular basis. In 2013, the department established the Exhibited Animals Industry Liaison Group to provide a forum for detailed discussion of issues affecting the industry. That group comprises three fixed exhibitors and one mobile exhibitor, representing an informal network formed in 2013 consisting mostly of mobile wildlife demonstrators, as well as a representative of the RSPCA. This group would likely be consulted when the department is refining proposals for wider consultation.

The department held a full-day industry workshop to discuss a working draft of the former Exhibited Animals Bill 2014. Any industry member was able to self-nominate for the workshop. Subject to the time constraints for finalising the regulations, the department intends to hold a similar workshop with industry nominees on a working draft of the regulations.

The committee invited me to assure the House that the department will consult with animal exhibitors before prescribing any matters by regulation for clause 218. Clause 218 allows a regulation to prescribe matters that a court may or must consider before granting compensation. Such a power is common in Queensland legislation, but has been used only once. Section 48 of the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005 provides for matters that must and must not be considered in deciding the amount of compensation payable by the contract holder for a service to the entity that formerly held a contract to provide the service. This reflects that arbiters have been required to make decisions relatively frequently about compensation under the relevant provisions of that act.

The government has no plans to prescribe any matters by regulation for clause 218. I assure the House that the government would ensure exhibitors were consulted before prescribing matters by regulation for clause 218. The regulatory impact statement system would generally require public consultation if such a regulation were to be prescribed.

Finally, the committee has invited me to clarify the intent and meaning of 'exhibit' and 'private event' in the bill and to confirm whether the exhibit of an animal by a mobile demonstrator is considered an 'exhibit' that satisfies the minimum exhibition requirement. Clause 13(2)(a) of the bill is explicit that display at a private event is an exhibit. However, display at a private event can only be counted against the minimum exhibition requirement in some circumstances. A private event, such as a display by a wildlife demonstrator at a children's birthday party to which entry was by invitation only, could generally be counted against the minimum exhibition requirement for a category B animal under clause 75. The only exception is a private display at the regular enclosure site. It would be difficult to verify the bona fides of exhibition at private events on the exhibitor's private property. No private event could be counted against the minimum exhibition requirement for a category C animal under clause 76. This reflects the even greater importance of ensuring the bona fides of exhibition of these high pest potential animals.


However, there are displays by a mobile exhibitor that would count against the requirement for a category C animal under clause 76. They would simply need to be open to the public. For example, a display at a community event could be counted against the minimum exhibition requirement, as could a show that was open to the public on payment of a fee such as a publicly advertised circus performance.

I want to assure members that the Queensland government is committed to ensuring a bright future for the exhibited animals industry. Queensland is in the enviable position of having a comparatively large and substantially private and profitable industry that delights its residents and its many tourists alike. It also plays an important role in education and the conservation of wildlife.

This bill will iron out the wrinkles in the current regulation of the industry. It provides a consistent and coherent framework for licensing exhibitors and it ensures that all the relevant risks associated with their activities are considered when licensing decisions are made.

The bill will enable the industry to exhibit additional exotic species. Zoos will be able to exhibit species that are not listed for that purpose under the current legislation. The amendments I will move when the bill is considered in detail will also open the door for mobile exhibition of additional species.

I thank the committee for its valuable contribution to this bill and table the government's response to its report. I also acknowledge the significant contribution that many exhibitors and other stakeholders have made during the development of the bill and I encourage them to play an equally active role during the development of the regulations. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.10 pm): I rise to speak on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015—a bill which reflects the LNP bill introduced in the last parliament on 14 October 2014 by the member for Toowoomba South, the former minister for agriculture, fisheries and forestry, the honourable Dr John McVeigh. I am pleased the new Minister for Agriculture, Bill Byrne, has brought this bill before the House in a prompt fashion. I am pleased that he saw the importance of finalising the work that was started by Dr John McVeigh. I acknowledge the hard work of the former minister who spent three long years—or two years and 10 months—rebuilding the department of agriculture after it had been dismantled by the previous Labor government.

It took an LNP government to introduce the Exhibited Animals Bill after many, many years of Labor government dillydallying. In fact, there had been seven years of ongoing discussions, reviews and workshops, starting in 2007. That is not exactly record breaking. When we came into government we sought to rectify the process and get the bill underway. I concede that it was a legacy issue which needed a resolution. It was our government that made this happen. Dr John McVeigh said on 14 October—

It took the LNP to get the ball rolling by releasing a detailed proposal in a regulatory impact statement for public comment.

The LNP involved 17 industry participants to discuss the working draft of the bill. At the time Dr McVeigh said it—

Sends a clear message that the LNP recognises the importance of the exhibited animals industry.

The LNP remains committed to this important industry—ensuring that in Queensland it can grow and become more prosperous. Clearly, as the shadow minister for agriculture and growing up and living in regional areas, I have a great affinity for animals and will work to uphold the rules and legislation that underpin the care and protection of animals whether exhibited, on farms or exported.

The RSPCA had a few things to say with regard to this bill. It is really happy that the bill is bringing all the different types of exhibited animals—whether they are in zoos, circuses, demonstrations, petting zoos—under one bill and considered the bill a step forward. They said—

We really think that this is a great step forward. We believe that animals in any of those different circumstances deserve the same welfare requirements.

This principle needs to be applied equally across all legislation. I acknowledge and appreciate that this has been a big task but it is not complete. In Queensland, the exhibition and dealing with native and exotic animals is regulated under three acts and associated regulations and administered via six licensing schemes with varying preconditions, restrictions, application forms and application and permit fees applying.

Under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the associated regulation, a wildlife exhibitor licence is required to display protected, international or prohibited wildlife at a fixed location with permanent enclosures for the animals, while a wildlife demonstrator licence is needed for travelling or temporary display of these wildlife. Under the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 a declared pest permit is required to keep and exhibit animals in a zoo or other fixed exhibit, in a circus and for the purpose of magic acts. Under the Fisheries Act, a general fisheries permit is required for keeping noxious or regulated fish. The bill's explanatory notes point out that exhibitors of native and exotic species of animals generally need at least two licences.

The Zoo and Aquarium Association made submissions and appeared before the Agriculture and Environment Committee. This association states that they have been working with the Queensland government since 2006 to establish exhibited animals specific legislation. The association believes that consultation for the purpose of developing codes of practice and guidelines should only involve government and affected members of the industry. In the bill consultation involves relevant entities such as community groups.

Developing a workable framework for exhibited animals is not without its challenges given the stated position of groups such as Animals Australia and Animal Liberation Queensland. Their aim is to see the demise of the exhibited animals industry. Such consultation, therefore, is an opportunity for them to impose costly and unworkable conditions on the operation of legal and legitimate businesses. These groups have no investment or jobs at stake and government should not provide the opportunity for them to undermine this vital Queensland industry.

Some 14 million people visit Australian zoos each year. Five million of them come to Queensland. Over a third of visitors to Australian zoos visit our great zoos.

**Mr Powell:** And why is that?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Because we have zoos like Australia Zoo, which is in the electorate of the member for Caloundra but which the member for Glass House is always talking about. My daughter Elke enjoyed her 10th or 11th birthday being a helper at Australia Zoo. She had an absolutely fabulous day with all the animals.

The tourism industry very much benefits from those five million people who visit our zoos. That figure is increasing each and every year. We also have great little zoos like the Darling Downs Zoo. My three children—Isabella, Lucy and Elke—have all been to the Darling Downs Zoo with their great-aunt Charmaine and enjoyed it very much.

When Dr John McVeigh bought the Exhibited Animals Bill before the House in 2014 the bill had two main goals. The goals were: firstly, to consolidate and streamline the provisions relating to exhibited animals into one act; and, secondly, to allow for a wider range of animals to be exhibited in Queensland. Why is this bill so important to Queensland? I know that all of the members on this side of the House are riveted, as is the minister, by the Exhibited Animals Bill.

The exhibited animal industry contributes at least \$100 million to the Queensland economy each year. Our state is nationally and internationally recognised as one of the best places in the world to see animals of all types up close. It brings enjoyment and education to thousands of people each year and, in particular, keeps us in touch with the native wildlife and amazing animals that we have here in Australia—for example, the platypus.

There are three main types of animal exhibitors: our zoos and aquariums; our travelling circuses; and our mobile demonstrators like Dreamtime Reptiles, a successful business run by South Burnett—Nanango—constituents Garry Sippel and Rob Preston. They showcase native reptiles at all

of our local shows, schools, shopping centres and major events. Honestly, if people in this House have been to local country shows, particularly at the southern end of Queensland, they and their family and friends would most likely have seen this wonderful South Burnett business Dreamtime Reptiles. They add amazing value to shows for schoolchildren and visitors to our country shows.

The current legislation for exhibiting animals is fragmented. There are provisions spread across four acts and regulations. I would like to touch on some of the recommendations made by the committee. I was pleased to hear that in the amendments which the minister will be moving he has taken on the recommendations of the committee. I would like to thank all members of the committee for their timeliness in bringing this bill before the House.

Recommendation 2, for example, recommends amending the bill to allow mobile exhibitors an opportunity to assess risk and propose management actions for category C exotic animals. The approach suggested is to clarify that the exhibitor's home base satisfies the definition of a regular enclosure and that this enclosure need not be open to the public provided it meets proper standards. I believe this is an important recommendation which takes into account the needs of mobile exhibitors, such as my great South Burnett exhibitor which I was just talking about, which operate quite differently from fixed exhibitors such as Australia Zoo or Darling Downs Zoo. Mobile exhibitors who made submissions and attended the public hearing clearly expressed their concerns about this aspect of the bill which had disadvantages to their businesses. I am really pleased that this recommendation has been accepted.

Recommendations 3 and 4 also consider the concerns raised by mobile exhibitors in relation to the minimum annual hours an animal must be exhibited and the minimum time per exhibition. This is because mobile exhibitors typically exhibit animals for shorter durations—for example, if they are following a show circuit. I am encouraged by the recommendations which suggest that each time an animal is exhibited this would be counted as the time the animal was exhibited and that the minimum exhibition hours be reduced from 900 to 600 hours per year. These are sensible recommendations which deserve consideration.

Finally, I would like to comment on recommendation 6, which I know the minister addressed, which addresses concerns around proposed management plans. My colleague and close friend the deputy chair of the committee, the honourable member for Burnett, has spent some time discussing proposed management plans with me. While I appreciate management plans do provide more flexibility than strict regulations, concerns were expressed through the submissions that the writing of management plans for all species in their care may become onerous and time consuming. Obviously a management plan for my favourite animal, the platypus, would be completely different—that is why I was grinning before when the minister mentioned a couple of his favourite animals—from a management plan for some of the other animals which are listed which are so varied. There is a freshwater crocodile alongside a koala. Obviously management plans would need to take into account those sorts of things.

The recommendation is therefore to request that the department consider alternative licensing requirements along with the potential for more efficient management plans which aim to reduce the regulatory burden rather than increase it. As my role in the previous government for the first two years was the assistant minister for red-tape reduction, I was very pleased to see that in the bill. I would encourage this approach so small business operators are not bogged down in paperwork and instead are getting out doing what they do best—keeping us in touch with and educating us on our valuable Queensland wildlife.

Creating the capacity to educate through schools is an important purpose of the Exhibited Animals Act. They have been very popular with school groups. On this point I want to emphasise the importance of educating our children not only on food security and where our food comes from but also on our animals in Queensland. We do have some valuable exotic animals in Queensland. I think it is extremely important that we teach not only our children from the city but also our country kids where their food comes from. Milk does not come from a carton; it comes from a dairy cow. Our steak does not come from a cryovac pack; it comes from a beef cattle producer. Our nice lamb chops do not come from Woolies or Coles; they come from a sheep producer like the Leader of the Opposition, the honourable Lawrence Springborg.


**Mr Mander:** They come from sheep, not sheep producers.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Well, sheep producers allow the sheep to be grown. I think it is so important that we educate our children on not only where our food comes from but also the importance of our exotic species such as saltwater crocodiles, platypus, koalas and some of the other animals I have talked about.

With exotic species exhibited through schools, we are able to look at animal adaptations and different animals adapting in different parts of the world. This allows our children to learn, show and teach other kids about this. To see a tortoise compared with a turtle, for example, shows a child how these animals survive in their own environment. There is always the TV and there is always Google, but the joy bought to children to see and sometimes touch their favourite species which they would only have been able to see on a flat screen is seriously remembered by schoolchildren for many years to come.

For Queensland to fully realise its potential for increased agricultural production, we need to secure export markets and higher farmgate returns for our producers. Both China and Indonesia are set to become even stronger trading partners and markets for our farm products. So let us educate the world about our amazing farm products. There is a strong focus on how animals are treated in Australia and overseas when exported. These countries are also witnessing the rise of community expectations. This is why the frameworks protecting the conditions of animals are so critical and deserve the attention this legislation affords.

In Australia we have some animal activists who are very keen to score points against our very important animal industries as well as animals in recreation and sport. They are very persistent in their observations, and they have looked very closely at circuses and zoos for years and years. This fundamentalism needs to be managed, and maintaining a strong set of rules for animal welfare, care and protection is paramount.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak to report on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015. This report presents the findings from the committee's inquiry into the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, introduced on 27 March 2015 by the Hon. Bill Byrne, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing. The reforms in this bill were first brought to our attention in 2008 under the Bligh Labor government. The bill is similar to the LNP government's lapsed Exhibited Animals Bill 2014 considered briefly by the former Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee, though there are some notable refinements.

We are fortunate in Queensland to have a strong and vibrant exhibited animals industry worth some \$100 million to the state's economy and at least a further \$100 million in additional value to the tourism sector annually. There would be few locals or visitors to our state who have not experienced one of our iconic zoos, circuses or mobile animal exhibitions. In the year 2007, which is the most recent year where figures from individual parks published their list of attendees, we saw 1,368,141 people visit Dreamworld and 1,351,800 people visit Sea World.

Of course there are many attractions at theme parks such as Dreamworld and Sea World, but anyone who has seen their advertising knows that the animals they exhibit are a huge drawcard. The IBISWorld industry report on amusement parks and centres operation dated September 2014 noted—

Theme park revenue increased strongly from 2012-13 through 2014-15 due to greater investment in new attractions and rides, strong sales for the company's annual-pass program and improvements across the economy.

Theme park revenue dipped slightly in 2011-12 due to some poor weather ... and despite visitor numbers increasing to over five million.

In the Gold Coast Business News, Dreamworld was named one of the top 10 companies and noted—

More than two million visitors passed through the turnstiles for the first time at Ardent's Gold Coast operations which comprise DreamWorld, WhiteWater World and Skypoint in the 2014 financial year.

And we have Australia Zoo, as the member for Nanango just mentioned, which on their website state—

Corporate Sponsorship at Australia Zoo is a great way for organisations to be recognised by well over 700 000 annual visitors from all over the world whilst supporting our fight for wildlife conservation.

Thanks to the mobile animal exhibitors—those exhibitors who travel far and wide across our state, visiting our local schools and our regional and rural areas—Queenslanders living in remote and regional areas are provided with an opportunity to have contact with these animals which they may not otherwise have had the opportunity to experience. Here in South-East Queensland we have access to facilities like Dreamworld, Sea World, Australia Zoo and Underwater World, but it is not so easy for many people who live remotely in this state or those who for some other reason are unable

to visit fixed animal exhibits like Dreamworld, Sea World and Australia Zoo. That is where these mobile animal exhibitors come in. I am sure we have all seen the joy that these groups bring to people when they exhibit the animals, as they often provide the additional opportunity for a more hands-on experience for the people they visit.

This Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 is an important piece of legislation. It brings together several components around the exhibition of animals into one consolidated bill. Prior to this bill, we saw regulations and licensing schemes scattered across several pieces of legislation, making it confusing for stakeholders and potentially negligent on matters such as animal welfare and safety risks. In fact the cornerstones to this Exhibited Animals Bill are public safety, biosecurity and animal welfare.

What stakeholders in the area of animal exhibiting have had to do previously is navigate their way through more than six licensing schemes under a variety of acts. As if that was not enough, they sometimes needed more than one licence in order to operate their business in a professional manner. The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 provides consistency. The bill is designed to protect professionals—like the groups which contributed to the committee's inquiry. At the same time, this bill will act as a deterrent to those people who may not share the same scruples when it comes to those cornerstones previously mentioned of biosecurity, animal welfare and public safety.

The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 will require all animal exhibit applicants to provide a management plan, which will include a detailed explanation of how the applicant intends to minimise risks such as animal welfare, biosecurity and public safety risks. It is my view that preparing a management plan—which, once successful, can result in the granting of a three-year licence—provides animal exhibitors with an opportunity to display their experience and knowledge of the field; at the same time, it outlines the risks relevant to their own specific operation. In its submission, the RSPCA said—

Further to welfare considerations, we support the compulsory stipulation that a management plan must be written for all exhibited animals as we see this as an important way to ensure the appropriate care and welfare is provided to all animals in various situations.

Another positive outcome of management plans—which effectively provide licences based on risk assessment—is that a broader range of animal species will be eligible to be exhibited in Queensland. There is one restriction though that comes out of this bill—that is, the exhibiting of one category of animals. These are animals that are considered prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014 and it includes reptiles, amphibians and most exotic mammals. The main reason for this exemption is that these 'prohibited matter'—which includes most exotic mammals—are identified as posing a 'high pest establishment risk' and as such are only able to be kept in a fixed exhibit that is open to public viewing. There are some instances where these animals will be granted 12-month special approval for offsite exhibiting, such as in the case of travelling circuses.


Within the submissions and during the public inquiries, there were some concerns around the need for mobile exhibitors to provide a minimum of 900 hours each year where the animals were open to the public in what is known as a 'fixed exhibit'. It is important to note the decision around this requirement is largely as a means to deter any private collector who wishes to operate under the guise of an exhibitor but for personal enjoyment. However, the committee did make the recommendation that the stipulated 900 hours per year be reduced to 600 hours per year, or 50 hours per month, to assist mobile exhibitors meet the licensing requirements.

In addition to the risk based licensing framework, the department will carry out regular compliance assessments of all licensed exhibitors. These compliance assessments are essential to monitor the licensees and to ensure that the chief executive has all the information they require to make an informed decision on an application for a grant, a renewal or an amendment of a licence. It is my view that this monitoring, through the compliance assessments, will assist the government to reach its goals of this bill—which is to manage biosecurity, public safety and animal welfare. Further, these regular compliance assessments will help the industry take responsibility for future improvements when it comes to risk management.

This long-term strategy will enhance industry quality assurance schemes moving forward. But exhibitors who have a good track record of compliance within the industry should not fear that they will be subject to invasive compliance assessments. These compliance assessments are a means to ensure that the animal exhibit industry in Queensland remains at the high standard we currently see. Random checks will also occur to ensure best practice outcomes. I see this as creating good incentives—both financial and professional—to exhibitors when it comes to best practice in their field.

Working on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 was an interesting and informative experience. It was my first in my role as chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee. In my view, the bill will implement a holistic, risk based approach to regulating the exhibited animals industry. I take this opportunity to thank all those stakeholders who made submissions and who attended public inquiries. I felt it was a real privilege to be in the room with these people who so clearly are passionate and professional in their industry. Their contribution was invaluable, and I think I can speak on behalf of the whole committee when I say that we were impressed with their professionalism, passion, dedication to and care of the animals that they exhibit.

The provisions in this bill will help to ensure that this important industry continues to maintain its excellent animal welfare biosecurity and work safety record, and that exhibitors and their staff will maintain their high standards of professionalism and care. I want to thank the exhibitors and others who shared their views on the legislation with my committee and with the former committee. I also acknowledge the effort and professionalism of departmental staff who advised the committee on provisions of the bill. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the committee secretariat—Rob Hansen, Megan Johns, Tamara Vitale and Rhia Campillo—for their professionalism, their support and their patience. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the particularly constructive approach adopted by committee members—the member for Burnett who is the deputy chair, the member for Maranoa, the member for Logan, the member for Mackay and the member for Hervey Bay. I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (4.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, which will enable the exhibition of animals to continue in Queensland while, importantly, minimising risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and safety. Importantly, it will reduce red tape, ensure new opportunities for the industry and deal with community expectations of risk. Queensland needed a consistent approach to the laws applying to the management of exhibited animals. It is noted that most of the industry support the bill and the committee has continued the work done in 2014. The bill has evolved from significant consultation with the department and key industry stakeholders. I would also like to acknowledge the departmental representatives present here this evening for their assistance throughout the process as well as the previous agricultural minister sitting beside me, who introduced the bill in 2014. I also thank the current minister for progressing this legislation.

It is important to identify those involved. Animal exhibitors in Queensland include zoos, circuses and mobile animal demonstrators. As we know, zoos and circuses have operated in Australia since the mid-19th century and they remain popular today. Queensland's current legislation is fragmented, inefficient and disjointed. There are currently six licensing schemes and regulations across four acts: the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001.

Some exhibitors need multiple licences, each with fees, charges and regulation and, as a result, are being regulated under more than one act. All governments should be looking at reducing the regulatory burden and providing Queenslanders with opportunity. We want to see innovation and adaption by business in what should be an evolving industry. As a result, we have some animals that are not able to be exhibited at all. Of course, Queensland needs this opportunity and we need to be able to manage the risks that are involved. In the past, safety and animal welfare risks posed by exhibiting animals have not been appropriately regulated.

The bill will simplify how government authorises the exhibition of animals that generally cannot be kept in Queensland without a licence. Only those exhibitors who need a licence under the current legislation will need a licence under this new legislation. The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 will consolidate the regulatory burden and licensing schemes for the successful exhibition of native and exotic animals into a best practice legislative framework by requiring exhibitors, the best people, to take a more active role in identifying and managing animal welfare and important biosecurity and safety risks that impact when exhibiting these important species.

To further reduce red tape, this legislation will provide that licences can be granted for up to three years, with those involved in exhibition and dealing with exhibited animals required to prevent or minimise the risk. The issue surrounding the use of management plans, which has been alluded to in several speeches already, was certainly a consistent and regular part of the negotiations in the examination of the proposed legislation. The management plans will allow exhibitors to propose the activities they wish to conduct under their licence and explain, using the management plan, how they will prevent and minimise risk. Importantly, this will give industry the opportunity to utilise expert knowledge to manage risk in what can be unique circumstances where the current legislation prohibits exhibition of the species by their activity.

Changes in the bill will mean that licensing decisions will now be risk based. In practice, a licence could be granted to keep almost any animal for any type of exhibit if it can be demonstrated that risks were prevented or minimised, achieving the result of allowing a greater range of species to be exhibited if the industry so desired. It has been stated that, under the current legislation, some species cannot be exhibited in Queensland at all. This new flexibility of a risk based approach will be complemented by a monitoring regime by the department of licensed exhibitors. Minimum exhibition requirements are now defined to ensure that animals kept under licence are actually exhibited. This issue became really important because the species to which they apply cannot be kept in private situations in Queensland.

The issue of fixed exhibits was raised on a regular basis in the committee. The high pest potential animals listed as prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014 now need to be in a fixed exhibit that is open to the public. Most other species will need to be exhibited on a regular basis. This removes the unintended consequence of issues of some private collectors in our community. The industry looks forward to the frequency of assessment visits based on compliance.

I would also like to thank those who participated in providing comment and feedback during the process in 2014 and again in 2015 of getting on with the job of providing a single industry-specific act. This bill has undergone an extensive consultation process. We need to acknowledge their involvement that allowed us to present a framework for successful exhibition of animals in Queensland. The bill provides an opportunity for business expansion while cutting red tape, remembering the core function of this bill is minimising the risks to welfare, biosecurity and safety.


I acknowledge the work of my fellow committee members and the staff—Rob, Megan and Rhia—as well as the Technical Scrutiny Secretariat. In referencing the bill, it was noted that it has been broadly supported by the industry throughout its development. It was also noted that the proposed restrictions on category C animals was an area of some concern. When the issues of incidents being scrutinised was raised, it was a difficult and sensitive area in which to propose the requirement for category C animals to be based in a fixed exhibit. I highlight the committee's recommendation 4, which recommends that the bill be amended at subclauses 76(2) and (3) to reduce the minimum annual hours to at least 50 hours in each calendar month or 600 hours in a year.

During our deliberations, there was some assertion that the department had an agenda of bias against some sectors of the industry. I was satisfied with the department's advice and assurances that managing risks associated with category C animals is based on internationally accepted control principles.

The bill will apply the same risk management criteria to assessing licence applications. The only exemption is category C animals, which are required to be based in a fixed exhibit. This highlights the importance of management plans, which will not preclude the mobile exhibit of category C animals. The process will allow this under a special exemption approval which would be reviewed on a regular basis by the department.

As stated, management plans were raised regularly. The bill is structured so that the utilisation of a management plan is important in deciding whether applicants can manage the relevant risks. This was acknowledged in the minister's response. I record my thanks that the committee's recommendations were listened to and agreed to, and I thank the minister for that. There was recommendation 1, but I think we do need to acknowledge that the risks to biosecurity and safety appear to be rare in Queensland. Recommendation 4—we do acknowledge that. I thank the minister for taking that up. I mentioned this before; it is around those private collector issues in Queensland. I acknowledge the examples and the two amendments in recommendation 5. The example given was a good one, and I thank the minister for that. Of course, recommendation 6 did address the management plans.

The committee generally accepts that category C animals, which include exotic species that are prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act, present greater risk. That is why the way this current legislation has been framed is important. In closing, I acknowledge the points of clarification, and I thank the minister for his response in addressing those concerns.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.47 pm): The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 will streamline regulation of animal exhibits. Currently, laws regulating animal exhibition are spread across several acts. This bill will create a single coherent framework for regulating the exhibited animals industry. That is why I am standing here today in support of the bill.

Since time immemorial people have been attracted to exotic animals. This was evident in my travels to the ancient Persian and Mesopotamian sites. Even in those ancient times, people were fascinated by exotic animals and circus type exhibits. The exotic animals were depicted in many artworks preserved in museums.

Currently in Queensland, exhibitors of animals include zoos, circuses and mobile animal demonstrators. Licences are held by fixed exhibitors in zoos and aquariums licensed for exotic species and native animals as well as mobile exhibitors holding licences for native and noxious fish species, and circuses, film and magic acts for exotic species only.

At the public committee hearing some of the exhibitors told the committee that they contribute \$100 million to the Queensland economy each year. The exhibitors also explained that they not only contribute economically to Queensland but also contribute to the tourism, cultural, social, recreational and educational sectors of the community.

What has changed in modern times is our desire to take great care of our animals. The desire to ensure animals are cared for was evident from all stakeholder groups at the public hearing. Although some groups were really opposed in their views of what constituted quality care and quality animal environments, the best interest of animals was always front and centre. The types of animal handlers and exhibitors that took the time to make submissions to the committee included representatives from a large range of interested bodies, including: the RSPCA, representatives from zoos, aquaria, circuses, theme parks, wildlife parks wildlife demonstrators who exhibit to the community, private events and educational exhibitors and the television industry's animal trainers.

The Exhibited Animals Bill addresses complex inconsistencies and ensures the effective management of animals by consolidating legislation dealing with exhibited animals. There are currently more than six different licensing schemes under different acts which may apply to an exhibitor, and some exhibitors need more than one of these licences to operate their business. Work is underway to develop a uniform national standard for exhibited animals in response to criticism of the industry arising from public incidents of poor animal treatment—animal escapes, et cetera—difficult experiences of jurisdictions in managing and preventing such undesirable situations, and difficulties for the industry in dealing with separate jurisdictions with inconsistent standards. It is anticipated that the bill will provide a legislative framework to enable the adoption of a national standard as the code of practice in the future. The bill addresses gaps in animal welfare and safety risks associated with their exhibition, which is inconsistent under the current legislation.

The current Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 applies to exhibitors of exotic animals but not native animals, and the duty of care under the Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 is also relevant to the exhibition of dangerous animals such as tigers and venomous snakes. There are, however, gaps in the carriage of some animal welfare and safety risks. The bill takes a risk based approach to regulation. Some exotic species included under the current legislative regime will now be protected with the passing of this bill. The passing of the bill will ensure that animal exhibitors will be together under one comprehensive, coherent legislative framework which deals with biosecurity risks. Animal welfare and human safety risks will also be consolidated sensibly under one head of power.

The bill will substitute multiple licensing requirements with one licensing framework incorporated under one single act of parliament. Not all exhibitors will be required to be licensed, but under the proposed legislation there will be an obligation on them to pay care and attention to biosecurity; the health, safety and amenity of the community; and the care and welfare of exhibited animals. This covers small exhibitors without imposing on them burdensome licensing requirements.

A feature of the bill is that it imposes no more licensing requirements than is currently the case. Only those exhibitors who currently require a licence will require a licence under the new legislation. Licences will be granted for up to three years. To receive a licence, the bill requires an applicant to submit an animal management plan. The management plan will explain how the applicant proposes to deal with the subject animal and will also identify risks and ways in which the applicant intends to prevent or minimise the risk. The management plan will form the basis for the assessment of an applicant's suitability to hold an exhibition licence. The explicit intent of a management plan is to provide exhibitors with flexibility in how they will manage risk, which is consistent with a risk based approach to industry oversight. This ensures that the knowledge, experience and history involved in the industry is indeed the best basis upon which to demonstrate how the risks involved can be mitigated or eliminated.

The management plan approach to licensing is in fact advantageous for the industry. It allows for the possibility of new species to be exhibited in Queensland providing that the chief executive is satisfied that relevant risks and relevant adverse effects are shown conclusively to be effectively managed under the management plan. However, specific restrictions on exotic animals that present a high risk of spreading pests in Queensland's environment and to our agriculture and tourism industries are provided for in the bill.

Under the Biosecurity Act there is provision made for the fixed public display of exotic animals such as in a zoo, for example. Exhibiting away from this fixed site may be approved on stringent conditions under a special exhibition authority which is valid for up to a year. The bill addresses risks posed by animal exhibits. The keeping and exhibiting of animals involves risks to the animal and/or from animals to their handlers, the viewing public or to other species. The potential remains for disastrous events to occur. From time to time we have been made aware of instances where individuals have kept exotic animals for their own purposes—sometimes for notoriety or perverse entertainment. The results are often dangerous for the animals and the community. This comes to the attention of the public when animals escape or are no longer wanted by their owner and let loose in inappropriate places. Animals which are prohibited for private purposes under the provisions of the bill may now only be kept if they are approved for exhibition.

At a minimum, category B animals will need to be exhibited at least once a month. The more exotic category C animals that are prohibited under the Biosecurity Act will need to be exhibited for the equivalent of 600 hours each year. These provisions contained in the bill will discourage any private collectors from keeping exotic animals under the subterfuge of being genuine exhibitors.

Examples of exhibiting an animal include the display of an animal in public for commercial, cultural, educational, entertainment or scientific purposes. This could be done by displaying the animal in a zoo or wildlife park; using an animal to perform in a circus or magic show; allowing public interaction with animals at a petting farm; showing an animal as part of an educational wildlife demonstration; and displaying an animal—including, for example, a bird in a cage—in an area of commercial premises accessible to the public.

After considering the submissions from mobile exhibitors, the committee recommended that the bill be amended to specify that a regular enclosure at a regular enclosure site need not be open generally to the public provided that (a) it still meets the exhibitor's minimum exhibition requirements; and (b) that the enclosure is assessed and meets the required standards for the relevant authorised animals. This means that mobile exhibitors will not need to display their animals at their home bases, which may not be suitable for public access.


The risk-averse approach of the bill will restrict the exhibiting of exotic category C animals to predominantly fixed exhibits. These animals will need to be based in a fixed exhibit which is open to viewing by the general public; for example, in a zoo. Exhibits away from the site can only be authorised on a temporary basis under a special exhibition approval which is valid for up to one year. This will help protect animals.

This will help protect Queensland's environment and valuable agriculture and tourism industries from the establishment of new pests while ensuring the government does not bear significantly increased risk mitigation costs. To mitigate risks caused by the animals in category C, the bill restricts their exhibit under licence to (a) a regular enclosure for the animal at a regular enclosure site under the licence; (b) a place outside a regular enclosure site under the licence but within a controlled area including a regular enclosure for the animal at the site; or (c) another place, but only if the exhibition is authorised under a special exhibition approval included in the licence. The restriction of having fixed-site enclosures for the exotic animals eliminates risks that may occur with mobile exhibitors, although I mention that mobile exhibitors have had a good record to date, without any breaches of biosecurity. The circus representatives believed that the restrictions relating to fixed enclosures discriminated against their ability to operate.

The committee recognised that there may be times when an animal can be exempt from being exhibited. The circumstances in which an animal may be unsuitable for exhibition include breeding programs, companionship for another exhibited animal or the requirement for prolonged handling or training in preparation for exhibit. We recommended that temporary exemptions be put in clauses 75 and 76 for reasonable circumstances. The committee also recommends that licence holders not be deemed to have committed an offence if they have reasonable grounds for not having their animals on display.

In its regulatory impact statement for the exhibited animals legislation, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries listed three risks and good reasons for regulating the keeping of wild animals. These reasons are the potential for animal welfare problems, wild animals causing human injury and death, and wild animals establishing pests and spreading disease. I believe that the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 has safeguards in its regulations to address these issues identified by the department.

The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 consolidates licensing schemes into a single fit-for-purpose act. It will meet community expectations for the management of animal welfare, biosecurity and the safety risks associated with exhibited animals whilst streamlining and simplifying the licensing of exhibitors. I support the bill.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.02 pm): It is a great pleasure to stand here this evening and talk about the bill. At the outset I thank my colleagues on the committee: Jenny Howard, the chair of the committee, Stephen Bennett, Julieanne Gilbert, Robbie Katter and Linus Power. I also thank Rob Hansen, the research director, and Ms Megan Johns, the principal research officer. I also thank those who appeared as witnesses at the public hearing on 27 April. They represented organisations such as RSPCA Queensland, Wildlife Kingdom, Darling Downs Zoo, Australian Circus Week, the Zoo and Aquarium Association Queensland branch, Cockatoo Chaos, the Queensland Native Fauna Advisory Group and Hands on Wildlife. It was great to hear those witnesses explain what they do and to see the passion they have for those animals. They really do care for their animals. To be an animal trainer you have to have a real passion for animals. In most cases, these people do the right thing by their animals and make sure they are cared for. When you listen to them you realise that some of them are really passionate about the animals they have.

The committee made a number of recommendations in its report. One was to reduce the number of hours for animals to be exhibited from 900 a year to 50 hours per month, or 600 hours per year. One of the things that came up related to management plans, which I will mention later.

Queensland is in the enviable position of having the best animal exhibition industry in Australia. It brings enjoyment and education to hundreds of thousands of people each year and makes a direct contribution to the economy. In today's world, the exhibited animals industry makes a contribution to TV and movies. For example, documentaries are made about different animals in this country. It is not like in the old days, when the circus that went around provided the only opportunity for people to see certain animals.

The current Queensland legislation relating to the exhibiting of animals is fragmented. It provides for around six licence schemes and some exhibitors need multiple licences, yet there was a gap in coverage relating to animal welfare and public safety. Some species cannot be exhibited at all, even if the associated risk can be minimised. Provisions are spread across four acts: the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001.

In November last year the then LNP government released the regulatory impact assessment proposing the new legislation to modernise and streamline the way Queensland regulates its exhibited animals industry. Public comments closed in February this year. Around 13 online response forms were submitted and 12 other submissions were made. Most of those submissions broadly supported the proposed exhibited animals bill. I think that was pretty good to see at the end of the day. The main difference between the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 and the 2014 bill I suppose is that exhibitors from other states could have up to one year to respond rather than just six months.

The bill introduces new terminology. There are now three categories of animals and they will be subject to different regulatory requirements. Category A animals are those which are currently being kept privately under the recreational wildlife licence. Having been licensed under the bill, people will be able to exhibit these species. Exhibition is not permitted under the recreational wildlife licence. Animals in category B include kangaroos, crocodiles, dingos, wombats, echidnas and rabbits. There is a real story to rabbits in Queensland. We had one white rabbit come from New South Wales to Hervey Bay and nobody had a licence for it. They had to take it back to New South Wales. Man, that created some problems. It also includes koalas, potoroos, platypuses—the shadow minister likes platypuses—and red-tailed black-cockatoos. Category C mostly includes exotic animals with a high pest establishment risk and are prohibited under some of the biosecurity acts.


**Mr Furner:** What about Pistol and Boo?

**Mr SORENSEN:** I thought somebody would bring up Pistol and Boo.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Member for Hervey Bay, direct your comments through the chair please.

**Mr SORENSEN:** Somebody had to bring them up; I knew that was going to happen. Industry sectors such as zoos, wildlife parks, wildlife demonstrators and circus magicians will be treated more fairly, and that is the main purpose of the bill. The key identification of animals, exhibits and dealing with them are dealt with in clause 12 of the bill. The word 'animal' means a live member of the animal kingdom other than a human being. Clause 10 gives an explanation of the animals that do not apply to exhibiting and deals with animals such as domestic animals, common pets and farm animals displayed at agricultural shows and displayed for sale. In clause 13, exhibiting an animal means the displaying of animals in a zoo or wildlife parks, using an animal in the performance of a circus or magic show, allowing public interaction with animals at a petting zoo, showing an animal as part of an educational wildlife demonstration and the displaying of animals including, for example, birds in cages in particular commercial residences accessible to the public.

In August 2012 there were 135 licences to exhibit animals in Queensland, 46 fixed exhibitors such as zoos and aquariums, 49 mobile demonstrators and 40 licence holders such as circuses, for the purposes of TV and film, magic acts and exotic species only. According to the statistics, in 2009 some 5.2 million people visited zoos in Queensland. That is a huge income for Queensland. We have some of the best zoos in Australia. When we look at those figures and the figures for the rest of Australia, we really stand out in terms of our zoos and exhibitions in Queensland. So it is a very important part of our economy which contributes up to \$100 million a year. That is a lot of money when you think about it. The main issue with those who gave evidence related to management plans, but I think the minister has done a fairly good job in that respect and hopefully we can sort out those few niggling issues. It was good to be part of this committee inquiry and it was very interesting to listen to the witnesses who gave evidence. I thank everybody for participating in the inquiry, especially the witnesses who gave evidence and Marguerite, who is sitting at the back of the chamber. Thanks for giving us a briefing on this bill.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (5.13 pm): In rising to participate in the debate on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, I particularly want to support provisions which have been developed to improve animal welfare, biosecurity and public safety regarding the exhibition of wildlife and the standard model for licensing and fees for wildlife exhibitors. I congratulate my colleague the Minister for Agriculture, his predecessor in the former minister, the shadow minister and the committee for their work on this bill. The Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing currently operates two wildlife exhibition centres at the David Fleay Wildlife Park and at the Walkabout Creek Visitor Centre which provide opportunities for the general public to view a range of wildlife at the Gold Coast and in Brisbane respectively with a particular emphasis on promoting conservation initiatives being undertaken by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Both of these centres will come under the framework of the Exhibited Animals Bill that we are discussing here today.

Under the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, the Daisy Hill Koala Centre is managed as a dedicated koala education facility and features a large outdoor koala enclosure and many interactive displays. This centre will also come under the new framework. In the last few months I have been fortunate to visit the Walkabout Creek Visitor Centre at The Gap in Brisbane and the David Fleay Wildlife Park at the Gold Coast, which are two of the three national park visitor centres in which the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service is currently investing around \$4.1 million. This investment will enhance infrastructure and visitor experiences to allow more visitors to share in the wonder of what our national parks and wildlife have to offer. I want to speak in more detail about these wonderful facilities and illustrate the application of the Exhibited Animals Bill to my portfolio responsibilities.

The David Fleay Wildlife Park is located at West Burleigh on the Gold Coast and is dedicated to the memory of Dr David Fleay, who established the park in the late 1950s and, among other achievements, was a pioneer in successfully breeding Australian wildlife in captivity. The park was later acquired by the state in the 1980s and subsequently dedicated under the Nature Conservation Act as a conservation park in October 1995. Since 1997 the centre has been known as the David Fleay Wildlife Park. The park combines community education, ecotourism and wildlife conservation where visitors can explore on their own or join the fantastic rangers from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for one of the daily wildlife shows. The park plays an important role in showcasing the efforts of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in relation to wildlife research, breeding and

public education and has a particular focus on threatened species. In fact, it is a terrific place to see a large number of threatened species all in one location. The wildlife that can be seen at Fleays includes iconic Australian fauna such as the cassowary, crocodiles, koalas, emus, brolgas, dingoes, bilbies, tree kangaroos and platypus. The park has recently completed a very popular Easter school holiday season, welcoming more than twice the number of visitors compared with last year's Easter break and more than three times the number recorded during Easter 2013. As part of new developments at the park, an amphitheatre will be built to encourage more visitors and further promote the department's conservation work, with construction scheduled for completion in August this year. The amphitheatre will be a hub for showcasing interactive exhibits and events as well as provide a valuable education space for school groups visiting the park. The facility will provide an increased range of ranger led interpretation and environmental education activities, including, for example, free flight bird shows. These new exhibits will be administered as appropriate under the framework of the Exhibited Animals Bill.

The Walkabout Creek Visitor Centre is located on Mount Nebo Road at The Gap in Brisbane on the edge of the D'Aguilar National Park. The animals on display at Walkabout Creek include a variety of birds in a walk-through aviary, kangaroos, wallabies, platypus, quoll, wombat as well as turtles, fish, snakes and frogs. The ranger guided talks and tours, called Wild Encounters, are held every weekend and the centre also hosts daily ranger led feeding presentations, and visitors can learn more about an incredible Australian mammal—the platypus. Like at Fleays, the philosophy of developing wildlife displays at Walkabout Creek is inspired by the protected areas in which the exhibited animals naturally occur. This is typified by the newly developed Gondwana Rockpool, home of the resident platypus, Burrun. The exhibit was inspired by the rock pools of the World Heritage listed rainforests of Lamington National Park and provides a meaningful connection between this iconic species and the protected areas required for platypus conservation.

The centre also showcases many of South-East Queensland's national parks through a virtual lookout featuring magnificent sites and inspiring landscapes. As mentioned, the centre is located on the edge of the D'Aguilar National Park—

**An honourable member:** D'Aguilar.

**Dr MILES:** D'Aguilar National Park.

**Mr Powell:** Great national park, Minister.

**Dr MILES:** Indeed. It is a 36,400-hectare park with eucalypt forest and rainforest that stretches from The Gap to Lake Wivenhoe in the west and Mount Mee in the north. No other capital city in Australia enjoys a park this large and this diverse just 12 kilometres from the heart of the city.


The future development of the Walkabout Creek centre and the David Fleay Wildlife Park is currently being guided by recommendations developed through two concept master plans and directions papers that present outstanding visions for these centres to continue to act as gateways to Queensland's national parks and encourage people to experience the parks for themselves. The centres will also continue to be destinations for visitors and locals to connect with nature and delight in nature based tourism and recreational opportunities. In relation to the application of the Exhibited Animals Bill to these wildlife centres, David Fleay's and Walkabout Creek hold associate membership of the Zoo and Aquarium Association. However, the centres have not previously been required to operate under a state licensing scheme.

The Daisy Hill Koala Centre is located in the Daisy Hill Regional Park, approximately 25 kilometres south of Brisbane. It was built by the Queensland government and opened to the public in 1995. Admission is free to the centre, which has two viewing boardwalks from where the three resident koalas can be seen. The centre attracts more than 65,000 visitors a year. Members of the public are not allowed to handle or pat the koalas; it is more of an educational facility where the public can learn about the threats and concerns facing the koala population in Queensland. Daisy Hill Koala Centre staff provide educational talks to groups in the centre where the public learn about how to keep koalas safe in their backyard and what the Queensland government is currently doing to help koalas.

The Exhibited Animals Bill, once enacted, will bring all three centres under the licensing scheme. The departments welcome the bill as an additional platform for supporting operational transparency, best practice animal welfare, biosecurity and staff and visitor safety across Queensland's zoological institutions. I know that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection are committed to ensuring that all three centres'

exhibits comply with emerging industry standards. Under the bill, this will include the development of risk management plans to help ensure that best practice animal welfare standards are being applied in managing the Walkabout Creek, the David Fleay Wildlife Park and the Daisy Hill Koala Centre collections and to inform the centres' licence conditions and future resourcing.

As the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, I take my responsibilities for the management of native wildlife protected under the Nature Conservation Act very seriously. Although the majority of my wildlife responsibilities relate to the conservation and management of species in their natural environment, I have a strong interest in ensuring that anyone caring for Queensland's native animals in an exhibited environment are doing so under a best practice framework and are delivering a consistent and appropriate duty of care. I am confident that that framework will be delivered under the Exhibited Animals Bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.23 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the Exhibited Animals Bill.

**Mr Stevens:** Hear, hear!

**Mr POWELL:** I thank the Leader of Opposition Business. I do so for three primary reasons. Firstly, as the former minister for environment and heritage protection, I worked with the former minister for agriculture, forestry and fisheries to see this bill ultimately introduced into the House. I would say that it is long overdue. I know that the exhibited animals industry certainly came to the former Labor government some seven years ago and tried to get this bill cracking. I acknowledge that, even in the three years that we were in power, it was a tortuous trek to get the bill to the parliament. So I am pleased—and commend the minister for reintroducing the bill—to finally see it come into legislation because, ultimately, it will bring together several pieces of legislation and some very convoluted regulation and subordinate legislation that are hard for the industry to navigate. This bill will make it far simpler for them to do so.

The second reason that I would like to make a contribution to this debate is the role that Australia Zoo plays in employment, particularly in the electorate of Glass House. As the shadow minister pointed out, Australia Zoo is technically in the electorate of Caloundra, but it is probably one of the most significant employers in the electorate of Glass House. Over the past six years, particularly over the past three years as the former minister for the environment, I formed a very close working relationship with Terri and the team—Wes, Frank and all of the staff of Australia Zoo. They do a fantastic job out there and I am pleased to do anything that I can to assist them not only in offering top-quality tourism opportunities for both Australian and international tourists but also in their work of presenting wildlife to the public so that the public better understand wildlife and are better educated about Australian wildlife in particular and the conservation work that they do.

The second reason that I would like to make a contribution to this debate is out of professional respect for two individuals whom I knew prior to being the minister for the environment, but certainly came to appreciate even more so during my time as minister, Ms Kelsey Engle, the curator of Australia Zoo, and Mr Al Mucci, the Manager of Life Sciences at Dreamworld. Al is the president and Kelsey is a board member of the Zoo and Aquarium Association, Queensland Branch. The minister will not find two more respected individuals in their industry than Kelsey and Al and nor will he find two more professional individuals in not only how they operate within that association but also how they operate within Australia Zoo and Dreamworld.

I would like to reflect on my primary concerns. Earlier this afternoon, I listened to the minister carefully. My understanding is that the minister is addressing, at least in part, some of these concerns. If I have not picked up fully what the minister is doing, I would be very keen for him to elaborate on them in his response. Al acknowledges that it is great that this bill has come about. Al and Kelsey started working on this bill back in 2006. So in 2015—nine years later—we are getting to the end of the process. A point that was made by the shadow minister and by Al was that, in developing the codes of practice and guidelines, they are very keen for that only to involve government members and the affected members of the industry. We all appreciate that there are well-meaning individuals who are part of organisations such as Animals Australia and Animal Liberation Queensland who are trying to free these animals from zoos without really respecting the fact that these zoos and aquariums play a very important role: firstly, to educate and, secondly, to demonstrate conservation practices and to be part of conservation practices in the form of a captive breeding program. So I would really encourage the minister to work primarily with the affected industry as he develops these codes of practice. I think that there is a place for organisations such as

the RSPCA, which has a role in terms of ensuring animal welfare in particular, but some of these other groups have very much a biased approach and their ultimate aim is to shut down these zoos and aquariums. I think that would be a travesty not only for the people who work in those industries but also for Queenslanders as a whole, who would lose an opportunity to enjoy what zoos and aquariums offer and be educated by what they offer.

The other matter that both AI and Kelsey raised related to the management plans. During the public hearing into this bill AI stated—


Management plans ... for each species will have a major resource implication on both government and industry. Under the current system, management plans are required for declared pest species.

During the hearing Kelsey went on to say—

I would definitely like to reiterate the aspects of the management plans, particularly if you consider that there would be a requirement for zoos and aquaria, who are quite professional facilities, to submit management plans not only for species that we have already been approved to hold but also for species that people can hold as pets. So you can go to a pet shop and buy some of these animals under a recreational licence and there is no requirement from government for any sort of management plan in the same respect. I guess for a business like Australia Zoo or perhaps Dreamworld, which hold hundreds of species, requiring a management plan for these very low-risk species—they are evidently so low risk that an individual private person can keep them as a pet with very little reporting—seems a little bit at odds.

The committee did pick up on this. On page 31 of their report there is significant committee comment, which I acknowledge the minister spoke to in his second reading speech, then there are two subsequent recommendations. The upshot of the views by AI and Kelsey is that in the interests of trying to reduce the regulatory burden on professional exhibited animal industry bodies we do not want to create an administrative burden either on them or on the government itself that has to oversee it. I think I understood there are going to be some minor tweaks, possibly an amendment during consideration in detail, but also that the minister's department is preparing a number of example template management plans and that there is potential to amalgamate some management plans to cover a range of species so it is not a case of hundreds of species requiring individual plans at zoos the size and calibre of Dreamworld and Australia Zoo. I am getting an indication that the minister has certainly heard those views and is looking to address them.

When so many pieces of legislation are brought together into a large body of work such as this there will always be teething issues. I would ask the minister to be open to addressing any of those teething issues as they arise. If the minister needs individuals to bounce ideas off, then the department, along with EHP, certainly should be looking to continue the engagement with both Kelsey and AI. I think they have the wisdom and the respect within their industry to represent those views. With that I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.31 pm): As many would know, I came late to the Agriculture and Environment Committee. Before I joined the committee I had little of the detailed knowledge that the member for Glass House displayed of the bill before the House, the Exhibited Animals Bill. Perhaps like many I had assumed when I saw the bill that it was about the exhibited animals of the opposition. However, this is not true. Instead, the bill is vital regulation about the many professional animal exhibitors of a variety of animals that are both fixed and mobile throughout the state. I do not know of any Queenslanders who has not, at least in childhood, been profoundly moved and informed by seeing live animals at a zoo, a park, an aquarium, a circus or at a demonstration at a school or a fete. However, we also want our government to ensure that these exhibitions of animals are safe for both workers and our children—biosafe in the case of non-native species or species that could carry diseases—while, of course, protecting the vital welfare of the animals themselves. For the House's benefit, that is the true purpose of this piece of legislation.

This legislation addresses a real need in our community and our fragile continent to regulate special types of animals that are used in exhibitions throughout this state. This is a \$100 million industry in our state and a considerable number of Queensland families rely on the income that the showing and displaying of animals creates. It is vital though that we put safeguards in place, firstly for the patrons of these displays, shows and zoos, secondly for the biosecurity of our state, the spreading of exotic diseases and the escape and uncontrolled breeding of wildlife and, thirdly and just as importantly, the regulation of the welfare of the animals themselves that are being displayed.

As I said, I came late to this process but have read through the work of the committee that took submissions and met with stakeholders throughout this process. The committee took submissions from smaller part-time animal exhibitors, as well as peak bodies such as the Zoo and Aquarium Association, the RSPCA, zoos and a number of circuses. Submitters commented on the number of days that animals need to be displayed, the length of time that interstate travelling and mobile

exhibitors such as circuses could travel throughout the state and the nature of the required management plans. Though not involved in this process, I recognise the good work of the committee and the collaborative attitude of both the chair of the committee, the member for Ipswich, and the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Burnett, as well as, of course, the fantastic member for Hervey Bay, the member for Mount Isa and the member for Mackay. The process of submissions and discussions has brought forward practical recommendations.

The purpose of this bill is to manage animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks associated with the exhibition of animals. To give some background to members who have perhaps not had the full opportunity to absorb the associated documentation in its totality, previously elements of these goals were managed under separate legislation that both crossed over and were considered incomplete. The Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 applies to exotic animals but fails to account for native animals. The legislation that takes care of employees is the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. This bill makes it the responsibility of the exhibitor to provide safety for both workers and patrons who view the exhibited animals and fills in gaps that may have been left by the Work Health and Safety Act. The Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 seeks to effectively consolidate these regulations and licensing processes into a single fit-for-purpose act. This makes clear the responsibilities of the exhibitors in a single act and although there are some regulations to comply with, the requirement to comply is more clearly contained within the one act.

This bill, as the member for Nanango put forward, has had a long journey. It was first proposed in 2008. We certainly need to recognise that it built upon the work of the previous committee on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2014 that lapsed in the previous parliament when it was prematurely dissolved for the election in January. Unlike the member for Nanango, I generously acknowledge that the committee work we do in this House is significantly built on the work of others previously.

Simply put, this bill makes explicitly clear that exhibitors must take reasonable and practical steps to prevent or minimise the risks to animal welfare and the adverse impacts that could occur from a failure to take these steps. This for the first time is to apply to all exhibited animals, including those animals that can be kept without a licence. This bill also has a process of risk based licensing whereby animal exhibits would gain a licence through the creation by the exhibitor of a management plan that would show how they would minimise their animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks. These licences, if successful, would be granted for up to three years. The bill also restricts the licensing of some animals that represent significant threat and are classified as prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act, which includes most exotic animals, amphibians and reptiles. Around State of Origin time Queenslanders cannot help but be reminded of the presence of invasive species such as the cane toad. That is something that makes us so aware of the significant risks of a failure of biosecurity. Further, we know the invasive nature of rabbits, fire ants, carp and other species. This is not a hollow threat. The Everglades of Florida in the United States now face significant environmental damage due to the introduction and dumping of unregulated exotic snake species. The regulation of such species in Australia is far stronger. This bill is part of the continuing defence of Australia and Queensland's biosecurity.

Private collectors who might want to do a very limited exhibition to attempt to gain a licence and to own a C class exotic animal will be deterred by the requirements that animals be on display and exhibited to the public for a significant time period. That means the keeping of an animal or animals is primarily for a professional or educational purpose rather than for a personal reason. In effect, it is for exhibition rather than to be kept as a pet. The time period was something that was actively discussed by the committee. I thank the other members for their active consideration of these issues.

Another vital component of the legislation is the ongoing monitoring of the risk based framework, which includes the monitoring of exhibitors who have a base where animals are kept in a place where they are not on permanent display. The frequency of the assessments of compliance will be undertaken on differing time frames depending on the risks associated with the particular animals for which the exhibitor has been granted a licence. In some cases, an inspector may make a random check that an exhibitor is still in compliance with the terms of the licence granted through their risk management plan.

In addressing this bill, it is vital to understand that some animals simply will not be allowed to be exhibited. As I said, none of the many exhibitors who presented to the committee sought any regulation that would allow them to exhibit any member of the opposition. Even though I am a member of the government, I have serious reservations about a particular aspect of the bill and I hope the minister is not unhappy that I raise some of those concerns in this speech. I have informally raised the issues with both the chair of the committee, the member for Ipswich, and the deputy chair of the

committee, the member for Burnett, and they were very interested in those issues. Under this bill, even category 3 does not contain a regulation for the displayed exhibition of Queensland dinosaurs. Under the legislation, there will be no legal way to display any of the dinosaurs of this place. The famous dinosaur *Tyrannosaurus rex*, once king but now toothless and lost in the suburb of Ashgrove, will not be seen again. The less well known 'health-guarantee-saurus' is not wanted by the public.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I rise to a point of order. I ask that you rule on relevance.

**Mr POWER:** I am addressing the relevance.

**Mr Rickuss:** Madam Speaker, I ask you that rule on poor humour.

**Mr POWER:** I will let others be the judge of that. As I said, 'health-guarantee-saurus'—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace):** Order! Member for Logan, please resume your seat for one moment. That really was out of order and frivolous. I think we need to put that on the record. The member for Logan has the call. I understand that members are getting a little bit anxious, but member for Logan, with relevance, please come back to the bill.

**Mr POWER:** My apologies, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will come back to the bill, because it is important to consider what other animals could or could not be exhibited under this category. As I said, the name of that species of dinosaur is under contention. Many in the health profession believe it to be false. Indeed, the consensus amongst most dinosaur experts is that it should be correctly—and please bear with me, because my Latin is not strong; they have settled on this name professionally—'future-member-for-Maranoa-saurus'. Although the bill makes no provision for the commercial display of that animal, members wishing to view that particular dinosaur may be able to see it at the cafes and restaurants of Kingston and Manuka. I shall leave the regulation of that particular dinosaur to the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory.

Another dinosaur is 'economic-wrecker-saurus'. It used to thrill the kids as it wandered around the Queensland economic jungle. It knocked over a few 1,000 jobs, but the kids loved it.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Logan, there is a point of order.


**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** This is a very important bill before the House. I ask that you rule on relevance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Logan, it would be wonderful if you could please come back to the bill. I agree that we need to speak about the issues that are contained within the bill.

**Mr POWER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I am disappointed in the ruling. I feel I never left the bill. I was dealing with some of its central measures. But I will respect the ruling of the chair.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Logan, I ask you to please withdraw that remark. That is a reflection on the chair.


**Mr POWER:** I unconditionally withdraw and, of course, I respect the ruling of the chair. More seriously, I wish to conclude by thanking my fellow members of the committee. I thank the chair, the member for Ipswich, and the deputy chair, the member for Burnett, whose participation in the debate was really fantastic and collegial. Thank you, Steven. I thank the member for Mackay, who made a vital and worthwhile contribution to the debate. I thank the member for Hervey Bay, who spoke earlier and made a fantastic contribution. I thank Rob Katter. Vitally, coming from a rural and remote region, he could comment on issues such as travelling circuses. I was really impressed by the submissions that I read through, which I think gave us new insight into the way the bill is framed and improved it. I am disappointed that I could not make a contribution about potential and hypothetical animals that might be examined under the bill, but I thank the House for its time. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (5.45 pm):** I rise to address the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015. Unlike the previous speaker, the member for Logan, I intend to make a serious and respectful contribution to this important bill. Clearly this legislation has been well considered over a number of years, with a substantial amount of work progressed under the previous Liberal National Party government. I acknowledge the great work done by the member for Toowoomba South and former agriculture minister, the Hon. John McVeigh, who sits in this place.

In Queensland, the exhibited animals industry is a valuable industry and represents over \$100 million to the Queensland economy, including tourist attractions such as Australia Zoo, Sea World, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in the electorate of the member for Currumbin, and, close to my own electorate of Moggill, the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary located in Fig Tree Pocket. The social benefits are significant: many of us will have experienced a family outing to Sea World or spent time watching films and TV related to wildlife. During my own childhood, I enjoyed visiting Sea World and I have taken some of my own children there for their birthdays and other events, which has been fantastic. We in this House should acknowledge the contribution of the late Keith Williams in the establishment of Sea World on the Gold Coast, as well as all the great work he has done for tourist destinations across the state.

The industry not only exhibits animals, but also plays a vital role in education, conservation, research activities and, in some cases, it provides rescue and rehabilitation facilities as well as captive breeding of endangered native and exotic animals to ensure their survival. However, none of this can be provided without ensuring that biosecurity is not compromised. It is critically important that any activity manages risks to Queensland's primary industries associated with potentially harmful pests and diseases, and that control strategies are robust when exhibiting animals to prevent pest establishment or harm to people and animals, and disease spread. Pest animals and weeds have a significant environmental and social impact on Queensland, with an estimated cost impact of approximately \$500 million annually. Disease spread poses a threat not only to primary industries, as over recent years animal linked viruses such as avian flu and swine flu epidemics have had a demonstrated impact on human health and wellbeing. Biosecurity is also an important international security issue. The continuing development and evolution of biotechnology increases the real risks of it being used for malevolent purposes, the further evolution of infectious diseases and the greater risk of more problematic epidemics.

A single regulatory structure for the licensing and monitoring of exhibited animals will streamline the required governance process and strengthen protections within Queensland. To this end, the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, amending the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, is very important. I support the intent of this bill and the practical outcomes it will potentially deliver for Queensland.

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (5.49 pm): I rise to support the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 presented by the honourable Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing. This bill will remove some of the regulations around the exhibited animals industry. This industry, although small, employs up to a thousand Queenslanders and contributes about \$100 million to our economy. This industry includes large zoos, aquaria, theme parks, wildlife parks, mobile wildlife demonstrators who exhibit at community and private events, circuses and magicians.

The current legislation around this industry is complex, with provisions spread across four acts—the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001. The current legislation regulating the industry is confusing for operators, and me, with more than six licensing schemes under these acts which may apply to an exhibitor.

**Mr Rickuss:** Did you read those acts?

**Mr KING:** Have you read them? Some exhibitors will need more than one licence to operate their business.

This bill will do a number of things. It will: provide certainty and streamlining of the processes for exhibiting and dealing with exhibited animals; ensure that the associated animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks and relevant adverse effects of such exhibits are prevented or minimised by addressing gaps with a cohesive, comprehensive and consistent risk based regulatory framework for exhibited animals; and reduce red tape for animal exhibitors by consolidating and streamlining regulation.

This bill will make improvements in a number of ways by: providing for a greater range of species to be exhibited in Queensland, provided the risks can be minimised; simplifying how Queensland legislation authorises the exhibition of animals that generally cannot be kept without a licence; implementing a holistic, risk based approach to regulating the exhibited animals industry; and reducing the regulatory burden on exhibitors by introducing a single licensing scheme under which exhibitors can be authorised to keep and exhibit both native and some exotic animals regardless of their industry sector.

This bill will continue to prohibit dealings with some potential pest animals that are listed as prohibited matter and restrict dealings with other pest animals that are listed as restricted matter, except where they are authorised by a permit issued under the Biosecurity Act or authorised under another Queensland or Commonwealth law.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Grace): Order! Sorry, member for Kallangur, could you pause for a moment. There is a little too much audible conversation in the House at the moment. I ask members to please keep it down. I call the member for Kallangur.

**Mr KING:** The bill provides for comprehensive and consistent management of animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks posed by the industry in Queensland, principally by introducing the general exhibition and dealing obligation. This bill will require industry participants to take reasonable and practical steps to prevent or minimise the risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and safety and the relevant adverse effects on the welfare of any animal, the health, safety or wellbeing of a person or social amenity, the economy and environment associated with exhibiting and dealing with the animal. This obligation will apply consistently to all animal exhibits, including those that do not need a licence.

Under the bill animal exhibits will be licensed in response to a management plan prepared by the applicant, explaining how they would minimise the relevant risks and relevant adverse effects. The licences will only be granted for up to three years. Developing a management plan represents an opportunity for exhibitors to use their expert knowledge to address risks relevant to their specific circumstances.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Sorry, member for Kallangur, for interrupting again. There is too much audible conversation in the House. I ask once again that if members want to have conversations to please take them outside. I am struggling to hear the member for Kallangur. It would be nice to be able to hear him. Members, once again, can we keep the conversations to either nil or a very low level in the House.

**Mr KING:** This will seek to encourage the industry to take more responsibility for further improvements in risk management by allowing for accreditation through this private assessment scheme. Safeguards within the bill, such as the requirement to disclose conflicts of interest in relation to assessments and management plans, will maintain the integrity of the private assessment scheme.

This risk based licensing framework will involve regular compliance assessments of licensed exhibitors. An official assessment conducted by the department at the exhibitor's cost will generally be required to provide sufficient evidence to decide an application for the grant, renewal or significant amendments to a licence. However, an inspector will have powers to make random audits or to investigate complaints to monitor compliance with the legislation. The frequency of assessments will depend upon the compliance record of the exhibitor.

As stated, the bill will allow a greater range of species to be exhibited in Queensland. Some of these are—and I will not go down the path of the member for Logan—meerkats, which are currently in a TV advertising campaign and we could do with more of them; the Patagonian mara, which is a large rodent similar to the quokkas in Western Australia; the capybara, another large rodent that resembles a wombat; the veiled chameleon, which is a lizard in case members did not know; and the cape porcupine, a South African porcupine and apparently an old-world porcupine. Sadly, Johnny Depp's dogs, Pistol and Boo, will still not be allowed in Queensland.

There are contained within the bill deterrents to private collectors operating under the guise of keeping for exhibition. I do note that the RSPCA, Animals Australia, a university academic with an interest in animal welfare and ethics and licensed exhibitors were consulted. These stakeholders were very supportive of the key principles.

I note in the explanatory notes there is an indication a lengthy consultation process was undertaken between 2008 and the finalisation of this bill. I note whilst national standards for the exhibition of animals in Australia are currently under development, the bill will provide a legislative framework that will enable adoption of the national standards as codes of practice which will improve consistency across Australian jurisdictions. To sum up, as stated clearly by the minister, the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 will create a new regulatory and licensing framework specifically for the animal exhibition industry. The bill will streamline and simplify the licensing of exhibitors. A single licence will replace the six fragmented schemes under the current legislation.


The bill will create new opportunities for Queensland businesses by ensuring that future licensing decisions are based on risks, not lists. It will allow exhibitors to keep almost any animal for any type of exhibition provided they can manage the risks. That means opportunities for business to exhibit a greater range of species in Queensland provided the risks can be minimised and it gives them the flexibility they need to grow the economy and create the jobs our state needs.

I congratulate the minister, the committee, the department and the industry—and everyone for listening to me—and I have heard that Australia Zoo are very good as well. All of these people have done the hard work and put in the effort to achieve this legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr King, adjourned.

## MOTION

### State Finances

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.00 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Treasurer to release the incoming government brief on the fiscal repair task.

I would like to table the fiscal reform blueprint which formed part of the incoming government brief to the LNP government in 2012.

*Table paper:* Queensland Treasury: Fiscal Reform Blueprint [\[453\]](#).

This was an independent and open snapshot of the state of the books left by Labor, and the independent review was quite stark in its findings. Before I get into the detail of that, let us have a look at what we have seen today in the parliament from the Treasurer of this state. Tonight right across the news we have seen this Treasurer—who said he was not going to talk down the economy—saying that the state is in recession. What a wonderful bit of positivity from the Treasurer! He was unable to rebut the claims that I made today that the statistics he was quoting from today before question time were anything but ABS statistics, and of course never came in to say that they were. We had a stunt on Tuesday from him with rubbery coins and today we had rubbery figures. He has cherrypicked some theoretical figures.

After he spoke, they did go up on the Treasury website, but with everything this government says it pays to go and have a look at the detail of the matter. The website makes this disclaimer about the state account figures. It states—

The content does not necessarily represent the current view of Queensland Treasury or the Queensland Government.

That is before we actually consider the data. That is exactly what we had from the Treasurer this morning. He was always adamant that he was going to be talking up the economy. What I can say is that there is no recession here—just a Treasurer intent on talking down the Queensland economy, destroying confidence and destroying jobs. That is what we had from the Treasurer this morning. It was fantastic to see him in here this morning trying to set the tone for the day; unfortunately, the tone was a terrible one.

I think the people of Queensland expect better from a Treasurer who is going to bring down a budget in a few weeks. That is why we are talking this evening about the fiscal reform blueprint that was given to our government in 2012 and that I have just tabled. As I said, it was an independent and open snapshot. The opening sentence of the fiscal reform blueprint—and we heard this many times from the former treasurer in the former government—is blunt and unambiguous. It stated—

Queensland's fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority for this term of government.

It continued—

Up to 2005-06, Queensland debt levels were low and stable. In the period from 2005-06 to 2009-10 the level of State debt more than doubled. Debt in 2014-15 is expected to be almost 5 times greater than 10 years prior.

It continued—

Treasury's medium term fiscal analysis serves to demonstrate that a long and sustained period of restorative fiscal measures and unprecedented fiscal discipline is required to restore the State's fiscal position, stabilise the debt to revenue position and return the State's AAA credit rating

Queensland Labor blatantly left Queensland on a path to more and more debt. Labor had us on an upward debt trajectory, and I quote again—

The build-up of debt is forecast to continue over the forward estimates with State debt forecast to reach \$85.4 billion by 2014-15.

I should point out that, thanks to the LNP's responsible financial management, debt has not reached this level. In fact, it is forecast to be \$7.8 billion lower this financial year. Even more importantly, the growth in debt has now stabilised. That is what the former treasurer used to say—'We've got to stabilise the patient.' Why is the growth in debt such an important and confronting issue? In the words of the independent officers of Queensland Treasury—

The borrowing implied by those projections makes Queensland highly vulnerable to shocks and is contrary to the principles of intergenerational equity.


Our responsibility as members of parliament is to improve our state for the next generation. Labor's irresponsible and reckless financial management challenged this notion. It will be our children and grandchildren who are forced to pick up the tab. The Treasurer has refused to accept that the adoption of the fiscal balance was a key Treasury recommendation. On 27 March 2015, he said—

Make no mistake: the suggestion yesterday by the shadow Treasurer that the Treasury had advised the former government that we should be using a fiscal balance was not correct. That was not from the Treasury ...

For the benefit of the Treasurer, this was Treasury's advice in 2012 on page ES2. It stated—

The existing fiscal target of an operating surplus is too narrow as achieving this target is insufficient to arrest the growth in debt. A key recommendation is therefore to replace the operating surplus target with a general government net lending surplus target by no later than 2015-16.

What has the government got to hide?

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.05 pm): I rise in opposition to the motion calling on the Treasurer to release the incoming government brief on the fiscal repair task. I can also inform the shadow Treasurer that I am advised that there is no incoming government brief that the Treasurer has been provided with called 'fiscal repair task'. My first point for opposing the motion is that the Palaszczuk government is restoring Queensland's integrity after three years of the LNP. We let the people of Queensland know the truth rather than hide it. The first bill introduced in the 55th Parliament by the Palaszczuk Labor government delivered on the commitment that accountability and transparency reform would be front and centre of this government's agenda. In relation to the opposition's motion, I would like to point out that the member for Clayfield refused to release the incoming government briefing notes, despite selectively quoting from them, including in his final Strong Choices plan document. We get them tabled tonight—three years too late.

The member for Clayfield said funding sources had been identified for the LNP's \$4 billion in unfunded promises before the 2012 election. But the incoming brief he received from the Treasury after being sworn in allegedly indicated the state's finances were unsustainable and required immediate action. He refused to release the entire incoming Treasury brief to back up his claims, saying it contained information confidential to government. I quote—

Much as you might like to see it, for very good reasons that's not there, but I have indicated very strongly the incoming advice in that first paragraph.

He was hiding important information for three years—I repeat: three years. I also note that the Leader of the Opposition is yet to respond to a letter from the Treasurer requesting the government be allowed to access those documents that led to decisions of the former government regarding asset sales.

**A government member:** What has he got to hide?


**Dr LYNHAM:** Indeed, what does he have to hide? This is due to significant discrepancies between the statements of the former government in relation to statements made before and after the election with regard to their Strong Choices asset sales plan. Specifically, we have identified that at least \$70 million was spent on asset sales prior to the campaign. That is \$70 million wasted, down the drain, that this state will never see again. Clearly, the opposition takes a selective view when it comes to disclosure of government documents in this regard. They cannot have their cake and eat it too. I would like to point out that the Australian Labor Party was elected on the back of a comprehensive, far-reaching vision for Queensland which sets us on a clear fiscal path for the future.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. I call the minister.

**Dr LYNHAM:** I repeat: a clear fiscal path to the future. Our approach is a measured, modest and responsible plan that does not involve selling the assets so important to Queenslanders. These are income-producing assets that are important for Queenslanders. It is a plan that protects and retains those assets while at the same time protecting the unique lifestyle Queenslanders require and deserve. The Palaszczuk government's plan allows us to pay down debt without further damaging our economy. Our plan gives Queenslanders a clear picture of where their money is being spent, how it is being spent and, crucially, how it is paving the way for a fiscally responsible, prosperous and fair Queensland.

It is a plan that protects and creates jobs and builds confidence in our economy. It is now up to our government to implement a positive economic agenda—one that is about delivering growth, confidence and, most importantly, job opportunities. Our government is dealing with the legacy issues of the former government and takes this challenge head on. We know that economic growth is critical for jobs and prosperity and it has been historically stronger under Labor governments than under any of those opposite.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.10 pm): We have heard about the debt deniers on the Labor government benches but now we have heard about the fiscal fudgers. We have just heard from the minister. Is he seriously suggesting that this Labor Treasurer did not ask for a fiscal report from Treasury? Is he saying he did not ask for a report on the fiscal position of Queensland? Is he serious? Is the government serious? The government has just exposed itself to the very criticism that is out in the marketplace that this government is incompetent, it cannot manage money and it has learnt nothing from the legacy of debt that was racked up under a Bligh Labor government.

It was also interesting to hear that members opposite are going to deny the release of the fiscal plan for Queensland because apparently they did not ask for one—don't ask, don't know and deny. They also have a privacy policy that is all about themselves. The public servants have no privacy rights where the unions are concerned, but the government gets to have privacy with regard to any briefings it does or does not receive. They have one rule for themselves and a different one for others.

There is a simple test for the state Labor government: will they release the fiscal advice? If we are to believe the minister who just spoke, they did not ask for it; they do not have any fiscal advice as to the status in Queensland, which truly would be a stunning situation. However, that appears to be what the minister has just advised the House. Does this advice exist? Bad as Labor is in terms of fudging the fiscal position of Queensland and denying the debt that they racked up, I struggle to believe that they would not have this advice. It is important for the accountability and the integrity of this place. It is important for the accountability and the integrity with regard to the fiscal position of the budget of Queensland that this be released. I thought there was only one reason why they would not want to release it—that they were clueless about how to competently address the budget of Queensland. However, it appears now that they are even more incompetent because they do not ask for this advice so that they can deny the need to receive it.

It is important that Queensland has a competent government that is able to steer the financial ship of state. What we have seen after 100 days of a Labor government is that people were willing to look and see whether they are able to do this gig. They did not expect them to win necessarily, but they were willing to give them a go. What they are not willing to give them a go on is seeing them go back to the bad old ways of Labor, denying the way they racked up the debt. They maladministered this state in such a way that we saw money literally poured down the drain in Health with a billion dollars wasted on payroll. Their inability to address the fact that government employee expenses were growing far faster than any other state with diminishing revenues and a growing need to service a debt that was out of control meant that they have left an intergenerational debt issue that simply needed to be addressed.

I acknowledge that, on coming to government, my colleague the honourable member for Clayfield, as Treasurer, received that briefing and, as has been tabled tonight, advice from Treasury. It was a huge challenge. We knew it was not possible to talk about that, but Queenslanders deserved the truth about the situation in Queensland. We knew there had to be tough decisions if we were to avoid lumbering not just the current generation, but also another generation with a situation that would be very difficult to repair. We were honest and released advice that was clear about the need to provide a fiscal repair task for Queensland.

Why is it important that we see a similar fiscal status report released to the parliament, which this government should have released if they are anywhere near pretending to be competent? Why is it important that it is released today? Because we know that Treasury's advice was that it was important to adopt a fiscal balance rather than a weaker operating surplus.

Labor has learnt nothing after three years in opposition. Its members had a chance to reform the way Labor did business, but unfortunately they reformed nothing, they have learnt nothing and they are on a path to create an even worse situation than the one they left this parliament, this government and this state of Queensland with when we came to power.

**Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise this evening to oppose this notice of motion. In doing so, I say that what we see here this evening is yet another stitch-up of the shadow Treasurer, the member for Surfers Paradise, by the member for Clayfield, who pines for his old portfolio. The member for Surfers Paradise is not having a good day at all. He is not even in the chamber to listen to the debate. Just this morning we saw him tie himself up in knots trying to deny—

**Mr RICKUSS:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** There is a point of order. Pause the clock. I call the member for Lockyer.

**Mr RICKUSS:** I rise to a point of order. It is unparliamentary to refer to people's absences from the chamber.

**Mr FURNER:** I am reflecting on him, but not—

**Mr SPEAKER:** It is unparliamentary to refer to a member's absence.

**Mr FURNER:** I withdraw. The member for Surfers Paradise is not having a good day all around. Just this morning we saw him tie himself up in knots trying to deny verified, independent and longstanding data from Treasury. Data that the member for Clayfield himself stated is the acceptable measure is now being ignored by the current shadow Treasurer, the member for Clayfield. He was trying to claim that black was white despite all evidence to the contrary. This motion is yet—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. What is your point of order, member for Clayfield?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I rise to a point of order. The member has incorrectly referred to me as the shadow Treasurer. If he wants to get his story right, he should do so and refer to the member for Surfers Paradise as the shadow Treasurer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the member.

**Mr FURNER:** This motion is yet another misstep by the member for Surfers Paradise because, as we have heard already, the brief they are calling for does not even exist. It does not exist just like the concocted need to sell our income-generating assets did not exist. The brief does not even exist, just like the trumped up basis of their Commission of Audit did not exist. Rather than asking the government for briefs that did not exist, the member for Surfers Paradise should have been paying attention when he sat around at the cabinet table. The member should have been paying attention when he agreed to spend \$70 million of taxpayer funds—potentially going up to \$250 million—on preparatory work to sell assets. Maybe the member wants a brief on fiscal—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Chatsworth, I give you notice that if you persist to interject, I will make a ruling under standing order 253A. I call the member.


**Mr FURNER:** Maybe the member wants a brief on fiscal repair because his side does not have a plan of their own. Slashing jobs, cutting services and selling assets is not a plan at all.

Honourable members can see from the figures released today that, under the LNP, Queensland's gross state product declined by 0.6 per cent in the last three years of 2014 following a 0.2 per cent contraction in the previous three months. The decline of 0.6 per cent under the LNP is the largest drop in the 30 years in which Treasury has been compiling this data.

When it comes to fiscal repair and economic competence those opposite do not have the ticker; they never have and never will. The member for Clayfield thought he had a magic bullet called asset sales, but the people of Queensland thought otherwise. In stark contrast, we will present an honest budget with honest fiscal principles and we will restore economic confidence and economic growth in Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government is adhering to five fiscal principles for the responsible and measured management of the state's finances which were clearly articulated before the election: (1) maintain a general government sector net operating surplus over the economic cycle;

(2) pay down general government sector debt by \$5.4 billion over six years with a target of paying down \$12 billion of general government debt over 10 years; (3) borrowing in the general government sector will be strictly managed for new infrastructure so as to be serviced with a general government net operating surplus target while also ensuring a constant flow of works to support jobs and the economy and mitigate against a backlog of necessary works emerging; (4) maintain competitive taxation by ensuring the government general sector's own service revenue remains at or below 8.5 per cent of nominal gross state product on average over the forward estimates; (5) targeting full funding of long-term liabilities such as superannuation and WorkCover in accordance with actuarial advice.

We have the measures and we have the responsible plan for the management of the state's finances. We will promote growth and economic opportunities and we will be the powerhouse of this nation, unlike those opposite who are inept and incompetent and who failed in their roles—unlike those opposite, who ask for briefs that do not exist and have no plan for the Queensland economy. That is why they lost government! That is why they are sitting on that side of the chamber this evening! That is why they were thrown out!

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (6.21 pm): I have to say that the Australian Senate's loss has certainly not been our gain. If that is the best they can do, it is no wonder they got rid of him from the Senate. It is like being done over by a wet lettuce leaf. I would like to acknowledge the former member for Pumicestone, who is here in the chamber tonight to enjoy the debate.

We have seen a couple of performances from those on the other side today, and no doubt we will hear and see something from the Treasurer himself as well. It will no doubt be a performance that will be thick on spin and thin on substance—a bit like the Treasurer's performance in question time on Tuesday and a bit like his performance in question time today. Let me deal with that straightaway, because the Treasurer came in here to deliberately strike fear into the hearts of Queenslanders and Queensland businesses with his irresponsible and unfounded claims this morning. They reveal a Treasurer who either does not understand the economic figures he has been presented with or, even worse, he does understand and does not care.

The Treasurer has cherrypicked through some theoretical figures to claim that the Queensland economy is in recession and to talk down Queensland, which is exactly what he claims he does not want to do. What is worse is that he did not need to. It was only done to score cheap political points and not out of any sense of concern for Queenslanders. We saw that on the news tonight when we heard people from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland saying that the figures were being used for political purposes. They said that there is no need to talk down the Queensland economy and that talk of a recession is unfounded.


After his two sterling performances this week, I wonder whether we will see the Treasurer out again on Friday. He thought he was a magician on Tuesday, and that went so well that he was bottled up by the Premier's media team on Wednesday. Then they let him out again today and what has he done? He has scored an even more monumental home goal; self-immolation on a grand scale. Without a shred of evidence he has done exactly what he claimed others were doing: struck fear into the hearts of Queensland businesses and Queenslanders by talking down the economy. Given the Treasurer's recent performance I think we will need a motion in this place calling for him to come out before too much longer, because he will be bottled up by those over there because of his monumental missteps.

As we look at what this Treasurer is talking about, we also need to look at what the figures are. This morning he talked about the state accounts and the state figures, and the member for Surfers Paradise has spoken about the disclaimer that Treasury puts there. He has been looking at something called chain volume measurements for the last two quarters, and it is worth pointing out that those measures do not reflect the actual price that businesses pay for their goods—what a surprise! It is an economic technique to measure changes in quantities between periods by fixing prices. In the real world, what you pay for something in today's dollars matters. That is the price. Try going to your local fruit shop and buying bananas using a chain volume measure. You will not get too many bananas for that. You would effectively be asking to pay the price of a banana from sometime in the past; not the price of it today. The fruit shop owner will tell you, 'I pay my suppliers based on today's figures, I pay my employees' wages based on today's figures, and I pay my bills on today's prices.'

If we look at today's prices, what do we find? Looking at the trend series, the seasonally adjusted series or the original series, using current prices we would see that Queensland's economy actually grew over the last two quarters. The trend measures for current prices show that the economy grew by 0.5 per cent in the December quarter and 0.5 per cent in the September quarter. Seasonally adjusted figures show that growth was 0.8 per cent in both quarters over the same period. There is no recession here; just a Treasurer intent on talking down the Queensland economy and destroying jobs.

Why will he not now release the incoming government brief relating to the fiscal repair task? Why will he not stand up and say what Queensland Treasury thinks about the five fiscal principles that he spoke about before the election? Why will he not release the advice about whether they think a return to an operating surplus rather than the fiscal surplus is worthwhile? Why will he not release the advice that talks about retaining expenses growth below revenue growth? Why will he not release the advice that says his plan is a failed plan; that \$450 million in revenue has already been wiped out by the Australian Energy Regulator and another \$650 million will go? The challenge is for him to release—

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (6.26 pm): I am glad we finally heard the words fiscal repair used sometime in that diatribe by the member opposite because frankly, Mr Speaker, he coined the phrase. Fiscal repair task was introduced into the lexicon of conversation here in Queensland in his first budget in 2012, which was the same budget that he outsourced to Peter Costello. What we are hearing tonight with the tabling of the document—and we have heard it from the member for Stafford, the Minister for State Development—is three years too late. If they were serious about being open and accountable, they would have done it at that stage.

They are being absolutely hypocritical when it comes to these matters. Timing is clearly absolutely everything in politics. What we know is that the member for Clayfield woke up on Saturday morning, 31 January, expecting Campbell Newman to lose his seat and expecting to be the Premier that night. It did not quite work out, and now he is upset because he is not the shadow Treasurer. So he has not had a good couple of months, and very clearly this is not where he wants to be. The LNP's hypocrisy is beyond belief. They did everything they could while in government to avoid scrutiny. When the LNP came into government they delayed the budget until September. They scrapped the annual economic review. They hid reporting on the Queensland state accounts when the economy was tanking under their mismanagement, and that is the most important point. Today we are releasing the state accounts—which is something that they failed to do because they did not want scrutiny—and we are being up-front with Queenslanders about the situation. The most disappointing thing is that over their entire time in government they have not been up-front at all. Now that they are in opposition they are being holier than thou on how information is treated and who should be given what and at what time. It is absolute hypocrisy.

They only released fiscal tables and state accounts on the Treasury website because we badgered them about it for so long. They finally did it at a time of their choosing and tried to hide it. We are being up-front with Queenslanders and telling people about this right up-front, and that is what should be happening. Frankly, they have had their go; we can have our go now. We have heard from them today.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** You are back in your seat. That is very good, member for Clayfield. Mr Speaker, I will return to the motion. At least I will deal with it in the first two minutes rather than the last 30 seconds. We know that the words 'fiscal repair task' were a product of the member for Clayfield. It is an expression that he used. It must have focus group tested well. The advice is that there is no incoming government brief called fiscal repair task.

Under the guise of fiscal repair the member for Clayfield set up special units within Treasury that were each designed to sack public servants. That is what the fiscal repair task meant to those opposite. It was all about employee expenses growth being limited. That was code for sacking—and this from the same people who said that public servants had nothing to fear!

I have been accused of a few things before but to be accused by those opposite of talking down the Queensland economy when presenting the facts about what is happening in Queensland is absolutely amazing. This is from those opposite, led in government by Campbell Newman, who compared Queensland to Spain. He said that Queensland was the Spain of Australian states. If that is

not talking down the Queensland economy I do not know what is. Then he said that we were on a power dive into the abyss. All of this had nothing to do with anything except a narrative to destroy the Labor Party's credibility. That is clearly what they aimed to do and they failed, because people have recognised that they did not take the advice they should have taken.

It should come as no surprise to those opposite that the independent Treasury does provide incoming government briefs, and of course they do provide comprehensive advice about a range of things including Queensland's fiscal challenges. I remind those opposite that the challenges we face are those they left for us. Our challenges are their challenges. Frankly, today I had to make people aware that the reason they were feeling so bad over the past year, in 2014, related to mismanagement and other factors. We have been up-front about that. If those opposite cared to listen today they would have got it.

There is a longstanding precedent that incoming government briefs are cabinet-in-confidence. It is a privilege that is attached to these cabinet documents that allows governments to make decisions. It is not dissimilar to the privilege we as members of parliament have in terms of what we have in our electorate offices. Frankly, do you expect us to release everything that comes into our electorate offices? We have to make decisions and that is how it is done.

In 2012 the member for Clayfield was keen to use the precedent of not releasing sensitive government information yet tonight he wants us to release it, egging on the member for Surfers Paradise. It is very, very sad. What we know is that hypocrisy is what the LNP stands for. Very sadly, that is why we see the current situation of LNP members sitting in opposition, talking about a plan that Queenslanders rejected.

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

**AYES, 42:**

**LNP, 42**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Walker, Watts, Weir.

**NOES, 44:**

**ALP, 43**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Pyne, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 1**—Gordon.

Resolved in the negative.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Mr HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.37 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 2 June 2015.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.38 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

## Gold Coast, Party Houses

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.38 pm): I rise in this House tonight with positive news for the Mermaid Beach electorate and indeed the Gold Coast with the adoption of the Temporary Local Planning Instrument No. 1 (Party houses) 2015 by the Gold Coast City Council. This issue has been long standing and was one of the most disturbing activities for the usually peaceful communities within my electorate—communities such as Broadbeach Waters, Mermaid Waters and Clear Island Waters, which have experienced unruly and unacceptable behaviour on a regular basis for far too long.


As everyone in my constituency is aware I have campaigned long and hard for this legislation, and I am proud to announce that the party is now over with the implementation enabling the Gold Coast City Council to enforce the TLPI from Monday, 18 May. We now have an opportunity to eradicate and stop these unapproved short-term letting businesses in residential areas for good. These party houses have been impacting our residents for years, and a solution in the best interests of suffering communities was needed.

The introduction of these clear legislative changes giving powers to local councils to enforce restrictions on short-term holiday letting in residential areas is already having an effect. I have had several constituents contact my office telling me how pleased they are by the news and that there is already noticeable change to their neighbourhoods with the long-term leasing of several homes rather than the short-term party house letting.

This important state legislation empowering councils such as Gold Coast City Council was developed by the LNP in government and shows how positive outcomes can be achieved with cooperation, hard work and empathy for the citizens of Queensland doing the right thing. I now call on the Palaszczuk government to ensure that the party stays over by working with our local government to further develop the proposed TLPI for the Gold Coast City Plan 2015. Mayor Tom Tate has been a beacon of moral fortitude in relation to this issue, and I cannot thank him enough for his rapid and decisive approach to the party house problem. Councillor Paul Taylor has also been a great supporter of this solution to a nagging problem in his electorate since his election in 2012, and I hope to see his good work for the constituency continue beyond 2016.


Lastly, as this will probably be my last speech on the party house legislation, I would like to place on record my genuine thanks to former premier Campbell Newman, without whose unflinching support and determination to eradicate the unacceptable behavioural issues associated with these party houses I would not have had the imprimatur to achieve an outcome of the implementation of legislation through this House to fix the problem. 'Can-do' Campbell did fix the party houses, and he was ably assisted by his minister in charge of planning, Jeff Seeney, who overcame the bureaucratic claptrap of naysayers to make the party house legislation a reality. It is the same strong, committed governance we need from the Palaszczuk government.

### **State of Origin; Ethics Committee, Report**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (6.41 pm): It is that time of year when people from Queensland and people from New South Wales don their true colours and proudly declare their state of origin. From schools to workplaces, in family homes and sporting teams, our competitive spirit is again sparked by a fierce but friendly rivalry. State of Origin is the biggest rivalry in Rugby League. The Queensland Maroons will take on the New South Wales Blues at ANZ Stadium next Wednesday night in game 1 of the 2015 series. The second game will be held at the MCG on 17 June and the possible decider will be held at Suncorp Stadium here in Queensland on 8 July in front of an expected sell-out 50,000-strong crowd which will bring millions of dollars to the local economy. In keeping with the tradition of state against state, Premier against Premier, yesterday afternoon Premier Mike Baird lay down this year's challenge: the Premier of the losing state will wear the rival's jersey and colours during question time in parliament. I am sure all Queenslanders and members in this House will agree: Mike Baird will look very good in maroon! I look forward to this year's State of Origin and I am sure that our boys will do us proud.

On another matter, I note the tabling of report No. 154 of the Ethics Committee which found that I did not intend to mislead the House in my budget reply speech on 5 June 2014 as Leader of the Opposition and recommended that the House take no further action. The committee did recommend, however, that I reiterate the clarifying statements that I made to the former committee. I am more than happy to do so. My reference to massive cuts to education funding referred to state contributions and in real terms a cut of \$25 million. My reference to teachers losing their jobs was a reference to teacher librarians and TAFE teachers.

### **Noosa Electorate, Election Commitments**

 **Mr ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (6.43 pm): Since the election of the new Labor government on 31 January, a number of Noosa residents have talked to me about the fulfilment of commitments that I gave during the lead-up to the election. The stand-out for me and my electorate would have been the establishment of a fund that would have allowed the state government and the Noosa Council in


partnership to clean up the Noosa River and maintain it as South-East Queensland's cleanest waterway. Given the election outcome, I will now be looking to achieve this essential project for my community through other means. However, there are some individuals and groups in the community who, while fully understanding the political system but acting through political motivation, pushed the line that an undertaking given by a candidate or a member can be fulfilled even though the political party that the candidate or member belongs to has not been able to form government. I therefore question the commitments given by candidates who were not elected but whose party is now in government as to why there should not be a call on fulfilling those election commitments.

Given that today the Labor Party is in power and has control of the Treasury, the election commitments made, particularly those announced by either the leader and now Premier or officially ticked off by party headquarters, should be fulfilled. I therefore draw the parliament's attention to a number of announcements made by the Labor candidate for Noosa on behalf of those seated opposite. Firstly, there was an announcement made in Noosa by the now Premier in July 2014 that the communities of Eumundi, Doonan and Verrierdale deserve a say in deciding whether their future is with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council or with the Noosa Council. Then there was a significant and statewide announcement made in January of this year with regard to the future of our TAFE colleges and the case of the Tewantin-Noosa facility, which would be reopened with an emphasis on job creation. There was also the future of the Noosa Hospital, and tonight I recognise the meeting I had with the health minister in that regard. The 2014 *Queensland Labor state policy platform* at page 60 under the heading 'Freight' at section 7.76 states—

Labor will develop and publish a plan for the progressive priority upgrade of the North Coast Rail Line to improve safety, efficiency and reliability.

I agree with the three local commitments made by the Noosa candidate, as I campaigned on them as well. I also agree with Labor's policy on the upgrade of the north coast railway. On behalf of the people of Noosa, I am now looking to collect on the promises made by the government during the election campaign and I particularly go back to my earlier comments on the Noosa River. I have already begun to write, ask questions and I am seeking appointments with the relevant ministers on these important undertakings. It is my intention to work progressively and collaboratively with the ministers concerned to achieve a worthwhile outcome for the people of Noosa.

### Townsville, Search for Missing Children


 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.46 pm): Today I rise to report the details of a search conducted on the weekend of two young children who went missing at approximately four o'clock on Saturday, 16 May 2015. On that Saturday in a local street in Wulguru five-year-old Tim Carter went next door to play with his six-year-old friend Nicholas Baxter—or so his mother thought. Any parent in this state of ours would be immediately filled with fear, anxiety and nervousness as it was discovered that both boys had wandered off. The parents and neighbours went immediately in search of these two adventurous boys. At 6 pm on Saturday their worst fears were realised that these two young boys were indeed missing and contact with the QPS was made. Under the guidance of Acting Inspector Chris Lawson of the Queensland Police Service in Townsville, a land search operation was immediately coordinated of the last known location of the boys. Assistance was sought from the SES and Queensland government aircraft, including helicopters from the Townsville base, Cairns and Mackay. Fifteen SES personnel were on the ground within an hour of notification and commenced searching, and the helicopters were able to assist immediately. The boys were unable to be located during the evening and overnight and, as such, the search was scaled up on Sunday when a request was made for ADF staff to assist. I am pleased to report that one of the fastest approvals was acquired by the ADF in Canberra that Sunday morning. Subsequently, over 100 Army personnel were deployed to assist in search operations.

Townsville enjoys a close relationship with the ADF and this was on display on Sunday, as it was indeed ADF personnel who eventually found the boys. Brigadier Roger Noble should be acknowledged for what was an outstanding and professional response from soldiers at Lavarack Barracks. As the search operations ramped up, over 45 SES personnel were on the ground during Sunday. Well done to each of them for their outstanding efforts. Indeed, many locals volunteered their own time in search of the boys, including one on horseback. Locals arrived donating food and water throughout the day. They, too, should be acknowledged and thanked by this government.

Having been involved in many searches as a flight paramedic over the years, I am acutely aware of the challenges of coordinating and the logistics required to conduct such search operations. Over 180 volunteers from numerous agencies were involved and whilst I would like to name all of them time is limited. However, I am very happy to report that on Sunday at 1345 the two boys were located by ADF Gunners Ben Morrison and Jason Goldsmith along with Major Mick Cook.

The Townsville community should feel safe in the knowledge that when called upon our communities, emergency services and ADF can come together, and this outcome clearly demonstrates this. In the brief that I received from the acting inspector, I would like to place on record the outstanding work of land search and rescue coordinators Sergeant Matthew Pegg, Senior Constable Jason Jesse and Acting Sergeant Matthew Dixon, who worked all Saturday and Sunday preparing search patterns and coordinating. Well done!

### Redlands Electorate, Road Infrastructure

 **Mr McEACHAN** (Redlands—LNP) (6.49 pm): I rise tonight to talk about one of the key issues facing the people of the Redlands electorate and that is traffic congestion. The Redlands electorate is accessible only by road and, as such, traffic congestion is one of the biggest local issues in my community. Fighting for investment in improving our road network was an important part of my election campaign. I am pleased to report to the House that critical works are currently underway at the intersection of Mount Cotton Road and Double Jump Road. This intersection has long been a dangerous part of the road network. The resultant upgrade will provide a safer road environment for locals and tourists alike.

During the recent election campaign I fought for funding for the upgrade to dual lanes of the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road from Magnolia Parade south to Double Jump Road. Indeed, if re-elected, an LNP government committed to this upgrade. This upgrade is vital, with Cleveland-Redland Bay Road congested at peak times, affecting mums and dads ferrying their kids to school, islanders heading to the mainland for their weekly shop and those 70 per cent of people who commute outside the electorate for work.

As we are all acutely aware, we now have a Labor government, which made no such commitment to reducing traffic congestion on these vital local roads. Immediately following the change of government I undertook to highlight the need for road investment in the Redlands electorate. On 27 February I wrote to the Minister for Main Roads urging the LNP commitment to be matched by Labor. I table that correspondence.


*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated, 27 February 2015, from the member for Redlands, Mr Matt McEachan MP, to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, regarding the Cleveland Redland Bay Road [\[454\]](#).

Thereafter, on 31 March I contacted the minister, again urging him to meet with me while he was in the electorate and enjoying the hospitality of the residents of Coochiemudlo Island. Again, there was not a peep from the minister. To date, nearly three months later, what we have heard from Labor is deafening silence. It is disappointing.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 31 March 2015, from the member for Redlands, Mr Matt McEachan MP, to the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, requesting a meeting regarding the Cleveland Redland Bay Road [\[455\]](#).

I remain available to meet with the minister at any time to discuss the road infrastructure needs of Redlands. The people of Redlands need and deserve this upgrade. I again urge the Labor government to commit to the upgrade of Cleveland-Redland Bay Road.

### North Queensland Cowboys

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.51 pm): I rise to inform the House of a civil war that occurred last Friday night. It was bigger than state versus state. It was bigger than mate versus mate. It was the north versus the south. It was brother versus brother as the North Queensland Cowboys took on the Brisbane Broncos.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr STEWART:** This was the biggest game of the year. Over 25,000 people attended the game that evening. They travelled from as far away as Cooktown to the north, Sarina to the south and as far west as Mount Isa. People travelled from all over North Queensland to come to this particular game. They brought their families with them, and what a great night it was, too. Such a game brings

confidence to the town. The week leading up to it is bigger than Ben Hur. It is bigger than State of Origin. You can see that throughout the town. People wear their jerseys and fly the colours of the team that they support. It is great to see. This game is really important for a city such as Townsville. Currently, we have 8.7 per cent unemployment and youth unemployment is over 17 per cent. So when the game comes to town, this is a little bit of light relief.


The final score, of course, ended up being for the good guys: 31 to 20 to the North Queensland Cowboys. I will answer and acknowledge the member who asked what the overall scenario was. We have had 37 Cowboys versus Broncos games and of those 37 games the older brothers, the Broncos, have won 26 of them. The Cowboys have now won nine games and there have been two draws. But the most significant factor is that it took the Cowboys 17 games to win their first Cowboys versus Broncos game. I remember that game. It took 10 years, but the score was 10 nil. So that really shows how much the Cowboys have matured.

On the Saturday night we then had the 20-year anniversary of the Cowboys in Townsville. It was amazing to see some of that vision of the old trotting track and how people came along and volunteered their machinery and hundreds and hundreds of hours to make sure that that vision would become a reality. The 1300SMILES Stadium that we have now is the home of the North Queensland Cowboys.

The North Queensland Cowboys is more than just a football team. It brings economic benefits to the city. Investment and confidence grows from North Queensland Cowboys games and a sense of unity is developed in the community, something of which all of us in North Queensland are very proud.

Unfortunately, the federal government is not coming to the party. The Labor government has committed \$100 million over four years to see a new stadium built in the CBD, but the federal government is all talk and no action. It talks about developing the north of Australia, but it is not backing it up with the money.


### **Chant, Mrs I; Youngcare**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.53 pm): Recently, I had the privilege of attending the 105th birthday of Mrs Ivy Chant, a resident of the Ningana nursing home in Dalby. Ivy was surrounded by her loving family, friends and nursing staff as she celebrated this special occasion. When I looked around Ningana, I could understand why Ivy felt so happy there.

Unfortunately, that is not the case for the over 7,000 young people who are currently living in aged-care facilities, because the alternatives are few and far between. In 2005 the organisation Youngcare was formed out of the need for a young husband to place his wife, Shevaune, in full-time care when her multiple sclerosis worsened. In 2007 David Conry, with the help of friends and the support of business, government and the community, raised funds to open the first one-bedroom apartment facility at Sinnamon Park in Brisbane. Shevaune lived at that facility with 15 other residents until her passing in 2012 at the age of just 40.

Youngcare has now opened two more facilities in Brisbane and Coomera, with one due to open in Sydney in 2016. Griffith University and Youngcare have partnered to create best practice living spaces that are designed specifically for young people with brain injuries or degenerative diseases like multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease. They have joined with big and small businesses to continue raising funds and have well-known ambassadors promoting the awareness of Youngcare and the service that it offers. This wonderful organisation is providing our young people in need of special care with a place to live independently and with dignity. The work that Youngcare does should be applauded and supported by us all.

### **Youngcare; Australian Marine Conservation Society**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (6.56 pm): Let me firstly commend the member for Condamine for his contribution. Youngcare really is an incredible group and David Conry is an inspirational man.

Earlier today the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services spoke about an important anniversary, the five-year anniversary of Policelink. I rise to inform the House of another anniversary worthy of celebration. This year, the Australian Marine

Conservation Society celebrates its 50th anniversary. For 50 years AMCS has been the voice of Australia's ocean wildlife. Members will most likely recognise the work of AMCS through its Fight for the Reef campaign. In partnership with WWF, AMCS campaigners and members have worked with energy and passion to educate the public about the risks faced by the Great Barrier Reef and the need for strong government action to protect it.


**Mr Rickuss:** Is that myths or risks?

**Dr MILES:** That is the risks. But honourable members may not know that AMCS members have been fighting to protect the reef since the 1960s. AMCS members successfully campaigned against a proposal to mine limestone on the Great Barrier Reef in the 1960s. They have also been central to public campaigns that saw the reef protected as a marine park in 1974, recognised for its outstanding universal value as a World Heritage area in 1982 and further enhanced through the establishment of green zones in 2004. These are achievements that span generations and their impact will be felt for generations to come.

We on this side of the House recognise the valuable role that environmental organisations and conservation groups play in our public and community life. It is worrying to see the way in which these groups are coming under attack. During the term of the previous government, we saw the use of gag clauses to try to stifle the voice of the non-government sector. Now, the federal government is trying to silence environmental groups. In a thinly veiled, cynical attempt to limit the ability of these groups to speak out on issues of public importance, the federal government has launched a parliamentary inquiry in an attempt to take away these groups' tax deductibility status.

The Palaszczuk government values the role and the voice of all of these environmental and civil society groups, which are such an important part of the fabric of our democracy. I will be joining AMCS members to celebrate their 50th anniversary tomorrow night. On behalf the Great Barrier Reef and all of the other marine habitats AMCS members have championed over years, I will toast AMCS as being the voice of Australia's ocean wildlife for many years to come.

### **Lockyer State High School; Comments by Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines**

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.59 pm): I rise to congratulate high school leaders from Lockyer District High School and their year 12 coordinator, Dave Fuller. Elijah Kugel and Bridget Scanlan were the captains and Lachlan Miners and Stella Echentille were the vice-captains. They are a great group of young students from the Lockyer. It gives me great joy to bring down to Parliament House school leaders and I have done it most years that I have been a member. They enjoy the day. They enjoy question time. I explain to them that is the time when we mostly disagree. We all agree on legislation to provide safe school buses and all in the House would agree we need to stop 17-year-olds killing themselves on our roads. Most of the debate at question time is how we are spending the money. I do enjoy having the high school captains from my area come down.

I am a bit disappointed in Dr Lynham. Unfortunately yesterday he misled the House when he said he would like to thank the member for Mackay, and what a wonderful place in North Queensland it is, this year celebrating 100 years of continuous Labor representation. I beg to differ. The Hon. Edmund Denis Casey was an Independent from May 1972 until March 1977. Do members know why? Because those opposite chucked him out.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I think you would appreciate that the member for Lockyer has an opportunity to make claims about misrepresentations through the proper forums of writing to you and I suggest he is being mischievous about this claim as we do know that Mr Casey, the former member for Mackay, was certainly an independent Labor member and he described himself as such.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No point of order, Leader of the House.

**Mr RICKUSS:** I did offer Dr Lynham the opportunity to come into the parliament and correct the record. Unfortunately he did not do that. I feel it is my responsibility as a responsible member of parliament to correct the record for him. I table a page from the Queensland parliament website which states that the Hon. Edmund Casey represented Mackay as an Independent from 27 May 1972 to 7 March 1977.

*Tabled paper:* Former members biography, Queensland parliament, Mr Casey, Hon. Edmund Denis (Ed) [\[456\]](#).

I must admit that I was pointing this out to the member when I was penalised for interjecting the other day. It was only a minor issue and I beg the Speaker's indulgence on that subject. I am not criticising at all, but I was just pointing that out to the member when I was asked to exit the chamber.


**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr RICKUSS:** I felt it needed to be corrected. I think he had the opportunity. I respect the chair so I gracefully retired from the chamber when I was asked to.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. One moment, please, member for Lockyer. I know you are excited. I was going to ask the Leader of the House, the member for Stafford, to allow the member for Lockyer to speak.

**Mr RICKUSS:** They have been harassing me most of the day. All I can say is that I am disappointed in the good doctor that he did not come and correct the record because Ed was an Independent for a long period. They chucked him out. Then they only had 10 and they needed a cricket team so they asked him to come back. He ended up captain of the cricket team at one stage, if I remember rightly. We have to be truthful in this House.

### South-East Queensland, Severe Weather Event

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (7.03 pm): I rise tonight to speak about the recent South-East Queensland storms that ravaged parts of our state. In particular I would like to speak about the effects those storms had on the Woodridge electorate. On Friday, 1 May wild weather swept through the south-east of Queensland tragically taking the lives of five people. Communities across the south-east were drenched with up to 100 millimetres, or four inches on the old scale, of rain in an hour causing massive traffic delays and flooding the homes of hundreds of people.

These storms affected many people within the electorate of Woodridge. Nearly 1.7 metres of water rushed through a number of homes in the Woodridge electorate damaging fridges, washing machines, barbecues, family cars and bedding. Precious family photo albums and books were also lost as a result of the flash flooding. On Friday, 15 May I doorknocked a number of residents and families in the storm affected areas of the Woodridge electorate, including homes in Tamarind Street and Kurrajong Drive, Marsden. I visited Mrs Michelle Featherstone and Mrs Norris Ramos who both lost a large number of their household possessions. They were very distressed over losing priceless family heirlooms and photo albums due to flooding. They both also had to undertake a huge amount of work to remove destroyed property from their houses and clean up the mud and debris that enveloped their yards. One ray of light for Mrs Ramos was the survival of her pet chihuahua, Killer, who managed to escape the storm unscathed.

Two other residents who were severely affected by the storm included Mrs Peta Martin and Mrs Layla Issa. Peta was without hot water for more than four days, having to use a kettle to make a warm bath for her children, while Layla lost her washing machine, making it impossible to provide clean clothes for her children.

Ours is a strong and resilient community. The individuals and families I have mentioned today are courageous and determined. They are fighting back, as Woodridge always does. The department of communities has provided important assistance to these storm affected families. A community recovery hub at Marsden scout hall was set up to provide relief and support to residents. I dropped into the hub last Friday where I saw firsthand the vital work being undertaken by the staff and volunteers for storm affected residents. I would like to thank Mr Patrick Sherry from the department of communities, who was the officer managing the recovery effort in Marsden, as well as all the staff and volunteers from the department, the Red Cross, Lifeline, as well as my mighty electorate office team, Kylie and Peter, who continue to work to help our community through this recovery.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.06 pm.

**ATTENDANCE**

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams