



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Thursday, 23 February 2023

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## THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Absence of Member



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Coomera, Michael Crandon MP, that he will be absent from this week's sittings of the House. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

### REPORTS

#### Auditor-General



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General Report 9: 2022-23—*Protecting our threatened animals and plants*. I table the report for the information of members.

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General Report 9: 2022-23—Protecting our threatened animals and plants [\[186\]](#).

#### Office of the Speaker



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I lay upon the table of the House the *Statement for public disclosure: expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022*.

*Tabled paper:* Statement for Public Disclosure: Expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022 [\[187\]](#).

### SPEAKER'S RULING

#### Same Question Rule




**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the government has circulated amendments proposed to be moved to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Government amendment No. 2 seeks to amend section 291 of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 to enable certain mineral mining leases to benefit from a rent deferral. I note that section 291 of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 was inserted by the Coal Mining Safety and Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022 which was passed in the same session of this parliament.

Standing order 87 provides that, once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative, the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session. Standing order 150 provides that no amendment shall be moved which is inconsistent with one already agreed to by the House.


Government amendment No. 2 proposes amendments to provisions that are inconsistent with amendments previously considered and agreed to by the House in the same session of parliament. This is contrary to standing orders 87 and 150. Accordingly, I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by government amendment No. 2. A motion to suspend standing orders 87 and 150 would be required for this amendment to be considered by the House.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### Ukraine

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, tomorrow marks one year since Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia was a shock to the peace and stability of democracies worldwide. In a symbolic show of solidarity with Ukraine on the first anniversary of the invasion, tomorrow night Parliament House will be lit blue and yellow. A year on, the Queensland community remains united in condemning this brutal invasion. We stand with Ukraine.

### School Group Tour

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Mango Hill State School in the electorate of Murrumba.

## PETITIONS

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

### Gin Gin, Driver Reviver

**Mr Head**, from 381 petitioners, requesting the House to allow the Queensland Country Women's Association's Gin Gin Branch, and other supporting volunteers, provide a Driver Reviver service to the town of Gin Gin [[188](#)].

### Tara Hospital, Redevelopment

**Ms Leahy**, from 51 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure proper community consultation in relation to the Tara Hospital redevelopment [[189](#)].

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[190](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by Her Excellency the Governor, viz—

### **Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022**

Amendments made to Bill

#### **Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

'Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

*Insert—*

'Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Hon. Dr Miles)—

[191](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 32, 57th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General reports on the local government sector, government response

Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs (Hon. Scanlon)—

[192](#) Annual report on the administration of the Environmental Protection Act 1994—1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022


[193](#) Annual report on the administration of the Marine Parks Act 2004—1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

[194](#) Annual report on the administration of the Nature Conservation Act 1992—1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

[195](#) Queensland Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner—Annual Report 2021-22

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Floods, Recovery

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.35 am): 22 February, 2022 is a date few of us will forget. That night, heavy rain began falling between Gympie and the Sunshine Coast. As we know, it just did not stop. Two-thirds of our annual rainfall fell in just a matter of days—monsoonal, torrential, unrelenting rain. Seven cities and 23 local council areas were affected. They included: Maryborough, Gympie, the Gold and Sunshine coasts as well as the Darling Downs. In six days, 792.8 millimetres of rain fell in Brisbane alone, 137 millimetres more than in 1974. This is the highest six-day figure ever recorded. A further 56 locations received more than 1,000 millimetres. Thirteen people lost their lives, including SES volunteer Merryll Dray who died trying to save others. That is what happened to us a year ago, but it is how this state responded that shows the strength and resilience that makes us proud to call ourselves Queenslanders.


Queensland has more heroes than it can count. As the water rose, neighbours turned lifesavers. I met Paul Edwards who was saved from his home in Ashgrove. Paul, his wife and three neighbours suddenly found their houses surrounded by raging torrents like rapids in the middle of a river. A swiftwater rescue team pulled them through windows and off their roofs to save their lives. I am pleased to inform the House that the efforts of those involved will be formally recognised at an award ceremony next month. There are no words to express the respect, admiration and gratitude we owe to our first responders, police, fire and paramedics. State Emergency Service volunteers—and I stress that these are volunteers—answered 13,685 calls for help. All of them are heroes.

As part of our flood response, the Department of Communities and Housing established 23 community recovery hubs directly in the neighbourhoods worst affected by the floods. More than \$35.8 million in personal hardship assistance for food, clothing and other essentials was provided to more than 111,000 people in need; 7,888 grants of up to \$75,000 for primary producers; and up to \$50,000 for affected small businesses and not-for-profit organisations valued at more than \$127 million have also been approved.


This was by any measure one of the most widespread disasters our state has ever seen. No-one seeks praise for doing what they have to do to help each other out, but I believe some deserve special mention. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority led by Major-General Jake Ellwood, former CEO Brendan Moon and Deputy Premier Steven Miles have done an extraordinary job. The \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund, the first in Australia of its size and scale, has so far identified 540 properties for voluntary home buyback; 365 offers have been presented and 230 have been accepted. It means these home owners will never again feel the fear of hearing rain on their roof. Their properties will be demolished and the land returned to open space. That is in addition to those being built back better, either raised or provided with other improvements to make them more flood resilient. I thank the federal government for partnering with us in this fund.

I would also like to make special mention of Minister Glenn Butcher and the operators of Wivenhoe Dam. As the Inspector-General Emergency Management at Wivenhoe did what it was supposed to do and held back the equivalent of four Sydney Harbours worth of the water, the same weather system that caused our floods moved on to Lismore and Sydney. Many people still suffer from its effects, but a year later it is the strength of Queensland that shines through as it always will.

### Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): Last night parliament passed the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This is an important step in our continued efforts to tackle the scourge of domestic, family and sexual violence and, in particular, coercive control. I thank the Attorney-General, the cabinet and the government and make special mention of Sue and Lloyd Clarke who were here this morning. They are tremendous advocates. We owe them a huge debt for the work they continue to do. We have committed to introducing an offence later in the year, and work is underway to set the groundwork for that.

### Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.39 am): I have some great news for regional Queensland. I am pleased to advise the House that our government will deliver the 117-kilometre Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline to deliver water security and even more jobs in Central Queensland. The pipeline will create new construction jobs—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, please cease your interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The pipeline will create new construction jobs, protect existing jobs and support new jobs in new industries. Nearly \$1 billion will be invested supporting around 400 local construction jobs. Let me say that again: \$1 billion. The pipeline will deliver water security to Gladstone to protect thousands of existing jobs in manufacturing and heavy industries.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I do not know why the member for Nanango is against this \$1 billion investment in regional Queensland. The pipeline will provide the water needed to support new jobs in renewable hydrogen and manufacturing. To make renewable hydrogen we need water alongside renewable energy. That is why this pipeline—


**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you are off to an early start. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is why this pipeline is so important for the future of Gladstone. Major new investment projects in Central Queensland that need access to water include: the Fortescue Future Industries hydrogen electrolyser manufacturing facility; Mitsubishi Gas's proposal for a green methanol plant; the Stanwell-Iwatani Central Queensland hydrogen project; Orica and H2U's proposed green ammonia plant; and Rio Tinto and Sumitomo's proposed hydrogen plant. These projects have the potential to support thousands of new jobs in Central Queensland.

The Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline is expected to be completed in 2026, with an expected capacity of 30 gegalitres of water per annum. The water minister, the member for Gladstone, will tell members more about this critical project soon. We are able to deliver water security with this pipeline because our government backed Rookwood Weir and secured federal funding. The \$367 million Rookwood Weir project has already supported 170 jobs. This is the biggest weir built since the Second World War. Our government will continue to deliver water infrastructure for regional Queensland because that means more good, secure jobs.

### World Mining Congress

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.42 am): There is more good news! From 26 to 29 June this year the World Mining Congress will be held in Australia for the first time here right in Brisbane, Queensland. The World Mining Congress is an opportunity to showcase Queensland to the world. The congress is expected to take over the convention centre and bring over 3,000 delegates, including 200 plus CEOs, from 50 countries to our shores. This is the first time the congress will be held in Australia in its 65-year history.

Queensland has long been the world's largest seaborne exporter of steel-making metallurgical coal. This is a state that prides itself on its long mining history that has underpinned our state's economic development and prosperity. This is a state that prides itself on a mining future providing the resources needed for the clean energy industrial revolution. That includes ongoing demand for steel-making coal to make wind turbines and electric vehicles. As well as critical minerals, Queensland has the copper and bauxite needed for power lines, the vanadium to make grid batteries to store renewable energy, the high-purity alumina to make battery separators and graphite to make anodes for lithium batteries, the cobalt and access to nickel in lithium-ion batteries, and the zinc needed for batteries and wind turbines.


Not only do we have all these resources below the ground, Queensland has the world-leading sunshine and wind energy above the ground to make renewables with renewable energy. Queensland has some of the best scientists and research in the world right here to make it all happen. I do not want to see Queensland just become a major global supplier of vanadium; I want to see flow batteries made




here on our shores, Queensland to become a global supplier of the precursor materials used in lithium batteries and Queensland to mine and process the minerals to manufacture more renewables in Queensland.

The World Mining Congress will shine a light on Queensland and open the investment opportunities to make this happen. I thank the Minister for Resources for helping to sell Queensland and this conference on a recent trade mission. Well done, Minister.

### Mount Isa Day

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.44 am): Today is a special day in our state's history. It is Mount Isa Day. The great city is celebrating its 100th anniversary. I am advised that it is going to be quite a celebration with morning tea at the civic centre and a day and evening of community entertainment. Mount Isa has a rich and vibrant history, and I am sure it has an exciting and even richer future. Today we acknowledge and reflect on its first 100 years. I know this House will join me in wishing Mount Isa and its people a very happy birthday.

### Floods, Recovery

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.45 am): A year ago this week Queensland was hit by one of the nation's worst recorded flood disasters. From Maryborough to the Gold Coast and west to Goondiwindi, the rain bomb hit Queensland first and it hit us hard. Brisbane received 80 per cent of its annual average rainfall in just three days. In Gympie, the Mary River reached heights not seen since the 19th century, peaking at 22.96 metres on 28 February 2022. Hundreds of families lost their homes.


The scale of damage from these disaster events was extraordinary, with homes, businesses, primary producers and community and sporting groups impacted, some of them multiple times. In total, almost 7,000 houses and more than 1,000 commercial properties were damaged. Some 57,000 people were left without power at its peak. Tragically, 13 Queenslanders lost their lives.

Through the rain, the mud and the tragedy, the Queensland spirit was on display—neighbours helping neighbours; mates helping mates. Our disaster and emergency services worked around the clock to keep Queenslanders safe. Energy workers and road workers worked quickly to get the power back on and the roads open. Our swiftwater rescue teams put their lives on the line to rescue Queenslanders from floodwaters. I acknowledge Merryl Dray who lost her own life serving the Queensland community. I want to thank the dam managers. They held back four Sydney Harbours worth of water from smashing its way through the city.

Our nation-leading \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund has seen more than 5,800 registrations for house raising, resilient retrofitting or voluntary home buyback. Some 230 flood-affected home owners have accepted offers through the Voluntary Home Buy-Back Program to date, which will allow these people to move away from the threat of rising floodwaters for good. Beginning last week and continuing through to early March, QRA is conducting its 12-month damage and repair monitoring assessments, checking on homes and commercial buildings still damaged from last year's SEQ floods. More than 2,500 assessments have already been completed. Preliminary data shows that, of the properties visited, almost 47 per cent are no longer damaged. Of the properties still damaged, repair work has commenced on more than 500 of those.

As recovery works keep progressing for these flood events, the Australian and Queensland governments will continue to work together to ensure Queenslanders are always supported, no matter what Mother Nature throws our way. One year on from the South-East Queensland rainfall and flooding event, the Queensland government continues to stand up for impacted communities and for every Queenslanders.

### Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline; World Mining Congress; Trade and Investment


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.48 am): I start this morning by welcoming the Premier's announcement of the new Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. I am especially pleased that \$550 million of the cost of this vital piece of infrastructure will be the first investment into regional Queensland from our new progressive coal royalty tiers. These royalties allow this type of investment to proceed sooner than would otherwise have been possible. We are delivering on our commitment that these new coal royalties are being reinvested in regional Queensland.

I also welcome the news that the Global Mining Congress is coming to Queensland. Since James Nash discovered gold near Gympie in 1867, Queensland has been a mining state. Our high-quality metallurgical coal and new economy minerals, like scandium, cobalt and vanadium, ensure we will be a mining state for many decades to come. We welcome the world's miners to Queensland because we sell Queensland resources to the world.

Queensland's exporters, including miners, are the backbone of our state's economy. In the 2022 calendar year the value of goods exported from Queensland totalled a record breaking \$137.2 billion. That is an increase of more than 70 per cent on the value of calendar year 2021. In 2022 over 42 cents in every dollar of Australian exports came from the Sunshine State. We are continuing to expand and diversify the strength of our exporters through the latest round of our highly successful Go Global Export Program. The fourth round of funding provided critical support for Queenslanders to achieve their export ambitions. Thirty-five businesses shared in \$780,000 in grants to enable them to overcome common export barriers when entering new markets.

When we back Queensland exporters they deliver. Since it was launched by Trade and Investment Queensland in 2020, Go Global has already provided over \$2.8 million in matched funding grants to 137 businesses. That is more than 60 new export deals valued at over \$32 million, supporting more than 80 new export jobs. The Palaszczuk Labor government is investing an extra \$150 million over the next decade to supercharge our 10-year trade and investment strategy. That includes an additional \$5 million for grant programs like Go Global as we surge down the golden runway towards 2032. We want Queensland businesses small and large to export, to expand and to succeed, and Trade and Investment Queensland and our government will be with them every step of the way.

### Local Schools, Local Jobs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.50 am): The Palaszczuk government is delivering the skills students need for the jobs they want through our new \$66 million Local Schools, Local Jobs program which is being driven by the Assistant Minister for Education, the member for Keppel. This election commitment is all about supporting the significant role that schools play in linking up with local industries and ensuring students access skills for well-paid, secure jobs based in their own communities.

Last year I joined the member for Waterford and the member for Woodridge—in fact, we had both treasurers there—to open Mabel Park State High School's new \$28 million cutting-edge STEM precinct, incorporating a \$4 million Local Schools, Local Jobs automotive training facility where students can explore the latest automotive technologies such as solar powered vehicles. We have also delivered a further five projects.


At Longreach State High School in Gregory there has been a \$3.7 million upgrade of the Big Red Truck, which I know the member knows is a fantastic catering facility supporting students to obtain hospitality qualifications with local partnerships including CQU, the Qantas Founders Museum and the Winton Outback Festival. I can say that they made the best coffee when I visited their facility. Dalby State High School in Warrego has a \$3 million refurbishment of the trade training centre, where students are now getting technology and engineering qualifications to help set them up in the local manufacturing industry. Caboolture State High School in Morayfield has a new \$1.7 million specialist health learning centre, and a partnership with TAFE Queensland means that more than 70 students are now undertaking qualifications in a range of health services.

In the electorate of Mulgrave, Bentley Park College has a new \$1.4 million medical training room where 100 students are studying health and science qualifications, linking with hospitals, dentists and Royal Flying Doctor Service. At Moree State High School students have a new \$1 million technology hub and are completing qualifications in robotics, coding and virtual reality programming.

In 2023 we are planning to deliver a further 19 projects, including: a new \$4.6 million agriculture research facility at Rockhampton State High School; a \$3.2 million engineering annex to support training opportunities in the mining, gas and electrical industries at Tara Shire State College; Thuringowa State High School will receive a \$1.7 million refurbished health science facility; and a \$3 million hydrogen hub at Gladstone State High School will complement the approximately \$20 million investment we are making in a new ITD building at the school. It was fantastic to join the minister and member for Gladstone at the school last year to talk about these fantastic projects.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring our schools are places where children can learn and teachers deliver a world-class education in high quality learning environments. We want students to get the skills they need for the good jobs available locally so they can stay in their communities. The member for Keppel and I look forward to visiting many of these schools as these vital projects come to life during the year, and I am sure other members will want to join us.

### Floods, Recovery; Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.54 am): Mr Speaker, I know that you are as excited as I am about the Fitzroy pipeline. It has been a year since the south-east was devastated by floods. Just like those before it, the 2022 floods remain etched in the minds of so many Queenslanders in our community. Despite the widespread damage, we have seen Queenslanders show our best qualities when faced with a crisis, and for that as a member of parliament I am so proud.

I have said it before and I will say it again: we have some of the best people working in our government departments and agencies, including my department and Seqwater here in Brisbane. Across that intense three-day period last February and March, Wivenhoe Dam more than tripled the volume of water being stored and at its peak held back about 2.2 million megalitres of water. As we have heard, that is the equivalent of four Sydney Harbours. Seqwater made steady, controlled releases, and Wivenhoe Dam performed exactly as it is meant to do in that flood event. The fantastic work of our expert dam managers was backed in by the Inspector-General of Emergency Management in his report. It was fantastic to recently catch up with and thank some of those Seqwater staff who went through that weekend. They played critical roles before, during and after that event. Thanks to this forward-thinking Labor government we have the South East Queensland Grid and it, along with connected infrastructure, was absolutely critical during that emergency.


Speaking of forward-thinking Labor governments, today I am proud to back in the Premier's announcement of almost \$1 billion to build a Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. Construction is expected to start very shortly, creating 400 good, local jobs in regional Queensland. This 117-kilometre pipeline will run from the lower Fitzroy River in Rockhampton and connect to the Gladstone Area Water Board's existing water network at Yarwun. This pipeline means that Gladstone will be able to access their water allocation from Rockwood Weir—another legacy project delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. It will also support the emerging hydrogen industry and renewable sector that is rapidly expanding in regional Queensland.

Late last year I stood alongside the highly respected Professor Ross Garnaut as he released the Bradfield report. Two of the key recommendations of that report were to use water closer to where it falls and to develop regional water grids so regions can rely on each other in tough times.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I have long said that we will listen to the experts, not those opposite. What we are doing with this project is something special. We know that water is the lifeblood of regional Queensland, so we are putting our money where our mouth is. We are creating great jobs right now and good jobs into the future because that is exactly what Labor governments do.

### World Mining Congress

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (9.57 am): London, Madrid, Stockholm, Rio de Janeiro and now Queensland. What do they all have in common? No, I am not talking about the Olympic Games. I am talking about one of the world's biggest resource industry events coming to our great state this year. As the Premier has already announced, more than 3,000 delegates, including more than 200 CEOs, will make Brisbane their base in June this year for the World Mining Congress.


For the first time in its 65-year history the World Mining Congress will be held in Australia. It is fitting to stand in this House today, Mount Isa Day, to talk about the importance of the resource sector in the same month as we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the discovery of copper in Queensland. There is no doubt that the sector has evolved since that discovery 100 years ago, but one thing has not changed: the world-class nature of Queensland's resources. Having this prestigious event in Queensland recognises our state's strong global reputation when it comes to our resource sector. It will also showcase the massive potential of our resources industry and our significant deposits of critical minerals, which are becoming increasingly important as the world seeks to decarbonise.

With Queensland front and centre as part of the World Mining Congress, it will showcase not only Brisbane but also our regions, and it will help encourage investment in the industry well into the future. This four-day event is expected to generate up to \$20 million in economic benefit for Queensland as delegates converge on the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

On my trade mission to the United Kingdom, investors had their eyes on Australia's critical minerals and it was my job to emphasise the opportunities that exist in Queensland—with high volumes of critical minerals such as vanadium, cobalt and copper, just to name a few. Next month a delegation from the Department of Resources will head to the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada conference in Toronto to again put Queensland's resources on the world stage, where there will be thousands of potential investors. That is what the World Mining Congress will do later this year—all eyes will be focused on the opportunities for investment in our resources industry.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to support the resources sector for the royalties and jobs it generates, particularly in regional Queensland. The resources industry directly supports 77,000 jobs across the state, particularly in the regions, which accounts for about two-thirds of all mining jobs. So put on your high-vis, lace up your steelcap boots and get ready as Queensland becomes the centre of the mining world for four days in June this year.

### **Floods, Recovery; Police Service, Personnel**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.00 am): I start by associating myself with the remarks and condolences just expressed by the Premier. One year on from the South-East Queensland floods, our thoughts remain with the loved ones of those who lost their lives and all those who were impacted. I particularly remember one of the best of us, SES volunteer Merryl Dray, who lost her life in the service of her community. My thoughts as always are with Merryl's family, friends and colleagues from the Lowood SES Group and the SES family more broadly.

The Palaszczuk government is making the biggest investment in policing in Queensland in more than three decades. This investment will deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel positions, and it will deliver nearly 1,500 sworn police officer positions. These commitments are fully funded and fully allocated by the government. The funds and the positions have already been allocated to the Queensland Police Service by the government. The Queensland Police Service advises that the first two years of recruitment have hit their targets, and only two weeks ago another 89 recruits graduated from our police academy. Mr Speaker, you will be very pleased to hear that lots more are on the way.

I am advised that there are currently 345 recruits undergoing training at our Townsville and Brisbane police academies. In addition, 144 recruits are due to start training in only a few months in May. In addition, a further 50 recruits are due to start in June. In addition, police advise that nearly 600 police recruit candidates had registered to undertake testing this month for admission to the academies, and nearly 500 more candidates are registered to undertake entry testing next month.

The Queensland Police Service never stands still and is always planning for future contingencies. We have seen the impact COVID has had on labour markets across the nation in all industries and all sectors. Unemployment is at its lowest level in decades. Labour markets are tight. Police have responded by stepping up their recruitment activities. Police have conducted police academy open days and waived some of the application costs, among a range of other initiatives.


Today I can announce that the Queensland Police Service now intends to take advantage of its international reputation as a truly world-class policing service. Through an agreement with the federal government's Department of Home Affairs, the Queensland Police Service will now conduct a marketing campaign to attract new recruits from across the world. The Queensland Police Service has approval for 500 new international recruits to join the service each year for the next five years. This is a unique opportunity for Queensland and is the broadest agreement of its type in the nation. It is a unique opportunity for people across the globe to join a world-class organisation, and it is an unprecedented opportunity for the Queensland Police Service to significantly expand the diversity of its workforce. I call that a win-win. I commend the commissioner and the Queensland Police Service for their agility, flexibility and capacity to plan ahead for whatever challenges and contingencies may arise.

I also want to thank in particular the federal immigration minister, Andrew Giles, who has worked on this initiative for a number of months with me. He played a pivotal role in ensuring that this agreement could proceed. I would also like to thank Minister Farmer for her support and the introduction to Minister Giles on this particular subject, which we did last year. The Queensland Police Service played a vital role keeping Queenslanders safe during the pandemic.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, there is too much conversation in the House generally. I would like to hear the ministerial statement that the minister is delivering.

**Mr RYAN:** The pandemic in turn has thrown challenges at the police—and all sectors, for that matter—and their recruitment activities, but, as ever, the Queensland Police Service has risen to meet whatever challenges are thrown its way. While I am on my feet, I might take the opportunity to say that if there is anyone out there who is interested in joining a world-class policing agency now is the time to join the Queensland Police Service.

### Coercive Control

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.05 am): Sunday marked the third anniversary of the brutal murder of Hannah Clarke and her three children, Aaliyah, Lailanah and Trey, at the hands of Rowan Baxter. It was a devastating event that shocked the nation. Yesterday marks two years since the tragic murder of Doreen Langham in a house fire lit by her ex-partner. These awful anniversaries are a tragic reminder of the insidious nature of domestic and family violence. We were reminded, in the most terrible way, of the dangers of coercive control. Their deaths continue to strengthen our resolve to ensure that such tragedies are not repeated. I also want to acknowledge the other recent lives that have been lost—Wendy Sleeman from the Gold Coast, Krystle Monks from Ipswich and Janet Guthrie from Bribie Island—and extend our sympathies to friends and families.


I want to acknowledge the work that Sue and Lloyd have done in the subsequent years to raise awareness around the dangers of coercive control. Their advocacy has been instrumental in not only our government's commitment to criminalise this dangerous form of abuse but also letting Queenslanders know and understand the dangers of coercive control. Late yesterday the House voted to pass the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This is the first crucial step in our journey to make coercive control a standalone offence to help keep women and children safe. The Clarkes themselves said in their submission to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce—

We have to admit that we did not understand coercive control, even as our family was dealing with it on a daily basis. We knew that something was wrong with the behaviour, and we certainly knew that Hannah deserved so much better from her husband. We didn't understand that this bad behaviour had a name, could be codified and should be illegal. And, of course, we didn't know where it was leading.

Even Hannah was not fully aware of the term coercive control, even though she was fully aware of its consequences. She feared for her safety, and her fears were proved correct.

Increasing community awareness and legislating against coercive control will be Hannah's legacy, and it is in large part due to the amazing efforts of her family through the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation. Through the Investing in Queensland Women grants, they have partnered with Carolyn Robinson from Beyond DV to facilitate conversations between mothers and daughters to help identify red flags in relationships. This is how we break the cycle; we educate the next generation on what respectful relationships look like. I can announce today that we are opening the latest round of the Investing in Queensland Women grants. These grants support organisations with grants of up to \$15,000 to put their ideas for empowering women and ending all forms of gender-based violence in our communities. I encourage all organisations to apply.

### Drought Declarations; Agriculture Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.09 am): The Palaszczuk government is supporting primary producers with drought assistance. With our recent reforms, we are assisting producers right now to prepare for future droughts. By supporting a strong agricultural sector, our government is supporting good jobs for Queenslanders.

Today, I have some good news for primary producers regarding drought. Based on recommendations from local drought committees, after significant rain and pasture growth, I am revoking the drought status for more areas of Queensland. From 1 March, the LGAs of Rockhampton, Central Highlands, Woorabinda, Barcoo and the eastern part of Barcaldine will no longer be drought-declared. I table an updated copy of the Queensland drought map.

*Tabled paper:* Map, dated 1 March 2023, titled 'Queensland drought situation as reviewed on 1 March 2023' [\[196\]](#).

The drought-declared area of Queensland will drop from 38.1 per cent of the state to 27.8 per cent. That is below 30 per cent for the first time since 2013. Conversely, just six years ago, 87.5 per cent of Queensland was drought-declared. Indeed, large parts of Queensland remain in drought, some for almost a decade, having a major impact on primary producers. Thanks to our government's groundbreaking reforms, farmers both in and out of drought-declared areas can access assistance through my department.

At this point, I would also like to express my thanks on record for the work of the late Vaughan Johnson as a drought commissioner. He did a sterling job for Queensland and also in his capacity as Drought Commissioner.


I am also pleased to announce today the first round of the Rural Agricultural Development Grants have been allocated, totalling \$1.8 million. Ten agriculture businesses will receive co-contribution grants of up to \$200,000 to make expansion projects a reality, creating 77 jobs for Queenslanders in places like Quilpie and Richmond. I can also announce that applications for round 2 of the RAD Grants open today as well.

There's more! I am pleased to announce the launch of the Queensland AgTech Roadmap draft for consultation. I table a copy of that.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland government document, undated, titled 'Queensland AgTech Roadmap 2023-2028, Draft for consultation' [197].

It will help agribusinesses stay at the forefront of the digital revolution. We want Queensland to be a global destination for AgTech. I encourage everyone to go to the DAF website to check out the roadmap. Queensland farmers have no greater friend in this House than the Palaszczuk Government.

### Queensland Workforce Strategy

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.11 am): Queensland's economy is going absolutely gangbusters. In January, CoMSEQ named Queensland as the top performer. Our unemployment levels remain low at 3.7 per cent. There are now 224,000 more Queenslanders in work than there were before the pandemic. Projections from Jobs Queensland show we will have created an additional 280,000 jobs by 2025. Queensland is absolutely the place to be.

We are, in fact, so successful that we will have created more jobs than we have people to fill them, which is exactly why almost six months ago now we launched our Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032, kicking it off with a \$70 million three-year action plan. We are very pleased with the progress that is being made. Just before Christmas last year, we announced joint funding with the federal government of 37,000 Fee Free TAFE places for this year alone, with priority allocated to those courses where we know there is greatest workforce demand, like early childhood education, nursing, construction and IT. Already 11,000 of those places have been taken, and enrolments continue to flow in.

As a result of our significant investment in skills and training in Queensland, we have seen an 86 per cent increase in apprenticeship commencements in the last two years. However, across the nation, there has been an over 35 per cent decline in completions over the last 10 years. We need every single one of our apprentices to complete, and our new train and retain strategy will help to address that, starting with establishing contact with every single apprentice in Queensland so we can gauge the problems. So far, we have made over 90,000 direct contacts, including our staff personally visiting over 1,900 workplaces.

There are around 180,000 people in Queensland who face barriers to employment. Our initiatives aim to link those people with the employers who so desperately need them. For example, we have added three new regional locations to our Diverse Queensland Workforce program and 82 per cent of the participants, all from multicultural backgrounds, have already gained employment. Yesterday I opened the first round of our \$4 million Indigenous Workforce and Skills Development Grant program which will support Indigenous organisations to link training for First Nations people to real jobs in their communities.

Schools play a vital role in determining the career choices our students make. I acknowledge the great support of the Minister for Education in developing our school industry partnerships. We do well in Queensland, with over 55 per cent of all Australian students doing apprenticeships and traineeships in school doing so in our state. However, we have other fantastic school-based programs, including our

highly successful Gateway to Industry Schools program to which we have added the hydrogen sector. Up to 40 schools have already been offered the opportunity for their students to create a pathway to jobs in this hugely important industry, meaning potentially at least 2,000 new entrants to the industry.

I look forward to providing further updates to the House on the valuable partnerships being created between industry and schools. This government is committed to creating good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle, and these early trends are testament to that commitment.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.15 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 14 March 2023.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.15 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That, with respect to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, standing orders 87 and 150 be suspended to allow any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

### Unauthorised Disclosure of Committee Proceedings

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (10.16 am): As chair of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, I rise to report a matter involving the inadvertent unauthorised disclosure of a private committee transcript of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. The transcript was of a private hearing conducted in Bundaberg on 8 March 2022 for the committee's inquiry into the functions of the Office of the Independent Assessor.

On becoming aware of the breach, the Parliamentary Service began immediate investigations into the circumstance of the publication and its wider implications. These investigations found that a combination of factors, including an error by a Parliamentary Service employee and a system defect, resulted in the disclosure. It is clear to us on the committee that the disclosure was inadvertent, it was a mistake, and it was not deliberate nor mischievous. We acknowledge the impact that this breach has had on the affected witness.

We are satisfied that the Parliamentary Service has dealt with this matter thoroughly and appropriately. As such, we do not intend to refer this matter to the Ethics Committee for further investigation.

I take this opportunity to remind those who may have accessed a transcript that the document remains a confidential document of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. It has not been authorised for release, and a further disclosure could amount to contempt of parliament. I obtained consent from the Speaker and seek leave from the House to incorporate the remainder of this report into the *Record of Proceedings*.

Leave granted.

As the transcript is a document of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee we have discharged our responsibilities set out in Report No. 42 of the former Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee as they relate to unauthorised disclosures.

This included assessing the source, significance, and merit of further investigation into matter, to determine whether to report the incident to the Legislative Assembly and/or make a referral to the Ethics Committee.

Our deliberations have included consideration of whether the disclosure was a substantial interference with the work of the committee; whether it was inadvertent, deliberate or mischievous; and whether it was an isolated occurrence or indicative of a larger problem within the Parliamentary Service.

It is clear to us that the disclosure was inadvertent, a mistake. It was not deliberate nor mischievous.

Both the Committee and Parliamentary Service have acknowledged the significance of the information breach and apologised for the impact that it has had on affected parties.

The committee has sought assurances that lessons have been learned from this incident and that steps have been taken to reduce the risk of a similar occurrence.


We are satisfied that the Parliamentary Service has dealt with this matter thoroughly and appropriately. We are also satisfied that the disclosure is not indicative of a larger information-security issue within the Parliamentary Service and that appropriate risk mitigation measures have been put in place.

As such, the committee has taken the view that the most appropriate way forward is to report the matter to the Legislative Assembly. We do not intend to refer this matter to the Ethics Committee for further investigation.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.17 am.

### Police Service, Personnel

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.17 am): My question is to the Premier. Ahead of the last election, the Premier promised Queenslanders her government would deliver 1,450 additional police by 2025. At estimates, the commissioner confirmed the promise was over and above attrition levels. According to reports today, more than halfway through this term, only 92 officers have been added. Can the Premier confirm that at this rate it will take 32 years to deliver on her police promise?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the member for Broadwater knows, Minister Ryan made a statement in this House earlier. Under our government, the total approved police strength has increased by 1,018. Let me say very clearly that we absolutely support the Police Service in this state.

We know what those opposite did: 110 senior officers were sacked. According to their 2020 election commitment there would have been a thousand fewer police officers. So those opposite should not come in here and lecture us. Not only that, we give the police the resources they need to do their job, whether it is more cars, better equipment—

**Mr Crisafulli:** Just more police.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I do not think those opposite should talk about frontline services because their track record is to cut and sack. When I was Leader of the Opposition I actually went and spoke to a senior police officer who lost their job because of those opposite. They actually cut out—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my right.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They sacked them. That is their track record. We can keep reminding Queensland. Campbell Newman and the member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table. The member for Broadwater was there at the cabinet table when they took the decisions to cut 110 senior officers. That is what happened. Even more than that, they wanted to sell off the Townsville police academy. Guess what? We are building a brand new police academy. We were there in Townsville where the 1300SMILES Stadium was. That has been demolished and they are getting a brand new police academy. In addition to that, we have the business case for a brand new academy in Brisbane at Wacol.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There we go. I will stand on our record and they can stand on their record because Queenslanders do not trust them.

### Police Service, Personnel

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to media reports of explosive leaked police data which shows the government has delivered just 92 of the 1,450 extra frontline police promised at the last election. Will the Premier guarantee this promise made to Queenslanders will be kept?



**Ms PALASZCZUK:** When I came to office after the savage cuts that were handed down by those opposite when they were last in office we made a commitment to the people of this state to restore frontline services—that is right, restore and then increase. When it came to health there are more doctors and more nurses.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There are more police, more fires and more child safety officers. I am so pleased we are having this debate. I am so pleased because it gives me the opportunity—here we go, I have some evidence. There was a headline in the *Townsville Bulletin* ‘Police to cut training period’. That was the opposition. Then there was ‘Funding chop, budget cutbacks concern police’.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat. Members for Maroochydore, Burdekin, Everton and Chatsworth, you are all warned under the standing orders. You have been continually interjecting. Yes, you, member for Everton. Member for Everton, it was you.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! That was not an invitation for other members.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In October 2014 there was the headline ‘Ipswich police asked to serve breakfast and wash clothes for inmates to save cash’. Then there was ‘Jail house cops made to serve prisoners’. There is more. In February 2014 there was ‘Anger at FIFO plan for police’—fly-in fly-out police. In Jan 2013, ‘322 police jobs set to be axed’.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, you cannot continually hold those things up. They are considered a prop. You are either tabling them or you are not.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I want to table this one.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You can table the documents. You have that privilege.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will table this one that I read from. Then I want to table the FIFO plan for police from those opposite. Do not forget the member for Broadwater was there.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of media articles, dated 2013 and 2014, relating to policing [\[198\]](#).

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** He was there.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have more to table.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I had called the House to order. There is a point of order I need to consider. I asked the Premier to resume her seat. If you could not hear me that means the volume of conversation and level of interjection is too high.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is on relevance under 118B. The question was simply: will the Premier guarantee the promise will be kept to Queenslanders?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Whenever a question is essentially asking for a yes or no answer, the Premier has three minutes to decide how to answer it with a simple response. At the moment she has 54 seconds remaining. I will ask the Premier to ensure she rounds out her answer.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, we will support our police. Yes, we will support our police.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left, this is not playtime; it is question time. It is not frivolity and it is not a time for trying to shout down the person on their feet. Premier, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, absolutely. In September 2012 in the *Townsville Bulletin* there was an article headed ‘Police work hamstrung by cutbacks’. Yes, we are reminding Queenslanders. In September 2012 there was ‘Police cutbacks may hit the Beat’. Do not worry, there is a whole lot more where they came from because I remember, and they have never apologised to the people of this state.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of media articles, dated 2012, regarding police cutbacks [\[199\]](#).

(Time expired)

### Job Creation

**Mr KING:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier advise how the Palaszczuk government is delivering on Queensland's economic recovery plan and creating good jobs, and are there any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member very much for the question. I know that he is committed to ensuring that young people and people in his electorate have the opportunity of the dignity of having a job. When we came to office that is exactly what we said. We said we wanted to increase the number of people in the workforce. That is exactly what our government has delivered.

I am absolutely proud of our record: more than 220,000 Queensland jobs have been created since the 2020 election. Since our government was elected in 2015, over 480,000 jobs have been created. As the Treasurer said the other day, that is more than a thousand jobs a week created in Queensland. That is fantastic news.

Unemployment in our state is now at 3.7 per cent, the second lowest in the country. We know that in regional Queensland we have seen dramatic declines, which means more people are in work—that is fantastic news—with Mackay leading the way at 2.2 per cent unemployment, closely followed by Townsville at 2.3 per cent.

We want to have a history lesson again for those opposite because some were not around during the Campbell Newman days. There were some who were not here then. At that time those opposite decimated regional Queensland. Let me clarify that—regional and remote Queensland—because some of the most savage cuts were at Longreach, in those rural areas, where people actually left those cities and towns. When we were elected we said we would restore after those savage cuts, and that is what we did. We worked hard in that first term and then we built on that in the second term.

Then we said to the people of Queensland, 'If we had a strong health response we would have a strong economic recovery.' That is what we said, and guess what? That is what we are now delivering. Queensland's days—our best days—are ahead of us because we are setting up the groundwork with the biggest infrastructure build when it comes to health across the state—over \$9 billion.

When it comes to looking to the future and capitalising on the clean, green revolution I was talking about, our \$62 billion Energy and Jobs Plan is creating over 100,000 jobs in regional Queensland. Then, of course, we have the Olympics, which will set this state up for the decades to come.

*(Time expired)*

### Police Service, Personnel

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. Leaked QPS data in the media reveals that many police stations have had a cut in actual police numbers since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power in 2015. In the middle of a crime crisis, how is cutting police numbers keeping Queenslanders safe?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There is an opportunity for the member for Kawana to look into the mirror and ask himself—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** He looks back to those days and thinks, 'When I was the attorney-general of Queensland, what did I do?'

**Dr Miles:** The glory days!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The glory days—the fights, the cuts.

**Mr Bleijie:** Red carpet. Checked out.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am talking about your policies.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you are not directing your comments through the chair. You are warned under the standing orders. Members to my right, you may be supporting the Premier, but your level of interjection is too high. I need to be able to hear the Premier, as does Hansard.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana, the left-hand man of Campbell Newman—the Leader of the Opposition was his right-hand man—sat around the cabinet table and made the deliberate decision to cut services and to cut staff. The 14,000 people they cut were people with names and families. They were people who had the dignity of work, but those opposite ripped the carpet out from under them.

I will not be lectured to by anyone opposite—never—because they do not deliver what they say. They say one thing before an election and do something else after it, or they take fake policies to the election—pipeline dreams, like the member for Nanango—that can never be delivered. We will stand on our track record, and we will stand up for Queenslanders every day. Whether that is providing thousands of free TAFE classes to help young people get a job, building trains in Maryborough or making sure we have water security from Rockhampton to Gladstone to generate thousands more jobs, that is what we are absolutely committed to. For those opposite to come into this place and suggest these ridiculous notions is absolutely shameful.

### Floods, Preparedness

**Mr BROWN:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Will the Deputy Premier outline how the Palaszczuk government is preparing Queensland for the next significant flood event, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Capalaba for his question. I know that he is looking forward to building resilience in our Queensland community. I know that he is also looking forward to getting a new neighbour, with news that the LNP plans to parachute accused upskirter Andrew Laming into the seat of Oodgeroo. I wonder how the member for Oodgeroo feels about that.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order as to parliamentary language—whether the language used by the Deputy Premier is indeed appropriate for this parliament, as well as inaccurate.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, the term that has been used is a term that I would suggest has been utilised in legal circles; however, I think the context in which it has been used may not be appropriate in this case. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Dr MILES:** I withdraw. This week marks the first anniversary of the devastating floods that we saw in February 2022, when Queenslanders once again proved their strength in the face of extraordinary weather. I am pleased to announce that 36 councils across Queensland will receive assistance from the Palaszczuk and Albanese governments to improve their flood risk management.

The \$18.25 million Flood Risk Management Program will allow councils to invest in flood studies, flood risk management plans and flood warning intelligence systems to prepare for the next big flooding event. It will ensure Queenslanders know what the flood risks for their properties are and they can plan accordingly, and it can inform further flood mitigation efforts that councils can undertake to keep their residents safe and to lessen the risks for next time. Some 127 projects have been given the tick so that councils can manage local rivers, creeks and overland flood risks.

While on this side of the House the Palaszczuk government is helping Queenslanders to prepare for floods, those opposite are busy being flooded with dodgy money. Not only have they benefited from donations that were meant to go to flood victims, but that bloke—that convicted fraudster—is their second biggest donor. They really will take money from anyone. I thought those opposite would draw the line at taking hundreds of thousands of dollars from Russian oligarchs.

One year on from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Palaszczuk government stands proudly with the Ukrainian people. In fact, the member for Greenslopes will attend a vigil with our local Ukrainian community this weekend. Meanwhile, those opposite have accepted \$304,000 from a Russian tycoon—money made in Russia and brought here via the Russian tax haven Cyprus. It is well known to be a tax haven for Russian elites wanting to move cash around. This is not just cash for access; this is cash for favours. It is shameful. Those opposite really will take money from anyone.

### Police Service, Personnel

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier has promised 1,450 extra police by 2025. With an attrition rate of 3.8 per cent, in order to reach 1,450 extra police the government needs to recruit, train and deploy around 2,100 new officers in just over a year and a half. Is the government on track to keep its promise to Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have made commitments towards 2025. The police minister has outlined the recruitment campaigns that are happening. It is a fact that people are progressing through our training academies. He has reached an agreement with the federal government and he has acknowledged that there are difficulties in terms of recruitment everywhere, in every industry. It is in every labour market and it is in every state across the nation—this is not unique—and the world.

Let me say this: we will not be cutting resources like those opposite did. I said that I would find some more articles, and in fact I have. I have found some more. In Townsville—it is very good that that member asked the question—a headline was ‘Cops to hit beat without vital kits’. There we go.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have answered the question and now I am comparing our record with your record.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Through the chair, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: our record to your record. While we give our frontline police the resources they need, those opposite were taking away their vital kits. The *Townsville Bulletin* did an editorial titled ‘Don’t stretch our blue line too thinly’ during the government of those opposite.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order relating to 118(b). The question was about the Premier’s promise to Queensland.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier, I believe, has attempted to answer that aspect of the question. There are some contextual comparisons the Premier may make, but I ask, Premier, that you come back to the question which related to the government policy.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I said to the people of Queensland that we would increase jobs in this state and we have increased that by 480,000 jobs—480,000 extra people in work. As we know, the police minister made a comprehensive statement. I have it here and I can read through it again if members want me to, but it was very clear about the recruits going through our police academies. It was very clear that we are looking at building a brand new academy in Townsville. We have a business case for the police academy down here. We are giving them the resources that they need, but we on this side will not cut positions. We are increasing the positions. We are increasing the numbers, and that is our commitment to the people of this great state.

### Central Queensland, Infrastructure

**Ms LAUGA:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering the infrastructure Central Queensland deserves and is the Treasurer aware of any other approach?

**Mr DICK:** I want to thank the member for Keppel for her question. Along with the members for Rockhampton and Gladstone, the member for Keppel understands and knows how important the Premier’s announcement of the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline is. It supports the future economic development of Central Queensland because it harnesses the strength of the entire region. Some \$550 million of the cost of that pipeline is funded entirely 100 per cent from new progressive coal royalties.

The money earned from the mines in Central Queensland will be reinvested into Central Queensland from a secure funding allocation and there are only three things that can threaten that pipeline—the letters L-N-P. Yesterday we had the spectacle of LNP MPs lining up to criticise the new coal royalty tiers that are delivering so much for their region. Michelle Landry said that the new royalty tiers are not sustainable. The former member for Callide and the now enlightened member for Flynn joined her in attacking these royalties. The current member for Callide posted on social media that royalties are costing jobs—a statement that is completely and demonstrably false but, let us face it, that has never stopped him and the LNP before because jobs in mining are actually going up.

All of this comes after the member for Condamine said that the LNP did not support the royalties and the member for Burdekin promised to sit down with the leader of the mining lobby and review the royalties. The LNP will review royalties like the LNP reviewed the Public Service—it will cut them—and that means \$3 billion for regional Queensland will be cut. The LNP and its current leader did not dare vote against coal royalties, but now we know what their plan is. The cuts are coming. Some \$3 billion worth of cuts will rain down on the people of regional Queensland from the LNP. Forget the Moranbah Hospital; that will be cancelled. Forget the Townsville Hospital upgrade; that will be cancelled. We can forget the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline; that will be cancelled too. There will be fewer police, fewer nurses, fewer doctors, fewer teachers, fewer youth justice workers and fewer child safety officers all because the Leader of the Opposition cannot stand up to the mining lobby and its leadership. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government will ensure Queenslanders get their fair share of high coal prices and we will be the only government that ensures those funds go to regional Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### Police Service, Personnel

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Minister for Police. At the Toowoomba crime forum the minister told 300 locals there were increasing police numbers in the region. Leaked data in media reports show actual police FTEs have reduced by 39 since February 2015. Did the minister know there was a reduction in actual police FTEs when he made this statement to my community?

**Mr RYAN:** Those opposite like to crow about how many former police officers are on their side, but they have not spoken to them about how the Police Service structures its workforce and how it counts its numbers.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:** No, this is a very important point. The numbers that the member is referring to are divisional police numbers, but what we will also find located in areas, including in the same police station, are district police numbers and central police numbers.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:** No, this is true.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Order, members!

**Mr RYAN:** Come in spinner—

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:**—and it is also obviously up to the Police Service and the commissioner—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, you are warned under the standing orders. We do not allow gesticulation across the chamber. It is very unbecoming and unparliamentary. The level of interjections is still too loud, members. I need to hear the minister's response.

**Mr RYAN:** There are multiple classifications of police officers based at the same police station. What the member is referring to is data only about divisional numbers and it does not include district numbers or central numbers. From time to time the commissioner and the Police Service, who are experts—those opposite are not—will reclassify people depending on the function that they need them to do. Also from time to time—and this shows the ignorance of the member for Toowoomba South—there will be new police stations that open up in the area where some police officers may be allocated to. In the Toowoomba area we opened the Highfields Police Station and some police officers went there. In the Toowoomba area—and the member for Toowoomba North knows this because he was there when the Newman government closed the police beat—we reopened the Newtown Police Beat and some police officers went there. Also in the Toowoomba area, because of the way the Police Service works, it forms things like tactical crime groups and tactical crime squads which go out and do proactive policing. They are actually district resources, not divisional resources.

I am informed by the Queensland Police Service that the central and district functions in the Darling Downs area, which is the Toowoomba policing district, went from 190 in 2015 to 243—an increase of 53. When we look at our commitment to the Queensland Police Service, it is a commitment of more resources. It is a commitment of additional positions and it is a commitment of additional funding. Those opposite had a commitment which was 1,000 less than ours. They also like to plaster over their commitments, but when they were last in government, as the Premier said, they did not just sack police officers; when they created the PSBA almost 400 police officers were ripped out of the Police Service and put into the PSBA to do paperwork. Shame on them! Our government delivers for the police.

### Electrical Safety

**Mr WALKER:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister advise the House on how the Palaszczuk government is spreading the electrical safety message to Queensland children and could the minister advise if there are any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. He is a proud new grandad and he knows how important it is to start young when it comes to electrical safety. No socket is safe. It is great to see up in the gallery the students from Mango Hill State School. I welcome them to the gallery. The Palaszczuk government believes it is never too early to teach them about electrical safety. That is why in December last year we launched a three-year partnership with Australia's favourite children's entertainers, the

Wiggles. I say to the students in the gallery that there is no truth to the rumour that I am the pink wiggle. It is not true. It was great performing the song with them. I loved every minute of it. Their song *Electricity* is about electricity powering the appliances that make hot potatoes and cold spaghetti. It also highlights that, even though it cannot be seen, electricity is very dangerous. It has been very successful. Since December we have had over 650,000 views of the video. That is an amazing accomplishment.

Queensland Health statistics show that from January 2018 to November 2022 there were nearly 70 hospital admissions for children under 12 due to electrical injuries. We need to get the message out. I could not think of any better way of doing that than with the Wiggles. We have competitions for families, we have targets for mums and dads. It is a really well-rounded, terrific campaign and I am very proud to have been involved.

I notice that the questions from those opposite have been about cuts. Let me share with the House some cuts to electrical safety those opposite made in the short time they were in government in 2013. The LNP cut the standalone Electrical Safety Office. We restored it. The LNP sacked the Electrical Safety Commissioner. We restored it. The LNP cut the Electrical Education Committee that gives advice about promoting electrical safety in businesses and community. We restored it. The LNP cut the Electrical Equipment Committee, the committee that gives advice on safety and performance of electrical appliances to families and children. We restored it. All members on this side of this House know about the cuts and, let me inform those opposite, so do the people of Queensland. In the short time that they were in government they completely decimated the Electrical Safety Office. You want to talk about cuts, I am happy to talk about cuts every day of the week.

*(Time expired)*

### Child Protection

**Ms CAMM:** My question is to the Minister for Children and Youth Justice. A whistleblower has today gone on record stating that if child safety officers were not overloaded then Chloe and Darcey, who died in a hot car, would still be alive today. Given this case's similarities to the government's failure in the Mason Jett Lee case, will the Premier now admit the Palaszczuk Labor government is failing to keep Queensland children safe?

**Ms LINARD:** From the outset I would like to say that the deaths of Darcey-Helen Conley and Chloe-Ann Conley were an absolute tragedy. My deepest sympathies go to their family, the community they came from and all of those who were gravely affected by their loss, including that former child safety officer who the member refers to today. It would be inappropriate for me to comment further on that case at this time given an appeal may arise from the current criminal proceedings and given it is also a possibility that the case will be reviewed by a coroner at a later date.

I do want to say this, and it is something I said yesterday: since coming to government this government has continued to invest in frontline services. We have continued to invest in child safety officers and we have done so at a time where we have seen significant growth for those services. There has been considerable demand increases in the system. I am not sure if I said this yesterday, but child protection notifications are up 16 per cent in the year to 30 September 2022 and 40 per cent since June 2018. The number of children who need care continues to grow, with record increases seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thankfully we have seen that begin to stabilise. There are 11,427 children and young people in out-of-home care, up 2.3 per cent in 12 months and 26 per cent since 30 June 2018.

We are not sitting still while the demand and need for these services is increasing. We are certainly not standing still while our child safety officers are responding to this call. They are responding to more notifications, they are responding faster and they are working with families longer. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge their efforts every single day. To be a child safety officer is an incredible calling. I call it a calling; it is not a job. What they see on the front line working with vulnerable families, the trauma that they see with these children each and every day, is extraordinary. We are not just acknowledging that; we are investing in additional staff. I said yesterday that since coming to government we have invested more than \$1.625 billion in new funding, 782 new staff and, most importantly, that investment has brought average case loads down to 16. With that incredible growth in demand, that is down from 21 under those opposite. We will continue to invest in the front line. We will continue to invest in the services needed because that is what a responsible government does to support vulnerable children.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Clayfield, I called the House to order. You will cease your interjections. You are warned.

### Health Services

**Mr KELLY:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise the House about the strategies to deal with the increased demands for frontline health services in Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternative strategies?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question and again acknowledge in this House his contribution as a registered nurse and the contribution he made throughout COVID to support our tremendous efforts in getting people tested and vaccinated so that we could reopen and see our economy continue to grow.

The Palaszczuk government has a very proud history of engaging health workers and investing in frontline services, as all Labor governments do. I am very proud of the fact that this year we have invested even more in our health services. We went to the election and promised 9,475 extra frontline health workers. This year alone we have engaged 834 new intern doctors. This is the largest cohort of intern doctors we have ever had. To do that requires planning. Additional doctors had to have been planned six years ago to have those interns now. That shows that we have been planning since we came back into government. We also put on 1,036 nurse graduates this month, which is fantastic, and 1,540 extra nurse graduates will be put on over the next two years. We have increased our graduate nurses intake by 50 per cent for this year and next year because of the pressures on the health system and the need to deal with the skills shortage that is a national problem right now.

This is in contrast to the LNP which we know sacked 4,400 health workers when they were last in government. I hate to think how this state would have dealt with COVID if we had not invested in those frontline health staff and rebuilt the health workforce back in 2015 and the decisions that those opposite would have made with COVID. I am very proud of this government investing in over 17,000 new frontline health workers since we came into government in 2015 which put us in front when it came to managing COVID and making sure that consequently we could grow our economy and support jobs in this state.

One does not need to look back to 2012. The LNP went to the 2020 election offering 4,935 fewer health workers. We talk about 1,000 fewer police if they had been elected in 2020; we would also have 4,935 fewer health workers over this term of parliament. That is shameful. Those opposite come in here and attack the health system day in, day out, saying that they are not doing good enough, calling them regional duds. The LNP are shameful.

*(Time expired)*

### Floods, Ipswich Property

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. What housing solution does the Deputy Premier have for the 42 Mi Hi Grove residents in Ipswich who have been out of their flood-ridden homes for over 12 months?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Everton for his question. I am aware of the circumstances at that property. It is complicated by the fact that the owners of those units are not unanimous in what they would like the future to look like in terms of that particular property. At this stage, our body corporate laws require unanimity before a decision can be made to, for example, terminate the body corporate and allow those people to access our Resilient Homes Fund buyback scheme. We will continue to work through that quite complicated situation with those owners to get the best possible outcome. We will do our best to address the differing views amongst those home owners.

It was always the case that the buyback component of the Resilient Homes Fund was voluntary so that home owners could decide whether they wanted to rebuild, retrofit, raise or, indeed, sell their properties back to the government. That voluntariness is harder to maintain when you have multiple unit holders, all of whom have an effective veto right over the termination of the body corporate.

I thank the member for Everton for his interest. I am happy to undertake to keep him updated as we work our way through what, as I have explained, is a quite complex situation. I can assure the member that the Queensland Reconstruction Authority will, as they always do, do their very best to achieve the best possible outcome for Queenslanders affected by natural disasters and, in doing so, will assist them to build back better to deliver even more resilience.

Our disaster recovery and resilience programs are the envy of the world. People literally come from around the world to see how we do it. That is an enviable title. We have that title because we are one of the most disaster-prone places in the world so we have had the most practice. It is a credit to the QRA and our systems here in Queensland that when the Australian government moved to adopt a new disaster response model they looked to the QRA and, indeed, recruited our QRA CEO, Brendan Moon, to head up their agency. I think that is all in recognition of how good they are at doing their job. They will take all of those skills, expertise and knowledge and apply them to all of the varying situations that we find property holders in right now, including owners of units that were affected by the natural disaster.

### Rookwood Weir

**Mr O'ROURKE:** My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Would the minister update the House on the progress of Rookwood Weir and how the Palaszczuk government is supporting water projects in 2023?

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the member for the question. He is a huge advocate for this amazing project for Central Queensland and I thank him for his support.

Today I am very happy to update the House on the progress of Rookwood Weir and share some fantastic news about that project, which has been acknowledged for its ongoing commitment to good local jobs as well as its sustainable design practices. The Infrastructure Sustainability Council has awarded the project an excellent rating after evaluating its economic, social and environmental performance during the design phase. We know this project is already boosting the local economy in Central Queensland. The \$183 million investment by the Palaszczuk Labor government into the project is delivering flow-on benefits which include the invaluable contribution that the weir will make to Central Queensland water security into the future.

On this side of the House we care about our growers. That is why it is the Palaszczuk Labor government that dragged the federal LNP government kicking and screaming to the table for their fair share of funds for this amazing project. I know the member for Rockhampton was certainly on the front line, calling out his federal member, Michelle Landry, to put the money on the table.

We make the big decisions here in Queensland and we fund the projects that will change Queensland lives forever, particularly in regional Queensland. Do you know what? You know you are doing a good job when the opposition does not say a word in relation to a project but goes quiet for months. You know you are doing even better when you do not hear a peep from the LNP shadow water minister because she does nothing in this space. She just sits back, whinges—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr BUTCHER:** It is even better that I get to speak without her saying a word because she is on a warning. That is fantastic.

The Palaszczuk Labor government's track record speaks for itself in this space. We have invested over \$4.6 billion, creating more than 2½ thousand jobs across the state. We are building Rookwood Weir. We are rebuilding Paradise Dam. We are raising the Burdekin Falls Dam. We are funding stages 1 and 2 of the Haughton Pipeline Project in North Queensland. I wonder if my North Queensland colleagues can tell me why we are funding it. It is because the LNP pulled out of the deal. Phillip Thompson in Townsville should be ashamed of himself. He went to the election saying, 'We are going to fund Haughton stage 2.' What did they do? They pulled it from the people of North Queensland! Who came to the table? The Palaszczuk Labor government, once again, stepped in to fill the void left by the federal LNP government. We funded that amazing project—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders.

### Adani

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question today is to the Premier. After being accused of a brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud scheme to obscure significant debts, Adani is facing investigation by Indian regulators and has shed half its share value. Is the government assessing its risk from Adani's royalty holiday and how many millions of public dollars could be lost if the company goes bust?



**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The way that the question was framed appears to be a hypothetical. I ask that you rule it out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. I believe that the question is in order given that it is asking whether risk is being assessed. I believe that, on those grounds, the question is valid.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As with all projects in the state, if they are financially viable they continue to go ahead. We have had nothing to Treasury that would suggest anything otherwise. If there were concerns then I am quite sure they would be raised with the Treasury department.

### Copper

**Mr HEALY:** My question is to the Minister for Resources. Will the minister advise how copper is continuing to evolve in its uses throughout the world and how important it is to the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan?

**Mr STEWART:** I thank the member for Cairns for his question. Mr Speaker, do I have a mining tale that will rock your world. The story goes: 100 years ago in the rugged outback of North-West Queensland, a chap by the name of John Campbell Miles was looking for gold. He kicked a rock that was so heavy he nearly broke his foot. Some say that it was not Miles's boot that hit the rock but his horse's hoof that struck one of the world's richest deposits of copper. Would members believe that Miles convinced my great-grandfather, Walter John Davidson, to move from Duchess to Mount Isa to help him set up that claim? I would like to table a copy of an original photo that shows John Campbell Miles standing beside my great-grandfather, Walter John Davidson, as part of the original miners from Mount Isa. I am very proud of that.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph, captioned 'Mt Isa, Prospector John Campbell Miles (left) in 1924 with Walter John Davidson, Will Purdy, S Boyce and EC Saint-Smith' [\[200\]](#).

That set in motion a chain of events that led to the birth of one of our most famous mining cities, Mount Isa. Talk about a great kickstart! Over the past century copper has not just been a one-hit wonder. Copper has been the ultimate multitasker, playing a starring role in electrical wiring, conducting energy, electric goods, plumbing and even jewellery. Let us not forget about the more recent chapter in copper's story. It plays a vital role in the clean energy revolution. From wind turbines to electric vehicles, it is minerals such as copper that are helping power the Palaszczuk Labor government's Energy and Jobs Plan. This is a metal of many talents. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about those opposite.

Even though Mount Isa copper is 100 years old, it knows how to evolve—unlike the LNP, who have not changed their spots since the dark days of Campbell Newman's 'cut, sack and sell' gang. If the LNP had their way, they would leave Queensland's resources and energy sectors out to rust. It is only the Palaszczuk government that understands how vital minerals such as copper are in powering our future. These critical minerals are essential to our Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan, our 30-year vision for our resources industry. We want Queenslanders to mine and process our critical minerals, from copper to vanadium. These minerals will build the SuperGrid, the batteries and the wind and solar farms that will secure Queensland's energy future and create good, rock-solid jobs. Thanks to pioneers like John Campbell Miles and my great-grandfather, whose vision and determination knew no bounds, Queensland was able to unlock its potential to be a shining beacon of mining success. I encourage those opposite to take a leaf out of Miles's book. No, I am not suggesting they put a boot into Queensland. They do not need any help with that.

### Noosa Hinterland

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs. Will the minister advise why this government cannot or will not act to protect the environment, safety and health of Noosa hinterland residents from the ongoing—it has now been three years—devastating volumes of heavy haulage truck movements made possible through an environmental authority that was never fit for purpose?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for the question. I know that she has been raising this issue on behalf of her constituents for some time now. In relation to that particular quarry, the only involvement my department has is through the environmental authority process. That was, of course, granted some time ago. I am advised by the department that there is no ability at this stage for it to revise that current environmental authority, but if any new information comes to light I would encourage anyone in the member's community or the member herself to bring that forward. The independent regulator can assess whether that does support the grounds to look at amending the environmental authority.

I should say, though, that the quarry operates also under a local government development approval. That development approval considers issues such as the sustainability of the local area and the impacts of the volume of heavy vehicles and haulage routes. Many of the issues that residents are raising really do fit within the realm of the Noosa council, so I would encourage them to continue speaking with council around what avenues might be available.

I am advised that the Noosa Shire Council has taken a matter forward to the Planning and Environment Court, so there is probably not too much I can say in that regard. Of course, I do acknowledge the issues that residents have raised. I understand that the Department of Transport and Main Roads has also invested something like \$6 million in trying to upgrade the road there to make it safer. I acknowledge the member's advocacy in that space as well. We will continue to listen to the concerns of locals to see if there are avenues available to support any of the concerns that people are raising.

### Tourism and Events

**Mrs MULLEN:** My question is of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. Can the minister reveal to the House examples of the events that are helping to accelerate the recovery from COVID of Queensland's tourism and events industry?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Jordan for her question. I note and thank her for her interest in the recovery of Queensland's visitor economy. Queensland genuinely is re-emerging as the world's favourite destination. I acknowledge the Premier's earlier announcement in relation to the World Mining Congress—a great example of the way in which the world is, on not just a tourism basis but also a business conference basis, coming back to Queensland. Business conferences and conventions are making a real mark, with Queensland as their destination of choice for the world. The Palaszczuk government has invested \$7 million in incentives to help Queensland's three government owned convention centres recover from COVID. In just the last year convention centres in Brisbane, Cairns and the Gold Coast have secured 37 lucrative national business conference events. The fact that we will see the World Mining Congress add to that is very exciting. As businesses pull the plug on virtual videoconferencing, that \$7 million investment deal has leveraged some \$34 million for the visitor economy here in Queensland.

Our time to shine has really highlighted who we are and where we are, with great events right across the globe. In fact, Hollywood is looking our way as a result. In recognition of the international achievements of Queensland's thriving screen industry, the Palaszczuk government has secured a piece of Tinseltown for the Gold Coast. It was a great pleasure to announce alongside Australian film star Russell Crowe that the prestigious Australian Association of Cinema and Television Arts Awards, the AACTAAs, are coming to Queensland. The AACTA Awards and the international awards will be merged into a single glittering event in February on the Gold Coast for the next three years. The AACTAAs are being reshaped—Mr Speaker, you would take great interest in this—to coincide with the international awards season, including the UK's BAFTAs, the Golden Globes and the Oscars. It will be part of the run-up to the Oscars. It is estimated that the AACTAAs will deliver some \$3.4 million for the Gold Coast and bring some of the world's greatest stars. I have to say—

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Bonney, what is my motivation not to warn you? You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I do want to highlight how, in that awards season, it is always good to see what awards people might be up for. We have seen today and on a few occasions this week some extraordinary attempts by those opposite to get an acting award. They have confected their outrage about so many things and confected their amusement this morning on a couple of occasions, to the disruption of the House. Let's be sure that we know we are supporting the events industry and making sure Queensland does shine.

*(Time expired)*

### Social Housing, North Stradbroke Island

**Dr ROBINSON:** My question is to the Minister for Communities and Housing. In 2015-16 the government promised to construct new social housing for the Quandamooka people of North

Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah. Quandamooka leaders say that no new homes have been built in the past eight years. Can the minister confirm that the government has not delivered on this commitment to the Quandamooka people?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have one minute to respond.

**Ms ENOCH:** I thank the member for the question, directed at me as the housing minister and obviously also as a Quandamooka person. I recognise the nature of the question. Obviously as a government we have committed a record amount of funding to ensure we are building more houses than we have ever seen in the history of this state. We continue to work with all parties across the state to ensure we are seeing those properties built in appropriate places, whether that be in remote communities, in Indigenous communities, right across South-East Queensland or in other parts of the state. We are working with local governments in particular around their local housing action plans. We continue to do that work with the Redland City Council, which I hope will continue to do that work with us. We have seen that having to be taken over by the state government in some ways. We will absolutely ensure that we are commencing more properties than we have ever seen before.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired. Before moving on to the next order of business, I remind of those members already under a warning, which will extend through to 1 pm. They are the members for Nanango, Everton, Chatsworth, Maroochydore, Burdekin, Kawana, Currumbin, Clayfield, Southern Downs and Bonney.

## MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

**Arnold, Mr M; Dare, Mr A; McCrow, Ms R**

**Mr SPEAKER:** The tragic deaths of Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Mr Alan Dare were senseless and shocked our state. The Queensland Police Service protects Queenslanders every day and does so by making great personal sacrifice, but our police men and women should not have to make the ultimate sacrifice. It is with great sorrow that this House now has to consider this condolence motion.

**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (11.18 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Constable Matthew Arnold and Constable Rachel McCrow and acknowledge their sacrifice in the line of duty for the events of 12 December 2022 and to also acknowledge the bravery of Mr Alan Dare, who also lost his life in the terrible events of 12 December 2022.
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the families of Constable Arnold, Constable McCrow and Mr Dare the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss that they have sustained.

The loss of constables Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow was felt by us all. Their memorial service was televised live on three networks. A dozen simultaneous services were held in King George Square, Alpha, Rockhampton, Mackay, Bowen, Dalby, Chinchilla, Tara, Miles and Townsville. Some 8,000 serving and former members of the Queensland Police Service filled the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. As I said at the time, there was a sea of blue and an ocean of tears. They were joined by members of the community and representatives of police and emergency services from around the country and around the world, along with the two distraught families of two very special Queenslanders and a dog named Archibald. Perhaps only an animal lover knows how to recognise the heartbreak of a dog who could not understand where Rachel had gone.


Listening to their friends speak at the service, I felt I got to know Rachel and Matthew. Both were characters—broad smiles, from absolutely loving families, a little mischievous. Matthew took his skills from the volleyball courts of St Laurence's to the Western Downs community where he was posted. Rachel ensured everyone in her group at the Townsville police academy passed their classes, especially when it came to fitness. They were so proud to wear their uniforms and be part of their local communities, having graduated only in the year or two before they had, as the saying goes, their whole lives ahead of them, which makes their deaths all the more senseless.

What happened to Rachel and Matthew is an outrage. We must call it for what it was—a deliberate act of hate filled malice. The trap had been set. There was little anyone could do. We know now that it was an act of religiously motivated terrorism. At the memorial Rachel and Matthew's friends

implored us not to dwell on the evil that took their lives. Instead they wanted us to follow Rachel and Matthew's lead to believe that the world is mostly filled with good people. When people needed their help, Rachel and Matthew were the first to give it.

We must remember that when evil surfaced on that remote and dusty road, good people rushed to meet it. In a stunning display of everyday selflessness, a neighbour named Alan Dare saw there was trouble and jumped the fence. Sadly, it cost him his life. He was followed by 16 general duties police from Dalby, Tara and Chinchilla, not to mention specialist police and paramedics—all of them running towards danger. They are examples of the best of us.

This Saturday there will be a memorial day for Rachel and Matthew at the Kayo Stadium in Redcliffe. Proceeds will go to a memorial fund in their honour. We owe it to these decent and honourable people to never forget the circumstances of their loss and to do what we can to stop the division, misinformation and the vile tearing of our society apart. Let us also remember the way Rachel and Matthew lived—true leaders of their communities; an absolute credit to their families, to the Police Service and to our state. To their brothers and sisters in blue: with great honour they served.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.23 am): I join with the Premier and all members of this House in paying our deepest respects and sympathies. The events at Wieambilla on the Western Downs last December truly brought home to all Queenslanders the fragility of life and the sacrifices that some amongst us are called to make. Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Alan Dare were murdered in the most brutal of circumstances—simply doing their job or being a good neighbour. It is difficult to put into the words the emotions that surrounded this tragedy; however, the entire state came to a halt as these events unfolded before our eyes. Our grief was shared as we endeavoured to understand the senseless nature of these deaths in an act of terrorism.

During our lives there are two groups of people we often rely on in times of difficulty—the police and our neighbour. They fulfil distinct roles, but the support they extend in their local communities is crucial in determining our response during these difficult circumstances. Police officers undertake hazardous work. It is a responsibility they assume when they are sworn into the Queensland Police Service. The magnitude of this tragedy brings home the extent of the dangers they face for us every day. These events are even more tragic when it is remembered that both officers were on the cusp of long and fulfilling careers. Having made a commitment to serve the community to which they were assigned, they had every expectation that it would be the beginning of a lifetime of service.

The people of Tara and Chinchilla embraced their local police as never before and expressed their sadness and horror at what unfolded. It is times like this that all Queenslanders realise the commitment that our police make. The ABC reported Tara local Allan Bougoure defining the unique relationship between a rural community and the local police. I quote him when he said—

Country-policing is different to the city. The police integrate really well and become an important part of the community.

Both constables were part of the Western Downs community and the people of that region have demonstrated how much they loved them.


Alan Dare was doing what people in the bush do—looking after the interests of his neighbour; an act of kindness that resulted in his death. A neighbour, a friend, a father and a husband; his daughter, Renee, expressed her thoughts about her father at his funeral in Ipswich. In her words she read—

Steady as a rock, he was always there, and guys like him are a rare and precious find: generous to a fault, going long where others fall short. They don't brag or boast, they pick up the slack ... they lower the temperature, they don't hold grudges, they unlock potential.

They don't show off, they show up.

I visited Chinchilla and Tara with our local members in the week following this tragedy. The emotion on the street and in the pub was something the likes of which I have not experienced for a long time. They were numb with shock. The people of the district remained resolute and they supported each other. It was at this time that the strength of the people of Chinchilla, Tara and surrounds became obvious. Their wounds will take time to heal, but they remain the strong and united community that they have been for generations.

The opposition supports this motion and we extend our condolences to the family and friends of Rachel McCrow, Matthew Arnold and Alan Dare. Their community will be poorer for their passing, but their lives will remain as an example to us all.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (11.27 am): I rise to speak in support of the condolence motion for Queensland Police Service constables Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow and Mr Alan Dare. When we leave for work we have every expectation that we will come home safe. When we say goodbye to our loved ones we expect to be reunited at the end of the day or our shift. Tragically, on 12 December 2022 Matthew Arnold, Rachel McCrow and Alan Dare walked out of their front doors and never came home.


Constables Arnold and McCrow served with honour and were dedicated to keeping their community safe. The reason they were at the house was to search for a missing person—to bring them home. Constable Matthew Arnold was described as a big man with an even bigger heart, so filled with love for everyone around him. His family were not surprised by his decision to join the service, saying they knew from when he was just a little boy that he would go on to dedicate his life to the service of others.

Constable Rachel McCrow has been described as a kind and positive person and an amazing mum to her beloved dog, Archibald. A member of her academy class spoke so warmly of the woman who organised fitness tests to make sure everyone else was ready and was there for anyone who needed her.

I never met Matthew or Rachel, but it is clear Queensland lost two shining lights that day. Rachel and Matthew have left a lasting memory on their colleagues, their families and Queenslanders. Both chose to become police officers to serve their communities and put the lives of others above their own. Both, had they been given the chance, would have gone on to do great and remarkable things.

By all accounts, Alan Dare was a man of immense heart. On the day that he was murdered he was acting out of concern for his neighbours. Smelling smoke and hearing gunfire, Alan walked out of the home he shared with his wife to check that everyone was okay, but he never came home.

To their families: please know that we are so proud of them. The events of that day rocked Queensland and the whole country. I have never seen such an outpouring from around the country for those three families and, of course, for the Queensland police family. I will not be using the perpetrators' names. To do so would give them the legacy they wanted. Extremism of all stripes has no place in our state, this violence has no place in our community and harmful ideology has no place in Queensland. We will continue to come together as a state and a community who cares for and loves one another. For Rachel, Matthew and Alan, each of them is a hero. We will remember Matthew, Rachel and Alan and the sacrifice they made.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.30 am): I rise to contribute to this condolence motion. Mr Speaker, 12 December 2020 will be forever etched in Queensland's history as one of our darkest days. It was a day that shocked Queensland and it was a day that forever changed the Queensland Police Service. Constables Rachel McCrow and Matthew Arnold and a good Samaritan, Alan Dare, tragically lost their lives at Wieambilla on that day, and I am both humbled and proud to contribute to this condolence motion here today. I know that I speak on behalf of my parliamentary colleagues and both former police officers, the member for Lockyer and the member for Ninderry, in delivering my contribution here today.

When police officers are sworn in they take an oath that includes inter alia 'that I will cause His Majesty's peace to be kept and preserved; that I will prevent to the best of my power all offences against the same'. On that day that is exactly what Rachel and Matthew did. They upheld their oath and they gave up their lives for each and every Queenslanders.

In recent days I have spoken to some of Rachel and Matthew's former work colleagues, including Constable Matt Herbert, who shared their insights into what it was like to live and work with Rachel and Matthew. According to Matt, the QPS lost two of their best and brightest. They were not just work colleagues; they were mates, socialising together and making the most of living and working in Tara. He described Matt as a ladies' man. He was known as the fastest man in Dalby after winning a footrace wearing his RM Williams. They were both super keen and they were good at what they did. Rachel had a knowledge beyond her years. She loved her mum, but she loved her blue heeler Archie even more. Archie and Rachel spent all of their time together and he was very protective of her. Now living with Rachel's mum, he still to this day stands vigil waiting for her to come home. Her bubbly personality made her a friend to everyone, and her goals and aspirations for higher rank were often the cause of many jokes amongst her colleagues, with some even joking that she was destined to become a

commissioner down the track. Matt was studious, he was a larrikin, but he was very, very close to his family. He loved his brand new Ford Ranger. He was out there cleaning and polishing it every day, and he loved the lifestyle and general duties he performed in that community.

The third Queenslander we lost that day was a man who always showed up. Alan Dare's best mate Max told the *Brisbane Times* that Alan had earned the nickname 'Rambo' because, like the Hollywood hero, he was always there when someone needed a hand. When Alan was laid to rest, accompanied by the biggest showing of classic Fords in Ipswich for 20 years, people who had never met Alan held up signs calling him a hero, and they were right. It was the words of Alan's daughter that best described Alan: he was a giant; a big man who did the little things, the things that really matter; the sympathetic ear; the helping hand; the heart of gold; the voice of reason; steady as a rock, he was always there. They show up. On 12 December Alan Dare did show up. Today we remember his courage and acknowledge a hero. He was the neighbour we would all like to have—someone willing to give a hand and, more importantly, someone you could rely on in times of need. Indeed, the Wieambilla community has lost a true friend and a hero.

As the shadow minister, I travelled to Tara and Chinchilla where I met Rachel and Matt's colleagues following the events of 12 December. I can tell you that the pain felt by Rachel and Matthew's police family was as keen as the pain felt by their family and friends outside of the Police Service. What we saw on that day were barbaric acts—that can never be understated—but we also saw bravery, comradeship and community members actively seeking to help their friends and neighbours. We saw courage and bravery by police officers and community members not just as the incident unfolded but also during the rescue of constables Randall Kirk and Keely Brough and well beyond as fellow officers grieved and came to terms with the events of that day.

Today, as a community and as members of this place we must commit to recognising that family members, friends and colleagues are still grieving. Coming to terms with the events of that day does not come with a time frame; it comes with the support and admiration of all Queenslanders. To Alan, Rachel and Matthew I say thank you. Your deeds will not be forgotten by Queenslanders and your courage will be remembered.

I would like to conclude with the *Police Ode*, which is recited at National Police Remembrance Day each year to extoll the virtues in verse and in appreciation of a deceased law officer's self-sacrifice and devotion to duty—

As the sun surely sets:

Dawn will see it arise,

For service, above self,

Demands its own prize.

You have fought the good fight:

Life's race has been run,

And peace, your reward,

For eternity begun.

And we that are left,

Shall never forget,

Rest in peace friend and colleague,

For the sun has now set.

We will remember.

We will remember.

Hasten the dawn.



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.36 am): We all have a heavy heart today as this parliament acknowledges the tragic loss of Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Mr Alan Dare, whose lives were so senselessly taken on 12 December 2022. I acknowledge that the hurt and sadness will go on for many, many people, including the Commissioner and her executive leadership team whom I would like to acknowledge in the public gallery today.

It is with great sadness that we are all here today as we remember Alan Dare and our fallen Queensland police officers, who paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect their community doing their jobs and doing their duty. It should have been a routine job for four bright young police officers working and living in our state's serene Western Downs region. Instead, the events that unfolded would leave the police community, the Western Downs community, the Queensland community—in fact, every community around our nation—rocked to its core by an unthinkable act of evil. Two of the best young

constables of the Queensland Police Service, Constable Rachel McCrow and Constable Matthew Arnold, were murdered along with local resident Alan Dare, while the lives of their two brave colleagues, Constable Randall Kirk and Constable Keely Brough, will never be the same.

Despite the risks involved, police officers continue to do their jobs, to do what needs to be done. They put their safety at risk and vow to protect the community at all costs. Each day they go to work with the understanding that they may not come home, but it is their commitment to their duty, to their service and to their community that makes police officers who they are. The harrowing situation those police officers were confronted with when they responded to what seemed to be a routine call, only to be ambushed and murdered, is nothing short of horrific. The death of a loved one in any circumstance is a hard burden to bear, but this senseless loss of life at the hands of evil will forever remain etched in the minds of all good people around our state.

It is my hope that the McCrow, Arnold and Dare families know that we grieve with them, we grieve for them and we will always grieve alongside them. I extend my deepest and sincerest sympathies and condolences to the McCrow family, to the Arnold family, to the Dare family and to their extended family and friends. My thoughts are and will always be with you.

Constable Matthew Arnold and Constable Rachel McCrow joined the Police Service in March 2020 and June 2021 respectively. They each began their careers policing in Dalby, before transferring to Tara Police Station. Matthew was a triplet and a gifted athlete. Even after his school graduation, he remained involved with the school as a coach. This clear drive to give back, to make impactful change on the lives of those around him, and his love for and sense of community is what would make Matthew the ultimate police officer. He brought compassion and commitment to the role and a drive to serve those he vowed to protect.


Rachel McCrow came from a family that understood the fulfilment of serving others and she embraced that path with great passion. She was not just kind; she was supportive. She was a good friend, but she was also an inspiration to those around her. Rachel would go above and beyond the necessary roles of her job and she possessed all the vital skills that any successful police officer should strive for. Above all else, it was Rachel's humanity that she will be remembered for—always wearing her heart on her sleeve, being a friend to everyone, a confidant to her peers.

The outpouring of grief from across the country for Matthew and Rachel is a testament to the remarkable individuals they were, both professionally and personally. We all mourn for their families who must now carry on without them. We mourn for the communities, for their friends and for the police family. We will never know what Rachel and Matthew were to become or what great achievements certainly lay in front of them. I hope their families can find some comfort in knowing that the legacy of their loved ones will live on through the good and hardworking members of the Queensland Police Service.

Today I acknowledge the tragedy that unfolded in December last year, but so too do I acknowledge the bravery, the courage and the dedication of the Queensland Police Service officers on that day. I acknowledge the efforts of Randall Kirk and Keely Brough. Although their physical injuries may soon be healed, I know the impacts of this day will last a lifetime. I would like to give recognition to the courageous officers who knowingly entered into the firing line to retrieve their own and to the other officers who worked throughout the night to keep the community safe. Their bravery in the face of danger is a testament to the professionalism and commitment of the Queensland Police Service and a credit to their own character and selflessness. We thank you and we appreciate you today and every day.

To the Queensland Police Union of Employees President Ian Leavers, we thank him for his support and all he has done alongside his union colleagues to support the families and the broader police family. I want to also express my deep gratitude and sympathies to the Police Commissioner, Katarina Carroll. Your compassion, selflessness and steadfast leadership was a rock for many—even for complete strangers who were seeking reassurance in these troubled times. To you and the entire police family, we say thank you. Collectively, you have been through an unthinkable loss, but in this time of great sadness and loss you banded together and each and every day since you have continued to protect Queenslanders and continued to support your colleagues.

This tragedy will remain a dark part of Queensland's history but we can never let it shape us. Collectively, we must all do our part to ensure good always prevails over evil. We will carry the legacies of our two great Queensland police officers, Rachel and Matthew, in all we do. Queensland and the nation will forever remember them because it was with honour they served.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.43 am): I rise to contribute to the condolence motion for the Wieambilla local Alan Dare, Constable Rachel McCrow and Constable Matthew Arnold. Alan Dare and his wife Kerry lived in the Warrego electorate about halfway between Tara and Chinchilla. Rachel and Matthew were police officers stationed at the Tara Police Station in my electorate. Both had served as general duties officers at the Dalby Police Station prior to working at Tara.

There is not one single factor that explains this incident—there are multiple contributing factors—and no doubt more will come to light once the Coroner reports his findings. The horrific incident that happened at Wieambilla on the afternoon of 12 December 2022 left six people deceased. It touched the soul of the nation. Police officers Constable Rachel McCrow and Constable Matthew Arnold and a neighbour, Alan Dare, all lost their lives on that fateful afternoon. What happened is not something that Australians expect in this country. The quiet rural area of Wieambilla has become etched in history—a history which is difficult for the people who live there to understand.

On behalf of the communities of Wieambilla and Tara, I wish to pass on our deepest sympathy to Rachel's family and friends, especially Judy, Wayne and Samantha, and Rachel's dog Archibald. Our deepest sympathy is with Matthew's family and friends, especially his triplet brother James and sister Hayley, and parents Terry and Sue. To lose a sibling is a tragedy; to lose a triplet is indescribable. Similarly, our deepest sympathy is with Kerry Dare and her family—Kerry is watching today—Corey, Renee and Rose and their families and extended friends. It is incredibly tough on the Dare family. They have lost their rock Alan, who was a giant to them, a big man who did little things and loved his Ford motor vehicles. These three families are in our thoughts and will be for many years to come.


Constables Keely Brough and Randall Kirk survived that day. Randall managed to flee back to his vehicle and alert police command. Keely was able to hide in the nearby bushland. Both Randall and Keely and their families need our support, and they are always in our thoughts. What they have experienced has been horrific and it will be with them for the rest of their lives. There are 16 other police officers from Miles, Chinchilla, Dalby and surrounding stations who had to lead the extraction team to the property on that afternoon. They too need our support and we should remember their incredibly brave efforts on that day.

Rachel and Matthew were police officers that every community wants. They took community policing and respect for the police to a higher level. They were well respected in the Tara community for the way in which they did their job—so much so that a few days after the incident there were some individuals who were wanted for questioning about their criminal behaviour who came up to the police station, laid their tribute flowers and proceeded to hand themselves in to the police voluntarily. Many Tara locals have told me stories about how helpful and kind both Rachel and Matthew were to them with their day-to-day police matters.

A further crime incident occurred in Tara in January this year. It again shook the fabric of the Tara community. Regrettably, over the weekend of 11 and 12 February, bushfires destroyed 18 structures, many of which were homes, in the Wieambilla district area. I also want to acknowledge the impact of those fires on the Montrose area. Sadly, media reports indicate that the bushfires may have occurred due to alleged arson. When it comes to Tara and Wieambilla, these communities just do not seem to catch a lucky break. I was in Tara a week ago and I can advise the House that there are still flowers being laid outside the Tara Police Station. This will continue for a long time.

I want to acknowledge those members of this parliament from both sides of the House who at the time reached out personally to me and my office. Your support is greatly appreciated. Tara has lost two young, bright police officers, and Wieambilla has lost 18 structures and homes in a bushfire and a local resident in just three months.

If six lives were lost due to a flood or a bushfire, there would be a disaster declaration, and services and support from many agencies would engage to assist the community over a period of time. In the circumstances that presented on Monday, 12 December, there is no disaster declaration. Afterwards there is a void, a void that can be felt in the community and can be seen on the faces of the people in those communities. A lot of work will need to be done to help the community heal, as every day they feel the loss of Rachel and Matthew and Alan. The Wieambilla and Tara communities will never forget the contribution of Alan and Rachel and Matthew. Vale, Alan Dare, Rachel McCrow and Matthew Arnold.


 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (11.50 am): For the differences we often express in this place, I think all members acknowledge how lucky, how fortunate, how honoured we are to live in Queensland—a place of peace, of prosperity and



stability. Those fundamental values are anchored in the bedrock of the rule of law, and at the front line of the rule of law and the protections it provides to all of us are the courageous men and women of the Queensland Police Service.

The protection of the community can be exhausting, both physically and mentally. It can be relentless, and at times it can be suddenly and inexplicably dangerous. When constables Rachel McCrow, Matthew Arnold, Keely Brough and Randall Kirk—the best of us—drove down Wayne's Road at Wieambilla last December, they had no doubt experienced the broad range of the highs and lows of policing during their careers, but nothing could prepare them for the evil that lay in wait. It is impossible to imagine what went through their minds as their training kicked into gear, or the emotions that went through the minds of their colleagues over the difficult hours that followed until the situation was brought to its inevitable conclusion, or that of their neighbour, Alan Dare, who did the thing so many Queenslanders instinctively do: he went to the assistance of his neighbours when he sensed there was trouble. Little did he know the very real threat were the neighbours themselves.

Queenslanders are used to dealing with adversity, even to witnessing tragedy, but what occurred on 12 December shook all of us to the core. It struck at the very core of what we know to be true about ourselves and our society. But Queensland is strong. Our rules-based order is strong, and today and every day the men and women of the Queensland Police Service and all our emergency services deserve to know that our trust in them, our confidence in them, our belief in them, our respect in them and our appreciation of them is strong and it can never be shaken.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (11.53 am): I rise to contribute to and support this condolence motion. When I signed up to run for the seat of Callide, I had no idea and certainly no inclination of the atrocity that could and would happen. Not only could you think this simply would not happen anywhere, but for it to occur in my own backyard was, and is, beyond comprehension.

Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and civilian Alan Dare lost their lives in a vile, horrific, callous and cold-blooded attack. This was not just an attack on the police, but an attack on my community, on the people of Wieambilla, of Tara, of Chinchilla and not only the Western Downs but also all of Queensland and all our great nation. It was a terror attack from three of the most evil of beings.

In the aftermath of that event, on 12 December 2022, I saw my community more broken than I could ever imagine. There was not a soul in my region who did not feel pain and grief that week. The huge floral tributes at local police stations placed by people who came from all across the state show how widely this was felt. There were people who I never thought I would see shed a tear who were crying alongside thousands. Even the most seasoned of police officers were shaken to their core. This event again highlighted what our men and women in blue put on the line for every Queenslanders every single day when they put on that uniform.

Alan Dare was a good citizen and a good neighbour who would always go above and beyond to help anyone he could. Alan lost his life in doing what he did best; he lost it being a good neighbour. I just hope that every other good neighbour across Queensland does not cede to the fear that this event has instilled.

When a singular event inflicts so much pain, it is easy to go looking for answers that may not exist. I still certainly have many questions as to how this could have happened, especially in my own backyard, but I understand such a complex investigation will take time, and I ask everyone to be patient until all questions can be answered.

Constables Randall Kirk and Keely Brough are the two other officers that attended that fateful afternoon and managed to make it out alive. One cannot fathom the fear they faced. The way in which Constable Brough conducted herself as she lay in the grass while the evil attackers tried to flush her out by lighting fires shows how much of a fine officer she already was only weeks out from graduating from the Police Academy. What we do know is that no-one was meant to make it out of that property alive. It is a thought that very much haunts other officers that could have been the ones on that job.


Constable Brough was fortunate to have a weak phone signal from a nearby gas plant. Through this, her only working means of communication, she was able to provide vital information and communicate with the Queensland Police. Because of this vital information she was able to provide, Sergeant Vern Crous of the Miles Police Station was able to lead a team of 15 brave local police officers with very limited equipment in an extraction effort under heavy gunfire. Their efforts ultimately saved the life of Constable Brough and recovered Constable McCrow and Constable Arnold.

I do hope that both Keely and Randall are able to continue their policing careers, move on and cope with the trauma of this horrible attack. The state of Queensland, the Police Service and my community are all better off with them in uniform. Move on and cope will be about all my community will be able to do, for we will never get over it and we will certainly never forget. The week that followed was the hardest week I have ever faced. I hope I never have to experience anything like it again.

To the families of Alan, Rachel and Matthew, while words cannot remove the pain you feel, we stand with you. We lost two fine young officers and a great citizen, while you lost someone close to your hearts. We are forever sorry. Please know you are always welcome back to our community and, of course, we are here for any support you may want or need.

To the men and women of the Queensland Police Service, on behalf of the people of the Western Downs and the electorate of Callide, I thank you for your service. Know you have my support in what you do for us every single day.

To echo the words of the member for Maranoa, it is all but impossible to become a local in a small country town. To Alan Dare, Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow, you are all locals now. With honour they served. Rest in peace.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.59 am): A priority as Minister for Industrial Relations is that every worker returns home safely each and every day. Queenslanders deserve to be safe in their local communities. Sadly for some, that is not always the case. We were all deeply saddened to learn of the tragic deaths of police constables Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow and neighbour Alan Dare on 12 December last year.

I express my deepest and most sincere condolences to the families and friends of Matthew, Rachel and Alan. These three lives were taken in the most horrific of circumstances. It rocked us all not only in Queensland but around the nation. In the days following there was sheer disbelief that something like this could happen and there was a huge outpouring of grief.

I accompanied the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer to the Queensland Police Memorial in Brisbane Botanic Gardens to pay our respects. I also attended the moving and incredibly sad memorial service for Matthew and Rachel. I know all who attended were overwhelmed by the heartfelt, respectful manner in which the memorial service was organised.


We are committed to do all we can to ensure the health and safety of workers, especially our frontline workers, who put their lives on the line every day to keep Queenslanders safe. Our thoughts are with Matthew's and Rachel's colleagues whose lives were no doubt changed forever on that day.

Last year we proudly passed legislation in this House that provides presumptive workers compensation benefits for first responders suffering from PTSD. This tragedy is a stark reminder of the dangers our police officers face every day and the amazing and dedicated work of our first responders.

Last year I was extremely proud to attend the police graduation of my nephew Izac. I know the Police Commissioner was there as well. Seeing the pride in Izac's face and that of my sister and other families at his graduation was a proud moment for me as, too, was seeing Izac attend the memorial service, travelling from the Gold Coast where he is based.

I have the greatest respect for our brave police officers who choose to dedicate their working life to protecting and serving Queensland. My heart aches for the families of Matthew and Rachel who also recently attended their graduations. These young and dedicated police officers deserved to have a long and fulfilling life.

I also want to acknowledge the loss of Alan Dare, who lost his life while simply trying to be a good neighbour—an absolute tragedy. My sincere condolences go to Alan's family and friends. May they all rest in peace.


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (12.02 pm): I rise to speak to the condolence motion on behalf of the members for Traeger and Hinchinbrook. Constable Rachel McCrow was only 29 years old and was sworn into the Queensland Police Service in June 2021. Constable Matthew Arnold was only 26 years old and was sworn into the QPS in March 2020. Both have been described as beautiful people.

I cannot even begin to fathom the heartbreak of Constable Rachel McCrow's and Constable Matthew Arnold's family, friends and fellow officers. I was deeply saddened upon hearing of the tragedy, as were all Queenslanders. I immediately contacted the acting officer in charge to express and pass on my condolences as I knew this would have a profound and devastating effect on all those in the service statewide. I would like to make mention of Constable Randall Kirk and Constable Keely Brough, both

aged 28, who witnessed the terrible shooting that claimed the lives of their friends and colleagues. They will both need the love and friendship of their family, friends and colleagues to reconcile what they witnessed.


We also pay our respects to Alan Dare, who also tragically lost his life when he went out to investigate and offer aid to the officers. Alan has been described by his family as a loving father, husband and poppy.

Those who have dedicated their lives to and those who are just entering the Queensland Police Service must continue to be looked after and given every support possible to carry out their duties. We offer sincere and humble condolences to all those who have lost their lives and those who have been deeply affected by this tragedy. Rest in peace.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (12.04 pm): Those evil events of last year near Tara which led to the deaths of two of our finest Queensland police officers have sent shock waves across our state and our nation. Two police heroes, Constable Matthew Arnold and Constable Rachel McCrow lost their life while on duty doing what they were trained to do. Two other police officers, Constable Randall Kirk and Constable Keely Brough, were also involved in the incident as well as an innocent member of the public, Alan Dare, who was also killed. The sacrifice of those two police officers and the willingness of the neighbour Alan to investigate what was going on will never be forgotten by Queenslanders.

Our serving officers of the Queensland Police Service, who assist Queenslanders day in, day out in their efforts, are greatly appreciated but not always acknowledged in the way they should. It is horrific events like this that highlight the dangers that our police officers face and the fact that the service has lost two wonderful constables. Family friends and their colleagues all have seen the outpouring of grief from everyday Queenslanders—genuine grief—and the realisation of the dangers that are faced by our police. As a son of a former police officer, I can say there was never a time when it crossed my mind that my father would not be coming home. Unfortunately, for these constables' families that is not the case. No doubt this tragedy is devastating for us all.

I want to extend my condolences to the families of the police officers and also Mr Dare. I extend my appreciation to the Queensland Police Union for the work they continue to do and to the Queensland Police Service. Truly with honour they serve.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.05 pm): I rise in support of the motion before the House and to offer my reflections on this tragic event. The day 12 December 2022 marks one of the deadliest days in Queensland's police history, a day when we lost three wonderful Queenslanders: Constable Rachel McCrow, Constable Matthew Arnold and Mr Alan Dare. The actions of all three on that devastating day embodied the qualities of courage, compassion and commitment, qualities that we should all strive to emulate in our own lives.

Like the rest of Queensland, I was deeply shocked by this horrific shooting. As the Prime Minister said at the time, it was a deadly ambush that has stolen lives, broken hearts, devastated a community and shocked the nation. The outpouring of shock and grief across Queensland which we saw in the wake of this shooting is testament to a rarity of such events in this state. Four bright police officers set off that afternoon to carry out what they believed was a routine call. Two of the constables were from the Tara Police Station and two from Chinchilla Police Station. All four officers were only in their 20s—just kids in many respects—with every right to expect a long and fulfilling life ahead of them. The four constables arrived at the Wieambilla property at 4.30 pm but they were almost immediately cut down in a hail of bullets. Miraculously, two of the four somehow managed to make a retreat and survived. Sadly, two of them, Constable Rachel McCrow and Constable Matthew Arnold, would not return home again that day. Both were murdered in a savage act of violence that defies comprehension.

Constable Rachel McCrow, the first to be gunned down, had only been sworn in as a police officer in June 2021. She was described by friends as a selfless and dedicated person who genuinely cared about others, someone who always went above and beyond and who took enormous pride in her job. Constable Matthew Arnold was just 26 years old and he, too, was relatively new to the force, having only been sworn in during March 2020. He served as a Queensland police officer for just two years and nine months. Matthew was a triplet and a very talented athlete. According to his former school principal, he will always be remembered as a man of service, integrity and compassion. Both of these young officers paid a terrible price that day, one that no-one should have to pay for the simple act of doing their job.

Tragically, neighbour Alan Dare was also shot and killed that day. Alan was due to celebrate his 26th wedding anniversary that week, which must have made his loss doubly painful for his loving family. My condolences go to them. Alan has been described by friends as an extremely kind man who looked after disadvantaged teenagers and was always ready to offer a helping hand. He, too, was a hero.


Like so many others who live and work in the regions, Alan saw smoke at a neighbour's property and immediately went to offer assistance, a simple act of neighbourly concern and kindness for which he, too, was savagely gunned down. Alan displayed the same courage and selflessness as the two young officers who died alongside him that day.

I would also like to pay tribute to the two young police officers who suffered injuries that will probably stay with them for the rest of their lives: Constable Randall Kirk, who was shot and wounded, and Constable Keely Brough, who also thought she was going to die but still managed to get word to her police colleagues and to call for help. That help was not long in coming, either. The extreme bravery of the officers who responded to this call for help also needs to be acknowledged and commended. Despite knowing that they were going to a scene where an active shooting was taking place, each of these officers put their own personal safety to one side and rushed to the aid of their colleagues. In doing so, they showed extraordinary courage and loyalty in the face of extreme danger.

We are indebted to all members of our policing community. Emergency services personnel often put their own lives at risk in the service of others. Today's motion provides this House with the opportunity to pause and honour all of our police officers, who serve and protect our community. These officers know the dangers they may face on joining the force. Despite this, these officers continue to get up each day, don their uniform and go out to do a job which may one day cost them their lives. This is true courage and true dedication. I pay tribute to each and every one. It is because of these officers that the rest of us get to sleep soundly in our beds every night—officers like constables McCrow, Arnold, Kirk and Brough.

Finally, I acknowledge the work that our forensic officers and others did in carrying out their investigation in the aftermath of this horrific shooting. It would have been a far from pleasant job, and I am sure many would have been deeply scarred by the experience.

Attacks like this one strike at the very heart of who we are as a state and as a nation. It was the savagery of this violent act which struck the hardest. It is vital that we ensure everything possible is done to get to the bottom of what happened that day and why—to ensure it will never happen again. To the heartbroken families of all three victims, I say: please know that this House and all Queenslanders mourn with you today. Your loved ones were all extraordinary human beings and their loss has left a gaping hole in our community—a hole that no amount of time or distance can fill. These officers served Queensland with courage, dedication and distinction. May they rest in peace.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (12.11 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the condolence motion. 'As the sun surely sets: dawn will see it arise, for service, above self, demands its own prize.' 12 December 2022 will forever be etched in the memory of the Queensland Police Service. I wish I had pretty words to say and I wish that I had words that could provide comfort, but words are all we have in this place so in my contribution I will choose my words carefully. There have been a lot of words used to describe the events of the 12th of the 12th—an execution, an ambush, domestic terrorism—but I choose to remember the good that we saw in Queenslanders that day, specifically our Queenslanders in uniform and our everyday neighbours.

The blue family is grieving. It is a big family, and it is not just those who put on the blue uniform. We have a large number of civilians who assist us in the day-to-day job. The blue family extends to our immediate and extended family as well. It is not just 10,000, 12,000 or 15,000 people; it is a much bigger family. I recall exactly where I was that afternoon. Because the blue family is extended, I heard the news through the police network texts coming in on my phone. Much like everyone else, we are fighting for information. We need to know, because it could very easily have been a friend or a colleague.


For those of us who have worked in training, when we see recruits graduate and we send them off into the world we only hope that they will come out the other side and that we will see them and catch up with them on Police Remembrance Day, not that we will be calling out their name and lighting a candle for them on Police Remembrance Day. It touches everyone because 'there but for the grace of God go I'. That was a shift: two to 10. Get dressed, put the uniform on, go to work, sign out your gear, kit up and see what jobs are ready for the day. A missing person job, an inquiry—it is that simple. No-one goes to work thinking 'this is the day', but for a police officer that is an all-too-real possibility and, as we saw on the 12th of the 12th, it was all too real and tragic.

We have all attended that job, but almost all of us get to walk away. When two of our colleagues walk in and find themselves face to face with an evil and premeditated act, we can only feel helpless. What else could we have done? We will look and review and do our best to keep everyone safe, but in the face of an evil like they faced that day, I am afraid I have no words.

I thank the police officers from the local area who went out to recover their fallen brother and sister. I thank the police officers and specialist officers who travelled and then stayed throughout the night to make sure that incident was resolved. I thank every Queensland police officer who turned up for work the next day, because that is no easy thing to do. That is what police do: they take the burden, they shoulder it and they turn up to work. They stand shoulder to shoulder in their grief and they keep Queenslanders safe.

The next day I attended the police memorial across the road with my kids. I sat on the grass while my kids collected some flowers to put on the memorial. The police family is an extended family. I think we all must be cautious of the impact this has on the extended families of our police officers, because all too suddenly the job that their loved ones do is very real. I know that for my kids, having a serving police officer father, it is a hard thing to grasp—to hear the news and see all of the coverage and to face the real possibility of what it means to be a serving police officer in Queensland. It is a difficult conversation to have, but we have to have it because we need our police—and they need us. To be able to turn up to work every day, they need our support. So I will turn up in this place every day, and I will be there every day for my kids, to make sure they have the support they need—that they know they are in a loving family and are part of the blue family.

What we do here in Queensland, as exemplified by Mr Alan Dare, is be there for each other when needed, whether that is at the beginning of the shift or at the end of the shift. Welcome them home, share their stories and enjoy the time you have. 'Rest in peace friend and colleague, for the sun has now set. We will remember. Hasten the dawn.'

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.19 pm): I rise to add a few words to this condolence motion for Rachel McCrow, Matthew Arnold and Alan Dare. Whenever I hear that biblical question posed, 'Who is my neighbour?' the name Alan Dare will come to mind from this point forward.

I wanted to particularly focus a few comments on the families of police officers at this difficult time. On 12 December they would have been doing what many of us were doing—that is, thinking about Christmas and getting ready for Christmas Day and celebrations with family—when suddenly their worlds were shattered.

I, like a lot of people who have police in the family, am very proud of their service. My brother did 35 years in the Northern Territory police and did a number of years as the president of the police association in the Northern Territory and then the president of the Police Federation of Australia, and one of the unfortunate duties that he had to perform was to attend police funerals. Unfortunately, during his tenure he came to Brisbane on far too many occasions and I always accompanied him to those funerals. I will never forget the faces of the families during those funerals. People who have police in their family are extremely proud of the service of those people who keep our communities safe. They know the risks that they take and they support them, and whenever they hear of the death of a police officer their thoughts immediately go to those families who are impacted.

I also wanted to just say a few words for Keely Brough and Randall Kirk. This will be an incredibly difficult time. It will be a life-altering—hopefully not shattering—event for them and their families and our thoughts are also with them. I hope the families of everyone involved find peace and I hope that Rachel, Matthew and Alan rest in peace.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will honourable members please indicate their agreement by standing in silence for one minute.


*Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.*

## LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 22 February (see p. 203), on motion of Mr Stewart—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KING** (Kurrongbah—ALP) (12.22 pm): Today I rise to contribute to the debate on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, a bill designed to help us remain responsive to change

and be efficient and effective in our resources regulatory framework. The Transport and Resources Committee inquired into this bill and tabled our report a while back. We made three recommendations, including that the bill be passed.

This bill is important for many reasons. Firstly, it makes some technical corrections to a couple of pieces of legislation; it streamlines, simplifies and increases efficiency in administrative processes governed by the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2020, including some land lease conditions and conversions; it repeals three pieces of outdated legislation where the purpose of the legislation has been fulfilled or usurped; and it amends survey and mapping legislation to recognise technological advances and new user needs in the survey standard making process.

Secondly, this bill brings into the digital age old requirements in several pieces of legislation to publish notices in newspapers such as those for placename changes by allowing notifications to be made by other suitable media channels instead. We have seen similar amendments across other legislation in recent years because we know there are far less newspapers in circulation these days, particularly in regional areas. Prior to the new *Moreton Daily* newspaper expanding into some suburbs across my electorate of Kurwongbah, my own community was forced to go online for news after the local Quest newspapers shut up shop some years ago. This is a brief digression, but I have to say that there were many cheers when *Moreton Daily* came along.


The third reason this bill is important is through its amendments to the Stock Route Management Act 2002 that will improve the ability of local governments to recover costs associated with managing the stock route network, ease the red tape around the preparation of stock route management plans and improve consultation between state and local governments to minimise risks where stock routes are located on or next to state controlled roads, waterways and other protected areas. For those who do not know, the Queensland stock route network comprises about 2.6 million hectares, or well over six million soccer fields, and includes 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves and corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated state land. I know a lot more about stock routes having worked alongside the member for Gregory for a bit of time because of his particular passion for them.

I want to take a moment here to thank all of the local governments across Queensland that help manage our stock routes. We know it is a big job. That is why we are making amendments to allow local governments to retain permit fees and other charges and to charge an applicable fee. Our amendments also build in flexibility for local governments to waive these fees in times of hardship like drought. Our changes to stock route management follow extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation undertaken in 2019 which, in turn, formed a discussion paper. I want to thank everyone who engaged with those consultation processes including AgForce, LGAQ, individual local governments and environmental groups.

Finally, this bill will make some amendments to the Vegetation Management Act 1999. Due to feedback from the majority of stakeholders, our committee made a recommendation that the minister revisit the proposed amendment to certify the regulation vegetation status rather than this be included in the Vegetation Management Regulation. In the government response the minister said that he will address this in consideration in detail and he backed that up in his second reading speech. Vegetation management is even an issue in my area and members would be surprised—or maybe they would not be—how often property owners carrying out land clearing overshoot their legally prescribed boundaries right across Queensland, including in Kurwongbah. Land-clearing laws are regularly raised with me, even in the semirural suburb of Joyner, the most southern part of my electorate, so I welcome clarification and discussion on land-clearing laws in this bill.

I know resources legislation is not exciting to everyone but to some of us it is, and the member for Gregory is agreeing with me. However, it is critical to the success of our state. Queensland is up there with the best in the nation when it comes to recovery from the effects of COVID-19. One of the big reasons is our fantastic resources industry, so I want to leave members with a few quick facts about the contribution of the Queensland resources industry. In the 2020-21 financial year the resources sector: invested over \$38 billion in direct spending across the state; supported over 15,000 local businesses; helped 1,430 community groups with funding in areas of need including health, education, environment and the arts; and employed the full-time equivalent of almost 55,000 workers. Overall, the Queensland Resources Council estimated a contribution of \$84 billion to the state's economy in that financial year. This type of investment would not be possible without sound, responsive legislative and regulatory oversight. I thank the minister and his department for ensuring that Queensland remains an attractive place to do business while balancing the impacts on our land, water, climate and the interests of our First Nations and farming communities. It is not always an easy task.

I will conclude with my thanks to the Transport and Resources Committee and its many members across the time since then, including the changes we have had to the secretariat, which is equally hardworking and we really appreciate it. I reiterate our recommendation that this bill be passed.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.28 pm): Thank you for those kind words, Chair. Stock routes are very important to Queensland. They play a significant role in animal welfare and also in increasing our agricultural abilities through tough times and drought.

Before addressing the contents of this omnibus bill, I want to draw the attention of the House to the concerns of the Transport and Resources Committee with the explanatory notes. As deputy chair of that committee, I share the concerns of all committee members with the poor quality of these explanatory notes. They made it difficult for the committee because the explanatory notes and the relevant clause numbers do not correctly align with the clauses being explained. This made it so difficult to clearly assess the effects of the bill that at our 4 May meeting last year the committee was in the unusual position of having to request the explanatory notes be corrected. This is not the professional standard that Queenslanders have a right to expect.

The bill makes substantial changes to the operation of Queensland stock routes and, like AgForce and the Local Government Association of Queensland, I welcome these amendments. Queensland's stock route network consists of 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves and dedicated corridors across pastoral leases and unallocated state land. Together with the dedicated reserves for travelling stock, they make up the 2.6 million hectares we call the Queensland stock route network.

At the 2012 election Labor premier Anna Bligh proposed the entire 2.6 million hectares be declared for nature conservation. This would have been an economic disaster on an unseen scale. Fortunately this did not happen because the Labor government was swept from office in an historic political defeat. By the skin of our teeth Queensland did not lose its stock routes in 2012 just as the epic drought commenced its slow creep across Queensland from west to east. The whole episode showed that the Labor government at the time did not understand the purpose or the value of Queensland's stock routes. They had spent decades trying to shift the maintenance of the stock routes to local governments while grabbing the fees collected from drovers. In doing so they neglected the maintenance of the stock routes: the fencing, the water points and even the mapping. Of equal concern was the abrogation of the state government's duty to coordinate the movement of travelling stock across some 48 local government areas.

For the benefit of those members who may not know how it works, the concept is that if you can keep the state's herds and flocks from diminishing during drought, especially the breeding stock, then recovery is much faster when the drought ends. During droughts stock is walked on foot, cared for by drovers, from areas with decreasing feed to areas of Queensland still receiving rain and producing pasture. The eastern pastures are a destination and the central parts are a linking corridor. You have to prevent these corridors from being eaten out or cattle would be starved on the way. That is why the management was vested in the state government. The state was supposed to operate the network with a statewide overview.

The last 10 years of drought have shown the true cost of that neglect. Western shires suffering the economic and social impact of the drought were struggling to repair the vital watering points along part of that network. To the east, shires like the Central Highlands found themselves acting as key crossroads as cattle moved from the drought-stricken inland to the coast. Before crossing into a new shire, the drover needs a permit from the shire. The shire will not issue the permit if they do not have the pasture to support that travelling mob. In recent desperate times staff at the Central Highlands Regional Council were having to ring neighbouring councils to the east to ensure that if they allowed the mob in they would be able to keep them moving east, not back. They did a wonderful job at that. They were doing the state government's job, but they were only permitted to keep 50 per cent of the fees by the users. The bill will resolve a lot of those issues and I congratulate the minister on that achievement. The fees going back to the local government do not even pay for the person sitting on the phone and doing the paperwork. It is a burden on those local governments. Those local governments we are talking about, as the member for Warrego will know, are in financial stress, and to cover the state government's job puts more stress on those local governments.

Managing the industry through the epic drought has proven once again that the long paddock is, indeed, a long-sighted vision, as vital today as it was when our forefathers established it. The amendments will empower local governments to better manage their part of the network. I also welcome the modernisation of the delegation of stock route declaration and amendment of the mapping power. I sincerely hope it is an indication that local governments will be able to adjust the mapping in their

shires to better reflect the current state of development. In the Central Highlands this is desperately needed as progress has seen parts of the stock route overbuilt by roads and rail to support the mining industry. Some landholders find they have isolated pockets of land that are still designated as a stock route but they do not connect to anything else. Canny campers can set themselves up on such land and the landholder has no right to move them on. I hope these amendments will allow landholders to discuss with their local government how to fix these kinds of mapping issues.


I move now to the amendments to the Land Act 1994. I appreciate the department's need to streamline the administration of Queensland's very complex system of land tenure. I pay tribute to the work undertaken by former minister Andrew Cripps to encourage the conversion of perpetual leases to freehold. I hope the intention of these changes is to continue that trend by allowing the chief executive officer to offer a conversion to freehold even when no application has been made. However, I do have concerns around landholders' rights because in a real sense it allows the decisions of unelected bureaucrats to become law.

The chief executive may decide not to renew a lease before receiving a renewal application. The lessee only has the right to appeal such a decision if it is made on the grounds that they failed to comply with the conditions of their lease, but the chief executive may decide not to renew the lease on completely different grounds such as wanting to change the designation of the land to national park or nature conservation. This is a policy matter, not one of land management. Queensland has many grazing leases of historic standing, including over adjoining areas designated national parks. Such lessees have a time-tested record of improving the management of our central and western landscapes. They also generate value to the landholder, the local economy and Queensland's GDP. The Labor Party's policy of converting such leases to protected estate will cause much anxiety and lessees will have extremely limited rights of appeal against such a decision made on an environmental or conservation policy ground.

I am up against the clock, but I must make mention of those amendments to the vegetation management legislation affecting regional grasslands. The effect of clauses 94, 97 and 107 moves the management of our regional grasslands ecosystems from a state of certainty to one of constant change. The amendments allow the regional ecosystem to be identified through the Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database rather than through the Vegetation Management Regulation 2012. The database is maintained by the Queensland Herbarium, and many landholders have already learned that correcting mapping errors on this database can be very difficult. Under these amendments many Gregory landholders will find themselves dealing with a database that can be easily and rapidly changed without parliamentary oversight.

The joint submission from the Environmental Defenders Office and the Wilderness Society blasted the change as one that reduces transparency, accountability and rigour for vegetation management. AgForce expressed their concerns that these clauses introduced the large possibility of rapid change in the mapping interfering with the longer-term business planning of agricultural and land managers. They pointed out to the committee that the ability of an agricultural enterprise to obtain finance could hinge on this rapidly changing database. In recognition of these concerns, the committee recommended that clause 94 not be passed as part of the bill but that the minister revisit these amendments.

As the chair of the Transport and Resources Committee says, I do love stock routes. I love stock routes and agriculture in general. They do play an important role in making sure that we have animal welfare when it comes to drought. In a drought the stock that you need to keep is your breeding stock. If you do not have your breeding stock you cannot start back up as quickly. Drought still exists in Queensland. Yesterday the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities revoked the drought declaration from the Central Highlands and eastern parts of the Barcaldine shire. I hope we get a good season and I hope we continue to see that season continue. There are some parts of this state which are still affected by drought and we need to make sure that we have our stock routes right to go. We need to make sure that the weeds and the pests are cleared up, watering points are brought up to standard and that people can use these stock routes for the purpose they were established for so many years ago to keep Queensland's economy growing.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (12.39 pm): I am pleased to make a contribution to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. It will be a short contribution as I will confine my remarks to the amendments that the bill proposes to the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968. As members would be aware, this is



the legislation that governs the BHP Mitsubishi Alliance mines in our state. The purpose of those amendments is to give effect to a request from the joint venture partners, BHP and Mitsubishi, to enable them to more easily sell the coalmines that are the subject of that agreement.


In recent days there has been some commentary in the media that suggests the decision to sell one of those mines, at Daunia, is somehow related to coal royalties. That suggestion has been driven by prominent LNP member Ian Macfarlane in his capacity as the CEO of the Queensland Resources Council. The content and the context of this bill disproves that idea completely. The House should be aware of the facts.

This bill was introduced by the minister in March 2022, well before the government had made any determination to introduce new progressive coal royalty tiers. The bill gives effect to a request from BHP and Mitsubishi to make these amendments; a request made in 2019, some three years before the royalty change. Therefore, as this bill shows, for that entire time—at least three years—BHP has been looking to sell down its coal portfolio in Queensland, regardless of what happened to royalties.

It is not just coal they are selling out of. BHP has a strategy to move away from hydrocarbons. They sold their oil and gas business last year to Woodside. That is a fact that is well known to Mr Macfarlane because he is a director of Woodside Energy Group Ltd. So let us not put up with this nonsense from the LNP, most recently made yesterday by LNP members in Central Queensland, that state royalties are somehow causing BHP to change their portfolio mix and forcing them to sell mines, particularly a mine that they had contemplated selling more than three years ago.

The transaction contemplated by this bill will not be, by any means, the first time that BHP has sold a coal asset in Queensland. There is a long list of mines that are currently operating that were formerly owned by BHP, including mines such as Gregory Crinium, South Walker, Poitrel and Dawson. Those mines have been sold or transferred to companies such as Peabody, Anglo American and Stanmore. They all continue to operate, employing Queenslanders and generating exports and revenue for the state. I have no doubt that the coalmines that BHP is currently looking to sell will similarly find willing buyers.

On that score, I note that a story this week in the *Australian* newspaper speculated that Coronado Coal and Peabody were likely starters in the 'race' to acquire these mines. That is because the coal mining companies in Queensland are cashed up and have low debt and extremely strong balance sheets as a result of the extraordinarily high prices they are achieving on the global market. Good luck to them because the market is hungry for more. It is why, as this parliament meets, we have a new mine under construction by Pembroke at Olive Downs in the Bowen Basin. We have Whitehaven Coal pursuing approvals to start building the Winchester South mine, also in the Bowen Basin. Therefore, from BHP's perspective, I am sure that this is a good a time to sell those mines and maximise their sale price. The government has no specific objection to them doing so provided they meet their obligations to the community, to their workers and to the environment. These amendments will ensure the legal framework is right in that regard and, on that basis, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (12.42 pm): I rise to speak on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The primary focus of this bill is the management of stock routes. The bill seeks to modernise notification requirements and improve recovery costs for managing the network. The stock route network is a key component in the operation of our cattle industry. It is a crucial piece of the transport infrastructure servicing our \$23 billion agricultural sector.

This bill has been a long time coming. It is a sign of the increasing ineptitude in this government that it cannot get the basics right. The explanatory notes not only had to be corrected; they were substantially corrected. The explanatory notes were so riddled with mistakes that they did not match the bill. They were so bad that even the Labor dominated committee had to recommend the minister table a new set of notes. The committee's recommendation 3 is highly damning. It states—

The committee recommends the Minister table a corrected version of the explanatory notes as a matter of priority and ensure that the electronic version of the document is the same as the tabled document.

The new explanatory notes were sneakily tabled in the quiet hope that interested parties did not notice.

The other sneaky thing that the government did was to insert a clause that seeks to amend the Vegetation Management Regulation. Clause 94 is another sneaky, underhanded attempt to make changes that could be easily disguised. This one even drew the attention of the Labor dominated committee. Recommendation 2 asked the minister to 'revisit the proposed amendment to certify the regulation vegetation status rather than this being included in the Vegetation Management Regulation'.

Let us think about this: it is revealing that the Labor dominated committee highlighted problems with the government's own legislation. The government is so interested in spin over substance that it is not even getting the fundamentals right.

This bill was introduced in March of last year; effectively, a year ago. It aims to ensure that the regulatory frameworks within the resources portfolio remain efficient, effective and responsive to change. It also provides a range of simplifying changes to legislation and regulations to reduce complexity and clarify the intentions of policy. Considering the unprofessional mistakes made in getting here, perhaps the government should also look at learning about attention to detail.

The bill has its origins in the Stock Route Network Management Bill 2016, which was introduced by former minister Anthony Lynham. Even that bill had its problems. The committee investigating it recommended it not be passed 'until the department has developed and consulted on the State Management Plan and the regulation, and undertaken an updated regulatory impact statement'. The bill was subsequently revised and incorporated changes that fitted industry and stakeholder expectations.

In areas that no longer have a newspaper in circulation, the bill will allow notices to be published by other suitable media channels. This provides more scope to use other means when a newspaper is not available. It cannot be another attempt by the government to avoid transparency and scrutiny.

The bill will also improve recovery costs that local governments incur for managing and administering the network. The stock route network is 150 years old. It reflects the close connection Queensland has to the agricultural and pastoral industries. A well-managed and connected stock route network is crucial for those industries, especially during times of drought. While its main purpose is for stock travelling on foot, the route has other purposes such as emergency agistment, grazing and road travel purposes. The Local Government Association of Queensland advised the committee—

The network provides feed for the agri-industry, as well as some major infrastructure, transport of water, power and communication, plus they also have some significant native flora and fauna, remnant vegetation and cultural heritage.

There are approximately 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves, corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated state land. Together with dedicated reserves for travelling stock, they make up 2.6 million hectares of route. They are especially important during years of drought when each drover can move and feed up to 330,000 head of cattle across the network. By its very nature, the cost to manage and maintain the network is spread across numerous councils that bear the responsibility for maintaining that crucial piece of infrastructure.

There are 48 local councils that have some part of the route within their local government areas. LGAQ CEO Alison Smith told the committee that it costs councils approximately \$4.8 million to maintain the route's assets. Councils issue permits for travelling and agistment, ensure compliance with those permit conditions and land management activities for pests, weeds, fire risks, water facilities and other capital works. They have a very limited capacity to recoup those costs.

Changes in this bill seek to provide more support and cost recovery for local governments to maintain the network and ensure its ongoing sustainability. Ratepayers in some of Queensland's smallest and remote councils have carried the burden of maintaining the routes because the current fee structure has not changed in about 20 years. Many of those councils do not have enough sources of revenue to sustain their existing and planned operational budgets. While it is expected that the proposed fee structure will recover approximately 21 per cent of those costs, many councils and ratepayers will still carry the burden. To put that in perspective, the LGAQ representative said—

It also depends on the actual number of travelling stock ... In some areas they have not seen cattle through for a number of years. One mayor mentioned to me ... that 100 per cent of zero is zero. Those councils still obviously have outlays that they have to pay, managing and maintaining the network.


There are serious concerns with clause 94, which seeks to amend vegetation management regulations. This clause changes reference from a static prescribed regulation to a constantly changing description database to amend plants exempt from the VMA within grassland regional ecosystems. It seeks to identify regional ecosystems through a certified version of the Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database rather than through the Vegetation Management Regulation 2012. The Queensland Herbarium frequently revises the database, which means that users such as landholders or vegetation management consultants have to check regularly for updates. Currently, native plants within grassland regional ecosystems listed in schedule 4 and 5 are exempt from Vegetation Management Act 1999 provisions. This is a devious and underhanded attempt at amending vegetation management regulations.

Ongoing farm business management, relationships with banks and debts require certainty and stability for those businesses to be able to borrow and invest. Landholders and consultants want clear and stable guidelines and regulations for vegetation management. They cannot successfully and efficiently operate in an environment where they will be subject to frequent changes in regional ecosystem descriptions from a conservation management database. AgForce senior policy adviser Greg Leach advised the committee—

... where landholders have invested a considerable amount of time to develop projects of clearing regrowth or managing landscapes ... that may or may not have been locked in under a property map of assessable vegetation, those requirements by the banks to have certainty when these developments can take place and where they can take place and the likely return on those investments, are very significant in terms of the sustainability of those enterprises ... certainty ... can mean the difference between ... obtaining finance or not, for some planned actions—

Relying on a rapidly changing database threatens the business stability of those investments. Due process should be followed in good time. AgForce said that, rather than rapid changes that significantly impact property businesses, any changes should follow the Queensland government's *Guide to Better Regulation*. It would require regulatory impact analysis as well as public consultation.

Recommendation 2 asked the minister to revisit the proposed amendment to certify the regulation vegetation status rather than this being included in the Vegetation Management Regulation. While this bill seeks to ensure regulatory frameworks remain efficient, effective and responsive to change, it is extremely important that the committee recommendation regarding vegetation management is accepted. As the minister has now foreshadowed that the government will accept the committee recommendation to omit clause 94 in full, I therefore support the bill.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (12.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill not only covers so many areas of importance for the Queensland state government but also addresses important concerns for local governments across the state and makes it much easier for our Australian federal government in relation to the Commonwealth Department of Defence. In relation to local governments, as a former Townsville City councillor who represented rural areas south of Townsville—which has many stock routes—and as the chair of planning, I know firsthand the issues surrounding stock routes: from maintenance, private use and the need for local government to have the ability to recover costs associated with managing them. Keep in mind that these routes play a big role for the cattle industry as well as our Rural Fire Service. There are many more benefits for local government with the Stock Route Management Act amendments that will assist them every day when dealing with stock routes in local government areas.

These amendments also assist local governments across Queensland to address urban sprawl by unlocking sites that have sat dormant for many years; give council and private enterprise the ability to work together to increase livability on some of these parcels of land; reduce the burden of the state carrying the cost of rectifying some of these sites; and allow investors to come in and, in some cases, through private and public partnerships, realise the full potential of some of these sites.

One example that comes to mind is the north and south railway yards that sat dormant in Townsville for many years. It took a lot of time in navigating red tape to free up these areas for the private sector and the Townsville City Council to start to revitalise the Townsville city centre, or the CBD as it is known to some. This has allowed for place making and to meet community expectations through the construction of a new start-of-the-art stadium in Townsville built by the Palaszczuk state government for the people of Townsville and surrounding communities. We deserve it. This in turn has increased investor confidence, created more good jobs and provided growth in the hospitality and entertainment sectors. That confidence has also encouraged the Hilton hotel group to construct a hotel right next door to Queensland Country Bank Stadium where we will see construction commence in the very near future. These are positive signs that clearly demonstrate that the Palaszczuk state government has a plan to make our economy the strongest in the country.

This bill will clearly assist in streamlining processes that meet the modern era. In the survey mapping and infrastructure legislation amendments, the bill achieves its objectives by amending the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003 and the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Regulation 2014 by removing the requirement in the act for the minister to give effect to the cadastral survey standards by notice made as subordinate legislation and replacing it with a provision that allows the chief executive to publish and give effect to the standards and guidelines. This streamlines the survey standard-making process to be responsive to advances in technology and user needs. This in itself is a very important change as we all know that technology is changing so fast that we need to be flexible and agile to meet the ever-changing landscape that we all work in in a way that industry expects.

This is the first time the Land Act has been amended in decades. These amendments bring the legislation in line with the times and allow Queensland to be ready for the next population boom. They also address environmental concerns associated with national parks and environmentally sensitive areas, unlock opportunities to bring innovative design to our great state and bring in new revenue for the state that can be reinvested into health, education and roads. This bill also modernises outdated requirements in the Land Act 1994, the Place Names Act 1994, the Stock Route Management Act 2002 and the Vegetation Management Act 1999 to publish notices in newspapers where a newspaper is no longer in circulation, instead allowing this to occur by suitable media channels. As we all know, some communities no longer have a local paper and now get their local news via the internet, email and social media platforms. We need to meet community expectations when communicating in a timely and efficient manner.

I mentioned earlier the Commonwealth Department of Defence and I note the following Land Act and Land Regulation amendments. The bill achieves its objectives by amending the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2020 as follows: expanding the application of section 390A of the Land Act to apply to defence land so that certain dealings over land leased by the Commonwealth Department of Defence, at the Greenvale and Shoalwater Bay defence training sites, can be undertaken by the Department of Defence without the minister's or chief executive's approval under the Land Act. These dealings must be consistent with the terms and purposes of the lease. This amendment supports the delivery of the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative, reducing the possibility of delays in the development and use of the land, giving the Department of Defence greater certainty in the management and use of the sites.

I was with the Minister for Resources, Scott Stewart, when the announcement was made that the Palaszczuk state government had finalised the leasing arrangement with the Australian federal government so that the Commonwealth Department of Defence could move forward with implementing the Australia-Singapore training facility near Greenvale. This is extremely important in itself as the Australia-Singapore military training site will be heavily serviced by Townsville, largely due to the fact that Townsville has the largest defence base in Australia and the largest port in Northern Australia. I might add that it is owned by the people of Queensland and the Queensland state government.


This amendment on its own will make the process of implementation of this important military training facility much smoother and highlights the importance of a project of this nature. This bill addresses many important issues: leasing, freeholding of land, land acquisition, what technology is used for surveying and mapping, stock routes and much more. This bill is a game changer for so many. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Walker, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Police Resources

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.00 pm): Is the thin blue line at breaking point? It would appear that when it comes to police numbers in this state that is the case. That should be ringing alarm bells right throughout Queensland. Queenslanders will cop many things, but what they will not cop is reduced police numbers or police stations with no officers, particularly during the worst juvenile epidemic this state has ever seen. We need police on the beat and we need them on the road. In fact, we need police everywhere.


This morning media reports revealed that the total headcount of the Queensland Police Service has risen by just 0.75 per cent, four single officer stations have no officer assigned and seven stations are operating below approved strength. If we cast our mind back to the 2020 state election, the Premier and the police minister made a commitment to Queenslanders regarding policing numbers in this state—2,025 additional police personnel by 2025. At the estimates hearing in December 2020 the Police Commissioner confirmed the commitment included 1,450 extra sworn officers. Deputy Commissioner Smith, answering on behalf of the Police Commissioner, outlined the plan. We were told in 2021-22 that attrition would be covered and that 330 additional officers would join the ranks of the Queensland Police Service. What was actually delivered, as advised by the commissioner at estimates on 3 August last year, was 143 additional officers—less than half the target.

What does that mean? Based on current figures, it will take this government 32 years to add the 1,450 additional sworn police officers that they announced at the last election. I am going to say it again. According to these reports, the Palaszczuk Labor government will take 32 years to deliver on its police numbers. Is it any wonder Queenslanders no longer trust the Palaszczuk government to keep them safe.

The minister is quick to talk up recruitment targets; however, according to the *Government Gazette*, 289 staff resigned from the QPS in the 2022—more resignations than we saw in the previous two years. Figures provided to me paint an even grimmer picture and indicate that in the last six months of 2022 there was a reduction of 98 sworn officers and that between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2022 the number of sworn officers reduced by 279. Our state is facing a youth crime crisis and it is time the police minister set the record straight.

*(Time expired)*

### Pumicestone Electorate

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.03 pm): So much work is happening across Pumicestone because our Palaszczuk government is getting things done. I am going to try to cover the top eight in the next three minutes. No. 1: we have now turned the sod on our Bribie Island satellite hospital site and construction is well underway, with opening on track for 2024. Bribie locals will soon have hospital services right in the heart of our community along with a minor accident and illness centre, bringing those vital hospital services closer to home.

No. 2: next week we will be switching on our new traffic lights at the intersection of Bribie Island Road and Regina Avenue, Ningi. When I doorknocked Ningi in 2020, dozens of locals told me that they were struggling to get access to their homes and to the local shops at the Ningi plaza. I spoke to the minister about that. I am grateful to him for his willingness to listen. We worked hard to get this solution. Now our traffic lights are about to be turned on. It is a great feeling being able to deliver for a local community.

No. 3: we have the business case for our next Bribie Island bridge underway right now. So far over 2,700 local people have had their say. Consultation closes on Monday. I would love to see that up over 3,000 by the end of the consultation period. That is all part of our bigger plan to increase capacity along the entire length of Bribie Island Road. Over 88,000 cars use Bribie Island Road every day.

No. 4 and No. 5 in my top eight are two more projects in the works right now to dual lane more of Bribie Island Road from Old Toorbul Point Road to Saint Road and Hickey Road to King John Creek. I know that will be greatly welcomed by my community.


Still on roads for No. 6: our start to finish upgrade of Beachmere Road starts later this year. We have doubled funding to \$15.75 million to widen Beachmere Road to nine metres wide, add wide centre lanes and add dedicated turning lanes into Riversleigh Road and Monty's Marina.

Still on roads for No. 7: the upgrade of the intersection of Pumicestone Road and Dances Road at Caboolture is on track to be finished early—finished by Easter—fixing this blackspot intersection to get locals home sooner and safer. It is a good feeling to be delivering for our Caboolture community.

Last but not least, No. 8 is construction starting on our new Bribie Island Neighbourhood Centre at Bellara later this year. For many years now the centre has been working out of a converted dental surgery. This new, purpose-built \$3 million build will give them more space to deliver even more projects than ever before.

I am going to keep working hard and getting things done for the people of Pumicestone. With so much investment from our Palaszczuk Labor government it is going to mean more jobs, more services and making our local lifestyle even better. From health to roads to much needed infrastructure, our government is 100 per cent delivering for Pumicestone.

### Child Protection

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.06 pm): Much has been said about the child safety system in this chamber in the last few days. What has not been acknowledged in the contributions of any of those opposite is the mistakes that have been made by this government—the failures that have happened time and time again and have left some of our most vulnerable children open to harm.

This minister has every excuse in the book, but there needs to be a recognition and accountability for the mistakes and for reforms that have not been carried out. The minister should stop using the privacy provisions of the legislation that are designed to protect children instead of protect the minister. Darcey-Helen and Chloe-Ann Conley deserve more than what this government has done for them. I will read to the House an excerpt from Justice Applegarth's judgement in the mother's case. He stated—

When their dead bodies were discovered, their skin was badly blistered.

They had suffered dehydration.

One can only hope that these little girls slowly succumbed to the growing heat of the day much earlier that morning and faded into a deep sleep from which they never returned.

As hard as it is, and as a mother myself, I find it devastating that this happened to two little girls on this government's watch. We must force ourselves to turn our minds to this tragedy. We must examine what has gone wrong. What went so wrong that a mother left her children in a car? She had a clear history of substance abuse, which the children were exposed to and which put them at great risk. The case was closed by the department. Their father should have more than fingerprints on a dirty door to remember them by. These are only two children, but there are many more who have been failed by three ministers. Many other children have died and many other children are currently in harm's way.

The commission of inquiry, for the benefit of the Attorney-General, who commented on it today, was in fact 10 years ago. We should be much further along than we are. We have a brave whistleblower who has come out today and said her case load exceeded 20 cases. I sure hope the minister has reached out to that brave young woman. Recommendation 10.4 of that commission of inquiry recommended the case loads of child safety officers not exceed average cases of 15. In states like New South Wales they have capped case loads.

Too many children are in danger. Too many are being swept aside by this government as a political problem rather than the vulnerable humans they are. If I hear one more excuse about the COVID impacts that are prohibiting the government from doing the job they should have been doing all along, I think I will scream in this House. The minister needs to step up and be accountable because this government is not keeping vulnerable Queensland children safe.

### Miller Electorate, Flood Mitigation


 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.09 pm): Many residents in my electorate suffered terribly a year ago with the largest rainfall recorded over three days since records began falling across Brisbane and the region, causing riverine as well as overland catchment flooding. These floodwaters entered and devastated the homes of so many residents who had worked so hard for them. Many of them are still recovering and working to restore their properties fully with the help of the jointly funded \$750 million Resilient Homes Fund or their insurers.

Local Yeronga residents in the vicinity of Orient Road, Ormonde Road, Hyde Road and the Brisbane Corso who met with me raised an added concern about a longstanding overland blockage that may have additionally contributed to the flooding. To make matters worse, when looking to the future a potentially much larger blockage of floodwater and overland flow is at risk of eventuating and threatening local homes with flooding in the vicinity of the Orient Road Park area. Blocking the natural overland flow through Orient Road Park to the Brisbane River is an industrial holding yard at 133 Hyde Road, Yeronga, with a huge amount of unapproved fill built up by up to four metres above normal ground level over approximately 60 metres as well as an unapproved narrow drainage pipe underneath the unapproved fill for the local creek to flow through. This can be seen starkly on any Google map by anyone, as it is surrounded by green open space on three sides.

These matters date back to 2006, when the then local councillor first raised the matter with the city council. The pipe is only 1,200 millimetres wide, whereas culverts on public land under the Brisbane Corso downstream only 280 metres away are much wider at 1,800 millimetres. The unapproved fill has been there for 20 years now and is at risk of collapsing the pipe that it sits above, which would prevent the current limited overland flow from draining away to the river in the event of the next extreme weather event. This is of great concern to me as their state MP and local residents. While this matter was investigated previously and found to be unapproved, no action has been taken to rectify the situation by the council, which may well become catastrophic should the pipe collapse and close and another extreme weather event happen before the matter can be rectified.

I wrote to the current Lord Mayor of Brisbane requesting he and council investigate this pressing matter, only to receive a refusal. After detailed and time-consuming research over a number of years, Yeronga residents have raised these matters with the current council. They have not received any appropriate response in relation to rectifying the unapproved pipe or fill to reduce the risk of future flooding for local residents. This refusal to act by the city council is unacceptable and means an ongoing risk for my local Yeronga residents, who have suffered enough. I call on the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Adrian Schrinner, and the council to meet with my local constituents face to face with appropriate council officers and to commit to an independent and thorough investigation into this issue.

### Police Resources

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.12 pm): When it comes to police numbers, whose numbers should we believe? Firstly we should look at the character of the police minister. This police minister has been described as 'deceitful in his actions'. 'Mr Ryan had a big, dirty secret.' 'I feel utterly duped by the dishonesty.' They are statements made about this police minister when he was dealing with the Pullens. Then it was all about power and politics over truth and honesty. There was no transparency at all; just politics and power.


The hubris of this police minister is excessive. It is unbelievable that he can stand here and quote numbers that he himself knows are not being delivered on the ground. He knows it is an empty promise. What he and this Premier have proven by not going to Toowoomba is that they are full of arrogance. The Premier refused to come and look my community in the eye. She sent a police minister there with a bunch of fictitious numbers that do not reflect the number of boots on the ground in Toowoomba. The minister knows that, the Premier knows that, and now the whole of Queensland knows that. It was a display of arrogance and hubris.

These people are not listening to the people of Toowoomba. They are not listening to the people of Queensland. They have not planned appropriately for the numbers they told people at the election. They have not delivered on those numbers. The academy cannot cope; it cannot recruit. They are trying to spin their way out of it with a load of politics. It is all about keeping power, trying to assure people they are safe in their homes. Let me just say that a person in Toowoomba looking at someone standing in their front room with a two-foot-long machete is not feeling safe, and they are certainly not feeling safe about some fictitious numbers about approved strength. We want to see boots on the ground; people through the academy.

Look at the retention that is happening under this police minister. People are desperately waiting for their defined benefit to come through so they can walk away from the force because they are overworked. They are not being looked after. The minister does not care about them. He does not treat them with respect.

The police force is finding it really tough to keep the community safe under this government, which has done nothing at all. They are not acting. They are not listening. They do not care about the community of Queensland; it is just about politics and power. What we have seen is poor planning, a lack of response, a tin ear and a load of spin. That is what we see. Let's face it, Minister, empty promises are not going to keep Queenslanders safe. What they want to see is boots on the ground. Just as an aside, can we build somewhere to put children rather than adult watch houses? Come on, Minister, do your job!

### Mundingburra Electorate, Health Services

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.15 pm): Just calm it down a bit. There is so much important investment in health right across the state of Queensland, and Queenslanders deserve it. I would like to publicly thank all of the staff who work at the Townsville University Hospital for their ongoing service. My thanks also go to all of the support staff, the tradies, cleaners, ground staff and security, just to name a few. I have to thank the Premier and Yvette D'Ath, the Minister for Health, for the continual support of our health services in the Townsville region.


In the two years I have served as the member for Mundingburra so much has changed for the better at the Townsville University Hospital. I visit the Townsville University Hospital on a regular basis—the member for Burdekin should try that—and I thank staff for the professional service they continually provide to our patients. What I continually notice are the ongoing investment and improvements in the infrastructure at the hospital. We now have a high-tech pharmacy that produces very important medications which need to be made onsite and administered immediately to patients who are receiving

important cancer treatments. There is much more. The paediatric emergency department is doing fantastic work and the paediatric cardiac unit is changing lives. There are another 33 new beds coming online soon, and the list goes on.

We recently heard about the \$40 million investment at the Kirwan health facility, which is fantastic news, but there is more. The Townsville University Hospital is getting a further 143 new beds, a new purpose-built helipad, new surgical theatres, more medical and imaging facilities, extra outpatient spaces and more—a \$530 million investment in health. Thanks to the new royalties from coal, we can continually invest in our health system for the people in Townsville and surrounding communities because they deserve it. I thank the Treasurer for his ongoing support.

I also want to thank Tanya Busoli and her team at Brighter Lives. This foundation continually raises funds and coordinates our extremely helpful volunteers. There was more good news recently when Brighter Lives received a grant from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for a new six-seater transport vehicle to assist those with a disability, and that was fantastic news. Finally, a huge thank you to the whole team at the Townsville University Hospital for their ongoing continual professional service.

### Traffic Infringement Notices; CFMEU and Office of Industrial Relations

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.18 pm): I want to tell the story of young Sebastian, who lives in Wurtulla in my electorate. Sebastian is 10 years old. He was diagnosed with a severe disability in 2014. Members would know that the Queensland government has recently commenced issuing seatbelt camera infringement notices by taking photos inside people's cars. Since then Sebastian's father has received three or four fines. These fines were issued because Sebastian is pictured wearing a seatbelt incorrectly—not flush across his shoulder—just at the time of the photo.

Sebastian's compulsive disability-related movements are seen as a violation of the seatbelt laws in the state of Queensland. This is pure discrimination against a 10-year-old boy with a severe disability. His father is about to lose his licence, because of the points he has lost, as well as his job and possibly their livelihood. Sebastian's parents wrote to TMR and it is now noted that an exemption will exist in the future on their file for Sebastian, but I am calling on the state government to show compassion and common sense and withdraw all the fines issued to Sebastian's dad. The QRO replied to Sebastian's parents, only waiving one of the fines, despite evidence from Sebastian's doctors that Sebastian was diagnosed with a severe disability in 2014.

I have written about this urgently to Treasurer Dick and as yet I have not even had a response, despite the fact that today is the day that Sebastian's father will likely lose his licence. Therefore, I am forced to raise this issue on behalf of 10-year-old Sebastian who lives in my electorate who I met a few weeks ago with his mum. It has forced me to raise this matter in parliament today because I give a damn about kids with disabilities and so should the government. I think it is disgraceful that the fines have not been waived. The government has got to show common sense, compassion and courtesy to a young kid with disability, rather than the bureaucratic fines being issued to Sebastian's family. I again call on Treasurer Dick and Minister Mark Bailey to sort this out for the sake of Sebastian's family.


I want to raise another issue. A year ago I wrote to the CCC alleging issues with respect to the Office of Industrial Relations and the CFMEU. That was over a year ago now. The report has been sitting on the deputy director-general's desk in the Office of Industrial Relations for over a year. Even as the complainant, I have not seen the report. On 6 July 2021, 24 January 2022, 16 March 2022, 6 June 2022 and 1 September 2022, I received advice that the government was still considering the report. The Minister for Industrial Relations is in the chamber today. What is she hiding? If this government believes in openness and transparency, it should release the report. It has been sitting on her desk for over one year.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for Kawana, during your speech, you used some unparliamentary language. I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw.

### Ripley Central State School

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.21 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, 23 January was not just my beloved brother's birthday; it was also the opening of the brand new Ripley Central State School in my electorate. It is the third state school the Palaszczuk government has built in the Ripley Valley since



2020, and we plan to build more to keep up with high numbers of people moving to the area. I want to acknowledge the Minister for Education, who is in the chamber, who I know has played a pivotal role in this.

I want to acknowledge the foundation principal of Ripley Central State School, Wuanita Meyrick, and offer her my best wishes in her new leadership role. Wuanita has been a champion for the school since it was announced in 2021. She has led numerous meetings and consultations with the community to help shape the school in a way that best fits the community's expectations. Having known Wuanita from her time as principal at another primary school, I know that her leadership will ensure Ripley Central will be a welcoming school that provides an inclusive and supportive environment where students can thrive with passion and purpose. I am excited to meet with Wuanita over the coming weeks to see how the school is settling in and coming along.

Meeting with school principals in my electorate is one of the things I do at the beginning of every year. I make the time to meet with each school principal from the 23 public and private schools across my electorate. I really appreciate and value their time and their feedback. It is great to hear about the schools' achievements and how the families are going in the area. Teachers and schools have their hands on everything that is happening in the community and they are a great source for local members.


The past three years have seen a lot of disruptions for our schools locally. We have had COVID-19, floods and complex issues across the nation that affect children and their learning. We have the invasion of Ukraine and climate change issues, and these are things that cause quite a lot of anxiety in our kids. Our principals and teachers in the classrooms are helping to guide our children through these difficult times, and I do appreciate everything they do.

The Palaszczuk government is a fantastic supporter of education—unlike the LNP, which shut down six schools when they were in government and had another 50 on their hit list. Since we got into government in 2015, we have opened 25 new state schools and we have invested \$1.6 billion.

**Mr Tantari** interjected.

**Ms HOWARD:** I take that interjection. We have opened 25 new schools since 2015. We have put them in Queensland's fastest growing areas so that children can access world-class education wherever they live. I am proud to say that all the state schools in Ipswich are air-conditioned. That has been important for them and I thank the minister for that again. What is more, they are powered by solar energy as part of our Advancing Clean Energy Schools program. Investing in school education gives Queensland children the best start in life, and our government has a fantastic track record.

### **Productivity Commission, National School Reform Agreement; School Swimming Programs**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.24 pm): Last month's release of the Productivity Commission's review of the National School Reform Agreement serves as yet another wake-up reminder for the Palaszczuk state Labor government. The Palaszczuk state Labor government must acknowledge that they are completely losing control of education in Queensland. Following the release of the review, Commissioner Natalie Siegel-Brown said it best when she stated—

Governments have boosted funding for schools and are implementing reforms to lift student outcomes. However, so far, this effort has had little impact on literacy and numeracy results.

... the commission recommends governments commit to firm targets to lift students' results—targets do not guarantee success, but they create a clear direction for reform and make governments accountable.

Further, and direct from the Productivity Commission review, was this key point—


Greater flexibility in progressing reforms should be accompanied by increased accountability for and transparency of results.

Firm targets, clear direction, performance reporting and government accountability—these are all the benchmarks in education which the Labor state government has neglected and ignored for the best part of the last decade, despite the many calls from the Liberal National Party opposition. Last year the Labor Minister for Education said that a new Equity and Excellence strategy would be finalised before term 1 of 2023. It was not until recently that this strategy was finally released, but even then it has been done so relatively quietly and with no significant announcement made by the Premier or Minister for Education and with only limited mentions of the strategy made by the Minister for Education. The Labor state government's failure to actively set targets, monitor outcomes and ensure open, transparent and regular performance reporting has had devastating and real consequences for Queensland's students, teachers and staff.

Across Queensland we have seen declines in student attendance. What is worse is that the declines are even more pronounced amongst Queensland's First Nations students. It must not be forgotten that last year's Queensland state budget revealed that not a single educational outcome target was achieved across reading, writing and numeracy through years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Queensland's teachers are doing a remarkable job and they need to be supported if they are to deliver improved results for our students.

In the interests of openness and transparency, I would also like to take this opportunity to call on the Labor state government to next week release the full results of its audit into the swimming programs of Queensland state schools. The Deputy Premier told Queenslanders in January that this audit was due for completion by the end of February 2023. It is incredibly important that the state government listens to swimming and pool safety experts and ensures that equitable access to swimming programs is afforded to all students across our state. There is no doubt that Queensland's students, parents, teachers and staff deserve better.

### Cairns Convention Centre

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.27 pm): The \$176 million expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre is now coming to an end. This expansion has supported up to 570 full-time construction jobs, with 896 workers being inducted onsite to date and 685 of those workers being locals. There have been 80 businesses engaged in the extended supply chain, with 54 of them being local businesses. There have been a total of 66,000 training hours recorded with over 41,000 completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers. Indeed 10 per cent of the workforce of the centre identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, which is terrific news.


Other statistics include the fact that there was 106 trade packages awarded, 71 per cent of those went to local Cairns businesses, and 55 apprenticeships were conducted onsite, which is really positive news. Investing in training local apprentices obviously helps leave a legacy of more qualified workers in the Far North. As you can see by these figures, this expenditure by the Labor government has injected a massive boost into the Cairns economy. Not only has this project supported hundreds of local jobs, it also means more dollars for the local tourism industry because they are able to host more events sooner.

Once completed, the Cairns Convention Centre will boast an additional 10,500 square metres which will include a large undercover, tropically planted drop-off entry forecourt, an expanded main entry lobby, a 410-seat plenary lecture space, three 120-seat meeting rooms, new exhibition space for up to 30 display booths, and the 500-seat Sky Terrace with spectacular views over Trinity Inlet.

I want to acknowledge the centre's general manager, Janet Hamilton, and her staff who continue to do an amazing job. They have been keeping the facility running while a lot of this work has been underway. They have hosted some fairly large events, whether it be the bull riders, the professional bull riders' invitational or the Australian and New Zealand Metabolic and Obesity Surgery Society conference—many and varied—not to mention a Guy Sebastian concert thrown in there also. As well, the centre played a huge role as a vaccination hub during the push to get Queenslanders protected against the COVID-19 virus.

The new-look centre is expected to inject an additional \$50 million a year into our local economy, as well as provide local jobs in a wide range of areas including hospitality, logistics, security and maintenance. This will be a world-class events destination with the potential to draw an additional 20,000 visitors to the Far North each year. The world-class Cairns Convention Centre is everything you would expect from an international purpose-built venue located amongst nature's most pristine playground, and we look forward to welcoming you all in May of this year.

### Gympie Electorate, Renewable Energy

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.30 pm): The rush to renewables does not justify riding roughshod over Gympie region locals. Whether it is powerlines running through people's backyards or the solar farm, which locals constantly claim as a visual and environmental eyesore, the impact on locals is being ignored. The draft corridor options for Powerlink transmission lines from the proposed Borumba Pumped Hydro Scheme is causing great distress. It should not be this way. Last year Powerlink held some information sessions without advising many of those being impacted. Many only knew about it after the event when they received notices in their letterboxes. The government paid scant attention to real and meaningful consultation. What's new?

The outrage forced Powerlink to hold further information sessions. Those lodging feedback online were finally advised, 'We apologise that we haven't shared information in a better way.' What an understatement!

The community remains very concerned because the Woolooga substation options show a widespread footprint. People are justifiably worried if a high-voltage powerline will be running across their properties. Many rural property landholders are concerned about the spread and management of declared weeds because their experience is that energy providers have a poor record of managing this serious issue. Small landholders worry about its impact on property values. This has stirred up people when there is no need.


On Tuesday I tabled a petition of 2,604 petitioners, asking that infrastructure is built on existing state owned land corridors and minimise the impact on private landholders. Using state forest should be an absolute priority. National parks should not be excluded in preference to someone's freehold property and running across people's backyards. The government should not exclude itself from using state owned land.

The government's announcement on behalf of two private companies about accessing power from the Woolooga solar farm was a self-congratulatory story designed for an audience outside Gympie. The cost is removing prime agricultural land from production. Hundreds of hectares of solar panels are on good quality agricultural land simply because it was a convenient spot. The claims are that the solar farm's output will power 63,000 homes and save 350,000 tonnes of carbon a year. It was also suggested its power would be used to run pumps for the hydro scheme. Now 138,000 tonnes or 40 per cent of the total output will be used to produce beer.

Last year there were serious concerns that live high-voltage underground wires—33,000 volts—were run along a state-controlled road corridor without following required compliance measures prior to activation. I have received reports that a hailstorm in December destroyed thousands of solar panels. Their disposal will be a serious environmental challenge.

To Gympie region residents, it seems others are happy to have renewable energy projects as long as they are not in their backyard.

### **GlenTech Auto**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.33 pm): Earlier this month I had the pleasure of representing the Hon. Grace Grace to officially open the GlenTech Auto facility. GlenTech Auto is a proud Glenmore State High School initiative, and rightly so. The school is partnered with the Motor Trades Association of Queensland to give high school students from not only Glenmore State High School but also other high schools around Rocky the opportunity to complete a Certificate II in Automotive Vocational Preparation in their final two years of schooling. This qualification will provide approximately 60 participating students from Glenmore State High School, Rockhampton State High School, North Rockhampton State High School and Mount Morgan State High School the opportunity to grow their basic automotive skills. The skills they will learn are directly relevant to local trade-based industries, including mining and transport.

It was great to congratulate Glenmore State High School for its work in identifying the need to provide training that is going to support students who have an interest in working in these industries. This automotive training facility goes a long way to accomplishing this goal. The Motor Trades Association of Queensland has partnered with Glenmore State High School to deliver this initiative and to provide a trainer to work alongside the teacher to deliver the automotive programs. Thanks to Kawana Wreckers for donating the car parts, and also to Stephen Waterson who donated a car. GlenTech Auto is an example of the Queensland government's strong focus on creating good jobs and better services to enhance our great Queensland lifestyle.

I am pleased to be able to say that the Queensland government contributed \$605,000 to refurbish an existing health and education storage shed for this project. In talking with the students in the first intake, they were so excited and looking forward to having each Wednesday in the auto shed. This new facility will give the local high school students a great start to a bright future. I know that the GlenTech Auto team has already made strong connections with the local community including local industry.

The next training facility I look forward to seeing completed is the aquaculture centre at Rockhampton State High School which we are providing funding for as well. Under Minister Grace Grace, we have seen such wonderful initiatives into our schools. It is great to be part of a Palaszczuk government that is delivering great programs.

### Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro; Flora and Fauna, Auditor-General's Report



**Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.36 pm): Queenslanders have embraced renewables and we need a clear path forward to ensure our state has reliable, affordable and clean energy. It took six years from committing to targets for the government to come up with their Jobs and Energy Plan, released only last year. The centrepiece of this announcement was the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro project. A couple of weeks ago I took the time to go up and visit the site. High rainfall and topography, while clearly showing why it is being considered for pumped hydro, also make this an incredibly beautiful and richly biodiverse part of our state. It was a privilege to meet with the residents there and to see the pride they have for where they call home. That is why when they heard on the news the announcement of the project, they described it as though a bomb had been dropped on them. They are angry, they are frustrated and they have many genuine questions. Many of those questions surround environmental concerns.

A sign on the side of the road at Netherdale, the town that is set to be flooded, proudly states that it is a 'key biodiversity area for flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world'. One landholder, who was so scared they had not let any outsider onto their property before my visit, has rainforest covering 60 per cent of their land. They want to know what the justification is for this site having been chosen. We must show respect to these residents by being open and transparent.

I would like to know from the Minister for the Environment whether she has visited the area and spoken to locals about the project, especially about their environmental concerns. The minister is very happy to talk about this plan in the south-east, but is she happy to go and talk to people on the ground? Will the minister visit Eungella?

In December, I asked what role the environment department has had in the assessment of that project and, in the answer, they confirm that the site had been chosen with a 'high-level desktop review' of the site's environmental values.

**Mrs Gerber:** Desktop?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** That is it! For a \$12 billion project with no business case and no delivery timetable, that is a staggering lack of detail.

On another very important environmental matter, today the Queensland Audit Office released the *Protecting our threatened animals and plants* report. It is a damning assessment of a conservation crisis under a Labor government who care more about announcements than outcomes. The department's database has a backlog of 10 million records, and 79 more Queensland species have become threatened since the last report was released. Only two of that report's seven recommendations have been fully implemented in the four years since it was released. Some 366 animal and plant reassessments are outstanding, and population status and trends are unavailable for 90 per cent of the listed animals and plants. Lack of targets and no time frames for delivery: it is the same story we hear time and again from this Labor government.

### Maryborough Electorate, Manufacturing




**Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.39 pm): On 7 February—and seven is a very lucky number for the Maryborough electorate—I welcomed the Palaszczuk Labor government cabinet to Maryborough to announce the \$7.1 billion Train Manufacturing Program to be based at Torbanlea, which is 25 kilometres north of the great city of Maryborough. Downer was the preferred tenderer announced on 7 February, and I keep talking about 7 February because we are talking about \$7.1 billion for 65 sets of trains. It will set the Maryborough community up for many years to come. This will ensure that our young people in our community will have a career path. This will ensure that they will be able to do a trade, stay in the region and raise a family in the region. This is what the Palaszczuk government does—a good Labor government—we are spending a lot of money around regional Queensland.

The 65 sets of trains will be made at Torbanlea in a purpose-built factory which is owned by the state government. Honourable members should think about what that injection of money is going to mean across the Fraser Coast region, including Maryborough and Hervey Bay, for our young people. The education minister is not in the chamber today. I would like to congratulate her on working with the transport minister and the Premier and for the way our schools have been working with TransLink to ensure that these young people have a career path. Our public schools such as Maryborough State High School and Aldridge State High School are working very closely with TransLink to make sure these young people will have a career path. That is in addition to the money that is being spent in building these trains—\$7.1 billion.

In 2015 the great city of Maryborough was on its knees. One of the first meetings I had was with the management of Downer. They were talking about pulling out of our great city. It was pretty traumatic for me as the newly elected member for Maryborough to talk about losing one of the biggest factories in our community and also that skill set we have had for over 152 years in our city. Who saved it? It was the Palaszczuk Labor government. They have saved Downer in our city. They have also brought back manufacturing to regional Queensland and they are giving the young people a career path. We are giving young people in our region a career. We are giving them a trade as a boilermaker or a fitter. This has all been done by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Had we left it to that mob over there, Downer would have been closed and there would have been no career path. We were once noted as the Detroit of Wide Bay. We are now one of the few manufacturing hubs in regional Queensland and that is all thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government reinvesting in regional Queensland.

### Sugar Industry

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (2.42 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the state of the sugar industry in Queensland as we see it today. It is a \$3.8 billion industry supporting 20,000 jobs across Queensland, and 91 per cent of that \$3.8 billion—that is \$2.3 billion—is spent right here in Queensland. Working through the Queensland government's reef regulation seems to still be a challenge for growers as is trying to implement BMP to keep the department off their back. They also have to deal with a fluctuating world sugar price and face challenges with reliability of our sugarmills as well as cane supply and transport issues. There are also high input costs for the industry. The price of diesel is going through the roof as well as fertiliser.

The wet weather this year has been hard for all growers and millers and those in the harvesting industry to contend with. It has meant the sugar industry in the Herbert district, which I represent, has left half a million tonnes of sugar cane in the paddock this year. This government needs to do more to support the industry. Rats seem to also be a huge problem with the standover crop. I do have to acknowledge the Department of Environment and Science, which has been doing what they can to ensure the damage mitigation permits were issued in the Herbert district to ensure we could get rat baits out to help protect that standover crop for next year.

Recent announcements by QSL and STL have indicated they will no longer be working together to—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. I am going to wait for silence. I am struggling to hear the member for Hinchinbrook's contribution. If people have conversations, can they please take them out of the chamber.

**Mr DAMETTO:** Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is good to see some people in the House respect the sugar industry.

The sugar industry is worried about the interaction between STL and QSL moving forward. They have been told that QSL will not operate our sugar terminals in Queensland post 2026. QSL's operators are a not-for-profit organisation, ensuring that the best quality, the best product and the best prices are afforded to our growers when it comes to storing our sugar. They also make sure when they are marketing our sugar that most of the profits are returned to the industry.

However, labour shortages in the sugar industry are killing everyone; that is what is ailing everyone, whether it is the miller, the growers or the harvesting crews. There is something that the minister can do to help: ensure there is industry-specific training to attract people into the sugar industry. We need to show young people that there is a future in the sugar industry. That is an important way to ensure we have the skill sets so that the sugar industry can continue for years to come.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Macalister.

**Mr Dametto** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr Dametto** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Hinchinbrook, you can leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Hinchinbrook withdrew from the chamber at 2.46 pm.*

### Carr, Ms RM

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.46 pm): I wish to make my contribution this afternoon and read into *Hansard* the service history and statement of former inspector Regan Mary Carr. Her record of service notes were taken from her funeral earlier this month as read by former commissioner Bob Atkinson.


Regan commenced at the police academy on 24 November 1986 and was sworn in on 5 June 1987. She commenced her uniform career at stations including Fortitude Valley, city station and Nundah. She then commenced her plain-clothes career as a detective for over 20 years commencing at the Brisbane Juvenile Aid Bureau in June 1988. Over the next five years she would work at the Fraud Squad, sex offenders squad and the child exploitation unit. She also worked as a covert operative at the Drug Squad and the licensing branch before returning to the Juvenile Aid Bureau at Noosa Heads and places like Indooroopilly and Pine Rivers. She worked at police headquarters as the SCAN coordinator and received her commission to be an inspector on 21 November 2011.

As an inspector, she worked at the Inspectorate and Evaluation Branch and at Communications as a state duty officer before she was appointed the state coordinator for domestic and family violence, a position created as a result of the *Not now, not ever* report. She created the Domestic, Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Unit. Regan brought her entire suite of skills to this role: her empathy, her dedication, her communication skills, her ability to bring stakeholders together and her tenacity.

It was in this role that I first met Inspector Carr. I came on board as her senior sergeant project officer for domestic and family violence. While I had written and taught domestic and family violence training for recruits, she had faith that I could design and deliver a training program for the entire Queensland Police Service. This is a comment I have heard about Regan as a team manager and leader and I will read what was said at her funeral. It was said that although she never considered herself one, Regan was a transformational leader. She believed in the vision, she believed in the people and she harnessed their intelligence, energy and experience to create the change necessary to challenge the status quo and shape a new future.

She retired on 15 March 2020 and passed away after a battle with cancer on 25 January 2023. Regan was a tireless advocate for domestic and family violence within the QPS and, regardless of the outcomes of the commission of inquiry, she deserves to be recognised for her work in this field.

### Gabba Redevelopment

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.49 pm): Queensland Labor plans to go it alone to demolish and rebuild the Gabba stadium for \$2.7 billion, closing East Brisbane State School, clearing Raymond Park and bulldozing family homes. The community is devastated. The Gabba project should be scrapped, saving a school, a park and billions of dollars that we desperately need for housing, health care and education. East Brisbane State School parents have said that they feel angry and ignored, that their children are anxious and depressed, and that these billions should go into schools and education. One parent said—

I am a parent of two boys at the school and they are devastated. I think grown-ups forget that little people have an understanding of things as well.

Another said that the public consultation has been a joke. Parents who met with the department this week said that they felt pressured, stonewalled, like the decision was already made and that consultation was just for show. I table a copy of the petition from school parent Paul Gollan. It is signed by 3,700 people and is asking the government to keep the school and to guarantee a new school in the heart of the current school catchment.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 23 February 2023, from the Change.org website regarding a petition to save East Brisbane State School [\[201\]](#).

I table the results of a survey from the East Brisbane State School last year.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Results of the East Brisbane State School P&C Association November 2022 Survey as published on the East Brisbane State School P&C Association Facebook page' [\[202\]](#).

Some 86 per cent of parents said that if the school does close they need a new school in the catchment. I table one of the hundreds of signs that are up across the neighbourhood saying 'East Brisbane needs its schools'.

*Tabled paper:* Sign titled 'Tell the government East Brisbane needs its school!' [\[203\]](#).

Labor have forgotten the experience in West End, with demountables on playgrounds. With the growth that is planned for the area, the government will be forced to build more schools. They could do it now or in a year's time, when it is even more desperate and even more expensive. Even better, they could scrap the plans to demolish the Gabba and leave the school where it is.

Raymond Park could be bulldozed for a temporary warm-up track, clearing family homes, trees, playgrounds, a soccer club and a community garden. One resident said—

The Deputy Premier said there will be small impact on homeowners, but how can he say this when he plans to resume people's homes?

Residents whose homes might be demolished have said that the Deputy Premier's claims of constant communication are false. I table a letter from Amelia, six years old, who said, 'We really love the park. Don't take it down. I love the swings, monkey bars and climbing.'

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, depicting handwritten notes and photographs of a park [204].

I table a petition from Friends of Raymond Park. Over 3,000 people are calling for the park to be protected.


*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 23 February 2023, from the Change.org website, regarding a petition to save Kangaroo Point green space (Raymond Park) from becoming an Olympic training ground [205].

I table one of the other signs seen right across the neighbourhood saying 'No warm-up track'.

*Tabled paper:* Sign titled 'No Olympics athletics track for Raymond Park' [206].

The government will resume homes for a warm-up track, but they will not find land for a school? The Gabba could be made fit for purpose for much less than \$2.7 billion. The main stadium could be shifted to Carrara—a perfect location—and those billions could be ploughed back into our desperate hospitals, underfunded schools, housing and things that everyday Queenslanders actually need. This community is being let down by Labor.

### Jindalee, Road Infrastructure

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.52 pm): Santa had one last goodie in his Santa sack last year. We announced late last year the awarding of the tender for the Centenary Motorway Jindalee bridge upgrade. It is a joint venture between BMD and the Georgiou Group. I was absolutely thrilled to stand alongside the Speaker of the federal parliament, Mr Milton Dick, and announce this on 27 December last year. The Jindalee bridge is good to go, and my community has already seen the working trucks out and about, scoping out the area. Works will start soon on this historic project and it cannot come soon enough. Last time we had a major upgrade on this bridge, they set up chairs on the bridge to open it. That is how old the last upgrade is.


I have said it before and I will say it again: this project means jobs for two reasons. Firstly, obviously there will be hundreds of jobs working on the construction of the bridge over a four-year period. Secondly, it will get this bridge moving again and improve our local productivity. Locals know that the Jindalee bridge is a real pinch point because of the short onramp at Jindalee. That onramp is decades old. It is not up to modern standards. It means that people are merging at a snail's pace. Right now, commute times into the city can be up to an hour and are getting worse every single day. That means that people in my community and beyond, in the communities in Ipswich, are struggling to get to work on time and then home again at the end of the day to their families and loved ones. Hundreds upon thousands of hours in work and play time will be saved by this upgrade.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PUGH:** Thank you very much; I take those interjections. We are very excited about this bridge upgrade. We have a lot of young families in our area, and I cannot count the number of parents who have contacted my office about this. They tell me it is a mad rush for them to get to their kids before the after-school care or kindergarten centre closes.

But wait, there's more. Locals will hopefully be aware by now, because it has hit their letterboxes, that community consultation is open now for the next stage of the motorway. We are looking at the scope of the motorway between Darra and Toowong. We are looking at what the next stage should be after the bridge is built. I attended the first community feedback session, which was on Valentine's Day. That was great, because I love the Centenary Motorway. I have conducted a number of my own feedback sessions. There has been some strong feedback that the dreaded Fig Tree Pocket merge should be one of the first sections tackled. I cannot say that I am surprised. I put the call out to every single person who uses this motorway: we want to hear from every single resident about what is important to them for that next stage. Is it noise barriers, tree retention, active transport, public transport or something that is not even on that survey?

### Queensland Building and Construction Commission


 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.56 pm): The construction industry makes an invaluable contribution to the Queensland economy. It is the second largest employer in the state, with 250,000 people employed in the industry. The construction industry contributes close to \$30 billion—that is 8.1 per cent of total input—to Queensland's economy, making it the state's third largest sector. The sector in this state is regulated by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. Under Minister de Brenni the QBCC has been embroiled in controversy after controversy, as both builders and consumers make endless complaints about the QBCC's ability to be competent and fair.

One of the minister's initiatives in the construction sector has been the minimum financial requirements and mandatory reporting laws. These laws were supposed to eliminate the risk of building companies becoming insolvent, therefore protecting home builders and subcontractors. With insolvencies happening on a regular basis, the effectiveness of this reporting regime is questionable. These laws have also created an enormous amount of paperwork and bureaucracy for builders, particularly small operators, putting a huge burden on them. This week the QBCC confirmed that it had imposed licence conditions on 537 licensees under the mandatory reporting system. The conditions imposed on these licences prevent them from entering into new contracts for building work.

This story was given to the *Courier-Mail* on Monday; it had a link to the site that named the companies. There was one major problem: this blacklist included building companies that had complied, but they were mentioned anyway. I am not sure if there could be a more irresponsible action taken by the QBCC. Do the minister, the QBCC board or the leadership of the QBCC have any idea what impact inclusion on this list has on a building business?

In the building industry, reputation is everything. It affects their ability to get work. Consumers avoid companies that have a black mark against their name, and I believe there are at least 14 companies—I suspect there are more—that have been wrongly named. I urge the minister to investigate this matter and provide an explanation on how this oversight could occur. Those wrongly named companies also deserve a public apology, clearing their names. If this minister is going to introduce bureaucratic, complicated implications on mum-and-dad builders, he has to make sure they get it 100 per cent right.

### Lynch, Ms H; Ukraine

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.59 pm): After a career which spanned four decades, much of it working in oncology and palliative care nursing, Helen Lynch was taken far too early by cancer. She was until very recently a dearly loved member of the nursing staff at Greenslopes Private Hospital's wards 31 and 22. Her colleagues pay her the highest tribute a nurse can receive, by nominating her as the person they would want to care for them if they were sick. I pass on my sincere condolences to her husband, Carl, and her family in the UK.

After two years of treatment, most of it in the hospital in which she worked, there are just too many people to thank, but I would like to thank my wife, Susan, and her friend Liz who cared for their dear friend Helen until the end and, as nurses do, continued that care beyond death. I would like to thank the staff of wards 31 and 22 and all of the GPH nurses who cared for Helen. I would like to thank Liz and the cancer care coordinators. I would like to thank Michelle and the staff of the Cyril Gilbert day unit. I would like to thank Dr Pretoria Bilinski and the medical team. I would like to thank Petra and the chaplaincy team and the CEO, Chris Went, and the management who have all done so much to make Helen's passing easier. I will miss her cheeky northern English accent cheerily greeting me whenever I call the ward.

Tomorrow marks a year since the full-blown invasion of the Ukraine. It is a fight that has been going on for nine years but escalated a year ago, and we should not forget that innocent Australians lost their lives on Malaysia Airlines flight 17. This is a fight for peace and democracy. Like all members of this House, I value democracy as a way to maintain a peaceful and civil society based on the rule of law applied equally to all citizens. I rang the President of the Ukrainian Community of Queensland, Peter Bongiorno, early on the morning of 25 February last year. He told me there would be a rally a week later for peace. My first thought was that it would be too late. I am so glad I was completely wrong.

The Ukrainian people have valiantly defended their homelands and their way of life. I really do not believe the majority of Russian people support this war, but sadly they live in a dictatorship which makes resistance dangerous, if not deadly. Peter and his team of volunteers have been supporting over a thousand Ukrainian displaced persons and I particularly want to note the hard work of Adam, Mikalya and Natalia, just to name a few, who not only support refugees here but have family in the Ukraine whom they still care for and worry about.




The Ukrainian community is particularly grateful for the support given by our Premier and the Queensland government. We were the first state to offer fee-free quarantine, fee-free schooling for Ukrainian children, the first state to offer free emergency health care and we donated \$500,000 to the Ukrainian crisis appeal—the first state to do so. I pay tribute to all those Ukrainians who have lost their lives in defence of their country, but I particularly note that my thoughts are with the civilians such as those six people who were killed standing at a bus stop this week. With ongoing support from countries around the globe, Ukraine will successfully defend peace and democracy. Slava Ukraini!

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 1 December 2022 (see p. 3881), on motion of Mr Brown—

That the House take note of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly Report No. 32, 57th Parliament, *Report on the 2022 budget estimates process*, tabled on 12 October 2022.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.02 pm), continuing: I stand to continue speaking to the House as I was before I was interrupted by Christmas, new year and everything else. Going back to what I was saying on 1 December—

**Mr Power:** We all remember!


**Mr WHITING:** I know you all remember, but I will just repeat it. I was saying that the LNP should be wary of calling for a review of the system of estimates because its members may end up having to do more work as part of it. They may be required to ask better questions, which is one of the things I did talk about.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** They could introduce a bill, but they could also ask better questions with no allegations, imputations or hypotheticals. They may need to ask more questions if we review the system—I do suspect that they often run out of questions—or might need to develop a deep well of questions for all of the different ways that the inquiry could go. I think members opposite should be prepared to go into depths along some of the different lines of questions, think on their feet and practice asking more of those questions. It might be that we need to see more questions by committee members. That would be fabulous. I do feel sorry for our LNP members who come into the committees and sit there all day and have someone else come in over the top of them and ask the questions instead of them. I do feel sorry for those opposite, especially the member for Burleigh. I look forward to hearing more questions from him.

I can see though what we may have done wrong in the estimates last year. I think we gave members of the LNP too much help. I think we gave them too much time. I think we gave them heaps of time—perhaps too much. We took away time from government members to allow LNP members to ask questions. I even, to my great shame, gave them some help with their questions. I was interpreting what they were trying to say and recasting that into conforming questions, so I do apologise for that. I have to say that I did not protect ministers. If anything, I needed to protect LNP committee members from ministers themselves. They are some of the things that I did do wrong.

As I said briefly last year, there are some things that we will be doing differently this year which will only add to the success of estimates. I look forward to this year. I will give a preview of what we are going to do. As I said, I am not going to accept the term ‘protection racket’ for reasons I outlined last year. I have to say to members of the LNP that I will not be helping them with questions this year. I will give them one chance or I might just rule them out of order. I will give them a hint though: they may need to rehearse some of this, so that is just a quick tip for them. One thing I will do is I will not protect them from ministers. I might allow the ministers to go full rein on what they want to say when faced with questions. One thing that we will be doing is we want to make more time for all members of our committee—the hardworking members of our committee who turn up all of the time. I think they should be getting more questions as part of this. I commend the report to the House.


 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.06 pm): In a unicameral parliament, the committee system and the estimates process are more valuable than anywhere else and at the moment in Queensland the estimates process is not working. It is broken. Anyone who values democracy will look at it and see it for what it is. It is essential and we have now seen the estimates process three times in this parliament and it has not improved. It has become predictable and sterile and it is a sham process.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is rare that I would say this, but I welcome the presence of the member for Logan at the moment because the member for Logan is the greatest exponent of running down the clock I have seen. He makes a tired footballer look like an amateur, this guy, the way that he runs down the clock. Every time someone asks a question, he rephrases the question and says, 'Who's the question to?' or, 'I've got to call it.' Just let the process unfold. I understand the juvenile name-calling, but I want to raise an important point: across both sides of politics when you watch the estimates process in Canberra it works far better than this one and it enables an interaction where the person does not have to be called each and every time. It enables ministers to be able to turn up, face the music and have to be across their brief without having people run a protection racket, and that is what democracy looks like.

I want to raise three things and they are three things that we commit to do in government because we are serious about this process working. The first is that the process should be chaired by the Speaker or the deputy speaker or someone other than a member of the government. That is fair and reasonable and that will enable time for people to be able to probe and test and make sure that ministers are across their brief. The second is that we will increase the time to examine the expenditure to allow a robust analysis to allow people to be able to ask questions across the portfolio when and where they like.

The third one, and one that I think Queenslanders will embrace, is limiting the mind-numbingly repetitive Dorothy Dixers. I have seen some interesting Dorothy Dixers, but the one that took the cake this time was the member for Hervey Bay who asked a Dorothy Dixer that actually had not even been properly prepared for the subject. You know the process is so metronomic and so repetitive when a member is given a question that even they do not know what it is about. That is absurd. If a minister is across his or her brief they would welcome the opportunity to show it. There have been some very good ministers from both sides of politics who have fronted up and just said, 'Over to you. We want to see some questions.' I ask the backbench, those sitting there who will not be promoted in this term, would you not want to ask some questions about your electorate? Would you not want to ask something that shows you have a level of intellectual rigour and that you stand up for your community? The process is broken. We intend to fix it.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (3.11 pm): It is interesting to note in this report that while the non-government members did get around twice the amount of time as the government members for questions, that still meant we had just four hours of non-government questions for the entire health and environment portfolios. Anyone who has had the misfortune of sitting through estimates knows just how much of a farce it is. The government members should be commended for managing to take their job seriously as they read out questions to the minister that are written by the minister's office. Those questions are just there to push the government's agenda and run down the clock. This report quantifies that. In the four hours of non-government questions in the health and environment portfolios, non-government members asked 151 questions. In around two hours the government members asked just 29. The non-government members made great use of their time, whereas the government members got out barely 30 questions within that whole period. It is interesting to note the comparison in this report to the estimates hearings under the previous LNP government where the committee that covered the environment portfolio had nearly nine hours of hearing time compared to 6.32 hours in 2022, which includes time for the entire health portfolio.

There was no genuine effort in our hearing to provide transparency. Questions were side-stepped. In some cases they were even called irrelevant, when on further advice from the director-general we found out they were actually within the minister's portfolio. I would like to clarify some of the statement of reservation that we made to the committee for the sake of the minister who has misrepresented it in a number of contributions. I would love nothing more than to talk about youth or science. I have a science degree and even though there is an ever-growing number of grey hairs on my head I am still relatively young.


The last estimates hearings basically became a joke because few of the questions from the non-government members in that section of the hearing were adequately answered. In the hearings I asked about the regional science and innovation hubs and I was told that the department was not responsible for those. Then right at the end of the session when no further questions could be asked I was told that, in fact, it was within the department. I had previous confirmation of the involvement of the Department of Environment and Science from the Chief Entrepreneur in innovation hearings and had

questions as to how this program was being rolled out. It was frustrating that we were not allowed to ask about this project. Because of the government chair who was running the show, I was not able to have follow-up questions to clarify this.

A key building block of the Queensland Youth Strategy is housing, yet all the minister could really give us on this was that it was a really complex problem and to attack me for standing with my community over concerns about overdevelopment in areas that the state government has not adequately resourced. It was staggering to have a Gold Coast MP implying support of this inappropriate development in Labrador, Biggera Waters and Chirn Park, a plan which locals were concerned about and overwhelmingly opposed to. The City of Gold Coast reached a good outcome on the city plan. Just let them get on with it.

Questions about the water tracking and electronic reporting system administered under the science area were not adequately answered as we were told they should have been asked under the previous environment section. Given questions were directly about the use of this system in flood situations that we saw emerge last year, it was disappointing they were struck out. When questioned about whether the government had set any targets for science engagement given it had spent \$30,000 on consultation, this was again swept aside as if it would be ridiculous to set KPIs for something that the department was seeking to achieve.

Even the member for Maiwar could not clearly get a science portfolio question through to the Chief Scientist as he was blocked by the minister. For the minister to get up and complain about feedback on the way that these sessions are allocated, when there is no clarity from the minister about activities under this portfolio, is incredibly disappointing. We want a rigorous estimates process to get transparency and openness for Queenslanders. Queenslanders deserve to know what is really going on and what the government is spending their money on.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.16 pm): I would like to contribute to this committee report because the estimates process, and what we do in question time, is important to all Queenslanders. This House is the House of Queenslanders. It is not the House of the Labor Party, it is not the House of the LNP, it is not the House of any political ideology; it is the House of the people of Queensland. They expect this process to work fairly for everybody.

I am on the Transport and Resources Committee and the chair runs a good process. We seem to find time for proper questioning from the opposition members and from the Labor Party members. It is a fair process. I see other estimates processes where the opposition members are always blocked or there is some reason why they have to interrupt the question and not allow a free-flowing opportunity for the opposition to question the government of the day. Yes, we are in opposition, we accept that, but our role is to keep the government accountable. A part of that process is to use the estimates hearings in a proper way. The people of Queensland expect that.

We all come into this role to represent our community. A part of that role is to allow questioning of the government of the day about whether they are spending the budget properly and are they meeting the KPIs that they committed to—in other words, are they running the state right? I understand those on the other side in government would say, ‘Yes, we are doing everything right. We should not be questioned.’ Yes, you should be questioned.

**Mr Power:** You had hours and hours of questions.

**Mr MILLAR:** I take the interjection. The member for Logan is the key person who stops questions. He uses his political ability, which is fantastic for the Labor side. It is brilliant. He runs a very good operation for his government. I am sure the Premier, the Deputy Premier and everybody over that side are patting him on the back after estimates time and saying, ‘What a good job you have done. You have stopped us being questioned. You have stopped scrutiny of us and you have allowed the process to roll out and not be scrutinised properly.’ People in my seat of Gregory expect that no matter what colour of government you are you should be questioned on whether you are spending the money the right way and are you running this government the right way.

**Mr Power:** We do!

**Mr MILLAR:** There is no, ‘We need to be questioned. We need to be under some sort of KPI. Are we doing the right thing?’ We should not be restricting the opposition, the crossbenches or even their mates, the Greens. When the Leader of the Opposition said that the system is broken, he was right. Are we a better society, a better parliament, when the system is broken? I think we need to fix this system. I think we need to give those people on the opposition benches the opportunity to question the government of the day.

I am not saying that government members should not believe in their ideology or their policies, but they have to at least be questioned on them. They have to at least allow scrutiny on the way they are governing this state and should not be afraid of it. They should not walk into an estimates process with a game plan on how to stop the opposition questioning the government of the day. If they believe in their policies so much and if they believe in the way of the Labor Party, they should say, 'Righto, the books are open. Question me on everything!'


**Mr Power:** We do.

**Mr MILLAR:** No, you do not. I take that interjection from the member for Logan.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Logan, order.

**Mr MILLAR:** I will take his interjection, Madam Deputy Chair, because he does not understand transparency, accountability and openness. I have no problem—well, I do have a problem—with members opposite espousing their ideologies on the way that they govern Queensland. That is their choice. However, they must allow the opposition and the crossbenchers to question what they are doing. If they are doing everything right and if they are doing everything perfectly then the books will be open and they can say, 'Question us.' However, do not try to shut down an estimates process. We need to fix this. The system is broken. Fix it now.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.20 pm): We have just heard hubris and smugness in the government interjections from across the chamber and I think that really sums up what has gone wrong with the estimates process. Government chairs see their ticket to promotion in protecting government ministers who cannot do their job. They run down the clock. We have seen situations where government chairs will rephrase a question by saying, 'Oh, I think you mean'. In fact, that has happened with the member for Logan who has run down the clock in a ridiculous way. Labor backbenchers are not pulled up by the committee chairs for moving points of order that are out of order and, because time is so short, opposition and non-government members have no chance to dissent against a ruling. You would have to go off line, do it within the committee structure and take time away from the estimates hearing. It has really become a joke. I think that the smugness and the arrogance of the interjections from Labor members, in fact, sums up the—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, member. Members, I ask you all to check your microphones.


**Ms SIMPSON:** The smugness of government members' interjections reveals just the tip of the iceberg because throughout the estimates process we see them behaving in this way as if it is a game. I would like to name and shame a few others who are primary culprits, but it would take too much time at this point. It is disappointing because I do believe that the estimates process and the committee structure in general started out with the best of intentions and with bipartisan support from across the parliament. What has happened in recent years is an abuse of the process. It is a protection racket and it is just not good enough. That is why I support the points raised by the Leader of the Opposition when calling for reform in the estimates process.

However, I would go further in regard to the committees and matters that are dealt with in secret and not released in full to the parliament. Those things are happening over and over again. Labor dominated committees hide minutes and procedures with the intention of keeping things secret. Committees should be doing the opposite. There should be a default situation where they release information. They have used the committees as a way to beat up issues behind the shed, as it were. It is not done in public and it is not done with full scrutiny. It should be. That has to finish.

I want to talk about the provisions that the Leader of the Opposition has outlined. We believe that more time should be given to allow for adequate questioning on expenditure. The structure of the estimates process has evolved with tight time frames, but that is not the way that it was initially set up. The process has become constrained and does not allow for continual questioning to follow through on issues. We see quite bizarre structures of government in terms of ministerial responsibilities across portfolios. There need to be clearer lines of accountability in view of the time of estimates hearings.

We support having a Speaker or Deputy Speaker having the ability to take over in regard to consistency of ruling. When Labor members think that this is how they are going to get themselves promoted to the cabinet—and good luck, because apparently the Premier does not want you—they take obstructive behaviour that is more about grandstanding than allowing the process to flow in a way that a good chair or deputy chair would enable.

The reaction from government members throughout this debate highlights why the estimates process is as broken as it is. They are so arrogant that they think they can get away with anything. I have seen some government backbenchers try to have questions ruled out of order even though I do not think they have ever picked up a standing orders book, but it is all about running down the clock. That is not in the interests of integrity and transparency. We need the system reformed. We need respect for the system rather than the game playing and arrogance that we are seeing from members opposite.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.25 pm): In talking to this report I want to endorse fully the comments of the member for Broadwater, especially when it comes to the member for Logan. I do fear that the more we highlight the incredibly poor conduct of the member for Logan as the chair of a committee the more we do to promote him, because that is what the Labor Party wants. The Labor Party wants chairs who run down the clock, who obfuscate questioning and who rephrase questions for members to protect their own ministers. That is what the ALP wants of their committee chairs. Therefore, we really should stop promoting the member for Logan and the member for Bancroft, who is another great exponent of the protection racket, because we are actually doing them a favour as that is what the ALP wants from their committee chairs. Apart from that, I agree with all of the comments of the member for Broadwater. We can do better in Queensland when it comes to accountability in government.

I will take up a comment that the member for Bancroft made in his contribution. He said that he rephrases questions for the ministers and he gives guidance about questions. Member for Bancroft, we do not need your guidance or your help in asking questions. As members of parliament it is our job to ask questions; it is not your job as the chair of the committee.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Scenic Rim, I remind you to direct all comments through the chair.


**Mr KRAUSE:** I will, Madam Deputy Speaker. Comments like those made by the member for Bancroft show the arrogance of not only the ministers in this government but also the Labor Party backbenchers, including the committee chairs. They think that as ministers they can administer not only the state but also the opposition. That is not the way it works and it is not the way that the people of Queensland want it to work. The member for Logan made comments about trying to help us. We do not need your help, member for Logan. We do not need the help of government members to ask questions.

The Senate process in Canberra gives us a good example of how things can work better. In that process, government ministers and public servants are not let off the hook. They have to answer questions. They are not allowed to leave the room until they answer questions. However here, if the line of questioning gets a bit hot it is shut down. It is closed off by the government chairs. There is a clear difference between the way that the Senate estimates process works and the way that the Queensland estimates process works.

We do not have to look that far away for another example of how things can work better. In this place we have seen that committee processes can work better when there is agreement from all parties to make it work better. We saw that throughout 2021 when the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee held 10 public hearing days during which we actually agreed. We got on with the job of questioning people and making the parties before us answer questions.

Our committee process can work, but it relies on government, opposition and crossbench members actually making it work. If we want to maintain the system we have here, it is entirely up to members of the government to make it work. Taking on board the comments of the member for Capalaba, it does help when there is a good committee chair who can allow that process to work. When we have portfolio committees chaired by government members, whose political survival depends on protecting the government, that is not going to work. When there is a non-government chair, someone who is committed to the process, it can work. We saw that through the PCCC process, where we got to the bottom of a matter and got solid answers from the organisations we were questioning. It can work for the government as well.

It will not work because this Labor government has lost the spirit that the estimates process is meant to have. It will just shut it down to protect itself altogether when the questioning gets a bit hard. That is not the way this process was designed to work. I endorse the comments of the member for Broadwater. We can do better here in Queensland.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.30 pm): I was not going to speak to this motion, but I am very tempted after hearing the member for Bancroft and the interjections of the member for Logan. I have been a critic of the way the committee system has worked for the past few years. People will not be surprised to know that that will not change during this speech.

In a couple of weeks I will have been a member of this parliament for 11 years. Over that 11-year period, the committee system has become worse and worse. From 2012 to 2015 it actually worked pretty well. We had ministers coming along and actually answering questions. There were some changes made to the way the estimates system worked. It actually worked a lot better. Obviously the Labor Party did not like it, but it worked a lot better. We saw ministers sitting in front of committees for six or eight hours at a time, instead of an hour and a half as happens now. The ministers sat in front of committees and gave answers to questions all day. In one instance I think the then deputy premier sat in front of a committee for eight hours and answered question after question. Do we know why that was able to happen? It is because we had competent ministers who could answer the questions. They knew their portfolios and were right across their brief. Instead, in this government we have hopeless ministers who are not capable of being honest and are not capable of answering questions. That forces the majority of chairs to protect them constantly. The exception is the member for Kurwongbah. I have asked questions in front of just about every estimates committee, and I would say that the member for Kurwongbah is the only reasonable chair in this House.

**Mr Power:** You haven't been on my committee.

**Mr HART:** I have sat in the member for Logan's committee. I have sat in on every committee and I have watched every estimates process.

We see chairs delaying the process, repeating questions and trying to change the question—all because they do not like the questions and the ministers do not like the questions. They try to change the question and try to delay the whole process. They give ministers overtime to respond to questions with completely irrelevant answers.

Then we see the Dorothy Dixers from government members with their list of questions that ministers are prepared for, one after the other. It is really amusing to sit there and watch this process when a government member asks a question out of order. The minister has to start flicking through all their paperwork, trying to catch up to the question that was actually asked! We also see other instances where a government member must have fallen asleep during the committee process, has not noticed that a question has already been asked and asks exactly the same question, only to get the same answer.

**Mr Power** interjected.


**Mr HART:** I take the interjection of the member for Logan. The reason some of our members have to ask questions over and over again is that they are blocked from getting an answer and have to change the question slightly. If you want an answer out of this government, do not hold your breath because it is not coming. We are seeing exactly the same thing in question time. There is a good reason it is called question time and not answer time, because we never hear any answers! In my view, estimates is a complete waste of time if ministers will not answer the questions that the people of Queensland want answered. Get it right.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.36 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee Report No. 28, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into the Independent Assessor and councillor conduct complaints*, tabled on 14 October 2022.

I am quite proud to talk to this report, because I am very proud of what the committee accomplished. I note a couple of points in the foreword. Four of the six committee members were former councillors, with 35 years of collective experience in local government. We conducted 14 hearings over nine towns and cities, heard from 47 witnesses and received 59 submissions. I wrote over 52,000 words across 15 documents as we assessed feedback. We did workshops and five drafts. I pay tribute to the

secretariat, who did all of this with us. As far as we could, we worked in a nonpartisan manner. It took us a while—we had a lot to do—but the way we approached this matter shows the way we in this place can undertake some of our inquiries.

The report makes 40 recommendations, all varying in scale. There was a lot of great input from all stakeholders. That includes the secretariat, the department—I commend the department—the LGAQ, councillors and other stakeholders. I thank them for the way they helped out with this.


I will touch on some of the themes in this report. The first is improving timeliness. For the councillor complaints system, we all knew that we needed to improve timeliness. We suggested some target timeframes. I know that they will be a stretch for those instruments and bodies involved, but we hope they make it. We also pointed out that perhaps the Councillor Conduct Tribunal needs to be changed in some ways. That would include, for example, putting in a full-time president, one member of the CCT hearing uncontested issues and perhaps better remuneration. We think those proposals will help with timeliness.

Another theme in our recommendations is that councillors are not using the inappropriate conduct system as best as they could. Inappropriate conduct is something that can be assessed and dealt with by councils. We think they can improve how they do that. We know it is a challenge, but we think it is a really important part so they do not overload the system and it falls back to us. We want to encourage and enable them to use that system as well as they can.

Another thing we talked about was the need for more training around these issues in the sector. When we started this inquiry one of the big questions we had was around why it seems there is legal overdrive in the system. What we are dealing with is a councillor behaviour system, not a legal system. We discovered when we asked why councillors were leaping towards getting legal representation once there was a complaint against them in the system that there was a level of fear and confusion amongst councillors—a fear of the ultimate sanction of being dismissed, a fear for their own reputation, a fear of what a finding of misconduct could mean for them, confusion about how the code of conduct operates and confusion around conflict of interest.

One of the most important things we said was that we need to reduce the legal overdrive and fear and invest in more professional development and training in the sector so that they are familiar with all aspects of the councillor conduct complaint system. We think that is a very important recommendation.

There is only time to talk about a couple of other things. We think it is important that there be committee oversight or committee scrutiny of the Independent Assessor every year. I see that has been accepted so we will do a report annually. My fellow committee members and others will perhaps talk a bit more about issues like social media and freedom of political expression, which deserve a lot of time. I congratulate the councillors around Queensland who helped us in this inquiry.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.41 pm): I have the privilege to rise to speak about the committee inquiry into the Office of the Independent Assessor. At the outset, I thank the committee secretariat for the enormous amount of work done for this committee inquiry. I echo the remarks of the chair in paying tribute to my fellow committee members for the spirit of cooperation shown. My colleague from Scenic Rim, Jon Krause, the chair of the PCCC, made a similar point about the way they conducted an inquiry recently. The committee system works if there is that spirit of cooperation. I thank my colleague the member for Burleigh for his thoughtfulness and the other committee members who have local government experience.

Right across Queensland the only consistency with this complaint system is the inconsistencies in interpretation not just by councillors and mayors but by the department, the assessor and the Councillor Conduct Tribunal. When we have the department of local government, which is the executive arm of government that puts in place legislation that this House passes, giving advice to councillors and mayors and then the Independent Assessor assessing the situation that has been reported to them differently and referring to it as misconduct and then the Councillor Conduct Tribunal assessing things differently again, the system is broken. I appreciate the spirit of cooperation in working on this report. If we have a committee report that makes 40 recommendations then that is enough to say the system is broken and it needs a lot of work.


I thank all the councillors and mayors who have gone through this system and have met the costs of the legalistic nature of this system. We heard of those councillors and mayors through the inquiry. Some decided to retire from local government. It is a shame when fear and apprehension of a complaints system weighs so heavily on the minds of councillors and mayors. A misconduct situation can range from an educative disciplinary process through to being dismissed. One of the

recommendations we made is that we be more iterative and send out letters to those against whom allegations are made and give them an idea that that sort of misconduct will be at the lower end—maybe an up to \$250 fine. What was being sent out were letters that said misconduct could lead to dismissal. Of course, if a councillor or mayor gets a letter like that they are going to engage their best and brightest legal minds. We heard time and time again about the costs to councils and councillors and mayors of this onerous system.

I appreciate the many recommendations made to the government. I am appreciative that there will be an annual review of the Office of the Independent Assessor, but I am concerned that we do not have a shorter time frame—perhaps three months—for a review of the implementation of the 40 recommendations. I have mentioned that to the department personally. What gets measured gets done. We do not want to be sitting here in 12 months and find that some of the recommendations have not been touched.

A great deal of thanks goes to Mayor Sean Dillon. Sean faced the ire of the Office of the Independent Assessor from different avenues. That was one of the examples of the misinterpretation by the assessor and legal minds. Fortunately, common sense prevailed and he was cleared of the matters. It was Mayor Sean Dillon and the LGAQ that drove this process and forced the hand of the Deputy Premier to ask us to conduct this inquiry.

I appreciate the recommendations stressing that the department of local government is the point of truth as the executive arm of this parliament. If they are giving advice to the assessor and the tribunal then that advice should be able to be used as protection by councillors and mayors. Once again, thank you to all the councillors and mayors who participate in local government—the government closest to the people in Queensland.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.46 pm): On 14 October 2022 the State Development and Regional Industries Committee tabled its report titled *Inquiry into the Independent Assessor and councillor conduct complaints system*. The committee's task was to consider the functions of the Office of the Independent Assessor and the performance of those functions and identify any amendments desirable for the more effective operation of the local government complaints system in Queensland.

On 27 October 2021 the committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into the functions of the Office of the Independent Assessor and the performance of those functions including: firstly, the performance by the Independent Assessor of the Independent Assessor's functions and whether it is consistent with the intent of the local government complaints system; secondly, whether the powers and resources of the Independent Assessor are being applied in accordance with the public interest; and, thirdly, any amendments to the Local Government Act 2009 or changes to the functions, structures or procedures of the Independent Assessor considered desirable for the more effective operation of the Independent Assessor and/or the local government complaints system.

The Office of the Independent Assessor has jurisdiction over the assessment of all complaints made against local government councillors in Queensland. The Office of the Independent Assessor undertakes the initial assessment of all complaints about councillor conduct in Queensland. It investigates misconduct complaints about mayors and councillors and where appropriate prepares applications for hearing by the independent Councillor Conduct Tribunal which decides misconduct matters. Previously, complaints about councillor conduct were assessed by the council's CEO or the chief executive of the department of local government. In 2016 the Queensland government initiated an independent review of the councillor complaints process. The *Councillor complaints review: a fair, effective and efficient framework* report recommended reform.


The Local Government (Councillor Complaints) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2018 established the Office of the Independent Assessor to investigate and assess councillor complaints, ensuring the process remained transparent and accountable. The Independent Assessor reports directly to the Minister for Local Government. The amended Local Government Act 2009 states that the Independent Assessor is not subject to direction by another person in regard to exercising its powers.

The committee also considered the operations of the Councillor Conduct Tribunal. The Councillor Conduct Tribunal was established under the Local Government (Councillor Complaints) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2018. The tribunal is an independent body made up of six members and a president appointed by the Governor in Council. It is responsible for dealing with complaints of misconduct by councillors. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning provides administrative and secretariat assistance to the tribunal to enable it to effectively perform its responsibilities.



The functions of the tribunal are: firstly, to hear and decide complaints of misconduct by the councillors as referred to it by the Office of the Independent Assessor; secondly, to investigate the suspected inappropriate conduct by a councillor referred to the local government by the assessor to be dealt with by local government; and thirdly, to make recommendations to the local government about dealing with the conduct. After conducting a hearing the tribunal must decide whether or not the councillor has engaged in misconduct. If the tribunal decides the councillor has engaged in misconduct, the tribunal must then decide what action should be taken by way of discipline against the councillor.

The committee found that the councillor complaints system was broadly sound but improvement was needed; specifically, the system needs to more closely and efficiently align with the intent of the legislation and public interest. Although much of the attention of the investigation was focused on the Office of the Independent Assessor, the complaints system is made up of several independent bodies. The committee found that each body can improve its processes in order to have a better functioning councillor complaints system. The committee made 40 recommendations and I support those recommendations.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.51 pm): Most of the members on the committee are going to explain the committee's report, so I am going to be very brief. I am unusually going to praise the committee and the Labor members on the committee for the work they did on this particular bill. As the member for Bancroft has explained, we came up with those 40 recommendations in a bipartisan way.

There are real issues with the legislation around the OIA and it needs to be changed. I think the government has a big job to change it. I hope they will take the recommendations the committee made seriously and make those changes as soon as possible. The secretariat did a fantastic job in pulling together the thoughts we all had. I think we went through four or five different iterations of the report. The secretariat was forced to rewrite it a number of times because of the things we kept adding to the report.

What really surprised me as we went around different councils and talked to them was the amount of dysfunction that is happening in some of our councils. We saw some politically-based councils and some non-political councils, but there seems to be factions in every council and they are actually weaponising the OIA against other councillors. Some of these meetings were in camera so I am not going to go into too much depth, but we saw councillors in tears at some of our meetings. We saw councillors who no longer want to be councillors, and I do not blame them. They have to be so cautious with what they say and what they do because of the system that is in place, and it has made them, quite frankly, unable to do their job. The government has a big job to fix this.

One of the key issues we discussed over and over again is the right of councillors to have freedom of political speech. In my view, they do not have as much freedom of political speech as a state member does, and I do not think that is right. I think they should have just as many rights as a state member and they should be put under the same conditions that state members are. I think we can look across the board at applying the same conditions to councillors as we impose on ourselves.


I will let the other members talk more in depth about the report, but it is a very unusual situation for me to praise the chair of my committee and the Labor members for the way they conducted themselves. This is a real report of a real committee of the Queensland parliament. It can work; it just needs to work the right way. If we all try to do—

**Mr Madden:** And the member for Traeger.

**Mr HART:** And the crossbench. I apologise, member for Traeger. We have been on the same committee for 11 years now, member for Traeger.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr HART:** I had a bit of a rest for a little while, but I am back. With that, I commend this bill to the members of the House. I think that all members should have a read of this thing because there are some really good items in there.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.55 pm): I too wish to praise the work of the chair, the deputy chair and the member for Traeger as the crossbench representative. This was an important investigation into the Office of the Independent Assessor. It also led us to other avenues where we have made recommendations in terms of how to make the entire process and system better. Of course, part of that comes down to the Councillor Conduct Tribunal as well. These are very valid recommendations. In fact, I believe that one of the recommendations was put forward by a substitute member on the committee at one hearing, who asked why we need to have three CCT representatives for each matter. I know there is a recommendation in the report about what we can perhaps do moving

forward. Perhaps we only need one tribunal member at a CCT hearing so we can make sure we are processing through the backlog of OIA complaints. I know that one of the big things local councillors want is time to either accept they acted inappropriately or with misconduct or to fight it and find a result as they move forward. I think that is very important, it is very valid, and the government in its response has taken that particular matter under consideration.

We also saw the need for more training. We did highlight that training is undertaken by the department and that when the OIA first came in there was a level of pre-emptive innovation in terms of making sure there is a conversation with councillors. One of the big things I noticed is that a lot of councillors do not read legislation. I am not criticising them necessarily, but these councillors are community people. They have put their hand up because they cared about a certain road project or kindergarten development, and maybe it is not their prerogative to go through and read an entire piece of legislation. I think we in this House need to understand that not everyone is going to be as excited about legislation as we are. I note that the member for Callide is laughing along but I know that, just like me, he stays up until two o'clock in the morning reading legislation and watching the British parliament. No? I went one step too far.

It is very important that we ensure our councillors—who are community people putting up their hands for four years and maybe further—are getting a greater summary of what the legislation is and what their roles and responsibilities really are. It is also very important that the OIA expresses quite clearly what the penalties for inappropriate conduct or misconduct are. We did hear the member for Lockyer touch on it and I will reflect on one example. We heard from a series of local councillors who spent thousands and thousands of dollars defending themselves when the penalty in the end may have only been about \$250. I think that is part of training but also making sure that the OIA communicates clearly when they are dealing with councillors to ensure we do not have people stressing out, becoming frantic and spending thousands of dollars to defend something that only involves a small penalty in the end. They need to be able to move on.


One of my big bugbears was the code of conduct. I believe there needs to be a review of the code of conduct because it was said it was ambiguous and at times superlative. It asks councillors to perform to the 'highest ethical standards'. I do not know what the difference is between 'ethical standards' and 'highest ethical standards', and a lot of councillors could not determine the difference either. It also talks about councillors having to 'clearly and accurately explain Council's decisions'. What does 'clearly' actually mean? There is also the line that councillors must 'accept and value differences of opinion'. I can accept a difference of opinion, but I must say that I do not always value a difference of opinion, and I have expressed that in this House once or twice.

There needs to be a review of the code of conduct. We also need to ensure we are protecting councillors in the same way that state members of parliament are—that councillors can block people from their Facebook pages and hide inappropriate comments on their Facebook pages without in some way suppressing political expression. I think that has come through very clearly. I thank all of the committee.

Debate, on motion of Mr Smith, adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Reports

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that: the Community Support and Services Committee report on the Path to Treaty Bill by 21 April 2023; the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 14 April 2023; and the Health and Environment Committee report on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 14 April 2023.

The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that: Auditor-General's *Report 8: 2022-23—Energy 2022* be referred to the Transport and Resources Committee; and Auditor-General's *Report 9: 2022-23—Protecting our threatened animals and plants* be referred to the Health and Environment Committee.

## MOTION

### Amendment to Standing Orders



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That schedule 6 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly be amended in accordance with the amendment circulated in my name, effective immediately.

#### SCHEDULE 6—PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

- (1) In accordance with s.88 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, the following table establishes the Portfolio Committees of the Legislative Assembly and identifies their primary areas of responsibility; and
- (2) A reference to a Minister is deemed to include departments, statutory authorities, government owned corporations and other administrative units reporting to the Minister and parts thereof that report to the Minister with respect to the Minister's responsibilities as set out in the Administrative Arrangements.

Portfolio Committee	Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Oversight Responsibility
Economics and Governance Committee	Premier and Cabinet Olympic and Paralympic Games  Treasury, Trade and Investment  Tourism, Innovation and Sport	Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games  Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment  Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement	Auditor-General  Integrity Commissioner
State Development and Regional Industries Committee	State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning  Agricultural Industry Development, Fisheries and Rural Communities  Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water	Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure  Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities  Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water	Independent Assessor
Education, Employment and Training Committee	Education, Industrial Relations and Racing  Employment, Small Business, Training and Skills Development	Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing  Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development	


Portfolio Committee	Area of Responsibility	Ministers	Oversight Responsibility
Health and Environment Committee	Health and Ambulance Services	Minister for Health and Ambulance Services	Health Ombudsman
	Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science and Youth Affairs	Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs	
Transport and Resources Committee	Transport and Main Roads	Minister for Transport and Main Roads	
	Energy, Renewables, Hydrogen, Public Works and Procurement	Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement	
	Resources	Minister for Resources	
Legal Affairs and Safety Committee	Justice and Attorney-General, Women and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence	Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence	Electoral Commissioner Information Commissioner Ombudsman Queensland Family and Child Commission
	Police, Corrective Services, Fire and Emergency Services	Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services	
Community Support and Services Committee	Communities, Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts	Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts	Family Responsibilities Commission
	Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships	Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships	
	Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs	Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## PROPERTY LAW BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.02 pm): I present a bill for an act to consolidate and provide for the law relating to property, and to amend this act, the Body

Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Land Title Act 1994, the Limitation of Actions Act 1974, the Property Occupations Act 2014 and the acts mentioned in schedule 3 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Property Law Act 1974. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Property Law Bill 2023 [\[207\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Property Law Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[208\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Property Law Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[209\]](#).

For the benefit of the House and committee, I also table a draft Property Law Regulation 2023 and a draft Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023. I want to stress that these regulations are draft only and will be subject to ongoing stakeholder consultation.

*Tabled paper:* Draft Property Law Regulation 2023, Subordinate Legislation No. xx [\[210\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Draft, Body Corporate and Community Management and other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, Subordinate Legislation No. xx [\[211\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Property Law Bill 2023. This bill will replace the current act with modernised property legislation, drafted in line with modern practice and using plain English to simplify Queensland's property laws. The bill will also enact, for the first time in Queensland, a statutory seller disclosure scheme. The new scheme will simplify disclosure for freehold land sales and empower buyers to make well-informed decisions when purchasing property.

The current Property Law Act governs many aspects of Queensland's property law. The act deals with a broad range of issues including: general rules around property, creating and disposing of land interests, co-ownership of property, deeds, covenants and mortgages. The breadth of these laws mean they will affect Queenslanders everywhere at some point in their lives, so it is essential that the legislation is modern and robust. The current act commenced in December 1975 and has not been substantially amended since. In fact, many of its provisions use language from the early 1900s legislation on which they were modelled. While the current act has served our state well, it is time for Queensland to modernise our property legislation.

From 2013 to 2018, the Commercial and Property Law Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology conducted a broad-ranging, independent review of Queensland's property laws. The research centre looked at equivalent provisions in other jurisdictions and undertook substantial consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. As part of its review, the research centre prepared a total of 18 papers, including comprehensive final reports recommending a new Property Law Act and the implementation of a statutory seller disclosure scheme. I would like to acknowledge, in particular, Professor Bill Duncan, Professor Sharon Christensen and Associate Professor William Dixon for their work in conducting such a thorough and comprehensive review. I should also mention at this point that I had the distinct honour of working with Professor Duncan as his research assistant while I completed my studies at QUT, and I understand he also taught the two most recent attorneys-general and is quite rightly regarded as Queensland's expert property lawyer.

**Mr Nicholls:** And shadow Attorney-General.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** And shadow Attorney-General—I take that interjection from the shadow Attorney-General. Bill Duncan has a lot to answer for!

Through extensive consultation and research, Professor Duncan and the team identified a range of issues with the current Property Law Act. These issues ranged from uncertainty regarding how a number of provisions should be applied, to provisions that do not reflect contemporary commercial practices and parts of the act that are outdated or unnecessary. The final report of the Property Law Review made 232 recommendations to modernise Queensland's property law framework. I again want to acknowledge the work of the QUT Commercial and Property Law Research Centre and thank them for their measured and detailed recommendations. These recommendations have been instrumental in the development of the bill.

Property law, no matter how technical it may be, will affect every Queenslanders at some point in their life, so it is important it reflects modern standards, practice and understandings. This bill modernises our property legislation in a number of important ways. For example, the bill repeals outdated or unnecessary provisions, including those dealing with unregistered or old system land. These provisions have been replaced with a simplified process for the registration of any unregistered

land that still may exist. The provisions dealing with property settlement in de facto relationships have also been removed, given these provisions have been overtaken by the amendments to the Commonwealth Family Law Act 1975.

Another feature of the bill is an updated legal framework that reflects modern practice around electronic dealings in property and electronic service of documents. Technology has advanced dramatically since the mid-seventies, and our legislation should reflect that. These reforms will provide mechanisms to better facilitate the digital creation and signing of contracts and deeds and make certain that these documents can be validly used.

There are also changes in the bill that will streamline development processes and go towards increasing housing supply. The bill will explicitly provide that a court can consider development when granting an order for a right of use over neighbouring land. The bill also extends the court's power to order easements in gross in favour of public utility providers. These changes will give landowners a pathway to removing unreasonable limitations to the development of land.

Not only does the bill update the law to reflect modern practice; it also seeks to reflect modern community expectations. One of the ways it does this is by bolstering consumer protections in property transactions while maintaining sellers' rights. For example, the bill modernises and clarifies the process around rescinding a contract if the house or unit someone has purchased is damaged or destroyed. Under these circumstances, if a seller returns the dwelling to the condition it was previously in the buyer will not be able to terminate the contract, better balancing the rights of buyers and sellers in these circumstances.

The bill also modernises various provisions for mortgages to clarify the powers of mortgagees and the protections for mortgagors. In addition, the bill updates and improves various laws that apply to leases, providing for modern terms to be implied into lease agreements and protecting lessees from any impacts owing to defaults and assignments. The bill also harmonises time frames with the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994 to provide consistency in leasing practice in Queensland.

Further, the bill makes several improvements to laws that relate to neighbouring property. A significant change will be the introduction of a negligence framework for supported neighbouring land, replacing the old nuisance-based cause of action. In addition, a duty of care obligation will exist between neighbouring owners, giving the court discretion to consider the circumstances more fully.

Another core change in the bill is the abolition of the common law rule against perpetuities. The common law rule was intended to balance the freedom of a person to deal with their property as they wish with the need to protect the public interest by ensuring that property is not indefinitely tied up in trusts. However, the rule is legally complex to apply in practice and can give rise to anomalies. The bill introduces a perpetuity period of 125 years, reflecting a contemporary life expectancy and avoiding the uncertainty regarding the duration for which property can be held on trust.

This bill is about making our property law framework more user-friendly and accessible than the current act. While it modernises the language used, it retains, in large part, the long settled principles of property law on which it is based. Some legal complexities, however, cannot be addressed by modernising language alone.

In a significant step forward for Queensland's property marketplace, the bill will, for the first time, enact a statutory seller disclosure scheme. Currently, sellers are required to disclose information under a complex mix of common law, statutory and contractual obligations. In addition, buyers currently receive a variety of different disclosure documents at different stages of the sale process, including before contracts are formed, before settlement and at settlement, and the consequences of failing to disclose information varies. This can make it difficult for sellers and buyers to understand the information and their obligations and rights. We will implement a modernised statutory scheme which requires the seller to give the buyer a simple disclosure statement and copies of relevant documents before the contract is signed. The disclosure statement will also contain various warnings about information that is not included. This will ensure that the buyer is informed before making the decision to enter into the contract and knows what they need to research themselves.

The draft regulations tabled at the start of my speech are intended to indicate broadly what will be disclosed under the scheme, including: the title search and survey plan for the property; specified notices or orders, including whether there is an intention to resume the property; contamination and environmental protection matters; body corporate matters if applicable; and an indication of rates and water service costs currently paid for the property. Should the bill be passed, key stakeholders will be consulted in finalising the draft regulations to ensure the new requirements are clearly understood and workable in practice.

Queensland is the most disaster-prone state in Australia, and it is important that Queenslanders are informed about the level of risk to their property. Following last year's floods, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority recommended policies be developed so Queenslanders understand the flood risk in particular. The framework proposed in the bill will mean that disclosure certificates include a warning statement, encouraging buyers to do their due diligence in relation to flood and natural hazard risk.

I know that during consultation some stakeholders, including the LGAQ, advocated for the mandatory disclosure of natural hazard risk information, and I want to thank these stakeholders for raising this important issue. Unfortunately, however, there are a range of practical and legal difficulties in mandating disclosure of this information, including that the level of information held by different councils can differ quite considerably. In addition, councils across Queensland charge vastly different fees for access to this kind of information. Not only are we committed to ensuring that Queenslanders have access to the information they need to make an informed decision before they purchase; we also recognise that we need frameworks to work for all Queenslanders. I am committed to continuing to work with stakeholders, including the LGAQ, to develop a mandatory scheme using uniform information.

The seller disclosure scheme will apply to all sales of freehold land. However, there are also a number of exceptions where disclosure would not be mandated; for example, where the parties are related, co-owners or neighbours, where the buyer is a publicly listed corporation, or where the sale price is greater than \$10 million and the buyer waives their right to the disclosure documents.

To promote compliance with the disclosure obligations, the scheme will provide the buyer with a right to terminate the contract in two ways: firstly, if the seller does not provide the disclosure documents then the buyer can terminate the contract at any time before settlement; and, secondly, if the disclosure documents are provided but they contain an inaccuracy or are incomplete, then the buyer may terminate if they would not otherwise have signed the contract. However, if another act provides a remedy for the failure to disclose certain information, then the consequence under that act will apply instead of these termination rights. This ensures that the consequences for current disclosure requirements under existing legislation continue to apply.

The bill also will enhance disclosure of important information to buyers of 'off the plan' lots in community titles schemes. Amendments to the Body Corporate and Community Management Act will require a copy of any building management statement that will apply to the community titles scheme to be provided to the buyer. I would like to acknowledge the representations made by stakeholders and members of the public on this issue. Their advocacy highlighted the importance of ensuring that building management statements are disclosed for proposed lots.

I would also like to thank the Community Titles Legislation Working Group for its important contribution to seller disclosure reforms for community titles schemes. The disclosure statement will include important information about the specific lot being sold. It will also outline information about the rights and responsibilities of owning a lot in community titles schemes, including information about the use of lots for short-term letting, and will note that buyers should seek advice about the permitted lawful use of the lot, including about whether this use could subsequently change. As with the seller disclosure statement, we will continue to refine the body corporate certificate itself in the lead-up to commencement of the scheme.

This bill has been the subject of extensive consultation over about a decade, particularly with stakeholders in the property industry, legal and community titles sectors. Ahead of the 2020 election, we committed to work with stakeholders to modernise and replace the current Property Law Act, and this bill delivers on that promise. I want to thank everyone who was involved in consultation for their ongoing involvement in this process. Their expertise has significantly informed the development of the bill. I want to thank the Queensland Law Society, the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, the Bar Association of Queensland, the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the Property Council of Australia, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, Griffith University School of Law, Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, the Australian College of Strata Lawyers, the Australian Banking Association, the Unit Owners Association of Queensland, the Owners Corporation Network, the Strata Community Association, the Australian Resident Accommodation Managers Association, and the Local Government Association of Queensland. I look forward to continuing to work with these stakeholders to refine the draft regulations and prepare for implementation of the bill.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge that there are a number of stakeholder positions that we have not been able to adopt. In particular, I know the REIQ has made representations around disclosure obligations at auction. Unfortunately, we were not able to consult with other key stakeholders on that proposal in the lead-up to introduction, but I encourage all stakeholders to engage in the committee process to further refine the bill.

As I said at the outset of my speech, this bill will replace one of the core pieces of Queensland legislation. Every Queenslanders, at some point in their life, will come across or have some dealing with property law, so we have to make sure our legislation is fit for purpose. I again want to thank everyone who has been involved in redeveloping our property laws over the past decade, particularly the QUT Commercial and Property Law Research Centre. Their dedication to these important legislative reforms has been invaluable. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.17 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

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

### Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.17 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 136, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report to the House on the Property Law Bill by Friday, 14 April 2023.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 250, on motion of Mr Stewart—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.18 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to thank the committee members from both sides of the House for their consideration of the bill and the submitters, of which there were four. The bill is an omnibus bill amending seven pieces of legislation. That is a few less pieces of legislation than the minister's predecessor amended in his former omnibus bills, and that is certainly a relief to stakeholders. However, the quality of the original explanatory notes was lacking in professionalism for this bill. There were significant errors. The relevant clause numbers did not correctly align with the clause being explained. The committee members and stakeholders were not then able to identify where information may have been omitted. Not only is it confusing for the committee members and the committee staff; it is time consuming for stakeholders when these mistakes occur—so much so that the committee recommended at its meeting on 4 May 2022 that the explanatory notes be corrected to meet the professional standards that Queenslanders would expect from government.

A major component of this bill is to amend the Stock Route Management Act. As a former deputy chair of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, I wish to make a few comments about the 2016 Stock Route Network Management Bill, which failed to pass the parliamentary committee processes.



This was one of the rare occasions when there was bipartisan rejection of a bill. The reform failed in 2016 not because it was reform but because the unintended consequences outweighed the achievements of the reform. The issues raised then were in relation to financial rigour, adequate consultation and transparency of being accompanied by draft regulations or a draft stock route management plan. It was also seriously lacking in many other areas. I distinctly recall local government after local government lining up at that time to reject the 2016 legislation. Very little support was expressed at that time for the stock route management reform throughout the submission process and also at the regional hearings. In 2016 I made it clear there was a need for reform of the stock route legislation. However, in the eyes of stakeholders the 2016 bill did not deliver for them.

The stock route network is valuable to many stakeholders in Queensland and the network's proper management is paramount to rural and regional Queensland and to many local governments. Since 2002 there has been government consultation, reports and draft legislation in relation to the stock route network. This reform has been in the wings for a long time. The reform needs to be done with good engagement from local government and other stakeholders.

There are 48 local governments in Queensland that contain parts of the stock route network within their local government area. Local governments hold substantial responsibility for the management of the network, including assessing and issuing permits, managing the land activities such as fire and weed management, and maintaining water facilities and other assets. Their staff are also very involved when it comes to travelling stock moving through their local government areas.


It should be noted that the use of the stock route network varies from local government to local government in Queensland. For instance, in the Boulia shire there are many stock routes that are not fenced and it would be impractical to fence them, yet they are used by local landholders and travelling stock. In the Maranoa Regional Council all of the stock routes are fenced. The stock routes are close to the Roma Saleyards and they are used to feed stock awaiting sale that may have travelled long distances to those saleyards. In other areas councils have travelling stock on their stock routes. We are seeing a change in climatic conditions and we hope they do not have too many stop on their stock routes in a short period of time. There are also camping and water reserves that are leased to adjoining landowners. The uses are varied and local governments are best placed to cater for the variances across the state.

The bill will enable local governments to charge an application fee and retain 100 per cent of the revenue from permit fees as a means of recouping some costs associated with managing the stock route network. In their submission the LGAQ estimated the cost to councils was approximately \$4.8 million per year to manage the stock route network. I think that figure is probably fairly conservative, too. As a result of the low price for travelling stock, the burden is on local governments as the fees do not cover the management and maintenance. Presently, ratepayers are substantially subsidising the operation of the stock route network and councils will need to work their way through any increases they make to those fees.

I also encourage local governments to look at public-private partnerships with local landholders to reduce the management and infrastructure costs on stock routes. That is something that I think has been overlooked in this information. If there is an adjoining landholder who is happy to maintain, for instance, a bore on a stock route and they can have a water-sharing agreement with the council and travelling stock, they will do a lot of that work for the council and it will save the councils a lot of additional expenditure. It helps keep down the labour costs. It actually helps ensure that the assets are well run and ready when travelling stock need to come through. If the councils can engage landholders in public-private partnerships they will find there is a win-win for everyone. I hope this legislation, given it will have greater local input, will encourage more partnerships of that nature, some of which already occur.

I think some very important points were made in the LGAQ submission. There were eight recommendations relevant to the future work that needs to be done with the Department of Resources and Queensland local governments. There is a body of work to do on mapping, and I stress the mapping must be accurate, ground-truthed and user friendly. We know of the difficulties experienced when mapping is inaccurate, and we have seen that play out with vegetation management mapping.

This reform to stock routes is needed. However, there is still more work to do. I will be keeping a watching brief and engaging with local governments as to how that reform continues and goes forward. I look forward to that. I support the bill.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.25 pm): I would like to start by acknowledging the efforts of the Minister for Resources in developing the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I also acknowledge the committee members and the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah. This bill

ensures that the regulatory frameworks within the resources portfolio remain efficient, effective and responsive to change. It provides a wide range of minor and miscellaneous amendments to legislation and regulations that clarify a policy intent and reduce complexity.

The key objectives of the bill are to modernise land administration and stock route management by putting in place measures that support local government to better manage public lands and recover costs. The bill contains amendments to a long list of acts including the Land Act 1994, the Stock Route Management Act 2002, the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968, the Land Regulation Act, the Land Title Act, the Place Names Act, the Stock Route Management Act, the Surveying and Mapping Infrastructure Act and the Vegetation Management Act 1999. A number of acts that are no longer required will be repealed. They are the Foreign Governments (Title to Land) Act, the Starcke Pastoral Holdings Acquisition Act and the Yeppoon Hospital Site Acquisition Act. A number of errors in the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act and the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 will also be corrected along with minor reference errors to the Forest Wind Farm Development Act 2020, the Government Owned Corporations Act 1993 and the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016.

While the amendments proposed in this bill are minor and administrative in nature, they are nonetheless important in support of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to economic recovery. We are adopting a contemporary approach with this bill by pairing flexibility with prudent safeguards to ensure that the intent of the legislation is much clearer. Amendments proposed to the Land Act 1994 will modernise land administration in Queensland and support our economic growth. It will also enable us to proactively manage the state land portfolio as well as support government at a local level to better manage public lands.

One of the key changes to this legislation that this bill delivers is a more efficient pathway for conversion of any leasehold land that is not of public benefit. In addition, we have thousands of great parks, sporting grounds and recreation facilities across Queensland. Local governments are trustees for these public purpose reserves and this bill will improve the day-to-day management of them by providing greater flexibility in allowing short-term secondary uses of the land.

Amendments will allow local government to manage public land more efficiently in the area by allowing for a wider range of trustee permits to be issued where a trust land management plan is in place. Further amendments will reflect contemporary approaches that support the development of defence training sites in Central and North Queensland, thus delivering economic benefits to regional communities and supporting the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative.

Another key part of our great state is the agriculture industry, which is an \$18.5 billion sector. In order to transport Queensland stock across various parts of the state, we need a well-developed network of roads and reserves. There is no doubt that Queensland's stock route network is vital infrastructure with more than 330,000 head of stock moving across the network each year. The network is administered by both state and local governments, but its day-to-day management is the responsibility of the local government in the area. Amendments of the Stock Route Management Act will enable local governments to keep their stock route fees and allow them to charge application fees to cover the administrative costs of assessing the applications they receive.

Local governments will also be able to waive these fees in cases of hardship or drought. The improved cost of recovery will deliver a better managed stock route network and be of huge public benefit to stock route users. It will reduce the level of ratepayer and government subsidisation for the commercial users of the network as well. I thank all of the local governments that participated in the public consultation last year.

As we push forward into the digital age we are seeing fewer newspapers being printed. It is often far easier and quicker to communicate changes through newer forms of media. Another benefit of this legislation is that it removes outdated requirements for placename changes to be published in printed newspapers when that newspaper is no longer in circulation. Instead, notices will now be allowed to be published via other suitable media channels.

This bill also streamlines and improves administrative processes for a variety of different government agencies. Dealings associated with Defence land, road closures, survey standards and water boundary frameworks are just some of the items that will become far more efficient under this bill.

In 2016, amendments were made to the Vegetation Management Act so that terminology was consistent with the Planning Act. This amendment assigned development categories to some of the clearing activities. To further assist the parties making applications under this act, the bill will help to


clarify those vegetation management activities; for example, the construction and management of large firebreaks are not prohibited. New amendments have removed any confusion and made the rules clearer.

This bill proposes to amend the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968 so that it is easier for companies to apply to remove a special coalmining lease and transfer some or all of the interests in the removed lease, thus providing more flexibility for certain lease transfers. It ensures the process for consideration of legitimate commercial and operational objectives of the companies, the interests of the state and the public interest in relation to regulation of mining in Queensland. Transfers under these provisions will trigger the usual relevant assessments and requirements, but they will make it easier. This continues the government's support for the mining industry and all of the jobs that it creates.

The Queensland resources industry has underpinned the state's economic development and prosperity for more than a century. Our metals, minerals, coal and gas industries have helped to define our state and are a proud part of Queensland's identity at home and abroad. Every Queenslanders benefits from our resources sector. Mining supports 77,000 jobs in Queensland, many of which are in regional Queensland, and royalties from mining companies help to pay for the services that we all need—good schools, good hospitals and roads—throughout the state.

I note the contribution earlier from the Treasurer. This government is ensuring Queenslanders receive their fair share from our resources, for which we are currently getting record prices. I note the fantastic news today that these royalties will pay for the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline, providing water security to Queenslanders and, of course, jobs.

In conclusion, the policy objectives of this bill are to make regulatory frameworks clearer, more efficient and more effective. The amendments reduce complexity and help to modernise land and agriculture administration in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.33 pm): Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for covering my shift in the chair so I that I could speak; I appreciate it. I would like to make a short contribution, on behalf of the members of Southern Downs, to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The aspect which is of most interest to me and I think to many in my electorate who depend on the cattle industry, which is a lot, is stock routes.

I begin by congratulating the minister for his very thoughtful remarks during his second reading speech about stock routes and the long paddock. I thought that demonstrated a really good understanding of the things that my electors would hope a government would understand when it is administering legislation such as this. It is not a has-been; it is not some kind of hangover from a bygone era in the way that we might think. I know that the drover has to a large extent been replaced by the cattle truck but, as we have heard a number of speakers on this side of the House say, stock routes are a vital fallback for industry. We have just suffered a very significant drought. In my electorate of Southern Downs, many—

**Mr Boothman:** It was crippling.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Theodore. It was crippling. One of the things that impacts communities long after droughts is if the owners of stock have had to sell down to pay for their feed until they basically have nothing left. If that results in them selling their breeders just before a drought ends, that is a significant economic blow, not only to individual producers and their families but also to the communities in which they live. From a mental health perspective and from an economic perspective, its effect flows onto the main street of the towns. I see my honourable friend the member for Theodore sitting next to me. He is an avocado farmer. Do you have avocado routes? They are below the ground I suppose, are they?

**Mr Boothman:** Avocados are the nectar of the gods.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection. I am glad this issue has received some attention. One of the important aspects of this bill, from my perspective, is the benefit that local governments will receive from new fee retention arrangements.

I have the Goondiwindi Regional Council, parts of the Toowoomba Regional Council and the Southern Downs Regional Council in my electorate of Southern Downs. For smaller councils particularly it is a significant, onerous burden for them to maintain stock routes and to administer them for those producers who need to move cattle. I note that clause 67 will enable cost recovery by local governments by allowing local governments to keep all revenue received from application fees, permit fees, water facility agreements and fines for reinvestment in the stock route network. I think that is a good thing.

To give an indication of the kinds of commitments that local governments face with stock routes, it is not just a long paddock of grass; there is infrastructure involved. There is fencing. There are water points and associated water infrastructure for the cattle. There is also weed and pest management, which ostensibly the local government authority is responsible for. In addition to this cost, local governments are up for the cost of assessing permits and working out what the pasture is like, what the carrying capacity will be, how far the cattle are likely to move in a day and when it will be free for the next lot. It is not just for movement but also for emergency assistance for producers of cattle who have lost their pasture: it has all gone, they have spent anything they can on providing feed for their cattle. As a last resort, I saw many cases in the Southern Downs where primary producers were taking their stock onto these stock routes to graze the grass that had not been touched.

It is important that we understand that the water infrastructure on the stock routes, particularly things like the old-fashioned windmill pumping water from the ground into a tank or into a trough, is not just useful for those who are on the stock route—it is not just ‘Clancy of the Overflow’ who benefits from those; local rural fire brigades in times of severe drought, like we have faced in Southern Downs, have been able to use that infrastructure to fill their trucks. Farmers have been able to obtain stock and domestic quantities of water from those water points, which have proven to be reliable over the course of time.

It is with pleasure that I see that this is a part of the bill. I know that local governments will correctly say that the funds that are likely to flow, the spoils to them, from this act will probably still not provide them with full compensation for the cost of administering the program, providing permits and assessments and so forth, but it will be an improvement and that is certainly something worth voting for.

One of the things that did provoke my ire—a number of speakers on my side of the House have mentioned it—is clause 94 and the alterations to vegetation management which are included in this omnibus bill. Obviously when there is a single change—it is something which occupies the political divide in this state—over something like vegetation management, it is unfortunate that it ends up in an omnibus bill such as this where it might not get the scrutiny it ought to.

I want to reflect on what my honourable friend the member for Gregory said. He made a very good point about what effectively sovereign risk is in that businesses that are relying on PMAVs and relying on lawful plans for how to use the vegetation on their properties for their business cases use those business cases to obtain finance. It would be like my honourable friend here saying that he was going to plant a whole lot of extra avocado trees only to find out that the legislation had changed unbeknownst to him and the bank and he could no longer plant them. This is the kind of thing that we are talking about.

Vegetation management is a very sore point for many of my constituents who feel that there is not enough flexibility or understanding of the exact application of their properties and how they are managed, and they believe that they have been denied full use of their property in circumstances which do not necessarily provide a counterbalancing benefit to the environment. That is unfortunate, but I heard the shadow minister, the member for Condamine, speak with great gusto about that particular point, so it did not escape our attention. Maybe there was the hope that we would not notice, but we noticed.


There is one last issue that I want to point out, and that is the question of informing the public of changes and gazettal and so forth. It is a reality that many of our communities in the bush are losing local papers. My electorate of Southern Downs has been very lucky and has retained a number of papers after the departure of the News Corp ones to a digital-only format, so we still have the *Allora Advertiser*, *Stanthorpe Today*, *Warwick Today*, *Granite Belt Informer* and a number of different publications, plus the *Goondiwindi Argus*. The unfortunate thing, not by design but by oversight, is that some of these small papers are not approached by governments to advertise information, so when there are matters which have to be gazetted or proclaimed or promulgated in the community that revenue is very important to those newspapers that want to be the source of that news because they want to be that service to their readers.

I was speaking to the proprietress of the *Allora Advertiser* some time ago and she and her husband work very hard in that business but found out that during COVID for some of the period they were not offered advertising positions for important government announcements to do with COVID. That was unfortunate because not only did they miss that revenue and that opportunity to share in the benefits of government spending; it also meant that the actual purpose of informing the community about important government things was missed, at least for a time. I believe the government did

respond when this was raised with it by the rural press association, but I caution the government to make sure that this is more than just a decision to embark on more modern mechanisms to promulgate decisions and changes and that every effort is made to retain advertising in the traditional newspapers, because in electorates like Southern Downs those small papers are the lifeblood of the community. They tell us about the funerals and the sports results, the sorts of things that a big paper that is online and run from Toowoomba or Brisbane will not tell us.

**Mr Boothman** interjected.

**Mr LISTER:** My son writes an article in the *Allora Advertiser* every week, so members can have a look at that.


 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (4.43 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Firstly, I want to commend my good friend the resources minister for bringing this legislation before the House. I also want to thank the members of the Transport and Resources Committee, including the chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for their hard work in making sure we get this legislation right.

As Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, there is one aspect of the bill that I am particularly pleased to speak in support of today. The bill makes important amendments to the Stock Route Management Act to improve the recovery of costs for local governments that manage and administer the network—a series of roads, reserves and corridors that crisscross the state, allowing drovers to move and feed up to 330,000 head of stock all over Queensland each year. These arteries of rural and regional Queensland stretch from the Northern Territory border in the north-west to the New South Wales border in the Scenic Rim. From Bamaga to Barcaldine to Birdsville, these stock routes are a quiet superhighway system that keeps our stock moving and provides feed in times of drought.

This bill is making sure local governments can retain permit fees and other charges collected in the process of managing the stock route network within their boundaries. This is a more streamlined and direct way to fund the management and maintenance of Queensland's 72,000 kilometres of stock routes. For the drovers, graziers and landholders who rely upon them, this will mean a better stock route network. Last year I had the pleasure of joining the resources minister to announce \$1 million worth of investment into our vital stock route network—an investment in our booming agricultural sector, the good jobs it sustains and the food it produces for both Queensland and the world; an investment that allows eight councils from the McKinlay shire in the north to the Balonne shire in the south to carry out maintenance and capital projects.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken by our government on stock route reforms since 2018. AgForce, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Queensland Law Society are all in favour of our proposed changes. To put it simply, the Palaszczuk government is backing Queensland farmers and this bill is further evidence that we listen to our rural communities and stakeholders to make necessary changes, because that is what good governments do. As always, the Palaszczuk government is taking care of business in the bush. This bill improves the administrative process for listing regional ecosystems under the Vegetation Management Act. A certified online database is where regional ecosystems and their conservation classification will be listed rather than through schedules to the Vegetation Management Regulation.

I wonder if those opposite know how to classify mulga. That certainly was not the case in 2018 when they tried to mislead farmers about it when the LNP fed the rumour mill by claiming that farmers would not be able to push mulga to feed stock. Those opposite made sure that these wild claims were not in the interests of farmers but in their own interests of trying to secure votes rather than telling the truth to rural and regional Queenslanders, causing undue stress for farmers who already had a drought to worry about, adding LNP misinformation onto the pile. The then natural resources, mines and energy minister Dr Anthony Lynham called this behaviour 'irresponsible', and I could not agree more. The fact is Queensland farmers were then, and still are now, able to push mulga to feed their stock. They are still able to self-assess mulga harvesting to make sure that their animals get the feed they need, particularly in times of drought. Ultimately, farmers who would like any guidance on vegetation management can call 135VEG. Do not bother calling the LNP. With that short contribution, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.46 pm): I rise to make some comments on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This is one of those bills that makes me sigh and, I am sure, provoke a bit of an eye roll from a lot of members. This is one of those bills where the government decides that it is going to simultaneously amend a bunch of different pieces of legislation irrespective of how clumsily

they fit together and how unrelated the base legislation might be. The cynic in me feels sometimes like the government does this as a way to sneak through unpopular or controversial amendments and one could be forgiven this time for thinking this is precisely what is happening in this bill. There are plenty of minor and uncontroversial amendments that are proposed here, but there are a few that we cannot support, including provisions to streamline the privatisation of public land and those proposed to reduce transparency around ecosystem conservation status.

I will start with those land privatisation provisions. For a so-called progressive government, Queensland Labor really does love selling off public land, and this bill will make it easier for it to do so. Disguised behind the rhetoric of modernisation and efficiency, the amendments in this bill allow the government to proactively offer to convert leasehold land to freehold. Right now it is an applicant-driven process. It makes sense that a lessee who has an interest in obtaining freehold title over land would themselves hold the onus to apply for and to convince the government to give it to them, but what this bill assumes is that the government will itself also want to regularly sell off public land and so under that assumption we need a mechanism to facilitate and streamline that process.

I have to say that I find it hard to trust the government's assurances that it will only sell off land if it is not delivering public benefit. This is the same government that apparently deems it in the public interest to approve new coal and gas leases. It sees fit to sell off public housing while 50,000-odd people linger on the public housing waiting list or to privatise national parkland via commercial long-term leases.

All of these steps are notionally in the public interest or somehow otherwise justifiable in the government's eyes. Their idea of public benefit seems to be pretty readily interchangeable with whatever benefits the wealthiest people or those with the best paid lobbyists in the state. Big grazing businesses are understandably very excited about this change. Ultimately they want to see all leases effectively converted to freehold or at least to perpetual leases. They see this bill as a step in that direction. Unlike this government, the Greens do not support giving away public land to mining corporations and multimillionaire cattle barons. This is land that should belong to all Queenslanders and should remain in the hands of Queenslanders. We are in the middle of a housing and a climate crisis, with Queensland families paying hand over fist for basic needs. It is simply baffling that this government's priority in the first sitting week of the new parliamentary year is to make it easier to sell off public assets to the likes of Gina Rinehart.


The bill would also list regional ecosystem conservation status on the Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database, or REDD, rather than the Vegetation Management Regulation which means that the status can change without any democratic oversight or public scrutiny. In their submission on the bill several organisations, including the Wilderness Society and the Environmental Defenders Office, raised concerns that this will unnecessarily reduce transparency and rigour. Queenslanders who farm on, do business in or take holidays in the various grasslands, rainforests, savannas and bushland can reasonably expect changes like this to be regularly published and potentially challenged and debated by their elected representatives.

Instead, this bill provides for unelected departmental officers to silently update the data each year with no real checks or balances. Queensland's farmers, tourism operators, tourists themselves, environmentalists and conservationists or just everyday Queenslanders who enjoy our state's extraordinary biodiversity all have an interest in changes like this. Allowing such changes to just vanish in our state's bureaucracy means the public will be kept in the dark and may not be aware of such changes of conservation status. We have already seen the way this government exploits the news cycle to hide embarrassing information, from the Friday afternoon coalmine approvals to releasing land clearing data the day before New Year's Eve. If that is how the government treats vegetation management data then environmental organisations are well within their rights to be concerned about this bill and the changes it makes to conservation status changes.

Looking at the provisions on stock route changes, we support the changes that enable local governments to keep all revenue received from application fees and permit fees, water facility agreements and fines paid by cattle producers to better cover the costs councils incur in managing and administering the stock route network. Currently councils can only retain part of the permit fees for stock routes. This change will still leave them with much less in the way of funding than what is actually required. The current framework is leaving Queensland local governments out of pocket, in particular with interstate producers travelling here to feed their stock with very minimal costs. We support councils being able to waive fees during times of drought or economic hardship, but we would like to see higher

user-pay fees to manage stock routes and a time limit before producers can sell cattle after using stock routes for feed to stop big operators exploiting public land in Queensland only to leave and sell their stock elsewhere.


To conclude, there are aspects of the bill the Queensland Greens do support, but we cannot support streamlining provisions for the privatisation of public land, giving public assets to billionaires and scaling back of oversight and transparency over ecosystem conservation status.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.53 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. While this bill amends several areas, I will only speak to the amending of the Stock Route Management Act. These amendments cover a number of areas to assist in the effective management of stock routes, particularly supporting local governments.

Stock routes in Queensland have a long and complex history dating back to the early days of European settlement in Australia. In the mid-19th century Queensland was a largely rural and agricultural state and the movement of stock was a critical part of the economy. The first stock routes in Queensland were established in the 1860s to facilitate the movement of cattle from the remote interior of the state to markets on the coast. These routes were often little more than tracks through wilderness and drovers faced many challenges along the way, including tough terrain and unpredictable weather. Over time the Queensland government began to establish more formalised stock routes with the designation of public reserves for the movement of livestock. These routes were typically several hundred kilometres long, including watering points, rest areas and other facilities to support drovers and their animals.

In the early 20th century the Queensland government began to regulate the use of stock routes more closely. A system of fees and permits was introduced and drovers were required to comply with a range of rules and legislation covering the movement of stock. Despite these regulations, the use of stock routes in Queensland remained a critical part of the state's agricultural economy throughout much of the 20th century. However, with the rise of transport costs and the decline of the cattle industry in the late 20th century many stock routes fell into disuse and were gradually closed or repurposed for other use. Today the legacy of Queensland's stock routes lives on in many ways. Many of our old droving trails have been preserved as heritage sites or tourist attractions and there is ongoing debate about the role that stock routes could play in supporting sustainable agriculture and land management practices in the state.

Stock routes in Queensland are an important part of the state's cultural history and serve as a reminder of the pioneering spirit and resilience of the people who built the state's agricultural industry. The stock route network is valuable for its native flora and fauna and remnant vegetation, as well as for Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage. Stock routes contain major infrastructure for the transport of water, power and communications. The stock routes include 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves, corridors and pastoral leases and unallocated state land. Together dedicated reserves for travelling stock make up nearly 2.6 million hectares of the Queensland stock route network. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.57 pm): It gives me pleasure to rise to contribute to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill covers some ground. The two main areas I would like to speak to are in relation to the management of Queensland's stock routes and amendments the bill was going to make to the Vegetation Management Regulation. This bill continues the work of the best ever natural resources minister that we have had in Queensland—that is, Andrew Cripps, the former member for Hinchinbrook.

**Mr Minnikin:** A great man!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** He was a great man. Even Minister Furner would acknowledge that the work that former minister Cripps did in this House in 2014 to enable landholders to convert their leasehold into freehold is still talked about each and every day everywhere around regional Queensland. It does not matter where I go, which pub I go to, which sale yards I go to, whoever I am speaking to always says, 'When is Andrew Cripps coming back? He was sensible. He brought in the legislation that enabled rural and regional Queensland to thrive.' What the former minister did was so important that even now, eight years later, it is being copied and extended by this government.

You would think that they would have done it a bit quicker—you really would—but we know what they think of rural and regional Queensland. While it took them a bit of time to work it out, it is very pleasing to see that in this bill there is an ability to streamline that process even further. That is very important for the many people who do not know how or do not have the ability to do that paperwork. It

is really important. If you do not want to transfer your leasehold to freehold then you do not have to, which is a really important point. If you want to continue on that leasehold journey then that is up to you. I congratulate the member for Condamine, the member for Toowoomba North, the member for Callide and, of course, the mighty member for Gregory for working so hard in relation to this extremely important bill.

Even more so than the Labor members in the House, I was blown away by the rot the member for Maiwar was speaking. I am quite pleased that I was in the House to hear the misunderstanding that the Greens are peddling in relation to this very important bill and stock routes. Stock routes are not there to encourage—what did he call them—the big beef barons. The stock routes have been around for a very long time. In fact, the member for Maiwar might like to know that stock routes are called the long paddock. Why are they called that? They are called that because when you cannot graze your stock on your own land because drought has you in the grip of its hands and you have nowhere else to go, instead of turning out your stock—and there have been some horrible cases; I do not want to think about the time when sheep were put down and so on—you use the long paddock, the stock routes, to feed your cattle. Not many people call it ‘droving’, but you drive the cattle very slowly along the route. They were most recently used in my electorate in 2019 when a large mob of cattle moved north through the region with a team of drovers and dogs in an effort to feed them and keep them alive during a really tough time.

The stock routes run through my electorate along our major highways such as the western parts of the Burnett Highway—a highway that I would really like to see a lot more work done on—the Murgon-Gayndah road through Cloyna, and Mondure, Melrose, Ballogie, Ironpot and parts of the Brisbane Valley Highway. When you see on the side of the road cattle grazing and moving slowly along the stock routes, slow down because we know there is a \$6 billion maintenance backlog for our rural and regional roads, which means that—

**Ms Boyd:** Relevance?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Relevance? I take that interjection. I want to explain to the member where a stock route is. A lot of them run beside rural and regional roads. It is on the public record, and I thank the shadow minister for transport for continually reminding this House, that there is a \$6 billion maintenance backlog on our rural and regional roads. It is important that we keep the roads maintained for when cattle are being driven through an area. Obviously it is fenced off but stock can get out and so on and we have to be careful. That is why we need to maintain our rural and regional roads. When I say that the Burnett Highway needs upgrading, it absolutely does, just as all of the other roads do. Today I issued a press release about the Brisbane Valley Highway, but that may be veering a little offcourse so I will get back to the issues that I want to talk about in relation to this bill.

I acknowledge the advocacy of the LGAQ. They note that it has been costing councils some \$4.8 million a year to manage the stock route network. We know that 48 local government areas contain parts of the stock route network. These changes have been long-awaited by the councils because they play a major role in the day-to-day management, funding and compliance of the very important stock route network. That burden ends up on the ratepayers. Queensland councils with large areas have, more likely than not, an extremely small rate base. They only recoup some of the costs involved in that \$4.8 million and they have been required to return to the state government 50 per cent of the fees that they receive. In 2017-18, the total revenue retained by councils was just \$324,000, which is only 4.5 per cent of their overall costs. I note that the LGAQ have been seeking this reform for several decades. I congratulate them on their unwavering advocacy on the issue.

It has also been a key priority for my LNP colleagues who represent Western Queensland. They have been advocating for a very long time on this issue. I know that we will get an opportunity to talk about the late great member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, but in this first instance I pass on my condolences to Vaughan’s family and loved ones. We will remember his legacy in Western Queensland and his advocacy in this House on the issues contained in the bill that we are talking about today, amongst many other issues.


**Mr Weir:** He drove cattle into Longreach with Bill Liddle.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection from the member for Condamine: the late great member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, drove cattle into Longreach with Bill Liddle. That is just one of the wonderful memories we have of him.



In the last minute and a half that I have, I want to refer to the amendment that was going to be moved in relation to our very important native vegetation laws in this state. That amendment was going to be snuck in under the cover of darkness. I thank those on this side of the House who stopped that amendment coming through. What an unacceptable piece of legislation it would have been. There was no consultation. It was just slipped on in there. That shows the importance of the committee process.

I note that all committee members, including the Labor Party members, moved that that was not a decent way of doing business in Queensland. Thankfully—and I know it has taken a fair bit of fancy footwork—that amendment was pulled out of this legislation. I note that we had to set aside standing orders. When we say that we are doing more governing from opposition that is what we are talking about. We are talking about the shadow minister doing the work of the minister. When we say that the LNP is doing more governing from opposition that is exactly what we are talking about.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.07 pm): In terms of doing more governing from opposition, a good place to start may well be with the introduction of some private members' bills, some thoughts, some ideas and some hard work from those opposite. If these issues are so important to them and if the time lines around the issues are so important to them, why aren't they bringing those ideas to this House? Why aren't they doing the heavy lifting in terms of forming up their own private member's bill? I think we all know the answer to that. It is because they are a lazy opposition. They are big on whingeing and holding media conferences, but they do not actually do the heavy lifting when it comes to proposing policies to this House in the form of private members' bills.

The Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill proposes a number of really important reforms to numerous acts in Queensland, but I will keep my comments to the proposed amendments that pertain to the Stock Route Management Act 2002. I commence my contribution by acknowledging that the stock route network of Queensland is something that I have taken a keen interest in through my role as Assistant Minister for Local Government. Travelling particularly through Western Queensland, I have had many conversations about the stock routes with the councillors and mayors, community advocates and stakeholders and often it is an agenda item at ROC meetings in the regions. In this bill we see much of that work come to fruition.

Queensland's stock routes include 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves, corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated state land. Together with dedicated reserves for travelling stock, the network spans 2.6 million hectares. Part of our state's rural history for more than 150 years, stock routes evolved as settlers drove stock along corridors that followed our river systems, Indigenous trade routes and trails.

Between 1860 and 1890, established stock routes were recognised and dedicated as roads. Between the 1950s and 1960s, when road improvements were made and road transport became more convenient and efficient, we saw the use of our stock routes decline. Recently, increases in fuel prices and prolonged drought have made the stock route network a cost-effective alternative for moving stock and a vital source for pasture and emergency grazing.

The stock route network is also valued for its native flora and fauna and remnant vegetation as well as for its Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage. Stock routes contain major infrastructure for transport of water, power and communication. The stock route network contains significant cultural heritage and has been celebrated in the works of Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson. The Combo waterhole at Winton is thought to be the location of the story that inspired *Waltzing Matilda*.


The changes to this act are a result of extensive stakeholder consultation over many years. The creation of a better funded network will provide improved outcomes for drovers, graziers and others who rely on the network. Local governments will retain the revenue from the use of stock routes so they can be used to manage and maintain the network into the future. This is a change to the current arrangement of 50 per cent local government and 50 per cent state. The introduction of a new fee to assist with travel and agistment permit costs incurred by local government is also facilitated through these changes. A fee regime that is fair and consistent across the state will also be implemented through these changes. We know that local governments, as managers of the network, have the knowledge and the expertise to advise of changes to stock routes when they are required. Currently, the Department of Resources works with the relevant local government on significant amendments so that local changes can be raised and considered. That will continue into the future.

The matter of a fee regime and how it operates has been a long discussed topic. Within this bill many amendments address it, and we do that through the proposed amendments to permit arrangements including allowing for a local government to waive payment in cases of financial hardship—for example drought, flood and the like. The renewal application fee process has been

prescribed by regulation. A local government receiving revenue from stock route application fees, permit fees, water facility agreements and fines must use the amount for the administration, maintenance or improvement of the stock route network in its local government area.

The committee heard that local governments do and can make application to seek funding from the state for capital works and for the maintenance of infrastructure on the stock route network. Predominantly, that funding is used for water infrastructure, dams, bores, windmills, troughs and pads associated with those watering points and to make sure that essential infrastructure is provided.

It is clear that the changes proposed through this bill are important advancements to generational practice. They have been under consideration for some time; in fact, they have been the consideration of many stakeholders over many years. This legislation aims to strike the right balance. I commend the work of the department, stakeholders and the committee in reviewing this legislation before the House. Of course, the future will bring an ever-evolving framework our way, and I am confident that the department will continue to handle these matters in the same measured and considered way. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.13 pm): This is legislation that will improve efficiency and streamline processes within the resources department. It removes outdated processes, simplifies administration and regulation of stock routes and makes other minor changes. I will make a short contribution on two areas that I think relate to my environment shadow portfolio. The Queensland stock route network makes up some 2.6 million hectares of our state—that is, 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves and corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated state land alongside other dedicated reserves for travelling stock.

It is worth considering if there is any way forward to forever enshrine these as stock routes but have some of them fall under a system of multiuse protected area. This could better protect and recognise their environmental values while still allowing them to be used for what they have been set aside for. We should be thinking about how we can better encourage and enhance this great example of cattle working alongside conservation. It could be an opportunity as well to provide environmental management funding to combat feral weeds and animals in these stock routes.


The other matter I want to touch on is the changes to vegetation management. Of course, I note that the minister has backed down on this and tabled amendments. I would like to read from the excellent joint submission to the committee from the Environmental Defenders Office and the Wilderness Society. It said—

We believe this change will unnecessarily reduce transparency and rigour. Under the current process, changes to the regulations are tabled in Parliament which will allow for the provision of a disallowance motion in the event that grasslands were inappropriately changed from regulated to exempt. However, under the new proposed process, such a change would not pass through Parliament and would, therefore, not be subject to the rigorous checks and balances currently in place.

Additionally, since the change would pass through silently without an annual data release, it would be possible for the public to not be aware of the change for several years until a technical expert stumbled across it.

We believe this is an unacceptable scaling back of transparency and accountability around an important regulatory matter of listing the conservation status of regional ecosystems, which flows through to how the regulations impact clearing of those ecosystems.

When the EDO and AgForce are united in their opposition to something, it shows how bad an idea it is. This should never have been considered, let alone included in legislation before this House. The opposition committee members rightly described it as a 'sneaky, underhanded attempt to disguise this section', and it was the right decision to remove it from the bill.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.15 pm): The last government speaker did an excellent job of covering off on stock routes, which was the part of the bill that I wanted to talk about. My time on the committee a few years ago was very enjoyable. I was the only female on the committee and I vividly remember our estimates hearing in December 2020. I believe it was the member for Gregory—I hope I am not misremembering—

**Mr Weir** interjected.


**Ms PUGH:** Thank you very much, member for Condamine. He had a lot of questions about stock routes. If I recall correctly, he also pulled up the minister because he said, 'Your answer was too fulsome.' I think we got that in *Hansard*. It was a very long and detailed answer. I know that many members of this House were very keen to see something done about stock routes. My contribution will relate stock routes information in a way that inner-city people can understand. I have some fun facts

about stock routes that tie into the Mount Ommaney electorate so that people in my electorate can understand exactly what this means for regional communities. Almost everybody here eats beef. I certainly do. I am a direct beneficiary of stock routes. I am certainly not misleading the House in those terms.

I inform the House that last year there were 10 stock moved on the stock route network for every constituent in Mount Ommaney in 2019. In Queensland we have 72,000 kilometres of stock routes. That stock route network would reach around the boundary of Mount Ommaney between 2,000 and 3,000 times. Historically, there have been stock routes in Mount Ommaney. We are still home to some farms but not home to many cattle anymore. Of course, these have transitioned with time. The closest stock route today is still only 40 kilometres from the Mount Ommaney electorate—at Wivenhoe Pocket.

The aim of this legislation—I know that it is something that has been fought for for a long time—is to simplify the processes for state and local governments, which are the day-to-day managers of the network. It is supposed to include a more efficient process for declaring and amending the stock route network by creating a digital map and removing the requirement for this to be done by regulation. It will also remove the need for the minister to consider a local government's draft plan. The aim, of course, is to simplify the process overall and make it generally easier.

I want to place on the record that my husband previously worked as an adviser to the minister and he did play an early role in the development of this legislation. I think it is important to declare that in the House. Of course, he is very excited to see this legislation before the House today. I am sure all members are keen to see this particular part of the legislation updated. With those few words—there are so many excited speakers yet to come—I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.19 pm): Many have spoken about the main purpose of this bill. I will not follow through with that because I think it has all been said. I want to look at the process. The process of this bill should bring blushes to the minister's cheeks and certainly some in the department.

First and foremost, clause 94 seeks to amend the Vegetation Management Regulation through a sneaky, underhanded attempt to disguise this section. It is alarming that a bill so long awaited by industry included this desperate attempt at amending vegetation management regulations without proper scrutiny. What was trying to be achieved here—and my colleague from Bonney mentioned this—was an opportunity whereby this House would be sidestepped in future when it came to important decisions about the management of our vegetation in Queensland. Vegetation management is always a contentious issue when it comes to the environment, food production, resource extraction and everything else. Vegetation management is a sensitive area and incredibly important. For a bill to be proposed in this House that would casually brush that to the backroom and have it slip through is not a practice that any minister should be encouraging or any department should be recommending. I think it is important to look at that part of the process.


Then what we have—and whether it was an attempt to try and hide the sneakiness of the first part—is the explanatory notes. It is extraordinary that the explanatory notes were so incompetently put together and placed into this House—even to the point where the hard copy and the electronic copy were not the same. It was breathtaking that they had so many mistakes. That is something that I would encourage the government to take a long, hard look at. I do not think anybody in Queensland appreciates the idea of something sneaky and underhanded with future legislation and going around the people's house. Secondly, presenting explanatory notes that are confused and inaccurate—it is bizarre how they even ended up here—is strange and peculiar. It is a real shame the guillotine will drop and we will not get to go through consideration in detail because I would love to see the minister go through and try to explain all the clauses. It was confusing for us even when we had plenty of time to look at it because they were poorly put together. With all of that, the process has been fundamentally flawed, poorly executed and badly drafted.

Then this morning we found ourselves facing the situation of the same question rule regarding a piece of legislation this House has already considered. The government had to again go through the embarrassing process of setting aside standing orders of this House so that they can amend the part of the bill that would otherwise contravene what has already been passed.

We arrive at a situation where I would ask the minister to reflect on his department. I would ask the government to reflect on the number of media advisers they have versus people who are drafting and looking at explanatory notes and parts of legislation. One of the fundamental purposes of this place is to ensure that we have good legislation that will serve the needs and requirements of the people of Queensland that is openly and transparently presented and debated with time for stakeholders to have

a look at it so that they can consider the detail and there are no unforeseen circumstances. We know this Labor government likes to skip around some of the transparency items and hide things, but this is a glaring example of it trying to be sneaky, being clearly incompetent and, by the way, as late as this morning contradicting itself.

When we strip away all the poor drafting, bad explanatory notes, contrary points of view and everything else, the bill has some worthy elements that we can all support, and I do. I think this should be looked at closely as not an example of good process for this House. With those few words and with the minister's blushes exposed, I support the principle of the bill but the process was fundamentally flawed.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.25 pm): The Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 is a necessary bill to enhance the economic growth of our state. It is a bill that I am proud to be able to support. The bill modernises and introduces flexibility, safeguards and a clear intent into legislation needed by government, the departments, local governments and landholders. The bill makes minor administrative amendments to nine acts and two regulations across the resources portfolio. These contemporary amendments will assist the state government to proactively manage the state land portfolio and support local governments to better manage public lands.

One of the major changes will support the conversion of leasehold land to freehold. Land that is neither essential to government business nor delivers a public benefit will be targeted. I know that the member for Maiwar spoke at length about this and opposed this. He needs to get out and talk to people on the land who are working on leasehold land. Land that has underlying tenure will not be offered for freehold—for example, community purpose reserves, national parks or state forests. There are some boundaries that should comfort the member for Maiwar. All land offered for conversion must also be consistent with the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 and the Queensland Native Title Act 1993.

The key change to conversion is the removal of a landholder having to make an application for conversion before the department can offer freehold tenure. I know from my time travelling with the former agriculture and environment committee and talking to people living and making a living on the land that they are always talking about the reduction in red tape. This should be good news for people on the land.

This proactive conservation process will support business development and economic growth by granting increased tenure security. Landholders are not compelled to convert to freehold if the department makes an offer; they can continue to use their leasehold land under the terms of the lease for the remainder of their tenure. It is important for landholders to know their options so they can develop and manage their businesses. They are big businesses that are supporting our communities by producing food.


Our local governments manage as trustees a range of public purpose reserves such as parks, sporting grounds and recreation areas. I am sure that all of us with sporting clubs in our electorates know what a huge job managing leasehold lands for local councils can be. It is quite a cumbersome task. The bill improves the day-to-day management of reserves by providing trustees with greater flexibility and discretion to allow short-term secondary uses that are otherwise inconsistent with the original purpose of the land use once they have approved a management plan.

This bill also contributes to the delivery of the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative by supporting more efficient development outcomes for training sites at Shoalwater Bay and Greenvale. These include subleasing and creating easements. Covenants to the changes will mirror similar arrangements to leasehold transport land. When armies come to these areas to train they are fairly self-sufficient units with specialised equipment, but these training bases will need to be furnished with fresh produce. That will be good news for our local suppliers. They will also need local services to maintain these training areas when they are not being used. There is always an overflow of income into local communities because when service people are on leave they look for tourism opportunities, entertainment, shopping, going out for meals and enjoying the local community, so the cash flow from these training camps is going to flow into our local communities, which will support the economy of Queensland. This cash flow could be quite significant for those local areas for the life of the contracts.

A lot has been said tonight about stock routes, and they certainly are legendary in the history of Queensland, especially for droving stock. Stock routes are a key piece of infrastructure, supporting Queensland's over \$18 billion agricultural sector. Last night Minister Stewart said that the bill will whip our stock routes into shape. I thought, 'Yes, I'm sure it will.' I look forward to hearing the stockwhips cracking as livestock is droved on these routes now that the long drought has broken in many of our council areas.

Our local governments manage and undertake maintenance on these stock routes, keeping them clear and usable for the movement of stock. The amendments in this bill will support council to manage cost recovery for managing the stock route network, and better recovery will take pressure off ratepayers and the state in terms of subsidies and maintaining these unique and precious routes. Cost recovery will also deliver better maintained systems and the provision of feed, pasture and water for stock moving through. We know the perils of the agricultural industry, which is at the whim of severe weather systems that cause hardship to local governments. Local governments therefore have the power to waive fees during times of hardships and when droughts do bite.

The Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968 is proposed to be amended to provide for a variation of the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement. This variation will facilitate the transfer of a special coalmining lease to a third party that would not become a party to the agreement. As others have said previously, this is something that these companies have asked for. Various BHP Mitsubishi Alliance entities, together with the state of Queensland, are parties to the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement. This is very important for the continuation of the mining industry in Central Queensland and they are very sensible amendments. This bill is certainly packed with common sense and necessary amendments, and I support the bill.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.34 pm): It is always good to speak about pieces of legislation that involve subleases, stock routes and, more importantly, issues around vegetation management. I want to address vegetation management issues and some of the issues around subleases later.

The stated outcomes of the amendments to the Land Act 1994 are to introduce an alternative and more efficient pathway to initiate lease conversion, giving the chief executive an opportunity to act proactively in the allocation of state land. I support the committee's recommendation around the proposed changes to the Vegetation Management Act and that any changes should remain with the Vegetation Management Regulation. I do, however, fear that every time there are changes to vegetation management in this House years of change and the tightening of laws have created many and varied perverse outcomes, including confusion and flawed data undermining stated outcomes. There have been a lot of debates in this House around vegetation management and, as I say, I get nervous every time there is a vegetation management discussion in this House.

In their submission AgForce raised concerns with clause 94 and rightly pointed out that any change to the regulation must follow the *Queensland Government Guide to Better Regulation, May 2019* requiring regulatory impact analysis and public consultation. It highlighted that the Regional Ecosystem Description Database is frequently revised by the Queensland Herbarium. We know that end users such as landlords and vegetation management consultants regularly check for updates, and that is why that data has to be accurate. It has been raised regularly that all landholders and consultants want clear, stable guidelines and regulations for vegetation management and are not continually subjected to frequent changes in ecosystem descriptions from these very varied databases. It is not unusual for an electorate officer to get many people—particularly in a rural electorate—coming in talking about PMAVs and issues around overlays. It continues to occur, but I guess we have a role to play. I think that we could still deal with the recalcitrants out there who are doing the wrong thing by prosecuting them under the law instead of dragging everyone down the same rabbit hole.

In relation to the amendments to the Land Act 1994 and Land Regulation 2020, I am encouraged that we are enabling the chief executive to become more proactive in providing alternative pathways when dealing with leases and trustee permits. Issues of inconsistent use and trustee permits have presented several problems in my electorate, and I will seek amendments to further provide options for the chief executive to make sensible decisions relating to trustee leases. We need to continue with reforms so that issues like I have in my electorate can be resolved for the benefit of the community.

There is an issue with the use of subleases of state owned buildings when conflicts exist and there is what is determined as inconsistent usage. It is an issue right across the state, and I cannot believe that we cannot have a ministerial direction so that the minister can extend subleases when he or the chief executive believes it is the right thing to do. It does not exist right now.


I want to highlight to the House issues that require attention relating to the state owned Agnes Water surf club. Since 1997 Surf Live Saving has leased the building at Agnes Water. It retains the lease until 2037. Issues have existed for a decade with Surf Life Saving needing, and wanting, to only sublease the upstairs of the building to some other tenant while happily using storage and other areas downstairs. Since 1997 the building has been sublet to several different enterprises like restaurants, clubs and more recently a school. Currently, the Goora Gan school has 70 students. They have received an eviction notice—they have another year before they get kicked out—because the law

currently states that you cannot have a sublease for a building that is inconsistent with the intended purpose, that is, sport and rec being a surf club. As ridiculous as that sounds, it is not the south-east corner or anywhere on the Sunshine Coast: it is Agnes Water. I would have thought any use of a government owned asset, particularly a school, would be a real issue that the department could have taken up for us.

When we talk about this anomaly in the Land Act, the amendments required are outside the long title of this bill; hence, there are no amendments being moved here today. However, I do want it on the record that I will continue to work with the department and the minister about pushing for the chief executive to have the capacity to approve the extension of a sublease. I cannot believe it would not be as simple as something like that.

A number of different enterprises are looking to occupy this building, including a medical service and a local neighbourhood centre, and, as I said, the school wants to extend its life so those 70 to 100 students do not have to look for an alternative venue. I do struggle with the overly bureaucratic situation where the minister cannot determine what is the best use of state owned buildings. I suggest, as I said before, that there are many other buildings that could benefit from sensible changes allowing us to do what we need to do. With no new ventures or opportunities regarding subleases, the surf lifesaving club will not be able to find a new tenant consistent with the stated use of this building and the space will remain vacant for another 10 years.

It is worthy of reflection. I call on the House to consider a future bill that will be able to look at subleases being extended by the chief executive officer. I hope somewhere down the track somewhere like Agnes Water can have all the services they expect and deserve and not keep getting caught up in bureaucratic nonsense which I cannot believe cannot be resolved.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill was introduced to parliament by the Minister for Resources on 17 March 2022. If passed by parliament, the bill will amend or revoke about 14 acts or regulations. It is truly an omnibus bill, but I will focus my contribution on the sections dealing with changes to legislation relating to conversion of perpetual or term crown grazing leases and the local government management of stock routes.

The purpose of the bill as set out in the explanatory notes is to ensure the regulatory frameworks within the resources portfolio remain efficient, effective and responsive to change. The bill provides a range of streamlining, minor and miscellaneous amendments to legislation and regulations, which clarify policy intent and reduce complexity. The minister nominated the Transport and Resources Committee to consider the bill, with the committee required to report to parliament by 6 May 2022. In its report, which was tabled in May 2022, the committee made three recommendations: firstly, that the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 be passed; secondly, that the minister revisit the proposed amendment to certify the regulation vegetation status rather than this being included in the Vegetation Management Regulation; and, thirdly, that the minister table a corrected version of the explanatory notes as a matter of priority and ensure that the electronic version of the document is the same as the tabled document.

On 21 March 2022 the committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make submissions on the bill. Four submissions were received. The committee had a public briefing about the bill from the Department of Resources on 1 April 2022. The committee received written advice from the department in response to matters raised in the submissions. The committee held a further public hearing on 8 April 2022.

The bill will amend the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2022 which will enable the chief executive to make an offer to convert a perpetual Crown grazing lease, or a term lease, to freehold or a perpetual lease. For those unfamiliar with grazing tenure in Queensland, Crown leasehold land—that is, perpetual or term lease—makes up about 66 per cent of the Queensland land mass. Owners of leasehold properties are required to pay an annual rent to the state government, despite having already purchased their properties. However, a leaseholder can apply to the government at any time during its term with an appropriate fee payable to convert their perpetual or term lease to freehold.

As detailed in the explanatory notes, the amendments proposed by the bill will enable the chief executive to proactively manage the leasehold land estate by providing an alternative pathway for initiating conversion from leasehold to freehold. The chief executive will be able to proactively seek the conversion of leases where freehold is of an appropriate tenure or where the perpetual lease is the most appropriate tenure in certain term cases, in accordance with the objectives of the Land Act 1994. The department advised the committee that eligible leases are those for which there is no underlying

tenure or interest in the land that is incompatible with freehold tenure, and when there is no public purpose associated with retaining state ownership of those tenures. Freeholding such land aims to provide greater tenure security to support business development and growth, which is critical to contribute to Queensland's economic prosperity. The amendment will basically allow the chief executive to proactively offer the opportunity for freehold to a tenure holder. They will not be obligated to accept the offer, and, if they do not, tenure continues as it is now.

In its submission, AgForce advised the committee that, while it is supportive of the introduction of an alternative, more efficient pathway to initiate lease conversion, it considered that term lease tenures require further attention. AgForce advised—

With most perpetual leases transitioning to freeholding, it is the term lease tenure that requires further attention if the State is to encourage continued good management, as well as the viability of the tenure, industry and its surrounding rural communities and to continue the good work that was legislated in 2014. Over the years, AgForce has advocated for reform and discussion for alternative tenure models to be implemented which address both the needs of traditional owners to have connection to country and lessees to exit the rent trap. AgForce believes that the state government should consider the implementation of a further tenure conversion program aimed at improving tenure security for term leases. As a preference, this would see the conversion of all leases to freehold or at the very least the conversion of term leases to perpetual.

In relation to term lease tenure, AgForce advised the committee that they would like to see a high-level statement that provides for a structured and considered pathway that allows for discussions about, at times, some vexed issues and provides for some certainty about the process which could take some time.


Another important aspect of the bill is the proposed changes to the Stock Route Management Act 2002. Queensland stock routes comprise about 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves and corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated land. In total, they make up 2.6 million hectares of land. They are not just used for moving stock—otherwise known as droving—but are also used for grazing of stock and providing water for stock in times of drought.

As detailed in the explanatory notes, the bill will amend the Stock Route Management Act so the local government can retain permit fees and other charges collected by them. This is to improve cost recovery for local governments arising from the management of the stock route network. As well, local government can charge an application fee—that is, the amount prescribed when the Stock Route Management Regulation is amended—to cover some of the administrative costs arising from managing access to the network, while giving local government the flexibility to waive these fees in cases of hardship, for example in times of drought.

The bill also provides that the Minister for Resources no longer needs to consider a local government's draft stock route network management plan and the local government no longer needs to establish working groups to advise on preparing such plans. As well, the bill provides that the processes for updating and publishing the stock route network map utilise contemporary technologies and reflect local circumstances and community input. With reviews of the local government stock route network management plans, the local government is required to consult with state agencies where stock routes are co-located on or next to state controlled roads, waterways and protected areas to minimise risks to road safety, transport infrastructure, park management and biodiversity. I am sure these changes to the Stock Route Management Act 2022 will be welcomed by local governments who are currently required to manage stock routes, the drovers who use them and the graziers whose stock is moved along this vast network of stock routes or use these stock routes for grazing in times of drought, in what is sometimes called the long paddock.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Transport and Resources Committee. At the time the bill was reviewed, the committee comprised: the chair, Mr Shane King MP, member for Kurwongbah; the deputy chair, Mr Lachlan Millar MP, member for Gregory; Mr James Martin MP, member for Stretton; Mr Les Walker MP, member for Mundingburra; Mr Trevor Watts MP, member for Toowoomba North; Mr Pat Weir MP, member for Condamine, whom I see in the chamber tonight—although he was only a member of the committee from 31 March 2022; and Mr Colin Boyce MP, member for Callide, who was a member of the committee up until 29 March 2022.

As well, I would like to thank the secretariat, Hansard, the submitters and the members of the Department of Resources who assisted the committee. I am delighted to commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (5.50 pm): I would also like to thank the committee members for all their work. I would like to thank all the submitters. I thank the member for Kurwongbah and the member for Gregory for all their hard work on this very important piece of legislation we have before us today. It is very important to look into these matters throughout the state. Whilst I do not actually have any stock routes in the Gold Coast region or the Gold Coast hinterland, we do have some dairy farmers.

**Mr Lister:** You have avocado routes.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Not in the Theodore electorate, unfortunately.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** No, the Coomera Connector. In all seriousness, I want to focus on a couple of aspects of the bill and something which has come home to roost in my area—vegetation management areas, or VMAs. I want to reiterate the comments made by the member for Burnett when it comes to making sure that we have accurate mapping. It is certainly something which is coming up in my area on regular occasions that residents will dispute mapping of a certain type of vegetation on their properties when they can clearly demonstrate that it is not that type of vegetation; it is not a remnant vegetation, and it is not even regrowth vegetation. It could potentially be giant privet growing along the creek areas. Those who are aware of what giant privet does would know that it causes major erosion because it does not hold the soil like certain native species do. Some of my residents are very frustrated with what is going on in the Gold Coast region when it comes to dealing with these issues. They say to me regularly that there needs to be far better mapping when it comes to these issues to ensure that the right vegetation is in place to protect the riverbanks.

The Coomera River is one of the best water quality rivers in South-East Queensland. I think it got a 'B' rating just recently. It did slip back slightly on previous results, but it is one of the cleanest rivers on the Gold Coast. To maintain that water quality level, we need to make sure that mapping in these areas is crucial and accurate to ensure that the run-off is greatly limited.

Ensuring accurate mapping is one part, but I want to reiterate some of the comments that the member for Southern Downs highlighted during his contribution in regards to regional newspapers being the lifeblood of our regional communities. Regional newspapers rely on advertising. The member for Bonney may remember that we used to have a newspaper called the *Gold Coast Sun*, but it fell by the wayside because, unfortunately, advertising funds were greatly reduced over a period. These newspapers in regional towns are the lifeblood of those regional towns. They are the information source for a lot of residents who actually read articles about what is happening in their local areas. Therefore it is so crucial that advertising gazettes from the government are regularly put out in those areas.

Over recent years, the pandemic really did hurt these newspapers; it sent quite a few of them almost to the wall. In regards to the *Gold Coast Sun* in my area, the lack of advertising and the lack of people taking them up destroyed the ability of that newspaper to gain revenue. Therefore, as I say, it is very crucial that we support these regional newspapers. We support them in Gregory and we support them in places like Lockyer, Southern Downs, Warrego and Nanango. They are truly crucial in these areas.

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Maryborough. Maryborough is a very important place—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member, I ask you to resume your seat. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House, the time allocated for consideration of the bill has now expired.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): In accordance with sessional order 4, the House must now consider all remaining clauses, schedules and any amendments circulated by the minister in charge of the bill.

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (5.56 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.



**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): The message from Her Excellency recommends the amendments circulated by the minister. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly that an appropriation be made for the purposes of the attached amendment, to be moved by the Minister, to a Bill for an Act to amend the *Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007*, the *Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968*, the *Land Act 1994*, the *Land Regulation 2020*, the *Land Title Act 1994*, the *Place Names Act 1994*, the *Stock Route Management Act 2002*, the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003*, the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Regulation 2014*, the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the *Foreign Governments (Titles to Land) Act 1948*, the *Starcke Pastoral Holdings Acquisition Act 1994*, the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure (Survey Standards) Notice 2021*, the *Survey and Mapping Infrastructure (Survey Standards—Requirements for Mining Tenures) Notice (No. 1) 2011* and the *Yeppoon Hospital Site Acquisition Act 2006*

GOVERNOR

Date: 21 February 2023

*Tabled paper*: Message, dated 21 February 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending an amendment to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 [\[214\]](#).

**Mr STEWART**: I table the explanatory notes and statement of compatibility with human rights to my amendments.

*Tabled paper*: Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Scott Stewart's amendments [\[212\]](#).

*Tabled paper*: Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Scott Stewart's amendments [\[213\]](#).

Clauses 1 to 109—

Insertion of new clause—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): I note that the minister's amendment No. 2 is outside the long title of the bill and therefore requires leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 1 to 11, as circulated, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

**1 Clause 2 (Commencement)**

Page 10, lines 13 to 15—

*omit, insert—*

(e) sections 94, 101 to 104, 106 and 107;

(f) schedule 1, amendment of *Stock Route Management Act 2002*, amendment 4.

**2 After clause 49**

Page 50, after line 9—

*insert—*

**Part 6A Amendment of Mineral Resources Act 1989**

**49A Act amended**

This part amends the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*.

**49B Amendment of s 291 (Deferral of rental for first rental period for particular mining leases)**

(1) Section 291, heading, 'rental for first rental period'—

*omit, insert—*

**initial rent**

(2) Section 291(1)(b) and (c) and (2) to (4), 'first rent'—

*omit, insert—*

initial rent

(3) Section 291(5), 'section 290(1)'—

*omit, insert—*

section 290(1), (3) and (5)

(4) Section 291(6), definitions *first rent* and *first rental period*—  
*omit.*

(5) Section 291(6)—  
*insert—*

***initial rent***, for a mining lease, means the rental payable for the mining lease for—

- (a) the first rental period within the meaning of section 290(1); and
- (b) the rental year that starts immediately after the end of the first rental period.

*Example—*

For a mining lease granted on 1 January 2024, the initial rent would be the rental payable for—

- (a) 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2024; and
- (b) 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

**49C Amendment of s 899 (Deferral of first rent under s 291)**

Section 899—

*insert—*

*Note—*

See, however, section 900.

**49D Insertion of new ch 15, pt 22**

Chapter 15—

*insert—*

**Part 22 Transitional provision for Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022**

**900 Application of s 291 to mining leases granted on or after 21 November 2022**

- (1) Section 291 as in force from the commencement applies, and is taken to have always applied, in relation to a mining lease granted on or after 21 November 2022.
- (2) This section applies despite section 899.

**3 Clause 97 (Amendment of s 20AK (What is a *property map of assessable vegetation* (or *PMAV*)))**

Page 86, lines 1 to 9—

*omit.*

**4 After clause 100**

Page 87, after line 8—

*insert—*

**100A Replacement of pt 2, div 7A, hdg (Classes of regional ecosystems)**

Part 2, division 7A, heading—

*omit, insert—*

**Division 7A Regional ecosystems**

**5 Clause 101 (Insertion of new s 22L)**

Page 87, line 9 to page 88, line 6—

*omit.*

**6 Before clause 102**

Page 88, before line 7—

*insert—*

**101 Insertion of new pt 2, div 7A, sdiv 1**

Part 2, division 7A—

*insert—*

**Subdivision 1 Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD)**

**22I What is the *Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database* (or *VM REDD*)**

The ***Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database*** (or ***VM REDD***) is the database that has effect as the *Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database* under this subdivision.

**22J Certification of database**

- (1) The chief executive may certify a database about regional ecosystems as the *Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database*.

- (2) The chief executive may certify a database under subsection (1) by certifying—
  - (a) a hard copy of the database; or
  - (b) a digital electronic form of the database.
- (3) If the chief executive certifies a digital electronic form of a database under subsection (1), a reference in this subdivision to the database is taken to include a reference to a hard copy of the database.
- (4) Before certifying a database under subsection (1), the chief executive must ensure—
  - (a) the regional ecosystem numbers, descriptions and classes for regional ecosystems in the database reflect the relevant numbers, descriptions and classes in the Queensland Herbarium Regional Ecosystem Description Database; and
  - (b) if certified, the database would comply with sections 22LA(2), 22LB(2) and 22LC(2).
- (5) However, a failure to comply with subsection (4), or section 22LA(2), 22LB(2) or 22LC(2), in relation to the certification of a database under subsection (1) does not affect the validity of the certification.

**22K When database in effect as VM REDD**

- (1) A database certified under section 22J takes effect as the VM REDD on—
  - (a) the day the database is tabled in the Legislative Assembly under subsection (2); or
  - (b) if the database states a later day from which the database takes effect—the day stated in the database.
- (2) A database certified under section 22J must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days after the certification.
- (3) If a database certified under section 22J is not tabled under subsection (2)—
  - (a) the database has no effect; and
  - (b) the database that most recently was the VM REDD continues in effect as the VM REDD.
- (4) The *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*, section 50 applies to a database certified under section 22J as if it were subordinate legislation.
- (5) If a database certified under section 22J ceases to have effect under subsection (4), the database that most recently was the VM REDD again takes effect as the VM REDD.
- (6) The fact that a database certified under section 22J ceases to have effect under subsection (4) does not affect anything done or suffered under this Act before the database ceased to have effect.

**22L Publication of VM REDD**

The chief executive must ensure each database certified under section 22J—

- (a) is published on the department's website; and
- (b) states the period for which the database is or was the VM REDD.

**101A Insertion of new pt 2, div 7A, sdiv 2, hdg**

Before section 22LA—

*insert—*

**Subdivision 2 Classes of regional ecosystems**

**7 Clause 106 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 15)**

Page 90, line 1, 'provision'—

*omit, insert—*

**provisions**

**8 Clause 106 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 15)**

Page 90, line 4, before 'Regional'—

*insert—*

**Queensland Herbarium**

**9 Clause 106 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 15)**

Page 90, line 7, before 'Regional'—

*insert—*

Queensland Herbarium

**10 Clause 106 (Insertion of new pt 6, div 15)**

Page 90, after line 23—

*insert—***150 Application of Act if no VM REDD or no former VM REDD**

- (1) Until a database takes effect as the VM REDD under this Act, the former provisions apply as if the *Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022*, part 11 had not been enacted.
- (2) Subsection (3) applies if—
  - (a) a database certified under section 22J stops having effect as the VM REDD under this Act; and
  - (b) there is no database that was the VM REDD before the certification.
- (3) The former provisions apply, as if the *Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022*, part 11 had not been enacted, until another database takes effect as the VM REDD under this Act.
- (4) In this section—
 

**former provisions** means the following provisions as in force immediately before the commencement—

  - (a) section 8(b);
  - (b) sections 22LA, 22LB and 22LC;
  - (c) schedule, definitions *encroachment*, *grassland regional ecosystem* and *regional ecosystem number*;
  - (d) a provision of a regulation made under a provision mentioned in paragraph (a), (b) or (c).

**11 Clause 107 (Amendment of schedule (Dictionary))**

Page 91, lines 10 to 17—

*omit, insert—*

**Queensland Herbarium Regional Ecosystem Description Database** means the Regional Ecosystem Description Database maintained by the Queensland Herbarium that contains numbers, descriptions, classes and biodiversity status of regional ecosystems.

**regional ecosystem number**, for a regional ecosystem, means the regional ecosystem number established under the VM REDD for the regional ecosystem.

**Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database** see section 22I.

**VM REDD** see section 22I.

Question put—That clauses 1 to 109 and schedule, as amended, stand part of the bill.

Motion agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 109 and schedule, as amended, agreed to.

### Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

Question put—That the minister's amendment No. 12 be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment as circulated—

**12 Long title**Long title, after 'the *Land Title Act 1994*,'—*insert—*


**the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*,**

Question put—That the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Callide Electorate, Driver Reviver Sites

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (5.58 pm): I rise to speak on the disgraceful decision by the Minister for Transport to close Queensland's driver reviver sites. This morning I was more than happy to sponsor a petition on behalf of the QCWA Gin Gin Branch and local champion Pamela Rebbeck. So much was their passion in making sure this vital service continues, they ran out of official pages. Therefore, tonight, alongside the 381 conforming signatures, I table a further 345 signatures from the Gin Gin community.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding Gin Gin driver reviver [\[215\]](#).

I must also highlight I am not the only local member tabling a petition to protect their driver reviver sites and support their community. The member for Southern Downs tabled his petition with thousands of signatures to protect the Gladfield driver reviver in his electorate earlier this week.

The Palaszczuk government is expected to rake in almost half a billion dollars this financial year from camera fines alone, but they claim they cannot afford to keep driver revivers open. It has been revealed that it would cost less than \$1 million to bring all sites up to code and avoid their closure. The Palaszczuk government claims the approximately \$400,000 it will take to upgrade the Gin Gin driver reviver site is too much. Firstly, what is the cost of a single life that this service would inevitably save? Secondly, having been at this site with the member for Burnett only last week, I struggle to see how this site requires a \$400,000 upgrade. Maybe the influence of the 'red carpet Premier' has overcome the Minister for Transport and he expects this site to be good for the very finest of stilettos! This site simply does not require an upgrade of this scale.


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member, I will remind you to use correct titles in this House.

**Mr HEAD:** This site simply does not require an upgrade of this scale. If the minister had bothered seeing this site with his own eyes I am sure even he would have come to that inclusion. It is incredible that the highest upgrade cost seems to have been intentionally assigned to the driver reviver site with one of the most active volunteer groups.

We know fatigue is a major cause of traffic collisions. The large volumes of traffic during school holidays only exacerbates the risks. Queensland's road toll is the highest it has been in years. This cut is reckless, dangerous and completely irresponsible. By closing driver reviver sites, the Labor government is putting political stunts like Wellcamp ahead of road safety in the bush. When it comes to road safety, they are all talk.

In the last election campaign the LNP committed \$50 million towards new and upgraded driver rest areas that would have supported 150 jobs, improved road safety and boosted local tourism. I support the petition that has been tabled this week.

### Morayfield Electorate, Health Investment


 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (6.01 pm): I would like to inform the House about investments in the Caboolture-Morayfield area by this government, particularly health investments, which is very important. It was only last month that I was able to join the Queensland Ambulance Service and unveil the plans for the new Morayfield Ambulance Station, a very big investment in the Caboolture-Morayfield area. It is actually an extra ambulance station—it is not replacing an ambulance station—it will deliver extra services. It will host 17 paramedics, but it is built for the future with a 10-bay ambulance vehicle storage area as well as space for non-acute QAS vehicles. That is a very big investment in the Caboolture-Morayfield area strategically located in the middle of Morayfield East. I am looking forward to seeing construction start this year and the official opening early next year.

There are also other health investments. We have the Caboolture satellite hospital that is well underway. I am very pleased to inform the House that construction is on track and it is due to be completed this year. The main building is now complete with internal fit-out works underway. It will be a great addition to the Caboolture area and will bring more health services to the very busy and growing community of Caboolture and surrounds.

Good progress is also being made on the expansion of the Caboolture Hospital: an extra 130 beds as well as other service facilities that are being constructed on the site. Most important for local residents is the extra car park that is being built. There will be a thousand parking spaces in the multistorey car park, bringing the total number of the car-parking spaces onsite to over 1,500, which is very important for a busy hospital in the Caboolture area.

I was also very excited to meet with the CEO of PCYC Queensland yesterday. He was able to share with me the plans for the new Caboolture PCYC, a very exciting project for the community. It is something which is showing cooperation between three levels of government. There is a contribution from the council, there is a contribution from the state government which follows an election commitment that I was able to achieve on behalf of the community, and there is a contribution from the federal government. The disappointing thing was that the Morrison government never tipped a cent into this project. It took an Albanese Labor government to provide funding for this project. PCYC have completed the plans. They are hoping to start construction this year and have the facility finished next year. It will be a good addition for our community.

### Local Government; National Emergency Medals

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.04 pm): This week Scenic Rim councillor Derek Swanborough resigned from council, and I table the statement he issued after his resignation.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Information Release, Resignation of Councillor Swanborough' [216].


He cited the 70 complaints—approximately one per fortnight for three years—and the process of constantly having to prove his innocence as reasons for his resignation. I will say more about this in the future, but for now I say that the OIA and conduct provisions for local government and councillors fail Queenslanders, diminish local government and seriously deter people from standing as councillors.

The OIA report tabled last year was a missed opportunity. There were some good things in it, but it could have gone a lot further. More staff and resources for the OIA, as recommended, are all well and good. However, I believe more than anything that the substance of the conduct system needs to be fixed. That is where the problem lies. In addition, it is now 20 months since the Deputy Premier promised to fix the conflict of interest provisions that can be weaponised—just like conduct complaints—to stifle debate and silence councillors. Fix it, Deputy Premier. How much longer does local government have to wait to get the conflict of interest provisions fixed, as he promised to do in June 2021?

In other matters, concerns have also been brought to my attention that there has been some delay in the awarding of national emergency medals for rural firefighters and other people who assisted during the 2019-20 bushfires in Queensland. It has now been over three years since that horrific event shook so many parts of Queensland including the Scenic Rim. There were so many wonderful volunteer rural fires, auxiliary firefighters, SES volunteers and others in the community who assisted not only in their own region but also in other regions across the state. I know there is a process to go through in terms of putting people's names forward for one of those medals: it has to go through the Rural Fire Service, then to the minister and then to the Commonwealth as well. However, it has now been three years since that incident. It should have progressed.

As I understand, as it has been put to me, there is a delay at the Queensland level in that recommendation being made to the government or Government House in Canberra. I urge the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services to look into this and, if there is a delay, to please ensure that it progressed as quickly as possible. There was so much good volunteering and there are people who deserve to be recognised through receiving that award. It should be done as soon as possible.

### Aspley Electorate, Sporting Clubs

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (6.07 pm): As we fast approach a new winter sporting season, I would like to briefly reflect on the wonderful sporting organisations in my electorate of Aspley. At junior level, many local north side families are currently taking advantage of the Palaszczuk government's FairPlay vouchers, which provide up to \$150 for sport and active recreation. This is a great example of how government is assisting families with cost-of-living pressures. These vouchers are being redeemed across the north side including at clubs such as Aspley Devils Junior Rugby League who provide pathways for boys and girls from three years of age via the Little Devils program all the way through to NRL and NRLW level through their partnership with the Broncos.

The Devils is a fantastic local club. Those players have benefited from training at our \$9 million sports precinct, which was opened a couple of years back. That was made possible through our Carseldine Urban Village, which everyone seems to be coming around to now that it is open and the

community is using it. There were plenty at various levels of government on the other side of politics who bagged it at every turn, but now that it is open the community is using it every day. We can really see the benefit there.

The Aspley Hornets continue to grow and recently played host to a training session and intraclub game for the Lions as they embark on a new AFL season. As the QAFL premiers, the Hornets return to Graham Road to start their title defence and the women's team continues to inspire the record number of junior girls who are forming a love of the game. Of course, just a few years ago I secured funding for their upgraded lighting, which helps them train more safely and to a higher level. It also enables them to play night games to the relevant standard where they need to and to reduce their energy costs.


Increased player numbers can put pressure on our local clubs and volunteers. I was pleased last week to assist the Aspley Vipers Netball Club with the purchase of 16 first-aid kits for use on their training nights at Aspley State School and on game days. I thank president Rebecca, vice-president James and all of the volunteers for all they do for netball clubs across the region.

I am pleased to say that the new home of basketball on the north side, the Northside Indoor Sports Centre, will host the NBL1 season for the men's and women's teams of the Northside Wizards this coming season.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr MELLISH:** I take that interjection from the member for Sandgate. The men's team have some fantastic recruits in DJ Mitchell and Lual Diing from the Brisbane Bullets, and the women's team have reigning league MVP Tiana Mangakahia. It will be fantastic to see basketball home at Zillmere. This building was a disused shed in 2015 and 2016. We took ownership of it, took some initiative and created new courts that are used seven nights a week. They would be used eight nights a week if they could be! It is an absolutely outstanding facility; it has really rejuvenated that part of Zillmere. We have the Jabiru Community College next door. It is a fantastic initiative. It is a great precinct, and I cannot wait to continue going there to see more fantastic games in the future.

### Gold Coast, Flooding

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise to comment tonight about a couple of hypocritical speeches given by government ministers this morning. I start with the member for Gladstone, who talked about dams. The only dam that is being—

**Ms BOYD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member has used unparliamentary language.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. I will need to take some advice. Member, I did not catch what you said.

**Mr HART:** I withdraw. The only dam this government is building is an accidental dam on the Gold Coast called the M1. During the last heavy rain there, the M1 caused the flooding of a couple of hundred homes in the Elanora area. On Saturday, the member for Currumbin held a meeting with her local residents to which she invited the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. What happened? Nothing. There was no response; he did not show up. The minister gave a speech today complaining about flooding in his electorate and complaining about the Brisbane council. I will not use that word again, but you know what it is.


**Mr Stevens:** Ironic.

**Mr HART:** Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. All the people there want is to meet with the minister or the Premier to find out exactly what happened during that rain event and see whether the works on the M1 caused the issue. For some houses that flooded, people have not been able to get back in. We have houses that flooded that have never flooded before—that have never seen water around them before. The only thing that has changed is that the M1 is being widened. There is a lot more dirt and a lot less drainage there and the river has been choked. One plus one equals two, usually—apparently not to this government.

The member for Currumbin, the member for McPherson, the local councillor and I have invited the minister and the Premier to talk to the local community about Gold Coast Light Rail stage 4. I wrote to the Premier and the minister a week ago. We are proposing that meeting for a month's time, and I will probably push it back for another month to make sure that the minister and the Premier are available to come. I am not holding my breath, because they do not appear to want to talk to the community. The

Premier told everybody in this state that you do not need to hire a consultant to get a meeting with the Premier, but apparently you do. We might have to hire Anacta. Maybe then the people in my electorate can get to talk to the Minister for Transport or the Premier about their houses being flooded or about the way that light rail stage 4 will destroy Palm Beach.


### Toohy Electorate, Chinese New Year

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohy—ALP) (6.14 pm): *A language other than English was spoken.* This is a short speech that I normally give at the many lunar celebrations in my electorate. The translation is basically, 'Hello everyone. My name is Peter Russo. I am the member for Toohy. I wish everyone a happy new Year of the Rabbit. Wishing you happiness and prosperity. Wishing you good health. May you realise your ambitions. Wishing you good luck in the Year of the Rabbit. Thanks, everybody.'

As everyone knows, the rabbit is the Chinese zodiac animal representing longevity, peace and prosperity. Lunar New Year—also known as the Chinese New Year or spring festival—is a very important and widely celebrated holiday across my electorate. It is a time of great cultural and historical significance. It is a time to honour our ancestors. It is a time of family reunions, visiting relatives and friends, exchanging greetings for the coming new year and gathering together for feasting.

The festival emphasises the importance of family ties. It is a time of the year that I always look forward to. It is a great way to start the new year. This year Lunar New Year fell on Sunday, 22 January and celebrations culminated in the Lantern Festival on 5 February. COVID meant that many of these usual celebrations could not take place in 2022, but this year was different. I acknowledge the many associations and organisations across my community that held ceremonies and celebrations. I think I counted at least 14 of such gatherings during that period. The gatherings featured traditional lion dances and the exchange of red envelopes between people, symbolising prosperity and good wishes for the future, not to mention the feeding of some of these envelopes to the lions. The athletic ability of lion dancers is astounding. The celebrations were so catching that the members for Bundaberg, Stretton, Mount Ommaney, Bundamba and Pine Rivers happily joined in the festivities.

### Traffic Infringement Notices


 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.17 pm): I have had several people complaining to my office of the unfair and unjust penalty imposed by this Palaszczuk Labor government's seatbelt fines, which are creating millions of dollars in revenue for Treasurer Dick to pay the interest bill on his massive borrowings. In June 2022 the fine was \$391; now it is \$1,078 and a four-point loss on your driver's licence, even if it is a passenger incorrectly wearing their seatbelt. That is a 275 per cent increase in less than 12 months. One woman who has recently been made homeless was fined three times in a row—amounting to over \$3,000 and loss of licence—before she even received notice that her child was incorrectly wearing his seatbelt, but that was because of a rash on his body.

These seatbelt spy cameras have been erected everywhere, so where was the education process about seatbelt wearing for passengers before this backdoor, money-raising exercise was put into practice by the main roads minister? He sold it to the public on stopping distracting mobile phone use, which was causing serious accidents and the consequential loss of life. I understand that and I support this, but fining drivers over a thousand dollars for the incorrect wearing of seatbelts by passengers is over the top, unfair and unjust. It has no causal relationship to influencing accident control. The driver is still in charge of the vehicle and is not distracted. Therefore, a passenger's seatbelt failing has no equality in penalty to a driver using their mobile phone while driving.

The proliferation of these spy cameras across South-East Queensland at the rapid rate they have been installed by the Labor government tells the public what a great fundraising measure they are. Even one of my family members had a young child in the back seat who was going to vomit. The mother undid her seatbelt to turn around to provide a bowl for the child to be sick in. Almost immediately they drove under a spy camera and were dreading the \$1,000 fine and loss of four points, but it did not come. It was an emergent situation, but that is not what the photo would have shown. They would have had to go to court, spend thousands on solicitors and take time from their jobs. No fine arrived. It is time for the minister to do a breach-of-bail backflip and reduce the seatbelt fine to its previous level of penalty. A passenger's seatbelt incorrectly worn is no justification for the driver of the car to lose four points on their licence and cop a \$1,000 fine. In fact, checking if your passenger is wearing the seatbelt correctly on an ongoing basis would be more distracting for a driver than fiddling with their mobile phone.



### Nicklin Electorate, Nambour Revitalisation


 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (6.20 pm): I rise today to speak about the wonderful community of Nicklin and its many treasures. As the state member for Nicklin, I am honoured to represent this beautiful area and its people who are hardworking, passionate and dedicated to making our region a better place. The centre of my electorate is the town of Nambour, the heart of the Sunshine Coast hinterland, offering a unique blend of urban convenience and rural charm.

The Nambour Special Entertainment Precinct, supported by the Palaszczuk government and Sunshine Coast Council, showcases the best of the town's arts and entertainment scene, contrasting our heritage with many new and unique venues including the Majestic Theatre, Sunshine Coast Pinball, DownTown Burgers and Club Hotel Namba. There will soon be many others setting up to open their doors as we continue to develop our new night-time economy. I want to thank Andrea Kirwan from Peace Run Records and the team supporting the Nambour Forecourt Live events. This is assisting with the activation of our entertainment precinct. Forecourt Live will run again this Friday afternoon featuring talented local artists like Andrea, food trucks and fun for the kids. I encourage all to attend.

The revitalisation of Nambour is continuing at a cracking pace with the further development of the I am Nambour brand, which showcases the small businesses, local industry and people who make up our town. This will launch on 1 March. I thank Reimagine Nambour and our chamber of commerce for their efforts in this space. This, in conjunction with the new parking map, will be sure to help drive further economic growth for the region. The new park-and-ride facility, part of the Beerburrum-Nambour rail upgrade, will also provide around 50 additional parking spaces on the eastern side of Nambour station, providing alternative parking for commuters.

So far in my short time in this parliament I have seen firsthand the strength and resilience of the people of Nicklin. In times of crisis, change or concern, we come together as a community to support one other and to rebuild what we have lost. The Nambour Community Centre is central in these efforts and now, thanks to the increased funding from the Palaszczuk government, can provide an increased range of services and support to individuals and families in need. In closing, I want to express my gratitude to the people of Nicklin for their unwavering support and their commitment to our shared values. I am honoured to represent this amazing community and I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that Nicklin remains a great place to live, work and raise a family.

### Coomera State School, 150th Anniversary


 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (6.23 pm): Tonight I rise to talk about a special event coming up in the Theodore electorate. This year Coomera State School will celebrate its 150 years. Coomera State School first opened its doors on 11 July 1873 with 16 pupils under the watchful gaze of Mr Augustus White. The original school slab was located on the property of Mr Stevens near the Upper Coomera School of Arts. This site was short-lived, and I will explain why. Mr White wrote to the secretary of the Board of Education in Brisbane seeking a more appropriate location. In bad weather events, children had to walk six miles to and from school to avoid flooded creeks and deep gullies. Therefore, a new location was found and the school was relocated on 20 July 1874 further down the river near the ferry crossing on the northern side of the Coomera River.

The settlement was originally called Ferry Town but later was renamed Coomera. The school was happily named Coomera Lower State School. Interestingly though, another school, Coomera Upper State School, opened its doors in 1887 within a short distance of the original school at the Coomera site right beside the School of Arts and near the cenotaph. This school was amalgamated with Coomera State School in 1964. Today there is still a concrete pad and a fence that remain that indicate the original location of that school.

Coomera State School has a proud history in our region. Many former Coomera State School student names are listed on our local cenotaph at both Upper Coomera and Pimpama, highlighting the sacrifice that the families made for our nation—30 students to be exact. The North Gold Coast RSL and my office have been working tirelessly on plaques and poppies to remember these former fallen students. Unfortunately, we do not have enough time to talk about these colourful students, but I will say that attendance rates back in those days were not the highest priority as many families were struggling with extreme hardship and the school also struggled to pay for ink wells and books for the kids.

The school will be celebrating its birthday on 11 July with the opening of a time capsule and students dressing up in olden day clothes. World renowned artist Donald James Waters OAM will be unveiling a memorial depicting the history of the school. On Saturday, 15 July the school will be hosting a fete that will include displays, memorabilia stalls and rides—something for the whole family and a fascinating trip back in time.

### Lytton Electorate, Community Spaces

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.26 pm): Today I want to talk about the failures of the Brisbane City Council when it comes to handling the wonderful bayside's community spaces. Community spaces and venues are so important to the fabric of any community. Our local groups, not for profits, families and schools all play a vital role in our beautiful bayside society. They bring people together, promote social cohesion and work towards the betterment of our neighbourhoods, and these activities often take place in community parks, halls and spaces. However, it is unfortunate that under the current administration of the Brisbane City Council it fails to support and collaborate with these groups, leading to widespread disillusionment and frustration when trying to access and use these spaces.

One of the primary failures of the Brisbane City Council is its lack of real support for these groups. Charging a bond and returning that once the space has been inspected sounds okay, but what if an event takes place and four months later there has been no inspection and there have been four other events in that park since that time and the organisation is still waiting for its bond to be returned? That is not okay.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** I take that interjection; that is unacceptable. I ask the Lord Mayor: how hard is it to get one of his staff members to go down there and inspect that property to return the bond, which is a significant amount of money and so important to that organisation?

**Mr Hinchliffe:** They don't have the staff, so that's it.

**Ms PEASE:** That is true; they have been contracted out. What about the fees that are being charged? It is simply charging a fee for nothing because it can. It gives with one hand and it takes away with the other. The irony of it is that the Brisbane City Council may support the event with a financial donation but then it charges a bond and then it charges fees for that space, both of which far exceed the donation from the BCC's sponsorship of the events, and, more often than not, these groups do not get their bond back.

Community groups have complained to me about the lack of access and many community groups have reported that they had to jump through hoops and navigate a complex web of regulations and guidelines, making it difficult for them to carry out their work effectively. The council's ridiculous bureaucratic approach to dealing with community groups has resulted in unnecessary delays and red tape and is rampant across the bayside and has resulted in the discontinuation of many events.

I call on the Lord Mayor to step up and stop charging communities ridiculous amounts. Perhaps the Lord Mayor could save a few quid by shelving his regular newsletter that we get delivered in our letterboxes. It is time, Lord Mayor, for council to take a more collaborative and supportive approach to working with community to ensure our community can thrive and flourish.

The House adjourned at 6.29 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting