

# TUESDAY, 1 AUGUST 2023

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## ESTIMATES—ECONOMIC AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE—QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Estimate Committee Members

Mr LP Power—Chair  
Mr RA Stevens  
Mr MJ Crandon  
Mrs MF McMahon  
Mr DG Purdie  
Mr A Tantari

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### Members in Attendance

Mr DF Crisafulli  
Ms FS Simpson  
Dr A MacMahon  
Mr DC Janetzki  
Mr MC Berkman  
Mr TL Mander  
Mr ST O'Connor

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### In Attendance

Mr JP Kelly, Acting Speaker  
Ms C Kemp, Executive Officer, Office of the Speaker  
Mr N Laurie, Clerk of the Parliament  
Mr M Ries, Deputy Clerk and Director, Assembly and Committee Services  
Mr C Atkinson, Director, Corporate Services and Electorate Office Liaison  
Ms M Harmer, Director, Property and Facility Services  
Ms J Prowse, Director (Information Services and Parliamentary Librarian)

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### The committee met at 8.59 am.



**CHAIR:** Good morning. I declare this hearing of estimates for the Economics and Governance Committee open. I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet here today and pay our respects to elders past and present. We are extraordinarily fortunate to live in a country with two of the oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, whose lands, winds and waters we all share.

I am Linus Power, the state member for Logan and chair of the committee. With me today is Mr Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach and deputy chair. The other members of the committee are: Mr Michael Crandon, the member for Coomera; Mrs Melissa McMahon, the member for Macalister; Mr Dan Purdie, the member for Ninderry; and Mr Adrian Tantari, the member for Hervey Bay. We also acknowledge as a guest for this session Mr Andrew Powell, the member for Glass House. The committee has granted leave for a number of non-committee members to attend and ask questions today. Other members may seek leave over the course of the proceedings.

Today the committee will consider the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2023 and the Appropriation Bill 2023 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility. I remind everyone present that any person can be excluded from the proceedings at my discretion as chair or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat. While the use of mobile devices is not ordinarily permitted in the public gallery, an exception has been made for staff who are assisting witnesses here today and who have been permitted the use of their devices for this purpose. I ask all those present to ensure that phones and other electronic devices are switched to silent mode. I also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in this chamber.

This year the House has determined the program for the committee's estimates hearing. The committee will examine the portfolio areas in the following order: the Queensland Legislative Assembly from 9 am to 9.45 am; Premier and cabinet, and Olympics and Paralympic Games from 10 am to 1.30 pm; Treasury, trade and investment from 2 pm to 6 pm; and tourism, innovation and sport from 6.30 to 9 pm.

The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2023 for the portfolio of the Queensland Legislative Assembly until 9.45 am. The following non-committee member has sought and been granted leave to participate in the hearing: Mr Andrew Powell, the member for Glasshouse. We will acknowledge other members as they appear, as others have asked to be included.

I remind those present that the committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in the Legislative Assembly apply in this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. I intend to guide the proceedings today so that relevant issues can be explored fully and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Acting Speaker, the Clerk and parliamentary officers, and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the Acting Speaker or the Clerk. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area administered by the Speaker open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Mr Acting Speaker, if you wish, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes to assist with our deliberations.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Chair. I do wish to make an opening statement. I would like to thank the members of the Economics and Governance Committee, as well as the other members who are here today. I am pleased to appear here today as the Acting Speaker at the 2023-24 budget estimates hearing for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service. I acknowledge we are meeting today on the land of Aboriginal people and I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also welcome our Clerk, Mr Neil Laurie, Coral-Leah Kemp from the Speaker's office and other officers of the Parliamentary Service to assist me in answering your questions today regarding the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2023.

Over the past year, the Queensland Parliamentary Service and the Office of the Speaker have remained focused on: the operation of the Legislative Assembly and its committees; public engagement; the custodianship, maintenance and refurbishment of parliamentary buildings; and increasing security in electorate offices across Queensland.

In addition to representations made directly to ministers and members, the work of parliamentary committees is central to the involvement of Queenslanders in the work of their parliament. In 2022-23, the parliament held 555 committee hearings, briefings and meetings, in addition to meeting as the full Assembly for 50 sitting days. Committee business invites Queenslanders to engage with legislation that may affect their lives, through providing submissions and the committee hearing process. This work is the nuts and bolts of public participation in our parliamentary process.

Committee hearings largely represent the public facing work of the Queensland parliament. However, they do not account for the enormous volume of work that goes on behind the scenes to collate submissions, prepare hearing programs, provide secretariat support to committee members and

prepare reports to parliament. In addition to the day-to-day work on supporting the examination of and debate on legislation, the Parliamentary Service delivers public service seminars, tours for members of the public and an education program for school students, including school visits and youth parliaments.

In May this year, the Far North Queensland regional sitting of parliament was successfully delivered in Cairns. In conjunction with the regional sitting, the parliamentary education team coordinated a series of school visits and a public service seminar, while also coordinating a Youth Parliament, a Junior Indigenous Youth Parliament and school tours of the temporary precinct. Additionally, we have as a parliament continued our respectful engagement with First Nations people through hosting and participating in various events, including the Junior Indigenous Youth Parliament on Thursday Island, the very first to be held in an Indigenous community. Members will be pleased to know that our second Reconciliation Action Plan will be approved and published in the coming weeks.

The parliament also hosts diplomatic visits and inter-parliamentary engagements. In the previous financial year, the Speaker's office hosted numerous diplomatic visits, including meetings with ambassadors, high commissioners, consuls general and international parliamentary delegations.

Last year, the Speaker highlighted that stage 2 of the annexe upgrade work would continue. This project is due for completion in early 2024. Additionally, the installation of CCTV in every electorate office is an important initiative that helps provide a safer workspace for members, staff and constituents. In addition to the physical works underway to modernise the precinct and electorate offices, the service is embarking on a new digital transformation program. Work is currently underway to replace a range of existing manual processes with more efficient digital solutions—with the largest initiative of the transformation being the new Parliamentary Information Management System, PIMS, which will replace the many bespoke applications built in-house and currently in place.

I now turn to the 2023-24 estimates for the parliament. The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill provides funding for members of the Legislative Assembly and the operations of the Parliamentary Service. The total appropriation sought for the parliament in 2023-24 is \$142.189 million, a decrease of \$4.5 million compared to the 2022-23 budget appropriation. The net decrease is associated with the timing of capital funding received to complete the annexe refurbishment project, offset by staff enterprise bargaining increases, electorate office leasing increases and funding for the digital transformation project. Major capital works to be undertaken in the 2023-24 period include: completion of the annexe refurbishment project; ongoing electorate office accommodation improvement program; upgrades to the IT network infrastructure; and completion of the electorate office CCTV program.

Chair, I am honoured to appear before this committee today to speak to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill. I thank the committee for its work in scrutinising the budget, and I look forward to answering any questions the committee may have.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Deputy Chair, do you or one of the members of the opposition have a question?

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you. I refer to the Manager of Opposition Business, the member for Glass House.

**Mr POWELL:** Thank you, Chair, Mr Acting Speaker and Clerk of the Parliament. If I may, I would like to start on a couple of procedural matters to do with the estimates hearings themselves. My question is to the Clerk of the Parliament. Can the Clerk confirm that during an estimates hearing, a direct question to a witness—for example, a director-general—that is not a question of policy cannot be passed over to the minister to answer, and neither can a minister add to the answer unless directly asked?

**Mr Laurie:** Standing orders envisage that questions will be placed to the minister and/or a CEO, as defined by the schedule. If a question is asked of the committee to the CEO, the CEO should answer and address the question. As you said, there are some restrictions in relation to issues of policy, for example, but the CEO should answer the question. If somebody else at a later stage wants to ask the minister a supplementary, that is fine, but it should be the CEO who answers the question.

**Mr POWELL:** Can the Clerk also reiterate his previous advice regarding questions relating to matters before the CCC and whether they are permitted to be referred to under the standing orders during these hearings?

**Mr Laurie:** You are referring there to the sub judice principle. Matters that are currently before the CCC that are not the subject of charge are not prohibited by the sub judice rule.

**Mr POWELL:** On CCC matters then—again a question to the Clerk of the Parliament—in last year’s estimates hearing, the Clerk stated that he expected the total cost for the Carne matter would be circa \$30,000. The Acting Speaker’s response to pre-hearing question on notice No. 18 states that total expenditure to date for the Carne matter is around \$167,000. Can the Clerk please explain why the Carne matter has cost the parliament over five times what was expected so far?

**Mr Laurie:** The majority of costs relating to the Carne matter relate to the appeal to the High Court. If I have my timetable right in my head, the matter was before the Court of Appeal around the time that I think we were here last time, but if it was not before, in any event it went to the Court of Appeal in Queensland. The Court of Appeal upheld Mr Carne’s action, so therefore there was an appeal to the High Court. The High Court hearing occurred in June. Therefore, at the time that those answers were given last year, we were not in a position to know that there would be a successful appeal and then a subsequent appeal to the High Court, and the majority of those costs relate to the High Court action.

**Mr POWELL:** Do you anticipate any further costs in this coming financial year for that same matter?

**Mr Laurie:** No. Once there is an outcome from the High Court, there is no other avenue of appeal. I would think that the legal costs in relation to the matter itself are now over. There is always a possibility—it depends upon the outcome of the High Court decision—that there could be some remit back to a lower court, but I think that the matter would likely be finalised by the High Court.

**Mr POWELL:** I also note that the legal costs for the Trad matter remain unchanged from an answer provided in last year’s hearing. Does the parliament anticipate incurring further legal costs regarding the Trad matter once the Carne matter has been decided? If so, does the Clerk have an estimate for what the final cost may end up being?

**Mr Laurie:** I imagine what happens with the Trad matter would be very much dependent to some degree on the outcome in the High Court. I would, however, caution that each and every matter turns upon its own facts, so I do not know whether or not there will be any further legal costs incurred in the Trad matter because there may be some factual differences or there may be some further litigation applying to the points of law from Carne, whatever they may be, to Trad. I am just not in a position to properly estimate. I would say that there will be some legal costs incurred, but I could not even hazard a proper estimate at this point in time. I would like to point out that when we talk about legal costs, we are really talking about the engagement of counsel because all solicitor costs et cetera we would bear ourselves internally. We do not engage solicitors or Crown Law; we do all that ourselves.

**CHAIR:** I did not know that.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, you made some reference in your opening remarks regarding the Cairns regional sitting of the parliament. Could I ask the total cost to the parliament for that Cairns regional sitting?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I think we would all agree that the Cairns regional parliament was an extremely successful activity. We saw that with the significant numbers of the general public who participated in the parliament, the high number of students who attended the parliament and the very high number of events that were organised surrounding that parliament that I know were participated in by members of parliament across the chamber. As to the specifics around the costs and the funding of that, the decisions around that sit with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, so you would have to address those questions to the Premier.

**Mr POWELL:** Whilst the costs are associated with the Premier, can I confirm, therefore, that any accounts are paid by the Premier’s department rather than the office of the Speaker?

**CHAIR:** Mr Acting Speaker is seeking advice. You can, of course, refer a question.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** We would pay certain accounts associated with that activity, but we would remit expense accounts back to the Premier’s office at the end of the activity.

**Mr POWELL:** Can I confirm then that all outstanding accounts have been finalised with respect to the parliament?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I might refer to the Clerk for that very specific technical question.

**CHAIR:** I was not certain whether it was referred to the Clerk. Mr Clerk?

**Mr Laurie:** As I understand it, all the costs that are associated with regional parliament have been finalised, if you like, to whomever the third party supplier is. We have then remitted our expenses to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

**Mr POWELL:** To the Clerk of the Parliament, can you give me the total sum that has been remitted back to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, please?

**Mr Laurie:** I can inform you what our costs have been, but they that would not be the total costs of the regional sitting, if you understand what I mean, because there would be some other costs that would be directly payable by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The costs that we remitted were, I understand, \$756,000.

**Mr POWELL:** Following up on that, Mr Clerk, could I trouble you for a breakdown on what that \$750,000 involved?

**Mr Laurie:** We will take that on notice. The vast majority of that would have related to hotel accommodation, members' allowances and travel costs—that is airfares—and probably in relatively equal amounts, but we will provide a breakdown.

**CHAIR:** Mr Clerk, you intend to get back to us at the end of this session, if you can?

**Mr Laurie:** Yes. I will give a high-level breakdown as to the costs—I will not go into detail—if that is appropriate.

**Mr POWELL:** I appreciate that. Some further questions to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Laurie: I refer to a response to pre-hearing question on notice No. 19 which stated that 114 questions on notice responses were published late last financial year. Can the Clerk provide this amount broken down by responsible minister or potentially give some indication of which ministers offended the most in regards to late questions on notice responses?

**Mr Laurie:** I do not have that breakdown by minister prepared and ready, but again with the Acting Speaker, I am willing to take that on notice. However, I would like to preface by a number of things. The late questions, as we indicated in the response, are often sometimes due to the compliance issues that the clerks at the table, acting on the Speaker's delegation, find in questions, so there is a remission back to the answering minister. That compliance overlay is sometimes responsible for the late questions. The other issue that affects the answering of questions is also objections taken by ministers to questions that are resolved through the Speaker's office. There are those two issues at play. I think that is all I have to say on that. We will provide a breakdown per minister. I should also mention that I will also provide a breakdown of the number of questions asked of each minister because the number of questions that fall outside the time period is obviously relevant to the number of questions asked of each minister, and some ministers are asked a lot more questions than others.

**Mr POWELL:** Understood.

**CHAIR:** I ask a procedural question of Mr Clerk. Is it the same process with a minister taking questions on notice, the Acting Speaker agrees to take a question on notice?

**Mr Laurie:** Yes. Mr Acting Speaker, do you agree with that?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I do agree.

**CHAIR:** I just wanted to clarify.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Understood.

**Mr POWELL:** You touched on this, Mr Laurie, that compliance issues made up a component of those late questions on notice. In that same question on notice it was identified by the clerks at the table that 66 question on notice responses were returned to ministers for re-answering prior to publication last financial year. Again, this is something I would consider you may have to take on notice, but could you similarly provide a breakdown of those 66 responses by responsible minister and by the reason for it being sent back to that minister?

**CHAIR:** Would that require the—

**Mr Laurie:** I think we are happy to provide a breakdown by minister. In terms of providing the reasons, I am somewhat concerned that it goes to the Speakers and the delegations deliberations issue, if you like. We answer in a very high level that the predominant reasons for answers to questions being sent back were around things like, for example, a website being quoted as a source of where information could be found without a pinpoint reference being given, and some of them have a multitude of issues. We are concerned about answering the second part but happy to answer the first part.

**CHAIR:** Is that clear, member for Glass House?

**Mr Laurie:** There is a degree of subjectivity involved as well.

**Mr POWELL:** Understood. Could I then ask for a bit more high-level input as to some of the other reasons that a question might be sent back to a minister?

**Mr Laurie:** I think Mr Acting Speaker would be happy with that.

**Mr POWELL:** Without a breakdown?

**Mr Laurie:** Yes.

**Mr POWELL:** Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Do you intend to give an answer now, or is that something you want to add to the—

**Mr Laurie:** It is something I am not in a position to give an answer to at the moment.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Clerk, in last year's estimates hearing you provided some advice regarding the performance of the parliamentary committee system following the Coaldrake review. Since then has the Clerk received any indications of intentions for reform the committee system or the estimates process following that Coaldrake review?

**Mr Laurie:** I think the Coaldrake review made it pretty clear that its mandate did not extend to looking at the committee system, so I think there was only one paragraph that really referred to committees in a general sense and noted its purpose was not to review the committee system. I have some restrictions of confidentiality here in relation to discussions with the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. There has been some discussion within the Committee of the Legislative Assembly but I am really restrained in talking about that, but you would be aware of it.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, can I confirm that you are being paid the Speaker's salary in the absence of Mr Speaker himself?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I thank the member for the question. When I qualify to the relevant time period, that is in fact the case.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, do you have an updated forecast completion date—I know you said early 2024—for the Parliamentary Annexe refurbishment?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I would like to thank the member for the question. I know like myself, the member and all members here are very interested in that completion date and we are always interested in the comfort and safety of everybody who comes to the parliamentary precinct. In terms of a specific date, the initial contracted date was the auspicious date of 29 February. The adjusted date is now 26 March 2024.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, you made mention of the safety of staff and so on. Are you aware of any workplace health and safety incidents involving the Parliamentary Annexe refurbishment and how we are going generally with regards to worker safety during the upgrade?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** No, I have not been made aware directly of any workplace health and safety incidents in relation to that project, but I would refer to the Clerk for a more specific answer.

**Mr Laurie:** The area that is being refurbished is under the care and control of Hutchinson; they are in total control of that. Any issues that do occur in respect of workplace health and safety are essentially Hutchinson's responsibility not the Parliamentary Service's. That being said, we become aware of matters when and if they affect our areas. I am aware of at least one issue where something had fallen off a high-rise forklift onto the Speaker's Green, but it fell into the area which was excluded for safety reasons. We are aware of those ones which impact upon what are excluded but otherwise accessible areas by us, but we would not be aware of any other issues that occurred generally speaking. It was non-notifiable under the Workplace Health and Safety Act because it was in an exclusion area.

**Mr POWELL:** Just to be clear, there have been no workplace health and safety incidents for parliamentary staff associated with the upgrade?

**Mr Laurie:** No, not that I am aware of apart from an incredible number of precautions that have been taking place. For instance, I do not have staff in many areas of level 6 because there are excluded areas. We obviously have parts of the lawn excluded from time to time. We have parts of other areas excluded from time to time. Those elements of workplace health and safety impact on us but in terms of incidents involving staff, no.

**CHAIR:** The time has expired but I do note that the deputy chair has one more question.

**Mr STEVENS:** My question is to the Acting Speaker but the Clerk will probably finalise the answer. I am very keen on the continued refurbishment program for the old House where we are spending \$600,000 a year on the replacement of the stone et cetera. Could the Clerk or perhaps you, Mr Acting Speaker, give us an update on where that refurbishment program is at and where it is going?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you for the question. I am aware of some information in relation to the replacement of the fence, but I think for a more fulsome answer it would be good to refer that to the Clerk.

**CHAIR:** I am not a fan of the glass, but go on, Mr Clerk.

**Mr Laurie:** Our work in relation to the old House is ongoing in terms of replacement of carpets and painting. It is more of a maintenance program in relation to the old House itself. Obviously from time to time we get things like water egress that affects paint et cetera, so it is an ongoing program. The biggest future program, however, relates to the replacement of the parliamentary fence. We would have liked to have commenced that already, to be honest with you, because there are a whole range of issues with that fence that are of concern in terms of its degradation and the way it needs to be replaced. However, it is not a project we could have done at the same time as we did the Parliamentary Annexe because essentially it would have overbearingly affected access and other issues.

When the Parliamentary Annexe refurbishment is complete—and when I say that I am also talking about things like level 6 and level 5 that have not been done yet—then we will turn our mind to the fence because that is a priority. Not only does the fence need to be remedied because of the state it is in, but in our opinion—and, thankfully, the Heritage Commission agreed—it has to be replaced to make it more fit for purpose as a barrier.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Deputy Chair. With that, we will turn to other members of the committee for questions.

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is to the Acting Speaker. I refer to your response to question on notice No. 1 regarding the new digital information strategy. Can the Acting Speaker outline the benefits to the Queensland parliament and the public from the investment over the next two to three years in the new Parliamentary Information Management System that you mentioned and the introduction of automated speech recognition?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** There will be significant benefits for the community in terms of their capacity to engage with the parliament thanks to the digital transformation program, particularly the introduction of the new Parliamentary Information Management System or PIMS. It does a range of things and will be rolled out over the next two to four years. It will replace and improve the existing systems including: Parliamentary TV and the live broadcast of proceedings; the production of the *Record of Proceedings* known as *Hansard*; questions on notice; tabled papers; e-petitions; bills; and *Notice Paper*. The Parliamentary Service is always seeking to make the parliamentary process and its proceedings more accessible to Queenslanders, both in terms of engagement and the ease of viewing, so there are a number of specific things I want to share with the committee in relation to your question. One of the things that will change in relation to Parliament TV are the live playback features. They will allow viewers to move forward and backwards during contributions that are made in either the Legislative Assembly or in committees in real-time. If they missed the start of your speech, member, they will have the opportunity to go back. I know that many of my constituents will no doubt be watching for my regular contributions.

There will also be closed captioning which allows for automated speech-to-text capabilities. It is anticipated that the accuracy of this current technology will provide viewers with highly-effective captioning. This will help them to follow along when the sound is muted or if they have a hearing impairment. That is obviously a significant step forward. It will make the parliament more accessible to not only people who have a hearing impairment but also the many public servants who need to watch the proceedings of parliament will be able to do that now without disturbing their neighbours in open-plan offices. There will be improved searching of key topics and points of interest. It will be much easier for members of the public, or anybody who has a professional interest in the Public Service, to work through speeches and find particular points of interest than it is at the present time.

The speech-to-text technology will allow opportunities for our Parliamentary Service to improve the efficiency of some of its internal processes. For example, Hansard will be able to produce copies of speeches in a more timely manner. They will be able to edit, verify and publish the record at a much quicker rate. For members of parliament—which I am sure you will be interested in member—there will be a range of new features that will be accessible via a member's portal. Things like my latest speeches and petitions—they will be particularly useful for the member for Coomera—my questions on notice, my upcoming committees, my submissions to review and my bills. These are ways in which members of parliament will benefit. I think overall it will be a great benefit to both the general public and our ongoing efforts to engage them in parliamentary processes, and to members here who have the great honour of being members of this parliament.

**CHAIR:** I do warn, Mr Acting Speaker, that we will be undertaking to evaluate the speech recognition by looking at the Deputy Chair's speeches which I think it will struggle with.

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is to the Acting Speaker. I refer to your response to a question on notice No. 3 regarding the enhancement of electorate office security through the installation of a CCTV monitoring system. While I appreciate that this project has only just been completed, can the Acting Speaker outline the benefits of the new system for the safety of members, electorate staff and the broader community?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Certainly it has been my personal experience in my own electorate office that it has improved security greatly. It has been welcomed by the three electorate officers that I have on my staff. As you may be aware, there are five cameras, a video recorder and two monitors to view live recordings in each electorate office. The five cameras are located both internally and externally. Due to the location of the placement of some of these cameras, we have already been able to assist both the Queensland police and a member of the general public by sharing footage relating to incidents external to our office. We have had nine requests placed for permission to download and share footage since installation. The offices where that occurred included Ferny Grove, Mount Ommaney, Callide, Algester, Cook, Kurwongbah, Clayfield, Theodore and Southport. The majority of those requests were made by the Queensland police, but one request was made by a member of the public. There is signage installed in electorate offices to make people aware that we have CCTV in place. That, in my experience, has been commented on by a number of people who have attended the office and come on a regular basis, so the signage is quite effective.

We have developed guidelines for electorate officers so that they know and understand the circumstances in which they can download the footage from the system and process it for accessing and managing that downloaded footage. Certainly those processes have a high regard for personal privacy rights.

**CHAIR:** In response to question on notice No. 6 regarding staffing and the reference to the new Parliamentary Service Graduate Program, I think the deputy chair would join me in saying that we as a committee very much value the professionalism and preparation of the staff—including the preparation for the meeting today by Lucy—but we know we need to keep a pipeline of that program. Acting Speaker, could you outline the current status of the program, whether it has been successful and the future plans for the program?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you for the excellent question. This is an exciting development for the Queensland parliament. Like all employers, the Queensland parliament is looking forward and contemplating challenges around staffing going forward. This is a sensible measure in relation to that. Like all workforces, we have an upward bending curve in terms of ageing so it is very sensible to be bringing younger people in and giving them experience. The members of the committee will understand what a unique workforce we have here in parliament and that we do need bespoke programs that bring people into this system. The Parliamentary Service is certainly benefiting from having these graduate positions in place. It was designed to include four graduates engaged via a full-time two-year temporary employment contract at the AO3 classification level, with two places reserved for First Peoples graduates. Each graduate was to rotate through the four divisions of the service for a six-month period, learn about the parliament and develop valuable skills while at the same time contributing to the service in a meaningful way. It is a bespoke program which is targeted at those graduates who are interested in obtaining a variety of work experience that the service can offer as a point of difference. These experiences will not only skill people up for work in this parliament, but for other Westminster parliamentary systems around the world, as well as providing an advantage when it comes to broader Public Service jobs.

The service has partnered with Chandler Macleod in developing a screening process. This includes a psychometric test, with an emphasis on identifying a pool of applicants who are the right fit for this service. The primary focus of this program is to discover candidates who not only possess the necessary qualifications but also exhibit a genuine interest and alignment with the service's values and are likely to stay in the roles after their rotation or return to advertised roles as they become vacant. We have had our first three graduates through this year starting in February. Support for those graduates included a comprehensive performance planning and learning and development program, a welcome guide, a supervising officer for each rotation, a mentor assigned to them for the program, as well as opportunities to participate in stretch projects over the course of the program.

In the course of designing the graduate program, the project team trialled a number of new initiatives which may have broader applications in the service, including a competency-based selection process linked to Parliamentary Service values, a new approach to onboarding including SharePoint

information resource, Gradnet, a simpler approach to performance management encouraging more performance conversations and issuing graduates with laptops and docking stations. Following the success of this initiative, a further intake is planned for February 2025.

**CHAIR:** I want to recognise Sheree Strauss, one of those graduate parliamentary officers who is assisting the committee here today. Hopefully we are not too off-putting or you might be able to find others that might be better.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Just following on from that, Mr Acting Speaker, I note that the new graduate program has been designed to specifically attract First Nations candidates. Could the Acting Speaker outline other strategies the Parliamentary Service has adopted or plans to adopt to improve engagement with First Nations people?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you for an excellent question, member. Like most organisations and institutions across Australia, the Queensland Parliamentary Service is taking its obligations to try and work towards reconciliation quite seriously as demonstrated by our first Reconciliation Action Plan. We certainly aspire to promote and support reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Queenslanders. In line with this aspiration, in 2018 the Parliamentary Service's management plan included a formal Reconciliation Action Statement to recognise the organisation's commitment to that reconciliation and in 2020 the Parliamentary Service built further on its support for reconciliation by developing a Reconciliation Action Plan. The plan has included a number of practical actions that drive the organisation's contribution to reconciliation through its operational activities and in the communities in which it operates, and I am pleased to say that I have seen that be engaged with and taken up by all Queenslanders.

A number of the initiatives advanced via the Reconciliation Action Plan include organising Indigenous welcome to country. The first one was on 22 February 2022 to mark the first sitting day of the year, and that has continued since and it has been quite a popular event with many members of parliament across the chamber supporting that. In my area the Greenslopes Reconciliation Action Group took the opportunity to attend that this year out of interest. We delivered the Junior Indigenous Youth Parliament on Thursday Island in July 2022. That is the first time this event has ever been hosted in a First Nations community. The event included over 50 participants from across the Torres Strait and northern peninsula area. The parliamentary precinct hosted a 2022 Reconciliation Queensland showpiece breakfast event to mark National Reconciliation Week. The event was attended by over 350 guests and you would have been lucky to get a chair in either the Premiers Hall or the Undumbi Room. It was a crowded house.

We developed a first persons cultural awareness program in 2022 to provide parliamentary staff with a formal framework from which to develop a deeper understanding of first peoples' culture, beliefs, tradition and historical perspectives. We are delivering a pilot Cultural Learning Strategy developed in 2022. We have introduced a new parliamentary graduate program, with two of the spaces reserved for First Nations applicants. Really pleasingly, this year for the first time in 2023 Parliamentary Education staff participated in the NAIDOC Week Family Fun Day at Musgrave Park. As I alluded to earlier in my opening statement, not only do we have a Reconciliation Action Plan; we are now moving to a stage 2 Reconciliation Action Plan, so that is pleasing to see. I think all of those things, member, go to show that this parliament is taking not just its obligations but its belief in reconciliation quite seriously and is trying to roll that out in as many ways as we possibly can.

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is to the Acting Speaker. I refer to your response to question on notice No. 8 regarding the range of activities conducted to promote awareness of the parliament during the Far North Queensland regional sitting in May. I noted that you outlined in your opening address some of those activities, but, Mr Acting Speaker, would you be able to more broadly outline the activities conducted as a part of the Parliamentary Service education program and what is planned for the year ahead?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Just last week I had the great opportunity to participate in a Youth Parliament educational activity in Gladstone—I do not know why it was not in Hervey Bay, but I am sure we will get there eventually—but plenty of people travelled from not terribly far away from Hervey Bay to participate in that project. It was incredibly popular. I was pleased at not just the very high number of students and schools that engaged but also the very significant number of parents and teachers who spent the entire day participating in that program, and I know the parliamentary staff spent a number of days in the area beforehand visiting schools. It confirmed to me what an incredibly important process this is and hopefully we engage a lot more young people with an interest in parliamentary processes and how they can use those to improve society.

Beyond those youth parliaments, we also have the Eric Deeral Youth Parliament which will be in September as part of the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program. That provides an opportunity for First Nations young people to come together to build leadership skills and drive change in their local communities. Any member of parliament who has participated in that in a support role will know what a valuable program that is. I am also really pleased to say that there is a teacher professional development program, Democracy in Action, which will help teachers to deliver education sessions within their classroom that fit in with the national curriculum. We also continue as a Parliamentary Service to run a number of Public Service training seminars. We would all know from when we sit in parliament and see the very large numbers of public servants coming in to observe question time how popular these are. We also run another half-day session called Committees@Work for public sector officers which are very popular.

**CHAIR:** Thank you very much. With that, the time allotted has expired. I note that there were some questions taken on notice and that the Clerk can give us some responses to those.

**Mr Laurie:** Yes. I have a response to the ones about the amount remitted to DPC. I can give you that breakdown. Travel was \$111,000, accommodation and allowances were \$268,000, venue hire was \$193,000, fit-out and equipment and comms were \$158,000, community engagement \$16,000, other \$10,000, so that totals the \$756,000.

**CHAIR:** Thank you very much, Mr Clerk. There was another question taken on notice—and I do not know whether you have some responses for us—about the advice on ministers responsible for questions on notice and also the high-level advice on the ministers and reasons for some 66 questions, but we have the details. Is there anything that you could add to your answer?

**Mr Laurie:** I would prefer to have some time to consider that one.

**CHAIR:** We note that the Acting Speaker has agreed to take those questions on notice. Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. We have previously resolved that questions on notice be provided to the committee secretariat by 10 am on Friday, 4 August, so I ask those assisting the Acting Speaker and Mr Laurie to observe that date. With that, on behalf of the committee I wish to thank you for your participation here today, Mr Acting Speaker, Mr Clerk and the entire parliamentary team, and thank you in general for your assistance throughout the year. We have confirmed the wording of questions taken on notice. We have some notes here.

The committee will now adjourn for a short break and resume at 10 am with the examination of the estimates for the portfolio of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We only have a short time, so I ask witnesses to vacate the chamber relatively quickly—I notice the Clerk is very keen to do that—to allow the committee to keep the hearing schedule determined by the House. Thank you for your participation today.

**Proceedings suspended from 9.47 am to 9.59 am.**

**ESTIMATES—ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE—PREMIER AND CABINET; OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES****In Attendance**

Hon. A Palaszczuk, Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr J Murphy, Chief of Staff

Mr T Linley, Director, Policy

**Department of the Premier and Cabinet**

Ms R Hunter, Director-General

Mr M Carey, Acting Associate Director-General, Cabinet Office

Mr G Fraine, Chief Executive Officer, Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office

**Office of the Governor**

Mrs K Hastings, Official Secretary

**Public Sector Commission**

Mr D Mackie, Public Sector Commissioner

**Office of the Integrity Commissioner**

Ms L Waugh, Integrity Commissioner

**Queensland Audit Office**

Mr B Worrall, Auditor-General

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 **CHAIR:** Good morning. The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2023 for the portfolio areas of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. I am Linus Power, the member for Logan and chair of the committee. With me is Mr Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach and deputy chair. Other members are Mr Michael Crandon, member for Coomera; Ms Melissa McMahon, member for Macalister; Mr Dan Purdie, member for Ninderry; and Mr Adrian Tantari, the member for Hervey Bay. A number of non-committee members have sought to be granted leave and I note that Mr David Crisafulli, the Leader of the Opposition and member for Broadwater, is here, as is Ms Fiona Simpson, the member for Maroochydore, and Dr Amy MacMahon, the member for South Brisbane. We welcome them as non-committee members to participate in the session.

The committee will now examine the Premier's portfolio areas until 1.30 and will suspend its proceedings during this time for a break between 11.45 am and 12 noon. I remind those present today that the hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and it continues to be subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament should apply to this hearing, I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. In respect of statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided. I intend to guide the proceedings so that relevant issues can be explored fully and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from the government and non-government members.

While the use of mobile devices is not ordinarily permitted in the public gallery, an exception has been made for staff who are assisting the witnesses here today and who have been permitted the use of devices for this purpose. I do ask, however, that all phones and electronic devices be switched to silent mode to avoid interruptions to the proceedings. I also remind you that food or drink are not permitted.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the Premier, the director-general, officials and departmental officers and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I would ask that any officials or advisers called up identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them

by the Premier or the director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of Premier and Cabinet and Olympic and Paralympic Games open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Premier, welcome. If you wish, you can make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Chair. The budget this committee will examine is, in my view, one of the best delivered in Queensland. As promised, a strong health response to the pandemic has resulted in a strong economic recovery. By focusing on delivering jobs, Queensland has the strongest budget position and balance sheet on the east coast of Australia. At three per cent over the next year, our economy is growing twice as fast as the rest of the nation. We have the strongest jobs growth. Unemployment is at 3.8 per cent. There are 535,706 more jobs in Queensland than before we were elected—278,800 of them have been created in just two years since the start of the pandemic. More than 80 per cent of these jobs are full-time jobs. This has been achieved by investing in new job creating industries, free TAFE courses in in-demand jobs and our \$80 million Skilling Queenslanders for Work program helping disadvantaged Queenslanders get the help they need to secure work. The \$89 billion Big Build announced in this budget will support 58,000 jobs over the next year, including 38,500 outside Brisbane and across our regions. The \$5 billion we will invest in CopperString 2032, opening up the North West Minerals Province, puts Queensland at the centre of global demand for critical minerals crucial for battery and new energy production, further cementing our state's future.

We recognise that Queenslanders are facing global and national cost-of-living pressures. The strength of this budget means that we can provide over \$8.2 billion in cost-of-living relief measures, the largest in Australia. Measures including \$550 off the power bills of every Queenslanders, \$1,072 off the power bills of seniors and vulnerable households, \$650 off the power bills of eligible small businesses and free kindy for all. Today I can also announce that from next month Queenslanders will be able to receive rebates on energy efficient appliances. Under our \$22 million cost-of-living initiative, eligible households could save between \$500 and \$1,000 on solar and heat pump hot water systems. This will help reduce electricity usage, meaning they have a smaller power bill. It applies to other appliances like washing machines, dishwashers and dryers, with a rebate of between \$300 and \$550; fridges, with a rebate of between \$350 and \$600; and air conditioners with a rebate of between \$400 and \$650. All households will be eligible and individuals who meet the ATO's Low Income Tax Offset threshold will be eligible for the additional assistance.

We are also rolling out a record \$5 billion worth of social and affordable housing, including an extra \$1.1 billion in this year's budget that will help deliver 13,500 homes. In 2021-22 our government provided more than 200,000 forms of housing assistance to Queensland households, including emergency housing, social housing, private market assistance and homelessness services. As a result of our Housing Summit we have invested \$2 billion in our Housing Investment Fund which will provide commencements for 5,600 additional social and affordable housing projects over the next four years. Already we have announced the purchase of former aged-care facilities at Rothwell, Toowoomba, Clayfield and Redlands, also adding another 141 homes. These are just a few of the ways we are addressing the need for more social and affordable housing in this state. Today I can announce another: we will fast-track developments of two sites at Northshore Hamilton. One will be a dedicated social and affordable housing project providing as many as 200 social and affordable homes. EDQ will work with a community housing provider to ensure these homes are built as quickly as possible. The second will add another 1,300 apartments, with a requirement that five per cent are set aside for affordable housing.

None of this would be happening, or happening as quickly, if it was not for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Northshore is the location of the athletes village that will house 10,000 athletes and officials in 2032. It has already delivered 3,000 homes and, as I have just detailed, will house thousands more before and after the games. The Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games have already delivered unprecedented cooperation across all levels of government and both major political parties to fast-track the investment our growing state needs. Spending on the redeveloped Gabba, Brisbane Arena and 16 new or upgraded venues across the state represents just over two per cent of our Big Build and will cost Queensland \$3.6 billion over nine years. This compares with the \$25.8 billion spent on health over just the next year, \$17.8 billion on education just over the next year and \$32.1 billion invested on transport infrastructure over the next four years.

Our government has also opened more than 1,700 new public hospital beds since 2015. By 2031-32, 3,743 additional beds and treatment spaces are scheduled to be delivered. Only yesterday I opened the first of seven new satellite hospitals to further ease pressure off our emergency

departments. Whether it is new or expanded hospitals, schools, roads or the second M1, Queensland is investing more on infrastructure in our state than the federal government is spending on infrastructure across the entire country and it is paying dividends. The story of this budget is the story of Queensland: strong, resilient and always looking to the future. No-one knows better than a Queenslander that storms will come, but it is how we respond to them that sets us apart. The strength of Queensland and this budget means we do not have to choose between tackling pressures on our health system, housing, law and order, a cleaner environment, new schools, good secure jobs and hosting the biggest event on the planet. In Queensland we can do it all. I commend this budget to you and look forward to the committee's examination.

**CHAIR:** I will now turn to the deputy chair to see if there is any guidance on questions.

**Mr STEVENS:** I will refer straight through to the Leader of the Opposition for the questions, please.

**CHAIR:** Leader of the Opposition, you have the floor.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My first question is to the director-general. If a project goes 34 per cent over budget, or \$2.4 billion over, would that need to go back to CBRC or to cabinet to approve the extra expenditure?

**CHAIR:** Who is that directed to?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** To the director-general.

**CHAIR:** My apologies. The director-general does not have to announce herself, only the officers who come up. We do know the director-general.

**Ms Hunter:** I am not certain as to the nature of the question. If you are talking about funding for projects, they are subject obviously to consideration by executive government.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The Premier told the media that she knew about the \$2.4 billion train manufacturing blowout before the announcement on 30 June. As a member of the CBRC and cabinet, can the Premier confirm that, in fact, she would have not only had to have been briefed about it but also signed off on that?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is about the train manufacturing. I make it very clear to the committee that processes do run through CBRC and what needs to be in the budget goes into the budget. When that contract was executed, the money, the final amount, when it was updated by the department, should have been updated in the press release. Officers involved in the ministerial offices have been spoken to about this. The minister has apologised and it will not happen again.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Further to that, did the Premier see that press release before it was distributed?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will say very clearly that it should have been discussed between the minister and myself. The minister has apologised and it should have been updated.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The Premier's name is on the release. There were quotes from the Premier. Did the Premier see the media release before it was distributed?

**CHAIR:** I think we are getting into repetition. I will put the question to the Premier, but I do counsel about repetition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The matters have been addressed extensively. The minister has apologised. It should have been updated at the same time as the departmental website. We apologise to Queenslanders for that.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Chairman, I have a very specific question not about the minister's intent but the Premier's knowledge. Did the Premier see the media release before it was distributed with the incorrect figure?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I think we have addressed that.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** With respect, you have not.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** With respect, Premier, it is a very direct question.

**CHAIR:** Leader of the Opposition, let us not get off on the wrong foot. You put the question and wait for the answer. I have counselled you about repetition. Premier, this is getting repetitive. Do you have anything to add to your previous answers?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I want to clarify for the committee that what was required to be in the budget papers was in the budget papers. The contract that was signed basically extends over, I think, a 30- or 35-year period. When the department—

**Mr STEVENS:** Point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, I have been very clear—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You are being very unclear, deliberately, I suspect.

**CHAIR:** Order. There is a point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** In relation to the question that was asked, it is quite clear under the standing orders that the question should be answered directly. There is no question to the Premier about the processes or whatever. Please, if the Premier could be brought back to answer the direct question?

**CHAIR:** I appreciate the rhetorical point you are making through the point of order. We do know that the Premier can answer the question as she sees fit.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My goodness.

**CHAIR:** This has been something that Speakers have repeatedly, including in your time in government and the Speaker at that point, answered and made clear that people can answer the question as they see fit.

**Mr STEVENS:** Point of order.

**CHAIR:** I am sorry but just before your point of order: opposition leader, I am giving a ruling. If you were to do that in the House you would be warned. I ask you to show the same respect that you show in the House. Deputy Chair, you have another point of order?

**Mr STEVENS:** My point of order was, when a question is wideranging, under the Speaker's ruling in the House, the Speaker allows a wideranging answer. The question that was asked was a very simple and direct question.

**CHAIR:** I understand and the Premier has gone to pains to make her answer relevant to the question that was put. At that point it is relevant. That is the limit of my answering that question. I also follow the guidance of multiple Speakers on these issues. I am sorry that we have interrupted you with points of order. I turn back to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** For the purpose of budget estimates what I have said very clearly is that the money that was needed to be provided into the budget was put clearly into the budget papers. Once the contract—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Chairman—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—was signed it is over a 35-year period and the minister has—

**CHAIR:** Order, Premier. Do you have a point of order?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I do, Mr Chairman. The question is not relating to the process behind the budget blowout. The question is whether or not the Premier saw the media release before a deliberately misleading figure was put out, yes or no. It is a very direct question. It could not be more direct. Did the Premier see the media release—

**CHAIR:** Order! That is a direct repetition of the previous question. To make frivolous points of order is obviously disorderly. It is disorderly in the House and it is disorderly in this committee. I return to the Premier. I ask for there not to be repetitive points of order where a ruling has already been made and, therefore, they are frivolous. I understand you wanted to make a rhetorical point. With respect, you know that is not what points of orders are for. Premier?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Chair, as I have said before, this is a budget estimates. What was required to go into the budget through the CBRC processes was put into the budget papers. When the contract was signed it is over a 35-year period and the press release should have been updated. The minister has apologised and, on behalf of Queenslanders, I also apologise and the officers have been spoken to. There is nothing more to add.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Premier, how many communication and media staff do you have in your office and, indeed, the department and what is the sign-off process for media releases prior to their distribution?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is not relevant really to the budget process.

**CHAIR:** We can put the question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Transparency is not relevant in Queensland; is that what the Premier is saying?

**CHAIR:** Order, member for Broadwater! I am going to direct the Premier to answer the question. Interjecting is highly disorderly. I ask you to control yourself.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes. So—

**CHAIR:** Order, Premier. Premier, there is expenditure in the budget on these issues and I ask you to answer the question put by the opposition leader.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There are 10 budgeted FTEs and 7.6 actual FTEs in my office providing media and communication services, I am advised.

**CHAIR:** Opposition leader, so far we have not had a question without you interjecting. Let's see if we can get through this one without an interjection.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the Premier. How many people would have signed off on that media release prior to its distribution and would the Premier have also signed off on that release?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The officers involved have been spoken to.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Can I ask, how many people would have been involved? You mentioned how large your team is. How many people would have been involved in the collation and the distribution of that release?

**CHAIR:** We have put the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It would have gone from the transport minister's office to a media adviser in my office.

**CHAIR:** When a question has been put and answered, to badger repetitiously is not in order.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Would that media release at any stage have contained a different figure, for example, the total figure and then it would have been amended back to the lower figure, the figure that was a \$2.4 billion blowout?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will have to check but, as I have said clearly before, the minister has apologised and the staff have been spoken to. When it was updated on the department website it should have been updated. We have been through this. It has been on the television. It has been in the papers.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It sure has.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The relevant people have apologised.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Because it is a \$2.4 billion blowout.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is over 35 years.

**CHAIR:** Order! I was hoping that we could get through a question without an interjection. I call on you again to control yourself. Premier, when a question has been directed I ask you to wait for me to give you the call because you seem to be encouraging too much interaction instead of an orderly process which I am desirous of. Deputy Chair, did you have a question?

**Mr STEVENS:** Is the Premier committing to take that on notice?

**CHAIR:** Premier, are you agreeing to take that on notice or will you get back to us at the end of the session?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We will try to get back to you at the end of the session.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Chair, I have a further question to the Premier. It has been a longstanding practice to publish reports on the use of government aircraft by the Premier and her cabinet. Quarterly reports went unpublished for over a year recently and this was not rectified until the opposition raised it. Can the Premier advise why this happened?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That question should probably be directed to the Police Commissioner as the operation of the air wing has been transferred to police.

**CHAIR:** Have you concluded your answer or is there something you wish to add to that?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In relation to ministerial domestic travel, I am advised that domestic travel expenses are reported in the public report of ministerial expenses which is tabled in parliament and published on the department's website biannually.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It has been practice, though, that they are published quarterly. It did not occur for over a year until the opposition raised it. As of yesterday, the latest report between April and June had not been published.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will ask the director-general. It is a matter for the department to publish that.

**Ms Hunter:** The *Public report of ministerial office expenses—overseas travel and the annual Ministerial gifts register* are tabled in parliament. Other data is published on both the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's website and the Queensland government Open Data Portal. I am advised that the data on these sites is current up to the end of March 2023. As per a previous response to a question on notice, details of ministerial expenditure are reported through a number of mechanisms post a data validation process which needs to be undertaken, and the timing of release can vary.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Good morning. My question is to the Premier. Premier, in March 2020 before the last state election you told the media, 'We are not buying a new plane.' Now the Premier is buying two jets. What has changed?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I might get the director-general to expand, but essentially the aircraft was end of use. The requirements in terms of organ retrievals have found that the plane was not fit for that purpose. From my recollection, there was a media article in relation to that, but we can find out some more information for the member on that.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I have a follow-up question.

**CHAIR:** There is nothing further to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Queensland Government Air is managed by the Queensland Police Service. We are committed to ensuring that Queensland Government Air can continue to deliver its critical services. As an example of this work, 101 flights were made for DonateLife to transfer organ and tissue donations, and the majority of the 2,543 helicopter flights were for aeromedical retrieval and search and rescue missions. This is why the government is undertaking a fleet renewal program to replace the current aging aircraft with modern aircraft to boost capacity and capability across the government's extensive and critical operations. This matter is being managed by the police. The committee could direct further questions to the Police Commissioner.

**Ms SIMPSON:** The government said that the existing jet had reached—and the Premier also repeated in an earlier answer—the end of its economic and operational life. Flight records show that the new owner has flown the Hawker jet approximately 25 times in the last 90 days. It even flew to Europe last year. Was the aircraft actually at the end of its life or was the Premier just after a new set of wings?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I find that offensive and I ask the member to withdraw those offensive comments.

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Ms SIMPSON:** I withdraw. I have another question for the Premier.

**CHAIR:** Order! Member for Maroochydhore, have you put the question or do you just not want the answer? The Premier has already made reference to the dual roles of the planes, which was not required in the question. I ask that in terms of answers given previously we do not mislead the committee about those issues. Does the Premier have anything to add to the member for Maroochydhore's question?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I might get the director-general to expand on that. There was actually a report done is my understanding.

**Ms Hunter:** In relation to the QGAir jets that have been out of action due to maintenance issues, I can advise that in relation to the Hawker 850XP, divestment has been completed. The aircraft was divested in mid-April 2022. Prior to divestment, there had been significant availability issues with the Hawker, including it being grounded due to fuel leaks, other maintenance issues and the crew being unable to travel for mandatory simulator recurrence training. It was divested due to its age and it was no longer in production. It became increasingly difficult to procure the necessary parts for safe, ongoing maintenance.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I also add that Minister Ryan put out a press release on 2 October 2022, 'New QPS aircraft fleet has Queensland covered', where all of these issues were canvassed and published.

**CHAIR:** I am sure there is a lot of lack of awareness of the press releases. It is not really influencing the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In 2020, the public were—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**CHAIR:** Order? Are you interjecting or asking a question? Member for Broadwater, I counsel you again. Member for Maroochydore?

**Ms SIMPSON:** The Gulfstream website for this model states—

Our skilled artisans create your bespoke interior with premium furniture and accessories, designing your ideal space in the sky—

**CHAIR:** We seem to getting into a speech. Order, member for Maroochydore.

**Ms SIMPSON:**—

Each configuration supports a fully equipped galley, a generous baggage compartment and an airy lavatory—

**CHAIR:** Member for Maroochydore! Order!

**Ms SIMPSON:**—

featuring two windows and a full-size closet.

**CHAIR:** Order, member for Maroochydore!

**Ms SIMPSON:** There is a question, Mr Chair. Can I ask the question, Mr Chair?

**CHAIR:** No. Member for Maroochydore, it is highly disorderly to speak over the chair of a committee. You for one should absolutely know that. I ask you to reflect on what ruling you would have made in the House if you were seeking order in the House and someone continued to speak over you.

**Mr STEVENS:** Point of order, chair: in terms of the question that was being asked—and I read it here—it was legitimate background to the question. It was not an extensive rigmarole in terms of the question. The member should be able to use quoted matter in terms of asking the question.

**CHAIR:** As I said in the beginning, questions should not contain a preamble and should be brief and to the point. The question was put rudely by speaking over the top of me. I counsel the member not to do that again. The member should know better. Premier?

**Ms SIMPSON:** With respect, Mr Chair, you did not actually allow me to ask the question. There was actually a question that you cut me off from asking.

**CHAIR:** Order! Do you have a point of order?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Yes. My point of order is: you cut me off and I did not actually get to ask the question of the Premier.

**CHAIR:** With respect, because you were yelling over the top of me I thought you had put the question. Can you briefly put the question?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Thank you. Premier, the budget for the aircraft acquisition project is, according to your papers, \$146 million. Is the Premier confident that this is a good use of taxpayers' funds in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, a housing crisis and a health crisis?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have adequate budget for our roads project. We have adequate budget for our health funding and for our education funding. This was actually put out by the Minister for Police back on 2 October 2022. I want to table the press release. This is nothing new. It has been fully canvassed previously. I am quite sure the Police Commissioner and the police minister can tell you about the time they were in the aircraft and there was an air emergency where it dropped dramatically. There were safety issues. The Treasurer and I were also in the Hawker at one stage, landing in Moranbah, where the plane had to go back into service after a very incredibly rough landing in which I understand there were some issues with the fuselage.

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There was high maintenance cost in relation to it. It was barely being used. These are matters you can put to the commissioner. It is now being run by the police; it is not run by Q Air anymore. Are the organ retrievals worth it? Absolutely they are. There are thousands of people whose lives have been saved. When I spoke to one of the pilots they said that the greatest satisfaction they have is when they hear that someone's life has been saved through the organ retrieval. That happens as far as New Zealand. That is the primary purpose of these aircraft. If ministers use these aircraft, it is secondary to that priority. There have been many times in the past when, if an organ

retrieval takes priority, ministers have flown commercial. Queensland is a big state. It is 2½ times the size of Texas. It is incredibly difficult to do the job in terms of getting to places. That is why the ageing fleet has been put in train to be reviewed.

**CHAIR:** The Premier has sought leave to table the press release. Is leave granted? Leave is granted. I now turn to other questions. I have a question for the Premier. The last question made reference to housing and the pressure we are seeing on housing across the nation after COVID. Referencing page 1 of the SDS, Building Queensland, and page 2 of the Big Build, Budget Paper No. 3, can the Premier outline the actions of the Palaszczuk government and what it is doing to increase available housing for Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Of course, Chair, you would know about the growth in the number of people not just moving to Queensland but also needing housing. In your electorate there is huge expansion, especially in the Yarrabilba area. We have an historic \$5 billion investment into social and affordable housing. This is made up of \$3 billion of funding to support the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and a \$2 billion investment for the Housing Investment Fund. Our budget includes a 67 per cent increase in social housing construction. It also includes an additional \$1.1 billion to drive social housing supply to meet higher construction costs and to boost the QuickStarts Qld program by 500 homes, bringing it to 3,265 social housing commencements by 30 June 2025.

I am proud to report to the committee that our government has over 600 social homes under construction right now, as we speak. These homes are right across Queensland—properties like eight one-bedroom cottages in Cairns that were completed in March this year; 12 one-bedroom homes on the Gold Coast; and over 335 ex National Rental Affordability Scheme homes that our government has stepped in and purchased, located across Townsville and South-East Queensland.

Of course, I have seen firsthand examples of how it changes people's lives. We went to Clayfield recently and met Shona and the other residents. They are absolutely thrilled that they have a roof over their head. It just makes so much difference. People tell me that through no fault of their own they find themselves facing housing issues beyond their control. They may be couch surfing or may not be able to have a rental bond. To find out they have now a permanent place is absolutely terrific.

We also have the build-to-rent program, which is going very well. Through the state budget we announced tax concessions for our build-to-rent developments with a minimum of 10 per cent affordable housing, to further drive rental supply. This is really important because you can build residential towers much faster than you can build individual homes. I think it is also very good that the Deputy Premier has announced those growth projections across the south-east. This gives councils certainty about where they need to do their planning. We know that we need more one-bedroom units, more duplexes and more townhouses, with the population growth expectation over the coming years.

We also have four proposed residential towers comprising more than 1,000 purpose-built build-to-rent apartments, and a 32-storey two-wing tower is earmarked for the state owned site of the former childrens court, providing affordable accommodation for low- to moderate-income earners. As we know, these are national housing pressures. Our government is stepping up and doing all we can to address these needs.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, in reference to page 2 of the SDS, can you outline how hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will benefit Queensland now and into the future?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There has been a lot of speculation around hosting the games and the impact it might have on housing stock. Personally, I think what we know is that with the Olympic villages that will be built—I want to fast-track the building of these villages. Next week I will be convening the housing cabinet subcommittee and speaking to prospective developers to see how we can bring more of those villages online sooner for short-term rental accommodation—for example, the athletes village at the Gold Coast—

**Mr STEVENS:** Robina.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—the athletes village in Maroochydore and also the one at Northshore. I can also advise that Northshore Hamilton is pushing ahead with our EDQ proposal. By 2032 there will be some 4,000 extra dwellings. They will include a diverse range of housing—not just apartments—and include social and affordable housing.

Today I am announcing that Economic Development Queensland will release those two land parcels that will accommodate up to another 1,500 dwellings. The first site will house 150 to 200 social and affordable homes over 8,000 square metres. The second site is ready for another 1,300 homes to be built, and five per cent of them must be affordable housing. Both developments will be required to

achieve our Green Star sustainability accreditation. These two housing developments alone will facilitate over \$500 million of private sector investment and create around 1,450 construction jobs. We are also supporting infrastructure in the precinct with a \$180 million investment for the design and construction of major road projects at Northshore. This just went to cabinet, on Monday. The \$180 million has now been approved to go out to start this.

We will be accelerating the development of those athletes villages, as I have said. This is the right thing to do because it is not just about building the infrastructure; it is about the legacy. This will be a prelegacy of the games, to have these athletes villages built well ahead of the games. We have seen what happened with the Commonwealth Games, when we had that on the Gold Coast. The athletes village is now home to hundreds of people. As I drove past there the other day I could see that people are living in those apartments.

**CHAIR:** I am not sure about the word 'prelegacy', but we do see the enormous benefit. It is a new word!

**Mr TANTARI:** Premier, people in my community are saying that housing is top of their mind, not just for them but also for their kids. In the budget I see that Treasury has pointed out a record high of residential work in the pipeline. That is from Budget Paper 2, pages 33 and 34. Can you please advise the committee how the government is supporting housing to protect Queensland's lifestyle as we grow?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Of course, it is growing. It is growing in Hervey Bay. You cannot blame them; it is such a beautiful part of the state. As Queensland grows, we are prioritising the unlocking of new land supply and accelerating sustainable and future-looking housing development. That is why in the state budget our government has made further investment to unlock it. This includes the \$171 million Catalyst Infrastructure Fund and the \$50 million Growth Acceleration Fund. This investment is designed to accelerate new road, water and sewerage infrastructure and other public facilities, making it easier for housing to quickly follow. We also have unlocked 30,000 residential lots in Caboolture West to help cater for growth in that region.

As we know, there is a lot of growth happening. Providing this infrastructure is absolutely important. It is great to see that the councils are stepping up and working with the state government in relation to this. I look forward to addressing the councils when they get together in the coming months for their LGAQ local government conference.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 1 of the SDS regarding 'Making it for Queensland', can the Premier please outline how the government is using modern methods of construction, including prefabricated housing production, to deliver rapid housing for Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As I said, we are doing everything we possibly can to improve the housing stock out there. One of the ways we can do this is to work with companies and to use our own internal QBuild to build more prefabricated homes. QBuild are able to build them quickly and send them out. Therefore, for our workers—whether they are teachers, nurses or people who work on our government construction sites—we can send out these prefabricated homes and get them established very quickly. That then frees up other housing in these particular areas. It also creates jobs.

It was wonderful to visit the QBuild Rapid Accommodation and Apprentice Centre at Eagle Farm. They are helping to deliver more affordable houses across Queensland. They have already completed 17 house frames, six bathrooms and ensuite pods, and manufactured two one-bedroom homes and one two-bedroom homes. By the end of this financial year, they will complete 15 homes on site. They are expected to deliver over 100 modular homes this year, including six social homes currently on site at Longreach. It was great that the mayor of Longreach sent me photos of those—very excited to see them arrive. The facility is expected to produce 30 homes per year from July 2024. We are also looking for a site in Cairns. Once operational, the Cairns facility will also manufacture up to the 26 modern homes per financial year.

**CHAIR:** With reference to page 1 of the SDS which talks about the government's commitment to additional critical health services, in Logan it is essential to have expanded health services for a growing community. Can the Premier please advise the committee about the initiatives the government is undertaking to deliver better health care closer to home for Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, Queensland's health system is very large and very complex. On any given day in Queensland Health—and this is very interesting—up to 127 babies are born, 646 surgeries are performed, an ambulance is despatched every 22 seconds, 776 women are screened for breast cancer and 6,113 people are presented to an emergency department. We know that there are pressures out there and there are pressures on our emergency departments. In the last eight years,

emergency department presentations have increased over 31 per cent. The imminent life-threatening emergency department presentations, known as category 1 and category 2, have increased by over 88 per cent. Our triple-0 calls have also doubled.

This is why we are very pleased that our health budget is \$25.8 billion being invested in critical front-line health services. This represents a 9.6 per cent uplift in the operating budget for Queensland Health. We are investing \$9.785 billion in health infrastructure, with \$5.7 billion being invested over the next four years, boosting Queensland's hospital bed capacity by 2,220 extra beds.

Yesterday I was very proud to visit our first operational satellite hospital in Caboolture and to meet the staff and talk to all of the staff there. They are very excited and they know that this will take pressure off our emergency departments. It will be open from 8 am till 10 pm. Its facilities include looking after people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and addressing mental health issues and minor illnesses. There are dental facilities as well. So many times people leave dental care to the last possible moment, especially when they are facing cost-of-living pressures.

I must say that I am so proud that was an election commitment we made. All seven will be open in the financial year. There will be three opened this month. To see the facilities and everything set up and ready to be opened officially to the public, taking up to 600 people a week, actually brought a tear to my eye. That is why you are in government. You are in government to make a difference to the community. Health makes a fundamental difference to families right across this state.

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to page 1 of the SDS and the objective to ensure all Queenslanders can access world-class health care no matter where they live. How is the Palaszczuk government easing the pressure on our health system with innovative new models of care for Queenslanders and attracting front-line health professionals?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member knows that in his community this year's budget will see \$23 million out of an \$82.3 million total spend for the fit-out of level 2 of the clinical services building and a new 22-bed adult acute mental health patient unit. I am also advised that the Hervey Bay Hospital expansion will provide another 35 additional beds, including 10 more intensive care beds, and a new rooftop helipad to service the member's wider community. Having previously visited that hospital, I know the growth in the area and the reason that we need to do that expansion—which is fantastic.

Our government is undertaking the largest hospital building program in the nation and the largest in Queensland's history—an investment of nearly \$10 billion to deliver three new hospitals in Bundaberg, Coomera and Toowoomba and to deliver a new Queensland Cancer Centre, and major hospital redevelopments including at Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Hervey Bay, Redcliffe, Ipswich, Robina, the PA, QEII and Prince Charles. These investments will deliver more than 3,300 additional beds over six years.

This year's budget delivers a record uplift in operating funding of 9.6 per cent, with \$25.8 billion in total over the next year. This includes a \$764 million Putting Patients First ambulance ramping plan, which includes improvements to discharge patients on the weekend. People are saying to us that if we can discharge patients more over the weekend that will free up more hospital bed capacity. Usually people do not get discharged over the weekend if you do not have the appropriate medical supervisor there to do that. The AMAQ has also welcomed that announcement saying, 'We know that, for example, being able to discharge people seven days a week is going to make a huge difference.' There is another \$42 million for rural and regional birthing services. That has also been welcomed by the AMAQ, who said, 'This initiative will support a pipeline of GP obstetricians to continue that vital role for rural families.'

The budget has also delivered a 10-year agreement for LifeFlight worth \$586 million. LifeFlight does amazing work. I had the opportunity to visit them at Archerfield. They will deliver helicopter services to Bundaberg, Mount Isa, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and Brisbane. The funding will also deliver a new three-bay hangar to be built at the Sunshine Coast airport. Again, the Sunshine Coast is another fast growing region of our state. I mentioned the satellite hospitals as well.

**CHAIR:** We are bidding farewell to Holland Park State School who were very welcome. Premier, on your right, we have the Lockyer District State High State School year 11 students who have been attentively watching. Normally the rules are against leaning on the balustrade, but we have such respectable and fantastic students that they get that extra special view, which is fantastic. My understanding is that the member for Ninderry has a question.

**Mr PURDIE:** I have a series of questions in relation to the Office of the Governor, which I understand Mrs Hastings might be best placed to answer. I refer to page 33 of the SDS.

**CHAIR:** Who is the question directed to?

**Mr PURDIE:** Mrs Hastings in relation to the Office of the Governor.

**CHAIR:** For future reference, if we do have an officer who is not at the front table ready for questions, advise me and we can give them a wave so they can get up here more quickly so we can proceed more quickly.

**Mr PURDIE:** Question No. 1: can the office confirm what vehicles are currently in the Governor's fleet?

**Mrs Hastings:** Government House has four vehicles for vice-regal transportation and a utility vehicle: a Rolls-Royce, a Lexus sedan, a Mercedes-Benz multi-people vehicle, a Toyota RAV and a Toyota HiLux Workmate utility.

**Mr PURDIE:** Whose idea was it to replace the motor of the vintage Rolls-Royce used by the Governor with an electric motor?

**CHAIR:** Sorry, I missed the question.

**Mr PURDIE:** The question is: whose idea was it to replace the motor of the Governor's Rolls-Royce with an electric motor?

**Mrs Hastings:** The motor has not been replaced.

**Mr PURDIE:** Whose idea was it initially to investigate replacing the motor, and what time and cost were incurred in that investigation?

**Mrs Hastings:** I cannot remember exactly when it was suggested. We look at a lot of sustainability initiatives around the estate, one of which was to put in an electric vehicle charging station for guests to Government House. One of the ideas suggested—forgive me, I cannot remember whom it was from—was to look at electrifying the vehicles, so we had a little look at it.

**Mr PURDIE:** Do you know to what extent those investigations were conducted and what costs and time were incurred?

**Mrs Hastings:** We had one company come out and have a look at it. It was probably a half an hour visit.

**Mr PURDIE:** Was there a quote given?

**Mrs Hastings:** There was.

**CHAIR:** Sorry, I missed the question. Sorry to interrupt you. If you could repeat the question.

**Mr PURDIE:** After that investigation was conducted, was a quote given to conduct that work?

**Mrs Hastings:** There was an indicative quote provided.

**Mr PURDIE:** What is the protocol and procedure with making that decision? Did that have to go before a minister or the government or cabinet for that expenditure, and who eventually made the decision not to proceed with that idea?

**Mrs Hastings:** It goes to the executive team at the Office of the Governor with a business case, and the executive team decided not to progress it.

**Mr PURDIE:** Do you know what the cost was?

**Mrs Hastings:** Can I take that on notice? I would have to check what it was.

**CHAIR:** The process of doing that is to seek the Premier's leave to take that on notice. We are looking for an expenditure that was not made. Is that something you could get back to us with at the end of the session? It is a relatively simple thing.

I would just reiterate to members that, when you are questioning the Officer of the Governor General you are therefore implicitly questioning the Governor, we do that in a respectful way. It is not part of the normal partisan process.

**Mr PURDIE:** The protocol you have just outlined, that it went to the Office of the Governor to make that decision, were any government ministers or the Premier's office supportive of progressing that idea?

**Mrs Hastings:** We are independent from the Premier's office and ministers. The decision rests with the executive team at the Office of the Governor.

**Mr PURDIE:** Was any government minister or person from government consulted about this idea and were they eager to progress it?

**Mrs Hastings:** We did not consult any government ministers about it.

**Mr PURDIE:** Thank you, Mrs Hastings.

**CHAIR:** Member for Ninderry, do you really wish to get the indicative cost of the expenditure?

**Mr PURDIE:** I would like to take on notice what the quote was.

**CHAIR:** Mrs Hastings, is there a way you could pass that forward, perhaps through the Premier or the director-general? Member for Ninderry, do you wish to get that information by the end of the session?

**Mr PURDIE:** Yes, please.

**Mr CRANDON:** My questions are to the Premier. I refer to estimates question on notice 14 regarding sexual harassment in the Public Service. Can the Premier advise if she is aware of any allegations of sexual impropriety involving existing or former ministerial staff in her government?

**CHAIR:** I note that your question was very careful, but of course the standard rules apply.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I might refer your question to the director-general because the director-general is in charge of ministerial staff.

**Ms Hunter:** The standards of conduct expected of ministerial staff members are outlined in the Code of Conduct Ministerial Staff Members. All ministerial staff are required to treat other staff members, Public Service employees and members of the public encountered in the course of their duties with dignity, courtesy, honesty, fairness and respect. Complaints against ministerial staff are taken very seriously and managed in accordance with the code of conduct. Any breaches of the code that could constitute criminal offences and/or corrupt conduct may be referred to the police or the Crime and Corruption Commission. It is not appropriate to discuss the details of individual complaints or investigations as it may disclose personal information.

**CHAIR:** Member for Coomera, do you have a follow-up question?

**Mr CRANDON:** Yes, I have several questions, Chair. That did not answer the question I asked, but I will go on to another question. I assume that was a confirmation there is knowledge of some allegations made. I will ask the question directly: are you aware of any allegations of sexual harassment by ministerial staff?

**Ms Hunter:** If the member has any evidence in relation to a particular matter, the member should provide that evidence to the Queensland Police Service. They are serious allegations. If they are serious allegations they should be treated seriously and they should be referred as you see appropriate.

**Mr CRANDON:** Are you indicating that you are not aware of any sexual harassment allegations?

**Ms Hunter:** I refer to my previous answer, which is that it is not appropriate to discuss the details of individual complaints or investigations.

**Mr CRANDON:** I am not asking about individual complaints.

**CHAIR:** Order, member for Coomera. I note the ruling I have given previously about repetition.

**Mr CRANDON:** Chair, if a witness is avoiding answering the question by indicating something off to one side of the question, I would draw—

**CHAIR:** Are you raising a point of order?

**Mr CRANDON:** Can I finish my point of order?

**CHAIR:** You have a point of order?

**Mr CRANDON:** I have a point of order.

**CHAIR:** I will hear your point of order.

**Mr CRANDON:** My point of order is that the witness is avoiding answering the direct question by referencing a previous answer that did not answer the original question asked. I am therefore putting the same question back to the witness to provide clarity on the answer that was avoided in the first instance.

**CHAIR:** I understand the point you are making. That is not the way I heard the director-general's answer. The director-general restated the appropriateness of answering that question. The question has been put and the answer has been given. It is not in order to continually repeat the question, and I have made that really clear.

**Mr CRANDON:** I will put a question in relation to a matter that does not involve individuals and specific allegations. Is the Premier aware of any allegations involving sexual impropriety involving existing or former ministerial staff in her government?

**CHAIR:** This question is now addressed to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not the employer of ministerial staff—

**CHAIR:** Order, Premier! The Premier had previously directed this question to—

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**CHAIR:** Member for Ninderry, those interjections are out of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The director-general is the employer of the ministerial staff, and those questions are directed to the director-general.

**Mr CRANDON:** Point of order, Chair: that is not my question.

**CHAIR:** I understand, member for Coomera.

**Mr CRANDON:** I would ask you to direct the Premier to answer my question.

**CHAIR:** The Premier is answering the question. I put the question to the Premier. Do you have anything to add?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** And you wonder why estimates has to be reformed.

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** What a protection racket.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Well, you put estimates on two days.

**CHAIR:** Order! Member for Broadwater!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No transparency.

**CHAIR:** Member for Broadwater! I was looking at the clock and asking how long we could get through without interjections. It is completely undisciplined to argue across the table on these issues. Do not shake your head. That is completely disorderly. Member for Coomera, do you have any follow-up questions?

**Mr CRANDON:** I certainly do. My question is to the Premier. Are any current ministerial staff alleged domestic violence perpetrators? Prior to answering the question, I table an email from a whistleblower, who indicates—

**CHAIR:** You need to seek leave to table.

**Mr CRANDON:**—that this staff member in the office of Minister Mark Ryan is an alleged domestic violence perpetrator. Is the Premier aware of this allegation? There are sufficient copies of the document for all members.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The director-general is happy to take that on notice.

**CHAIR:** This will be relatively complex for us to process as a submission because there might be multiple issues, as I am informed by the secretariat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Correct.

**CHAIR:** Are there any further questions?

**Mr CRANDON:** Yes, there is one final one. This is probably a more broad question. Premier, given the recent *A call for change* inquiry into the way the Queensland Police Service handles domestic violence, what does the Premier say to DV victims who may be listening to this and are alarmed that a DV perpetrator—

**Mrs McMAHON:** Alleged.

**Mr CRANDON:**—may be working in the office of the police minister?

**CHAIR:** Sorry, was there a point of order? I was distracted by the point of order.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Chair, I have a point of order in relation to that question. I am concerned about questions referring to alleged perpetrators when matters may be afoot.

**CHAIR:** I will note that.

**Mr CRANDON:** Do you want me to repeat the question, Chair?

**CHAIR:** No, I do not think we need that. I note that we should take caution about these issues. Nonetheless, the question has been put with some caution and is on the record.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Also, the committee can retire to consider that paperwork.

**Mr PURDIE:** We do not need to.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Well, you have tabled something that the committee is unaware of.

**CHAIR:** Understood. We will not necessarily be tabling all of this before we consider it at lunchtime because there are relatively complex issues. I will seek advice on that and also consult with the deputy chair on those issues. I also note that by accepting a document we do not choose to publish it. We went through this with advice from the Clerk previously. Documents are not automatically published as part of a report. They have to have a separate motion when they are published. As opposed to the House—where, if a document is accepted to be tabled, it is by its nature published—that is not the practice within the committee.

**Mr PURDIE:** The document has been redacted, Chair.

**CHAIR:** I am just explaining what happens. We will go to the next question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I refer to the \$1 billion cost for the Gabba redevelopment which has now increased to \$2.7 billion. Premier, what changed from the original scope to cause that massive blowout?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me bring Graham Fraine to the table. Firstly, let me say that we have got the funding from the federal government, which is fantastic, for that to proceed. Secondly, let me say that it is not just about the rebuild of the Gabba; it is actually about the whole precinct as well. It is very unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition seeks to politicise the Olympics, when the Leader of the Opposition is well aware that there have been price escalations and that we have kept the IOC and others informed of this every step of the way.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** From \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion.

**CHAIR:** Order! I have looked at the clock—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No. We have the funding—

**CHAIR:** Premier! I am looking at the clock again. We managed to get through the entire session this morning without any interjections from any member. Member for Broadwater, I ask you to control yourself.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will say a few things about it, if I can. In 2018, well before our bid, the *Stadium Taskforce report* found that the Gabba was a tired venue and would come to the end of its useful life by 2030. The redevelopment will also: play a major role in futureproofing Brisbane's ability to attract national and international sport and entertainment events; capitalise on the significant transport investment in the precinct, including Cross River Rail and the Brisbane Metro; ensure there is easier and safer access and transport for Queenslanders; drive major urban renewal in the area and help connect precincts across the city; and provide all Queenslanders with a stadium they can be proud of when we welcome the world in 2032.

Anyone can have a look at how well the FIFA World Cup is going at the moment and how all of Australia is getting behind the Matildas—and it was a great win last night. When all of this is completed, we will be able to have multiple sporting and entertainment events. We have already seen how just an NRL game between the Dolphins and the Broncos can essentially pack out Suncorp Stadium. These precincts and the Gabba will benefit generations to come. As we know, there has been a massive surge in construction costs which has been felt right across the world.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** A 170 per cent escalation.

**CHAIR:** Is there a point of order?

**Mr STEVENS:** There is a point of order, Chair. The point of order is that answers should be succinct rather than a ministerial speech.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** She has not answered the question again.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am answering that question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The question was specific about the announcement of \$1 billion—

**CHAIR:** Order! Do you have a point of order, member for Broadwater?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I do.

**CHAIR:** Is it going to be exactly the same point of order as the deputy chair?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My point of order is that the Premier misled the committee when she said the federal government was funding the Gabba.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, I did not. I said joint funding. We have got joint funding for the infrastructure. We are doing the Gabba and they are doing the Arena.

**CHAIR:** Premier, do not engage with the opposition leader. There is no point of order. You know that is disorderly.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My point of order is on relevance. I specifically asked what drove the cost increase from \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** And I am explaining it.

**CHAIR:** And I was listening carefully. You are raising exactly the same point of order as the deputy chair, which is out of order. I was listening carefully to the Premier's answer which was talking about the worldwide expansion in construction costs and materials which was directly relevant to your question. I think you know that it was and you were being disorderly by raising exactly the same point of order. Deputy Chair, that is my answer to the point of order. I am listening carefully to the Premier's answer. She was talking directly about the increasing costs, which was directly relevant to the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I also mention steel, timber, transport, logistics and labour. We have also had massive disruptions to the supply chains, and the building industry knows this as well. The work undertaken over the past year has provided more detail on what is required from a design and engineering perspective, and that is reflected in the cost. We have also had a look at the options, and the best option for a modern, sustainable stadium that Queenslanders can enjoy in the long term is a complete rebuild. I know that members of the organising committee went for a tour of the Gabba as well. There will be better disability seating. The Gabba has essentially reached its end of life and needs to be—

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**CHAIR:** Order! Do you have a point of order, member for Ninderry?

**Mr PURDIE:** No, Mr Chair.

**CHAIR:** Premier, can you continue with your answer after that disruption?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, and the member is not an expert on plane safety or plane maintenance, so perhaps he can think about that. The Deputy Premier will have more to say on this tomorrow. Graham, do you have anything you wish to add?

**Mr Fraine:** As the Premier discussed, this is in relation to the work that has been done on costing for the Gabba in the context of the increase in construction costs and issues to do with supply chain from matters like the Ukraine war. In the development of the work that was done in developing the project validation report that has been happening, and in the lead-up to the intergovernmental agreement work with the federal government on the broader funding package, the work that has been done into the Gabba has looked at these costs. As the Premier has noted, it has developed that better foundation for the costs.

**CHAIR:** We now turn to government questions.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, I refer to page 1 of the SDS on delivering 'even better services' and ask how the Palaszczuk government is supporting women's health through the budget.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I think the member is very well aware that we have made women's health one of the key priorities for our government. One of the key recommendations of the Queensland Women's Strategy was the development of the Queensland women's and girls' health strategy which we will be releasing later this year. The Queensland women's and girls' health strategy will build on funding commitments made in our budget. It will provide more beds and more staff through record investments in new and expanded hospitals, and a record graduate intake of 834 medical interns and 1,036 nurses and midwives with increased support for students taking their final-year placements in regional locations, and for GPs undertaking obstetrics training. There is a \$764 million investment for more resources and innovation through the Putting Patients First plan to reduce wait times through our emergency departments. Our boost to women's health care this year includes the new funding of \$34.8 million, \$10.5 million of our \$42 million committed to support for maternity birthing services in regional and rural locations, and strengthening outreach obstetrics and gynaecology services. There is a \$13.7 million investment in the Growing Deadly Families Strategy so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander babies born in Queensland have the strongest start in life. There is \$4.4 million for domestic and family violence and sexual assault reform activities, including training in new models of care to support timely, local and quality services, and \$1.73 million to ensure the integrated, timely and local delivery of high-quality, trauma-sensitive forensic medical examinations for victims of sexual assault.

In addition, the 2023-24 Budget announcement for women's health includes \$119.9 million for mental health, alcohol and other drug initiatives under Better Care Together, which includes perinatal mental health. Some \$11 million has been invested for eight new statewide public specialist inpatient mother-baby beds through Catherine's House at the Mater Hospital, South Brisbane. There is \$1.3 million for additional perinatal mental health clinicians to enhance community-based treatment and care for new parents and infants with severe and complex perinatal mental health service. The women's and girls' health strategy will also ensure women's stories of their health journey are heard, that clinicians listen and that women's healthcare services are safe and accessible. The director-general mentioned to me how well the children's hospital performed in a national survey. I will get the director-general to update the committee on that.

**Ms Hunter:** The Queensland Children's Hospital has consistently performed well in terms of international benchmarks for family and child-centred care and it is listed as one of the top paediatric services or hospital and health services globally. We should be very proud of the work that is done in the Queensland Children's Hospital and particularly grateful to the calibre, quality, commitment and compassion of staff who work there.

**Mr TANTARI:** Premier, again in reference to page 1 of the SDS and the need to provide Queenslanders with strong mental health services, can the Premier outline how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queenslanders' mental health?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We know that mental health is a big issue for Queenslanders. We have seen a lot of examples of it coming out of COVID. As I saw yesterday at the satellite hospital, there is a dedicated wing dealing with patients presenting with mental health issues, which is a separate wing to where everyone else comes in so that privacy is secured. Some of the other satellite hospitals will also include that. This year's budget contains a landmark \$1.6 billion investment in mental health services. The funding will deliver Better Health Together, Queensland Health's five-year mental health, alcohol and other drugs plan for clinical services. It also means more services and more mental health professionals when and where they are needed, services to help people earlier, and services for young people as well as technology solutions to better integrate care.

We are supporting our new crisis support spaces, Head to Health Services and headspace centres to open over the next year. The budget is delivering another \$150 million towards Redlands Hospital to deliver a new mental health facility which will almost double the bed capacity with 20 additional beds, to bring the total to 43 beds. It was wonderful to visit the Redlands Hospital recently with the Minister for Health.

We also have the co-responder model which is working well, where vulnerable people experiencing mental health can be assessed in their own home by an experienced health professional with police in attendance, rather than being immediately diverted to a hospital emergency room to wait for an assessment.

This year's budget also includes \$21.6 million over four years for domestic and family violence support. As you can see, there are a lot of examples of the way in which we are rolling out that money. There is the unit in your electorate as well.

**Mr TANTARI:** I am looking forward to the opening.

**CHAIR:** Premier, the cost of living is a pressure not only nationally but also internationally. Referring to the SDS in regards to even better services right across Queensland and backing small business, I ask what actions the Palaszczuk government is taking to tackle the national cost-of-living issue to support Queenslanders, particularly supporting Queenslanders in my electorate of Logan?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Chair. I think everyone appreciates the pressures people are experiencing right across the board, whether it is increasing interest rates, the price of petrol or the price of groceries. Everyone is experiencing those pressures at the moment, including people in my local community, and in your local community as well. A lot of people are experiencing those pressures right across the state. I believe we have delivered some of the best cost-of-living relief measures in the country, especially when it comes to money for concessions, but also every household will receive that \$550 power bill rebate, and for pensioners and our seniors, \$1,125.

My electorate has also told me, and similarly in other people's electorates, that people are finding that of the most interest, especially seniors coming in to say, 'How do I get that rebate?' I think that is very important.

Today I can also announce that from next month, Queenslanders will be able to receive rebates on their energy-efficient appliances. This is a \$22 million program. It is a cost-of-living initiative where eligible households could save between \$800 and \$1,000 on solar and heat pump hot water systems. This will help reduce electricity usage, meaning they will have smaller power bills. It applies to other appliances, as I said earlier in my opening remarks—washing machines, fridges and air-conditioners. All householders will be eligible. Individuals who meet the ATO's low-income tax offset threshold will be eligible for additional assistance. This is about replacing older appliances with new more energy-efficient ones that will help put downward pressure on electricity bills and save Queenslanders even more money.

We are also making kindergarten free for 15 hours per week with \$645 million of funding over four years, meaning families can save around \$4,600 a year in fees.

I welcome the opposition's support for free kindy. I think that is absolutely important. Kindergarten in those early years are very important for young children's start in life. It is also where issues or problems in relation to hearing, sight or behaviour can be picked up; early intervention is very important.

Our FairPlay vouchers of \$150 are being extended for swimming lessons for children aged zero to four. I was pleased to announce this policy at the UQ pool with the Treasurer as we witnessed young Queenslanders learning to swim. They were starting very young indeed!

We are doubling funding for the School Breakfast Program. I know that many members would realise how important it is for young children to have a good start to the school day by having breakfast.

There is another \$315,000 to Foodbank to provide food relief. There is \$650 in rebates off power bills for small businesses. There are motor vehicle registration concessions for pensioners, seniors and eligible veterans, halving registration costs from \$360 to \$180 for a four-cylinder vehicle. There is a \$200 rates subsidy for eligible pensioners. There is a reduction in learner licence fees. There is a textbook and resource allowance, and the Spectacle Supply Scheme for concession card holders providing up to 90,000 items a year to 70,000 people.

There is the oral health scheme to support health care card, pension card and seniors card holders to access dental treatment with average values of \$830 for general care, and \$2,200 for dentures. Our government is listening. We recognise the challenges that global and national cost-of-living pressures are placing on families and we are doing what we can to assist.

**CHAIR:** Premier, building on some of the statements you made about expanding kindy and referring to page 1 of the SDS and the service objective of education for the future, I ask how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queensland parents to educate and care for children including families who reside in the electorate of Logan but also throughout Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I know that you will be absolutely delighted that there is a new special school in Logan—

**CHAIR:** Very excited.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—in addition to a major expansion of Springfield Central State School with \$120 million set aside. Every Queensland child deserves the best education no matter where they live. To do this they need schools across the state that are fit for purpose and that prepare them for the careers and the future. That is why our government is investing in our Big Build.

Since coming to government in 2015 we have built 25 schools, including four new schools for the start of school in 2023. This year our record \$17.8 billion education budget will make sure the next generation has access to the facilities they need to learn, grow and succeed. Whether it is in the classroom, on the sporting fields or in one of our state-of-the-art performance spaces or multipurpose halls, we are building the facilities. We will invest a massive \$358 million to build new classrooms and specialist learning spaces like those needed for STEM, hospitality and specialist subjects. Recently I joined Minister Grace and our hardworking local Redlands MP, Kim Richards, to open a new STEM building at Victoria Point State High School.

Our government is also committed to delivering upgraded training facilities at schools under the Local Schools, Local Jobs initiative. This is really important because it is actually linking with the industries locally and the skills we need. It is getting in early and making sure those young people have those skills; it links them in with different industries whether it is aquaculture, manufacturing or

renewable energy. This is a very good plan that is working right across our state. For example, Mabel Park State High School has a new \$4 million automotive training facility where students can explore the latest technologies such as solar powered vehicles, and there are other examples right across the state.

**Mrs McMAHON:** I note the budget provides a funding boost for food relief services. In respect of page 1 of the SDS regarding giving our children the best start by investing in our teachers and schools, can the Premier please advise the committee further on how additional funding will support Queensland students?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, our government is committed to giving Queensland's children the best start in life. That is why there is a \$2.7 million program over two years to extend and expand the state's popular School Breakfast Program, which sees breakfast provided to children in need. That program ensures schoolchildren have access to a healthy and nutritious breakfast. We know this leads to better concentration and learning outcomes. It will be delivered through partnerships, including non-government organisations and P&C associations.

Approximately 300 state schools already offer breakfast programs supported by the Queensland government. This includes schools in the member's electorate such as Beenleigh and Eagleby and it includes Hervey Bay State High School in the member for Hervey Bay's electorate. Our government's additional investment will help deliver breakfast programs in approximately 200 more schools.

I am advised that the department of communities is working with education to ensure this funding best supports school communities in need, including in regional and rural areas. It was good to see firsthand at my local school at Durack how important that is for the children with the cereal, milk, fresh fruit and raisin toast. So many children do miss out on this whether their parents have to do shiftwork or start early. I think this is a very important measure and one that has been very well received as a result of our budget.

**Mr TANTARI:** I note your department has outlined on page 1 of the SDS that it is supporting the government's commitment to achieving a 70 per cent renewable energy target by 2032 and net zero emissions by 2050. Can you outline how this budget supports the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. Of course, our \$19 billion in renewable energy over the next four years in Queensland compares with \$20 billion in total under Rewiring the Nation. Today I can also announce Energy Queensland will invest \$24 million to trial locally made flow batteries. Investments over the next four years include: the start of construction next year of the CopperString 2032 transmission line from Townsville to Mount Isa, the largest economic development project in Northern Australia with early works now underway at Julia Creek; the start of geotechnical work on the \$14.2 billion Borumba hydro energy storage; \$1 billion to start work including geotechnical drilling for the world's largest pumped hydro energy storage, the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro dam; the 252-megawatt Wambo Wind Farm near Dalby; the 500-megawatt Tarong West Wind Farm near Kingaroy; the 230-megawatt Banana Range Wind Farm near Biloela; large-scale batteries at Greenbank, Swanbank, Chinchilla and in the southern and central renewable energy zones; the connection to the Kidston pumped hydro project; the Brigalow hydrogen-ready gas-peaking plant; and the rollout of further local network batteries across Queensland. That includes \$12 million to trial Redflow's zinc flow battery in Ipswich and \$12 million to trial an iron flow battery by Sword and Stone in the Wide Bay region.

Queensland business Redflow recently received investment from the California Energy Commission to deliver a 20 megawatt hour storage project. These projects build on our announcement to trial a vanadium flow battery in partnership with Vecco and Sumitomo Electric. If we do not back investment in batteries in Queensland we will see investment go offshore. Recently when I was in Japan and South Korea there was a lot of interest in Queensland's Energy and Jobs Plan as well as in Singapore with a lot of interest in investment in more wind and solar farms. It highlights how important that critical minerals zone is, the North West Minerals Province, because we have what the world needs when it comes to vanadium, cobalt, lithium—all the things that are needed for our renewable energy transition.

**CHAIR:** It is truly remarkable that two of the most exciting flow battery projects are actually Queenslanders. I now turn to the Leader of the Opposition for a question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a question to the Public Sector Commissioner. Can the commissioner confirm that the annual Working for Queensland Survey was completed in September 2022?

**Mr Mackie:** Thank you for your question. I want to clarify that you are talking about the workforce profile report, September 2022; has it been completed?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Yes.

**Mr Mackie:** Yes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Has the commissioner briefed the Premier about the results of that survey?

**Mr Mackie:** Only our PBN I think we might have done; a briefing note I believe would have gone upstairs.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The most recent survey results, which is now 2021, show that almost one in three public servants feel that their work has a negative impact on their health. What was the result in the 2022 survey for that metric?

**CHAIR:** I also feel that today has a negative impact on my health but I will not put that on you.

**Mr Mackie:** Sorry, I think we are talking about two different reports here. The first question was on the workforce profile report. Are you now talking about the Working for Queensland Survey?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The Working for Queensland Survey.

**Mr Mackie:** You are talking about this year's?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Yes.

**Mr Mackie:** We have not published that yet. I have not published that yet, but my intention is to publish it this week. Specific questions at this point in time are public. Sorry, could I ask what is the specific one you are wanting?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The number of public servants that feel their work has a negative impact on their health?

**Mr Mackie:** Thank you for the question. Again, this survey is not public at the moment. I am just trying to find the component of it though that you are speaking of. I might need a few minutes for that; if that is okay.

**CHAIR:** You might be able to come back to us.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I might ask a question of the Premier then Chair. Would the Premier be happy to release those survey results now so that we are able to ask questions about it in this session?

**CHAIR:** We have already had an answer about the commissioner's plan for releasing the results.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** With respect, I am asking if the Premier would be willing to release them today.

**CHAIR:** We can put that question to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is the Public Service Commission's report, so the Public Service Commissioner can release that report.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I am asking whether or not the Premier will apply for its release today.

**CHAIR:** Order! We know what you are asking; the Premier has given a really clear answer. Do you have another question Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. It has been over six months since the government released its latest 10-point plan to address youth crime. Explosive figures out today show that Queensland is the crime capital of the nation. Will the Premier today finally admit that her decision to water down laws has created the Queensland crime crisis?

**CHAIR:** We are delving into inference, which I think the opposition leader knows. I ask him to be respectful of the standing orders in his future questions. However, rather than repeat that, I might just put it to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Leader of the Opposition knows that our laws in relation to tackling youth crime were voted on in the parliament, and the opposition voted for those laws. You see the opposition leader front the media and talk negatively, but I do not see any alternative plans.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Remove detention as a last resort. Get serious about early intervention.

**CHAIR:** Order! This is now the sixth or seventh time I have counselled you about interjections. The question has been put; the answer has been relevant. I ask that you respectfully listen to the answer and show some discipline not to interject.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you. Let me make the point that detention as a last resort is a matter for the United Nations. The Leader of the Opposition might want to travel to the United Nations, because it is actually in every jurisdiction across the nation. You might want to go to the UN—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** How did the breach of bail go—what was the argument against that?

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** So rude.

**CHAIR:** Premier, I ask that you do not engage with interjections. Leader of the Opposition, I told you earlier during this question not to interject because it is outside of the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Leader of the Opposition has said 'do more intervention programs', but he has not named a single new intervention program. It is all very well to have catchcries, but what we are focused on and what the police are focused on is action. Last year, I announced a suite of comprehensive evidence-based additional responses to youth crime. This includes increasing the maximum penalty for stealing a car from seven years to 10 years; a more severe penalty of 14 years if the offence is committed at night; amending the Youth Justice Act; increasing penalties for criminals who have boasted about these crimes on social media; extreme high-visibility police patrols; fast track sentencing pilots; and the construction of two new youth detention centres. Members would be aware that the go-ahead has been given for an expansion at Woodford and that they are finalising the centre in Cairns. The trial of engine immobilisers in Mount Isa, Cairns and Townsville has already been announced by the police minister. The appointment within the Queensland Police Service of an assistant commissioner to the position of youth crime task force commander will increase penalties that apply to adults, as well as juvenile offenders.

Let me provide an update. I am advised that in 2022-23, the QPS arrested 133,267 offenders; issued 123,236 notices to appear; and made 167,469 referrals to support services for victims. I am advised by the QPS that crime statistics can rise and fall based on a number of factors. For example, the QPS advised that when the number of police increase, police-detected offences are also likely to increase. According to the 2023 report on government services, in 2021-22 the rate of operational police per 100,000 people in Queensland of 285 continues to be above the national average of 281.

Additionally, crime statistics can increase when governments strengthen laws. Since the Strengthening Community Safety Act passed parliament in March to 30 June 2023, police have charged 323 young offenders with breach of bail and 42 young offenders with the new social media circumstance for unlawful use of a motor vehicle. In addition, our government has committed more than \$30 million in police overtime funding for high-visibility police and police liaison officer patrols. I am advised that these operations from 19 December 2022 to 30 June 2023 have resulted in: 6,849 offenders being charged with 13,517 charges; 2,447 young offenders being charged with 5,690 charges; 75,681 proactive activities encompassing 30,741 hours; 30,643 street checks; and 20,629 random breath tests.

An evaluation of the high-visibility police patrols conducted by the QPS found that there was a 23 per cent reduction in offences and offenders; a 41 per cent decrease in unlawful use of a motor vehicle; a 33 per cent decrease in assault; and an 18 per cent decrease in unlawful entry. The QPS continues to invest in early intervention programs that work, with the highly successful Project Booyah coming to Toowoomba.

I add my thanks for the hard work that our police men and women do every day out there on the beat servicing their community. I know that there are many pressures out there at the moment. We give the police the resources that they need to do their job and the police operationalise as to how they will tackle issues of serious crime. Secondly, parliament passes the laws and the courts are there to enforce the laws.

**CHAIR:** There is a point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** We are aware of the great support by all members in the House for the police force. That is not the question that was asked and the answer has been rambling. Can you bring the member back to the question that was asked, rather than a speech?

**CHAIR:** On this committee, we have two former police officers.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** The question is obviously highly inflammatory. It used language that had both inference and imputation, so I gave some latitude to the Premier. Everything that the Premier has said is relevant to the question that was put, including the recognition of the police who administer those laws. Premier, before you were interrupted, had you completed your answer?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** A further question to the Premier. It has been two years since the government made its \$9.8 billion health and hospital announcement; what percentage of this fund will be spent by the end of this financial year?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will have to get that information for you.

**CHAIR:** Is this something that you will come back to at the end of the session, or something that you want to take on notice?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me just check.

**CHAIR:** You can let us know at the end of the session whether you are taking that question on notice.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I believe the budget papers show that it is just five per cent after two years.

**CHAIR:** Sorry, you didn't have the form of a question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If you already know the answer, why ask the question?

**CHAIR:** Order, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You are wasting the committee's time.

**CHAIR:** No. Order, Premier. Just because the opposition leader is out of order, it is not an encouragement to do that—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Checked out.

**CHAIR:** Did you seriously interrupt me again during that question?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I find that comment offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw. A further question to the Premier, Mr Chair?

**CHAIR:** Seriously, I am counselling the Premier about not engaging and you are interrupting me. Show some discipline about following the rules. You have a question?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Two years after its announcement, can the Premier advise how many Queenslanders are living in a newly-constructed home built using the \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** From memory, this question was asked in the House previously, so it is a repetitive question.

**CHAIR:** No. With respect, Premier, we have the opportunity during the estimates to ask the questions again. Also, some time has passed, so I put that the question is in order. Obviously when asking a question about a singular number—a snapshot in time—the Premier may need to get some advice on it.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As of June this year, Housing Investment Fund support has been approved for over 1,500 dwellings. This includes a pipeline of up to 1,200 dwellings to be delivered by the partnership between the Brisbane Housing Co. and Queensland Investment Corporation. The first two developments to be delivered by the partnership at Redcliffe—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** So rude. Construction on the Chermside site commenced, I am advised, on 14 July, and we will check that.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** So the answer, Mr Chair—

**CHAIR:** I want to check: are there any further questions for the commissioner?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No, no further questions of the commissioner.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If I can—

**CHAIR:** Sorry; hold on, Premier. Mr Mackie, I just wanted to let you know that.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I understand the Brisbane Housing Co. expects tenancing of the Chermside development to commence in the middle of next year and tenancing of the Redcliffe development to commence late next year. In March our government announced support to help the purchase of up to 335 ex-National Rental Affordability Scheme homes in Townsville and South-East Queensland. The first 94 of these homes have been purchased, with 82 tenanted as of 11 July 2023, so there is an updated figure for the member.

**CHAIR:** I understand from the deputy chair that the member for South Brisbane has a question.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** So not one?

**Mr PURDIE:** Zero. So the answer is—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Zero? Not one?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The first 94 of these homes have been purchased, with 82 tenanted as at 11 July 2023.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No, new dwellings—zero, not one, zero.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** How about the federal LNP support the housing package in the federal parliament?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The federal LNP—

**CHAIR:** I counsel—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** If you care so much about housing—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Two years.

**CHAIR:** I counsel both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to not engage. That is highly disorderly. Someone should keep a count. I counsel the Leader of the Opposition. We go now to the member for South Brisbane, who has been waiting so patiently and so quietly.

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, given that rents in Brisbane have gone up by at least 10 per cent since the Housing Summit in October last year, will your government support a rent freeze followed by a rent cap to give housing security to tens of thousands of Queensland renters?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, housing is a big issue nationally and the best thing that the Greens could do is actually support the federal government's package which would release thousands of homes for Queensland. I find it completely ironic and hypocritical for members of the Greens party—

**Dr MacMAHON:** Point of order, Chair.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—to be raising housing issues—

**CHAIR:** Sorry, Premier—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—when they do not support—

**CHAIR:**—but there is a point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—more housing in Queensland.

**CHAIR:** Sorry. Premier, order!

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question was about the Premier's support for a rent freeze followed by a rent cap. I do not see how her response is responding to the question.

**CHAIR:** I know what your question was. I believe the point the Premier was making was that the release of extra housing would put downward pressure on rents which would—

**Dr MacMAHON:** But my question was not about supply.

**CHAIR:** Order! Sorry?

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question was not about supply; it was about a rent cap.

**CHAIR:** No, I understand that. With respect, I do not wish to argue with you; I am making the ruling. My understanding is that the Premier was talking about supply putting downward pressure on rents and your question was about the upward pressure on rents. The Premier's answer is relevant.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In April we passed laws to limit the frequency of rent increases to once a year from once every six months to have a fairer go for renters and on 14 July we released a discussion paper to consult on whether further changes are needed to ensure the law achieves its intent. Minister Scanlon has been briefing us on that matter and, unfortunately, there were some loopholes and we need to fix that. You are talking about supply. We need more supply. The best thing the Greens and the LNP can do at the federal parliament level is to vote for the passage of the legislation that allows more supply. It is a very simple proposition, so I find it completely hypocritical when people come in here talking about housing yet they are holding up a big investment in housing.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Will the Premier be taking the question on notice?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I answered it.

**Dr MacMAHON:** I did not get an answer.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You did.

**CHAIR:** I call the—are you making a point of order?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No, a question. Premier, it has been two years since the explosion at the Callide Power Station which has increased the cost of power for every Queenslanders. The government said it would be back in operation by the end of 2022. This changed to February 2023 and then to April 2023. When will it be operational again and bring power prices down for Queenslanders?

**CHAIR:** Premier, I just wanted to note that we are at the end of time and we are about to have a break, so if your answer could be quick or else come back to the answer after the break.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will come back after the break, if that is okay with everyone.

**CHAIR:** Okay. In that case, we also had a question being taken on notice earlier about the issues with employment. I did not hear any question being taken on notice. I just wanted to confirm.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No.

**CHAIR:** All right. With that, it is now time for the scheduled break. We will now adjourn for a break and the hearing will resume at 12 noon continuing with the examination of the estimates for the portfolio of the Premier and cabinet and the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Premier, we will return to that question directly after the break. Thank you.

#### **Proceedings suspended from 11.45 am to 12.01 pm.**

 **CHAIR:** I welcome back the Premier and officials. We will now resume our examination. Premier, I believe a question was put to you by the opposition leader before the break.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes. Thank you. I thank the opposition for the question and I think I share everyone's frustration about the fact that there are delays in Callide C coming back online. I am advised that the minister has been regularly engaging with CS Energy on this issue. CS Energy advises all units will be back online by the middle of next year. But perhaps if I can say to the committee that when you examine the Minister for Energy's portfolio you may want to talk directly to the CS Energy representative.

The advice also that we have received is that power prices are being impacted by number of issues, including the war in Ukraine driving up gas prices and the closure in April of the 2,000 megawatt Liddell Power Station in New South Wales. The advice is that Queensland has sufficient energy supply for the next summer peak. We got through the last summer without Callide C3 and C4 units online. And, of course, Chair, everybody knows too that we kept our energy assets in public hands and that means that we were able to provide those rebates like we did in our budget. That was the \$550 in power rebates for all households over the next year, taking our total rebates to \$1,125 over five years and pensioners and eligible concession card holders will receive \$1,072 off their power bill over the next year.

**CHAIR:** There is a tremendous amount of excitement about the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games throughout the state. Referring to page 2 of the SDS, Lead Brisbane 2023 Olympic and Paralympic Games, can the Premier please update the committee on the planning works and, of course, the budget supporting this for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Chair. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity—of course, 2032—which will change our state forever. Even now when you talk to people overseas they say, 'Oh, you're from an Olympic city', and there is immediate interest in what that means for investment, for flights, for tourism. Everyone saw what happened with Barcelona when you saw the tourism increase dramatically after that. The Brisbane 2032 coordination office, the intergovernmental leaders forum, and the CO integration group will plan and deliver the world's largest event right here in Queensland.

As we have said, it is not just about the events themselves but what can be achieved leading up to them and what will be left behind after them. Planning is well under way for our 16 new and upgraded venues including the Gabba, Brisbane Arena and our indoor sports centres at Moreton Bay, Logan, Albion, Chandler and Sunshine Coast. \$1.9 billion will be spent over the next four years starting to develop some of these facilities, representing just two per cent of the state's \$89 billion four-year capital program. Progress is also being made on planning for the athletes villages, as I said, and we will be talking not just about the rebuild of the Gabba and the new Brisbane Arena and the 16 extra venues, we will also be clearly talking about accelerating those athletes villages to provide short-term and medium-term accommodation before the games even commence. As I said, that work will be underway very quickly.

The Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office and games partners are busy planning the delivery of these assets, as well as transport, environment, legacy, First Nations and security. Hosting the games will drive a projected \$8.1 billion in increased social benefits, trade and tourism. Legacy is much more than just about the dollars and cents. The games are creating a legacy for Queenslanders, addressing inequality, levelling the playing field, changing lives for the better. I think anyone just has to look at the Matildas and see how that is really changing the face of women's sport and encouraging more young girls to be active and how even putting in place our Female Facilities Program, where women and girls used to get changed in sheds or in cars, they now have their own dedicated facilities. For years and years people used to think that no-one would turn up and watch women play sport. You only have to look at these packed stadiums to see that women's sport is alive and well. I love seeing the families going along. It is a whole family event supporting our women. Great to see the swimming team doing so well at the world championships as well—our great Queenslanders.

Also too I am very proud that in terms of Paralympics we are investing \$44 million in the UQ's Paralympic Centre of Excellence. We know that 20 per cent of Australians live with some form of a disability and only one in four participate in sport. The centre will help address that inequality in Queensland. The centre will be a world first, deliver world's-best facilities for people with a disability, combining rehabilitation services with para sport training facilities. The centre of excellence will use sport as rehab through international-standard competition facilities, a wheelchair and prosthetic workshop and a para sport testing facility. These world-class facilities will not just be for elite para athletes but for everyday Queenslanders. That is what legacy is about.

Also, in addition, members will be aware we have our \$100 million Go for Gold Fund and this is about legacy in schools. Already \$2.5 million worth of sporting equipment is being rolled out to our schools, more than 50 per cent in regional Queensland. Round 2 will see sports clubs be able to partner with schools to apply for up to \$5 million to help build sports infrastructure. That is legacy. Development of our legacy strategy will also deliver for Queenslanders. So far, 14,000 ideas have been received. Grouped into themes, the message was clear: 32.6 per cent of respondents rated sport, health and social wellbeing as the most important legacy; 26 per cent wanted to see a better future for our environment; 23 per cent wanted to see Queensland globally and regionally connected; and 18.5 per cent wanted the games to deliver a better economy, jobs and innovation. This could come in the form of walkable and connected sporting precincts to a First Nations cultural museum in Townsville. These are a legacy for all of the state not just the south-east, a testament to the spirit of the games and championing everyone to do better.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, while 2032 seems a long time away, we know there are lasting legacies for the city and the state that host an Olympic and Paralympic Games. As such, and in respect to page 4 of the SDS, can you please outline how this budget supports the Olympic and Paralympic Games legacy for Queensland and how it will benefit Queenslanders into the future?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We often talk about the green and gold runway to 2032 and that Queenslanders need to make the most of this opportunity. That is exactly what our government has been doing since we won the games two years ago. We have kept our promise to integrate all three levels of government in the planning and delivery of the games, setting up the Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office, the Intergovernmental Leaders Forum—and we have already had our first meeting—and the CEO integration group. We signed a historic \$7.1 billion funding agreement with the federal government to unleash a wave of investment.

We have unveiled our new Q2032 campaign, 'All Queensland. All in', allowing Queenslanders not only to discover the social, trade and tourism benefits of the games via our new website but also to win gold themselves on and off the field through our procurement strategy. This strategy ensures businesses are prepared to supply to the games and beyond. Through the new MyGamesPlan tool—the Q2032 small business advisor, the Industry Advisory Group—the government is helping business to capitalise now on the opportunity 2032 presents, a whole nine years out from the games.

This is not just another plan. Our government has put Buy Queensland policy into law, helping Queensland businesses prioritise when it comes to games related contracts. Since 2017, Buy Queensland has seen our government award more than \$57 billion worth of investment contracts to some 70,000 Queensland companies. Forty-four per cent of them are in regional Queensland so the whole of Queensland can share in the benefits of the games. Brisbane 2032 is also accelerating housing development, as I have talked about at length.

The legacy of the games is about much more than just infrastructure and commerce. It is about improving accessibility, driving sustainability, promoting inclusion, acknowledging First Nations and, most importantly, encouraging every Queenslanders to play a sport or para sport. The games are about

the athletes. It is wonderful that we have increased funding to the Academy of Sport. We have the You for 2032 program rolled out so that young people are actually getting the training and being identified now as potential athletes for 2032.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, budgets are about people and, as outlined on page 1 of the SDS, this budget supports good secure jobs in more industries to diversify the Queensland economy. Premier, can you please elaborate on how this budget is supporting Queensland jobs?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Of course, we know that we have the strongest jobs growth in the nation out of the pandemic with 278,800 more jobs. There are now over half a million more jobs in Queensland under our government with over 535,000 jobs created. Over the next year, Queensland's economy is set to grow at twice the rate of the nation. This growth is underpinned by our government's economic plan to create high-value and secure long-term jobs. That is why the 2032 budget includes funding to take our Advance Queensland economic plan to the next level, focusing on developing new sectors, including renewables and battery technologies; ag tech; biomedical; resource recovery; biofuels; advanced manufacturing, including aerospace, space and defence; and creative industries, including sports tech and digital gaming. These new sectors build on our traditional strengths and will further grow our resources, agriculture, tourism and international education sectors.

We are delivering on these new economic sectors through our flagship \$5.84 billion Queensland Jobs Fund to partner with businesses, supporting our record \$89 billion Big Build to provide the infrastructure a growing state needs and supporting 58,000 jobs over the next year. It is the largest building program in Queensland's history, with the largest building program of new hospitals and renewable energy in the nation.

**CHAIR:** Premier, I am looking to the government's objective of supporting jobs, which you have just spoken about, in both traditional and, of course, our emerging industries—and we spoke about flow batteries before. Referencing the Service Delivery Statements and focused trade missions, can you advise of the outcomes for Queensland jobs from the trade mission that you made two weeks ago?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I can update the committee that the trade mission to Japan, South Korea and Singapore will lead to a huge investment and thousands of jobs across Queensland, particularly for our regions, including the north-west, Townsville, the Bowen Basin and Gladstone. Japan has been one of our largest export partners over the past century and we are setting up that trade relationship for the century ahead.

In Tokyo I met with ENEOS, Japan's largest oil company, which is now moving into renewable energy. They are the first company to successfully trial the export of hydrogen from Queensland to Japan, supported by our hydrogen strategy. Out of the mission they are now looking to establish an office in Brisbane to further invest in Queensland, with the projects including the Edenvale solar farm, supporting 400 construction jobs, which I will open later this year; the hydrogen demonstration plant, supporting 30 jobs; and future plans for a sustainable aviation fuel facility in Queensland. This is something that a lot of companies and airlines are interested in as we move to sustainable aviation fuel. We are working very hard in relation to that.

I met with Sumitomo, which has since committed to investing in the Yarwun hydrogen demonstration project in Gladstone to support the decarbonisation of our alumina refining industry. We are also working with Sumitomo on further opportunities for hydrogen. Along with Vecco we are looking at the emerging vanadium industry in North Queensland and opportunities to expand battery chains. In Osaka I met with the governor and committed to Queensland being a gold sponsor of the Australian pavilion at the Osaka 2025 World Expo. We are working with Iwatani and Kansai Electric on the Central Queensland hydrogen project, which is currently the largest hydrogen project under development in Queensland.

South Korea is another key trading partner for Queensland over the next century across hydrogen and critical minerals. The meeting with Queensland Pacific Metals and Korea Investment Partners was another important step forward for this project to support critical minerals processing and 300 ongoing direct jobs in North Queensland. The committee may or may not be aware that I also announced at the World Mining Congress that the office of critical minerals will be located in Townsville. I think that will be good to grow our department resources in the regions, especially with the amount of interest in Townsville and Gladstone at the moment.

In Seoul I announced \$8.5 million for the Abbot Point Activation Initiative under our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. This will support Abbot Point to become a hydrogen superhub for the export of hydrogen to Korea. That means jobs and renewable energy in the Bowen Basin with investment from the Han-Ho consortium in the Collinsville Green Energy Hub.

**Mr TANTARI:** Premier, exploring a little more about the trade mission, how does the trade mission and the new Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy support the government's objective of good jobs for Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, we are delivering the \$245 million Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy. It is interesting that a lot of companies are looking to Queensland because of our stable political environment, security of resources and our good labour market. The combination of those things makes Queensland incredibly attractive for overseas investment. As we know, the world is moving towards renewable energy and they want what Queensland has—that is, our critical minerals.

Our job is to engage with those trading partners and also, rather than just export the commodities offshore, actually manufacture and process the minerals here in Queensland. This will open up thousands of jobs in Townsville, around Bowen and in Gladstone. They are looking for ports from which we can export. We also want to manufacture as much as we possibly can. The amount of wind turbines and batteries that we will need into the future means that this Critical Minerals Strategy is being viewed across our trading partners as a key answer for their investment. I was very excited that we were able to invest that \$245 million, and I thank Minister Scott Stewart for doing great work in this space.

The federal government also released its critical minerals strategy. We are both targeting those fields together and it is great to see our working in tandem. Our strategy includes: the \$100 million for the Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund; the \$75 million for common user infrastructure and critical mineral zones; \$5 million to explore mine tailings and waste rocks for critical minerals; rent reduction for minerals exploration tenure worth \$55 million over the next five years; and \$8 million towards research and mineral discovery extraction and processing in partnership with universities. That is in addition to: our \$5 billion CopperString 2032 project to connect \$500 billion in critical minerals with the largest renewable energy zone on the east coast of Australia; the \$75 million Queensland Resources Common User Facility in Townsville to commercialise critical minerals; and the \$500 million commitment for grid scale batteries with a broader pipeline of three gigawatts of batteries with a focus on supporting local critical minerals. There is the Queensland Battery Industry Strategy to be launched later this year and the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan to ensure we have training in place for workers needed in critical minerals.

**CHAIR:** We do not have much time left in this section, but there is time for a quick question.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Staying with the Good Jobs objective for Queensland, what does the trade mission hold in terms of investment in hydrogen and sustainable aviation fuel?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The message from investors in Japan, Korea and Singapore was clear: that in order to reach net zero by 2050 they need to import significant volumes of renewable hydrogen and sustainable aviation fuel. In Queensland we have some of the best renewable resources with world-class solar with complementary wind resources. We have the land and the feed stocks to create renewable energy supply not just for Queensland but the broader region. Most importantly, we have our best resource: our people. Our investment partners in Asia see opportunities to bring about a new wave of investment larger than anything we have seen before for Queensland to become a renewable energy superpower, and that is exciting because it means long-term, good, paying and secure jobs in our region. It supports the new domestic hydrogen and sustainable aviation fuel industry for Queensland that will make our manufacturers more competitive.

In North Queensland there is a strong interest from South Korea to produce renewable energy. Japanese investors are more focused on Gladstone and Central Queensland for renewable hydrogen opportunities. Of course, there is demand for many sustainable aviation fuel refineries across Queensland that will be needed to both supply our national airlines and export partners. Our government is making the investments to support these new industries and to support domestic hydrogen opportunities in Townsville and exports from Abbot Point.

**CHAIR:** I now turn to the member for Maroochydore.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier appointed Frankie Carroll as Under Treasurer in February 2019. Was Frankie Carroll the recommended first-choice candidate by the independent selection panel and, if not, why did the Premier appoint Frankie Carroll?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** These matters are currently before the CCC and I cannot provide any further comment.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My understanding is that the CCC investigation had been finished, but I ask: was Frankie Carroll's appointment as Under Treasurer in line with the Premier's policy on merit-based selection for directors-general?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not in a position to comment.

**Ms SIMPSON:** The Premier cannot comment about whether this was based on merit?

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No. There is a CCC report and they are subject to a court case. I am not at liberty to comment any further on these matters.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Chair, the Premier is claiming that the CCC is still investigating.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Did I say that?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Could I ask: has the Premier been interviewed by the Crime and Corruption Commission with respect to the appointment of Frankie Carroll as Under Treasurer?

**CHAIR:** I think the Premier's answer would be relevant, but what the Premier has already answered would be relevant. I will put the question to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am not at liberty to make any further comment on these matters.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Chair, so the Premier is not wanting to confirm or deny whether she has been interviewed by the CCC in regard to this issue?

**CHAIR:** Look, there is an inference in this question and it is also effectively a repetition. I do counsel the member not to put inferences into questions or to be repetitive. That being said, I will put the question but note for future questions if the member for Maroochydore could—

**Mr STEVENS:** Point of order, chair: the Clerk has advised this morning that, because there were no charges in relation to any matter, it is not sub judice.

**CHAIR:** I do not know that that is strictly relevant to the situation we are dealing with now, but I put the question to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Any questions regarding the CCC's investigations or the status of any CCC reports are questions for the CCC. It would also not be appropriate for me to comment on any matters that may be before the courts. On 9 June 2021, the Public Sector Commission issued a new directive on chief executive recruitment and selection processes. All appointments of chief executives are required to be made in accordance with the directive.

**Ms SIMPSON:** The Premier has referenced a directive and how those appointments are supposed to be made. Can the Premier confirm that the previous appointment of Frankie Carroll was not made in accordance with merit selection?

**CHAIR:** The Premier has previously given an answer which would also apply to this question. I do ask the member to listen to the Premier's answers. I assume that the Premier is going to give exactly the same answer; however, I will put the question to the Premier because the member insists on asking.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I refer to my previous answer.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the director-general. Can the director-general provide details of any briefing, verbal or written, that she provided either the Premier or the Premier's office about any acts of noncompliance with the *Queensland Ministerial Handbook*?

**Ms Hunter:** I am just taking some advice. The *Queensland Ministerial Handbook* is a guide to assist the running of a ministerial office. The handbook sets out policies, practices and procedures for ministerial offices for financial and human resources management, accommodation, assets, entertainment, travel, information technology, security and other policy issues relating to the function of a ministerial office. It also references the codes of conduct for ministers and ministerial staff and other policies. Should any matters be identified that may not meet the handbook requirements, these are dealt with on a case-by-case basis through the appropriate avenue. Ministerial expenses are audited by the Queensland Audit Office and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's internal auditors.

**Ms SIMPSON:** As that question I asked has not been answered, my question to the director-general is about whether there were any briefings, verbal or written, she had provided to the Premier or the Premier's office about any acts of noncompliance with the *Queensland Ministerial Handbook*. I did not ask for an explanation of the handbook; I asked for whether there had been a briefing about where there had been noncompliance. Could the director-general please answer the question?

**CHAIR:** I am sure if I went back through the *Hansard* from 2012 to 2015 we would find a Speaker who made repeated references to the question being put and the answer given. I do not want to do that, take the lunch break or re-read that, but you do know the standing orders?

**Ms SIMPSON:** I do, Mr Chair, and the director-general is able to answer that question—

**CHAIR:** Order! I cannot believe the member is arguing across me.

**Ms SIMPSON:**—or the chair is not going to allow the director-general to answer that question.

**CHAIR:** Order! I put the question to the director-general.

**Ms Hunter:** In response to question on notice No. 505 asked by the Leader of the Opposition on 9 May 2023, the advice provided said—

... the Office of the Premier has not received any briefing notes from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet regarding any allegations of noncompliance with the Queensland Ministerial Handbook within the last 12 months.

The answer to the question on notice goes on to say—

... any matters of alleged non-compliance with elements of the Ministerial Handbook—  
which provides guidance to ministers and ministerial staff—

are dealt with by the appropriate officer, administratively or through the appropriate avenue.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Director-General, I refer to the question where I asked whether verbal or written briefings had been provided. You reference a question on notice with respect to written briefings, if I am correct. Could the director-general please provide details of all briefings—verbal or written—that she has provided the Premier or the Premier's office about any acts of noncompliance with the Queensland Ministerial Handbook?

**CHAIR:** This is very repetitive. The director-general has endeavoured to answer the question twice. Director-General, do you have anything to add?

**Ms Hunter:** I return to question on notice No. 505, asked on 9 May 2023. The second paragraph in that question on notice does say—

... meetings occur between the Premier's Office and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet regarding ministerial services matters, including the Ministerial Handbook which provides guidance to all Ministers, Assistant Ministers and staff on the operations of their offices.

I can only repeat that any matters of alleged noncompliance with elements of the Ministerial Handbook, which provides guidance, are dealt with by the appropriate officer either administratively or through the appropriate avenue.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Can the director-general confirm that oral briefings are also provided to the Premier's office and the Premier's staff with respect to the Ministerial Handbook and any examples of noncompliance?

**CHAIR:** Is this different from the four questions previously? I am not really certain.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I am just trying to get an answer, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Director-General, I am not sure. There may be some difference. You may understand that.

**Ms Hunter:** I can only respond as we have through the advice I have given previously. Should any matters be identified that may not meet handbook requirements, these are dealt with on a case-by-case basis through the appropriate avenue.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Chair, I note that no answer has been provided with regard to oral briefings. Premier, I refer to current court action concerning the release of CCC reports regarding former deputy premier Jackie Trad. Has the Premier considered introducing retrospective legislation to ensure CCC reports are tabled to ensure openness and transparency?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There is a matter before the court. I am not commenting.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Point of order, Mr Chair—

**Ms SIMPSON:** That never stops the Premier answering this question.

**CHAIR:** Certainly. There is a point of order.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Chair, the Premier is deliberately not answering a question. The question was about legislation. There is absolutely nothing stopping the Premier—

**CHAIR:** You seem to be making an argument here. I understand that nothing you are making reference to is a point of order under the standing orders. Are there any other questions?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Premier, as there is nothing in the standing orders preventing you from answering a question regarding the release of the CCC reports and court action to try to keep those secret, have you considered introducing legislation to ensure there is no doubt that CCC reports are tabled in the parliament, with transparency and accountability as a top order?

**CHAIR:** Given the question made reference to the court proceedings and the Premier has made a clear answer on that—there is a level of repetition here, but I will put the question to the Premier.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Let me put the question to the Premier. Will the Premier legislate to ensure CCC reports can be tabled in the parliament, with full transparency and accountability?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** These are matters before the court. You either respect the court's processes or you do not.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You do not respect the estimates process! What a farce this has become.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let's be very clear here—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** What a farce this has become.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Point of order—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—when the opposition were in office—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** That's all they've got, after a decade in power—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—they condensed estimates to two days—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** After almost a decade in power—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—so the opposition could not scrutinise.

**Mr STEVENS:** Chair, point of order—

**CHAIR:** Deputy Chair, we have a point of order from the member for Macalister.

**Mrs McMAHON:** We have argumentative approaches by the Leader of the Opposition here—the commentary on the question. The question has been asked and it has been answered and we are getting arguments as a comment.

**CHAIR:** I understand that it is disorderly, but I was dealing with that. I will deal with that. I appreciate that, but I am going to deal with that. There is a point of order from the member for Mermaid Beach.

**Mr STEVENS:** The point of order is that the question that was then asked was in relation to legislation introduced for future matters regarding CCC reports. It made no reflection or indication of current court action whatsoever. It was a direct question.

**CHAIR:** This is not a point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** It is a point of order, because what is happening—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Where is it in the SDS?

**CHAIR:** Order, Premier.

**Mr STEVENS:** Under the answer—it should be direct and succinct, as per standing orders—we have gone off on a matter to deflect the question when it should be answered.

**CHAIR:** We have in our guidance here at 2.2 that the minister, the director-general or the chief executive may answer the question whichever way he or she deems proper so long as it is relevant to the question. In this case, the Premier notes that there is a court case, which we spoke about this morning. We actually talked about that with the member for Glass House, who was putting questions about it. The result of that court case is something that the government will examine and will not make any statements before it. That is perfectly relevant and deemed proper and fit for the answer. It is completely within standing orders. There is no point of order. Am I making myself clear? We have to have a relevant point of order. This is not relevant to the point of order.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I have a question for the Premier but I want to flag that I will be asking questions also to the Integrity Commissioner, so I ask if she is able to come forward. With reference to the release of cabinet submissions within 30 days the Premier said at last year's estimates—

We will be preparing legislation for introduction later this year to take effect.

Can the Premier advise why the legislation was not introduced as promised?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Mackie, the Public Sector Commissioner, has been leading the work on the implementation of the Coaldrake review. I note that the release of cabinet submissions has been put into effect in New Zealand. It took a longer period of time than they thought to bring that into practice. We want best practice. The department is working very closely, examining the way in which New Zealand did that. They are also, I understand, keeping Professor Coaldrake updated. I thought the Public Sector Commissioner, who is leading that reform work on behalf of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, could provide a brief update on the timing of that.

**Mr Mackie:** It is one of the last four, I think, of the recommendations from the Coaldrake report that we are yet to put through. Professor Coaldrake himself did say that this is one of the most significant ones and to take the time to do it right, which we have been doing. There are some further amendments, as part of the cabinet document release, that we need to make through, for example, the RTI Act et cetera, but the intention, subject to executive government, is to bring that forward this year.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Integrity Commissioner. I note that a number of recommendations from the *Let the sunshine in* report involve lobbying. Could the commissioner please advise if the recommendation to abandon the drop-down menu in favour of a description of the purpose and intended outcome of contact with government has been completed?

**Ms Waugh:** There are three fields for the options for purpose of meeting. One of those is a dropdown menu, so there is both in effect.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Integrity Commissioner. There was a requirement to disclose diaries of ministerial staff recording all external contacts designed to influence government decisions. Has this been implemented?

**Ms Waugh:** I am sorry. I do not know the answer to that question. That is not a responsibility within my office.

**CHAIR:** I am checking the time. I think we are a little bit out of whack. Is there another question?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Yes. I will direct that question to the Premier in regard to ministerial staff recording all external contacts designed to influence government decisions. Could the Premier update the House in respect of the status of these recommendations?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am advised that all meeting requests from lobbyists are now required to be in writing and only ministers and assistant ministers or senior ministerial office staff with the approval of their chief of staff can meet with a registered lobbyist. Also, all published extracts of ministers' diaries will include greater details about the subject matter of the meetings with lobbyists.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Including the diaries of ministerial staff?

**CHAIR:** The question has been put.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Ministerial chiefs of staff diary extracts will also be proactively disclosed, starting from August.

**CHAIR:** We are all working here for the people of Queensland. With reference to page 22 of the SDS, can the Premier please outline how this budget supports the Public Sector Commissioner's vision for a public sector of excellence that delivers the highest quality services and outcomes for all Queenslanders? Is the Premier aware of other approaches to this issue?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank every public servant in Queensland for the job that they do each and every day on behalf of the people of Queensland. Over 240,000 public servants play an important role in ensuring Queenslanders have access to services and support that they need. I am further advised that over the past 12 months we have seen the public sector employ an additional 590 nurses, 301 doctors, 251 teachers or teacher aides, 199 health practitioners, 140 ambulance officers, 80 firefighters, 48 correctional officers and 52 TAFE teachers—just to name a few.

We have also seen a new Public Sector Act pass the parliament and commence on 1 March. It established a new employment framework for a fair, responsive and inclusive public sector for Queensland. We have some of the best public servants in the nation. Of course, you cannot blame people for wanting to come and live here. We know that Queensland is very decentralised. When I travel across Queensland I get to meet with our staff involved in a whole range of areas. I want to thank them for the incredible work that they do.

I am pleased that the new Public Sector Commissioner is embarking on developing an extensive five-year program of work to enhance our Public Service. I might ask Mr Mackie to come forward and say a few words about his priorities as the new Public Sector Commissioner.

**Mr Mackie:** As the Premier said, I have had a discussion with the Premier about the recommendation in relation to public sector rejuvenation, which was in the Coaldrake report. The way forward—that I want to see anyway—is that we have a five-year strategy being developed which will kick off next year. Between now and then we want to do extensive consultation with the public sector itself, with unions and with industry stakeholders to make sure that this is a sincere and meaningful opportunity to refresh the Public Service.

The Public Service has 246,000 people all around Queensland all doing a great job. I have had 33 years in the public sector and I have never met anyone who does not come to work to do a great job every day. Does it mean there is room for improvement? Of course. There are three priority areas that will be in the strategy that we will be engaging on soon. The first is about our workplace. That is about ensuring that the Queensland public sector is an employer of choice. What are the conditions that we provide for which people want to come and work for the public sector?

The second focus area is around the workforce. That goes to the heart of the Coaldrake report about how do you improve and increase the capability and calibre of talent in the public sector? In particular, how do you provide young people with great capabilities coming out of universities a pipeline into the public sector for that generational change that we need for capability?

Thirdly, it is about the work. That goes to the heart of the recommendations around ensuring that anyone who works in the Queensland public sector are public sector and Public Service professionals—they demonstrate and understand the importance of integrity, the importance of managing conflicts of interest and the importance of putting Queenslanders and the customer and the client first in terms of the work that they do.

We want this not to be a compliance tick on a report. We want this to be a meaningful and sincere approach to refreshing the public sector, particularly after the last few years going through COVID and natural disasters where the public sector has had to step up over that period of time. We want to do a full engagement process so they really feel that their voices are being heard.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, referring to the 'Connecting Queensland' objective and the Premier's speech to the inaugural National Tech Summit, what is the government doing to drive economic benefits from innovation and technology?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I want to commend the National Tech Summit that was held just recently here in Queensland. It was a vote of confidence in Queensland and our vibrant technology sector that we have. Through our Advance Queensland initiative, we have a proud legacy of developing the state's start-up ecosystem and creating new industries. Since 2015, Advance Queensland has supported 7,900 business and more than 27,000 jobs and leveraged over \$1 billion in funds from external partners and investors.

One of the early Advance Queensland funding recipients was Logan based online learning start-up GO1. It was great to be joined by co-founder of Go1, Vu Tran, at last month's National Tech Summit. They began as four friends working in a basement out of Logan to become a thriving company worth a reported \$3 billion which is absolutely an incredible story. There are so many of those examples right across the state.

In June, we announced, in conjunction with the Treasurer, a \$75 million Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund. The request for proposals from this fund attracted applicants from more than 80 venture capital companies and accelerators for over \$650 million worth of funding. The big focus that the committee might be interested in was in biotech, agtech, climate, energy, water and defence.

The Tech Council of Australia has identified South-East Queensland as one of the fastest growing areas for tech jobs in the nation, but we want to create and foster high-paying entrepreneurial and tech jobs right across the state. I think the advantage here is that people can live anywhere in Queensland and do their start-ups. They do not have to be in a work environment. They can do it from home or wherever they want to do it from.

We know that the innovation precincts and places are where businesses, industry and researchers work together to bring new ideas to life. They create new technologies and they look to commercialise them—places like The Precinct at Fortitude Valley, the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct and the Mackay agtech and biofutures precinct under development. Our \$15 million Innovation Precincts and Places Fund will help grow our state's existing and emerging innovation precincts and back our regions.

**CHAIR:** Being the member for Logan, I know that transport infrastructure projects are vitally important. We know that there are a few underway. With respect to the Big Build, Budget Paper No. 3, and page 1 of the SDS which refers to delivering world-class frontline services in key areas such as transport, can the Premier outline how the budget is supporting road and transportation projects which will support all Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, there is a lot happening across our state with \$32 billion over the next four years. A great example of our Big Build commitment is the second M1, Coomera Connector. The new major road is being built as an alternative to the existing M1 motorway and will be a north-south transport corridor between Loganholme and Nerang. In good news, it is expected to take 60,000 cars a day off the M1 from Coomera to Nerang. Construction has begun on this significant project. It will create an average of 1,000 jobs. The amount of \$5 billion has been committed to improving the M1 motorway since 2015. In relation to the Big Build on the Bruce Highway, we are investing \$13 billion over 15 years to upgrade the Bruce Highway. I am advised that more than 19 projects are currently underway there.

As we continue to invest in the future we know that, when we are looking at faster rail, the important thing is to give Queenslanders choice. In partnership with the federal government we are investing \$2.6 billion to deliver faster rail services between Brisbane, Gold Coast, Logan and Beenleigh. The project will see more tracks laid and level crossings removed to support faster, more frequent train services. Local motorists will benefit from the five level crossings that are to be removed. The project will upgrade nine stations, adding around 950 park-and-ride spaces and new active travel paths connecting stations. The transport department is now finalising the procurement and delivery strategy for this significant rail upgrade.

**Mr TANTARI:** Premier, I refer to page 1 of the SDS regarding backing our frontline services and keeping Queenslanders safe, and I ask how the Queensland government's investment in youth justice initiatives is strengthening community safety.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I know how seriously the member takes community safety. I know that a lot of seniors live in his electorate. We want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to protect our community. As we know, in this year's budget we have invested more than \$446 million to target serious repeat offenders, tackling the complex causes of youth crime and investing in community safety. This brings our total investment since 2015 to over \$1.4 billion, including \$500 million for early intervention to break the destructive cycle of offending. For every crime there is a victim and the impacts are extremely personal. I understand that because I meet with victims. There is also a process underway to appoint a special victims' commissioner.

I am advised that under Jack's Law police have now seized more than 200 weapons across Queensland. The committee might be interested to know that means 220 weapons are off our streets, including: 157 weapons located across Brisbane, Logan, Ipswich and Moreton districts; 41 on the Gold Coast; four on the Sunshine Coast; three in Wide Bay; three in Capricornia; one in Mackay; eight in Townsville; and three in Cairns. I am also advised that as a result 500 people have been charged and cautioned in relation to more than 900 offences. The implementation of our youth justice program is being rolled out—especially the co-responder models—across the state, which is great to see. We are also building new youth hubs, one in Toowoomba and one in Mount Isa, which came about directly as a result of meetings I had with the councils in both of those areas.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, referring to the importance of backing our frontline services, can I ask the Premier to outline how the Palaszczuk government is providing the police with the funding and resources needed to continue their vital role in keeping our communities safe.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As a former police officer, I know how interested you are in this issue. I thank you for your service and your strong support of the men and women on the front line who risk their lives every day. That is why we are committed to the biggest boost to policing in Queensland in three decades. We delivered a record \$3.281 billion budget to ensure we have police for the future. We are investing in quality education and training facilities, including a new police academy for Townsville. That is very exciting. It will be built on the old 1300SMILES stadium site, and I have been out there. In addition, there will be a new Kirwan police facility. We are also looking at plans to move the police academy from Oxley over to Wacol, which would be a much better facility. I think some money has been put aside for a business case there, and once that happens the land could be freed up for some social and affordable housing because of some of the facilities there. The police academy needs to be more modern and fit for purpose, but some of those facilities could be turned into a residential complex. I know that would be very supported by the local community.

We have embarked on an unprecedented \$87.5 million police recruitment package. The package includes a training allowance for police recruits on top of their wage, live-in costs for recruits at the police academies, and all recruit application and preselection test fees will be waived. It is my understanding there is a \$20,000 relocation allowance for interstate and overseas officers and a \$20,000 HECS debt payment for up to 400 university graduates. There is a new initiative whereby staff

members of the QPS who are accepted into recruit training will remain on their previous pay scale while training. The Try It On police recruitment campaign is an advertising partnership with the Queensland Police Union. I am advised that, as of 17 July 2023, 408 police recruits were in training across both academies and nearly 4,000 recruits have graduated from both academies since 2015.

**CHAIR:** This morning we spoke about the historic Queensland parliament sitting in Cairns. During that sitting we passed the Path to Treaty legislation. Can the Premier update the House on how this budget supports First Nations Queenslanders to really thrive in modern Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much. It was a very historic sitting up in Cairns. I believe it is critical that the parliament is able to travel to the regions. My understanding is that the cost of the parliament in Cairns was less than the parliament held in Townsville. There was also much more engagement between all parliamentarians and different sectors of the community, which was brilliant to see. The 2023-24 budget provides \$4.6 million over five years to support the repatriation of First Nations ancestral remains and sacred objects and \$1.4 million to support the implementation of a new First Nations economic strategy. We have also passed legislation to establish the independent First Nations Treaty Institute and the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. We are working in partnership with First Nations people to close the gap, with \$9.3 million over four years allocated for the implementation of the national agreement. We also have \$2.43 million in funding to support the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coalition. We are investing \$6.87 million to support capacity building in the community controlled sector, including through plans to strength the early childhood, health, housing and disability sectors. We are also working on women's health issues. It was great to see the opposition support the Path to Treaty Bill.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Premier outline how this budget supports the government's goal to provide greater support to veterans and the veterans' community in Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for her question. The member has also served the people of Queensland and Australia during her career in the military. As Premier, I have the honour of also being the minister responsible for supporting policies for our veterans. I want to acknowledge my assistant minister, Mr Bart Mellish, who does a great job in providing a lot of ongoing support and work.

Since we last met, I am pleased to say that our Queensland Veterans' Council has met in addition to the Veterans' Reference Group. The Queensland Veterans' Council is a statutory body designed, amongst other things, to provide advice to government on a wide range of issues that impact veterans and their families. The Veterans' Council has also assumed responsibility for the administration of the Anzac Day Trust Fund, which provides annual grants to organisations that support the welfare of veterans and their dependents since 1965. In addition, later this year the council will assume responsibility for the management of Anzac Square in Brisbane, which is the state's pre-eminent war memorial. I am sure that is a task they are definitely up to. We have also committed a further \$1.9 million over three years to expand the Queensland Remembers grants program. We have a veterans' employment pathway program to encourage people into careers in the Public Service. I am advised that since July 2018 we have seen more than 1,500 veterans start new careers with the Queensland Public Service. That is phenomenal, and I want to thank my director-general and our agencies for helping secure employment for 1,500 veterans. That is a remarkable achievement. We have also allocated \$1.1 million over four years to provide free TAFE and apprenticeships for veterans transitioning to civilian employment and to enhance the veterans' employment pathway and the veterans' online portal.

**CHAIR:** I now turn to the Leader of the Opposition for questions.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have questions of the Auditor-General relating to the *Queensland Regional Accommodation Centre (Wellcamp)* report. Auditor-General, I refer to page 1 of the report, which says—

The cost of the lease and the capital contribution toward construction of QRAC paid by the Queensland Government substantively represented the service provider's cost to construct the facility.

In other words, taxpayers paid for much of the facility for a 12-month lease. What is the residual life of that facility?

**Mr Worrall:** The residual life of the facility is probably not really a consequence for the state because the state does not own that facility. That facility has gone back to the Wagner Corporation.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the Auditor-General. The report shows that we basically paid for the capital cost of that facility though. I was just asking about a facility like that. Would it be a 25-year life?

**CHAIR:** We have just put the same question to the Auditor-General, who has answered it. We have gone over this ground before. Auditor-General, do you wish to add to your existing answer to the same question?

**Mr Worrall:** I will try to answer that. My understanding is the buildings probably have a useful life of 25 to 50 years perhaps. I have not been there myself so I cannot really make my own assessment, but I would imagine that is probably the ballpark figure.

**CHAIR:** We are not really asking for imagination, Auditor-General.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** No, we are after someone answering the question, which is refreshing. Auditor-General, would you describe it as normal for a short-term lease to cover almost the entire capital cost of a facility?

**Mr Worrall:** In my experience as Auditor-General, I would say that is novel. There is probably some precedence outside of the public sector. I guess you have to also understand the circumstances at the time, which we tried to lay out in the report. The other thing we said in the report was that there were alternatives at the time of entering into the agreement, such as continued hotel quarantine, even though there had been some issues with that, or even home quarantine.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Auditor-General, I am going to quote something the Premier said at last year's estimates. She said—

Now we have quarantine facilities—I cannot predict what is going to happen in the next two days, let alone the next two years when it comes to pandemics and world pandemics.

Does the contract for Wellcamp include any first right of access provisions that would allow the facility to be turned back into a quarantine facility by the government in the event of a future pandemic?

**Mr Worrall:** Not that I am aware of.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** That is what taxpayers reckon, too. Auditor-General, I note that the Premier's department has disagreed with your recommendation that guidelines be developed for ministers for the release of commercial information. Can you please provide some background as to why you made this recommendation and the implications for not implementing that?

**CHAIR:** Is the question clear, Auditor-General?

**Mr Worrall:** I think I understand the question. As outlined in the report around this, there was a slow release of information to the public in relation to the costs, and a number of questions were raised I think in parliamentary committee processes and things like that. The recommendation that we made to the Premier's department was to clarify in the Ministerial Handbook the sorts of disclosures that can be made and when they can be made in relation to matters that are commercial-in-confidence.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a question to the Premier. When announcing the Wellcamp facility, the Premier said it was futureproofing the state. Given that the state has no rights for that facility that it has paid for in its entirety after the 12 months, how is it futureproofing at all?

**CHAIR:** I do note that the question has an inference that was not put forward by the Auditor-General. I will put the question to the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, we were in a different place and a different time. We were in the midst of COVID, which the opposition seems to ignore even actually happened in this state. The way in which we handled COVID has led to a very strong economic recovery.

Secondly, our hotels were being utilised for quarantine and the Chief Health Officer had not recommended home quarantine at that time. The reason the government went ahead with building Wellcamp was that the federal government failed to step up to the plate and do quarantine. They failed to do their duty. Now we have a Pinkenba facility that is also available for quarantine which could be used in the future. Let me say it again. I do not know what is going to happen in terms of pandemics in the future—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** But you know you cannot use that facility.

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Leader of the Opposition does not know what is going to happen in the future.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Paid for it but you cannot use it.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Well, you want to talk about costs—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** You are not able to use it.

**CHAIR:** Order! This is now the fifth interjection. If you cannot control yourself, I will warn you. Interjections are out of order and this is disorderly to have so many interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** When the opposition were in office, they sank \$2.6 billion of taxpayers' money on selling off office buildings and building an office at 1 William Street. We do not own 1 William Street. We will be continuing to pay for 1 William Street through rentals for—how long is the agreement?—15 years.

**Ms SIMPSON:** We cannot use Wellcamp.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Well, member for Maroochydore, who is being extremely rude today, let me make it very clear that we were in the midst of COVID. You wanted to open up the borders, you wanted to let the virus come in, you were campaigning against me keeping the borders closed.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** How desperate.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I was about protecting the people of this state.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Oh my goodness.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You did not care about the people of this state.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Oh my goodness.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I was attacked relentlessly and now we have a strong economic recovery.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Oh my goodness.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The reason we are able to spend all this money now on health, on education and on youth crime is because we were able to keep people safe during that particular period of time.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Unbelievable.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Do you know what? I want to thank the people of this state for doing exactly what we asked them to do, because if it were not for them we would not be in the strong economic position that we are in today.

**CHAIR:** I did notice how disorderly that was. Member for Broadwater, I gave you instructions to not interject. I note that you did four interjections during that answer. I will go to someone who I hope will not interject, if the member for South Brisbane has a question.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Thank you, Chair. Premier, with regards to the \$2.7 billion Gabba rebuild that will come at the cost of a school and a park, when will the project validation report as well as the business plan that was provided to the IOC in 2021 be shared with the Queensland public for their scrutiny?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me put something clear here. The member for South Brisbane is doing a lot of misrepresentation around her local community. The people around the new school are going to be getting a brand new school in a much better environment. Secondly, you saw the release of what was happening to Raymond Park. Basically, we have been able to reduce the footprint of the training track—

**Dr MacMAHON:** I understand that the footprint of that warm-up track—

**CHAIR:** Order! Do not follow the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There is going to be huge urban renewal in that whole part of East Brisbane. I think what you will see is a transformational legacy the likes of which we saw over in London—where there will be a large mix of social and affordable housing around that precinct. It is not just about a venue; it is about a lasting legacy for that whole precinct. The member is being very selective when she talks about one particular project.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Point of order, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Sorry, Premier. The member's point of order?

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question was with regards to the publication of two documents. Could you bring the Premier back to the question?

**CHAIR:** No. I note that it was about those documents but also the Premier is talking about the issues involved. Premier?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** A little bit more about the school: the Coorparoo Secondary College is 1.6 kilometres away. My understanding is that the students at the school at the moment currently use that school's sporting facilities—

**Dr MacMAHON:** Premier, have you made a decision about the future of that school? None of us have heard that. No-one in the community has heard that. Have you made that decision?

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The education minister is discussing that at the moment to have a brand new school. I think that is fantastic news.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Outside of the catchment.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** A brand new school 1.6 kilometres away.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Have you come and talked to the school community? It is not what they want. You never bothered to show your face down in the community.

**CHAIR:** Order, member for South Brisbane. The question has been put.

**Dr MacMAHON:** The question has not been answered.

**CHAIR:** You have had a fair go. I have been tolerant. I certainly took your point of order and put it to the Premier. I ask that you do this in an orderly fashion. I understand you are passionate about it, but we need to have some kind of order here or else we will degenerate. Do not encourage the opposition leader in this. Premier, the member seems keen to have her question answered.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What I am saying is that it is the whole precinct, Chair. It is the redevelopment of that whole precinct which will dramatically change that area—the way in which people walk and commute with the Cross River Rail linking in directly with the Gabba, access for people with a disability, social and affordable housing, more connectivity, walkability, to be able to walk and cycle from the venues as well. This will be a lasting legacy for Brisbane and for Queensland. It is going to be remarkable. My understanding is that more detailed project validation reports are being prepared for new and upgraded venues. The Gabba Project Validation Report is progressing and we will release results of the report in due course.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** A further question to the Auditor-General: in December 2021, it was reported that the Auditor-General referred the Gladstone Ports Corporation to ASIC. What response have you received?

**Mr Worrall:** My recollection of that is that we have received no response from ASIC in relation to that referral.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Regarding the report implementing machinery of government changes, the report says, 'The scope of each change can vary greatly in its complexity but does not vary in that it diverts focus from leading service delivery.' I note specifically comments around youth justice being moved four times in under six years. Based on the Auditor-General's inquiries, has the disruption impacted the ability of the department to do its job?

**CHAIR:** Was that clear to you, Auditor-General?

**Mr Worrall:** What I am saying in that report is that the machinery of government changes and movements of chief executives and directors-general very likely does disrupt service delivery. There are a lot of things that have to happen behind the scenes when parts of departments are moving around. There are relationships that may have been severed that have to be reformed when individuals in those departments, including directors-general, are given different responsibilities. That is really what I am saying; there is disruption.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Premier, how does that reconcile with the Premier's comment that it would have minimal impact on departments, the machinery of government changes, including youth justice?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We have a very key priority of making sure that the government had a laser-like focus when it came to health, housing and areas of youth crime, and it is my prerogative as Premier to make those changes where I deem it necessary. The member would be well aware that there are a lot more changes that happen at the federal level. Did not the former prime minister appoint himself to many different portfolios? Anyway, the whole thing goes beyond understanding, really. In relation to this, the department keeps the costs to a minimum. I think that change is healthy. I think sometimes a renewed focus and renewed energy is good for departments. There is a combination of you can get experienced ministers staying in portfolios for a period of time, which is good, but also when you want to change direction and have clearer focus, I absolutely believe it is the prerogative of the Premier of the day to be able to change. We have had very minor changes over the eight years we have been in office.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The government's 10-point plan on law and order was released 216 days ago. It included the fitting of up to 20,000 vehicle immobilisers. As of now, how many have been fitted?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the member knows, Minister Ryan has recently announced that program and my understanding is that they are currently working with the suppliers of that. We have money allocated in the budget and that will be rolled out as soon as possible. Some \$10 million has been allocated. It will supply 20,000 immobilisers across locations in Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa. As I said, they are working with industry at the moment and the suppliers and installers of remote engine immobilisers, and the trial will commence as soon as that is ready.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The opposition has received advice from the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries regarding the fitting of after-market immobilisers: 'It is possible that an unforeseen interference with OEM equipment may occur. No OEM is likely to accept the liability for any such reduction in functionality.' Will the Premier advise if the government has spoken to vehicle manufacturers to ensure Queenslanders will not have their vehicle warranties impacted if they participate in the trial?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You can put that to the police minister. I am not across the detail.

**CHAIR:** I have never understood why OEMs do not have that right from factory.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Can I provide an update on that? The DG has provided me with some further advice. A call for submissions was made to the industry seeking advice about appropriate devices and expressions of interest open for installers on Monday, 3 July 2023.

**Mr STEVENS:** Premier, we are into two weeks of estimates with an acting director-general in the Department of Transport and Main Roads, an acting director-general in the Department of Health, an acting director-general in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and an acting Under Treasurer. Can the Premier confirm that individuals acting in these roles will be adequately briefed to ensure that they can deliver the answers to questions during the estimates hearings, considering they are all actors?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will get the director-general to talk about the recruitment processes for those positions. I have every confidence that they will be able to get across their briefs and advise their ministers. DG?

**Ms Hunter:** As the Premier has said, acting appointments are made by the relevant portfolio ministers, but all acting directors-general will be fielding questions at estimates. They have full responsibility for the role as CEOs in their acting capacity.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** At a press conference yesterday, the Premier was asked about safety at Cross River Rail and said that she would check if concerns had been raised with her office. Can the Premier provide an answer now?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My understanding is that the correspondence was checked and, to the best of my knowledge, there was no correspondence into my office.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Can the Premier elaborate if there were any verbal briefings with her or anyone from her office?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is a wideranging question. I took to check whether there was any correspondence. My office advised me there was no correspondence. I can advise that Minister Bailey provided an update to cabinet about the incident that happened at Cross River Rail.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** When was the Premier first made aware of safety concerns on the site?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I would have to check, but some concerns have been raised and Minister Bailey updated cabinet about the details of that on Monday.

**CHAIR:** Of course, they have been canvassed in the House.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the Auditor-General. Is the Auditor-General aware of comments from the Minister for Energy that the Callide C power station failure 'would have no net impact on consumers' electricity prices'? That was in response to a question through parliamentary estimates. How would you reconcile those comments with what was in your report?

**CHAIR:** Premier, we are about to change over, but if you could answer that question in a relatively brief way—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It was to the Auditor-General.

**CHAIR:** Sorry.

**Mr Worrall:** Could you repeat the question please?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The energy minister said to this place, 'The failure of Callide C would have no net impact on consumers' electricity prices.' How does that statement reconcile with your report into that incident?

**Mr Worrall:** I think in my *Energy 2022* report I did talk about electricity prices—I think it was the wholesale electricity prices—and how they were impacted by a number of factors, which I think included weather events but also things like Callide C going off line. From memory, the state had to procure other supplies of electricity when there were things like weather events which were increasing demand or whether there were outages such as the Callide C outage.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** And that drove up the cost of electricity?

**Mr Worrall:** I think the report shows that wholesale electricity prices had increased in that period.

**CHAIR:** Premier, this morning we spoke about two exciting movie releases, and the deputy chair had seen both of them. We know how important the screen industry is in Queensland to provide jobs and economic benefit to Queensland specifically. With respect to page 13 of the SDS and page 20 of Budget Paper No. 4, can the Premier outline how the budget is supporting the Queensland screen industry and the jobs that it creates?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Of course, there are about 4,000 people employed in the industry in Queensland, which is very good. There are 40 domestic productions including 30 Queensland-based screen companies and seven interstate screen companies working in Queensland and 23 international productions. There are now over a thousand screen industry businesses in Queensland including film and video production, post-production and digital games.

Young Queenslanders have also had their chance to work in productions. In recognition of the fact that Queensland households spend more on gaming than on music and film combined, our support for Queensland-based production and games development companies created an estimated \$26 million in Queensland production expenditure, which is \$7 for every \$1 invested. Eight projects have been supported through the Production Attraction Strategy incentive in 2022-23. These productions will generate an estimated \$493 million in Queensland production expenditure and support over 2,500 employment opportunities. A total of 22 projects have been supported through the Post, Digital, Visual Effects Incentive. These productions will generate an estimated \$32 million in qualifying Queensland PDV expenditure.

In 2022-23 Screen Queensland supported the development of 40 film and television projects; the production of 24 film and television projects through the Screen Finance Program; five productions benefitting from over \$160,000 in regional funding; and 75 practitioners to attend international and national markets to sell their projects and connect with key decision-makers.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Premier, what support is in the budget for small business, with reference to page 1 of the SDS, and backing small business and a changing environment?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We rely on small business every single day from tradies to coffee shops. We have extended our cost-of-living rebate to give relief to small businesses using under 100,000 kilowatt hours a year. More than 200,000 small businesses will benefit from an automatic rebate of \$650 on their electricity bills in 2023-24. We heard from the peak body about our budget. For the benefit of the committee, the business chamber called it a 'cost-of-living budget'. Business chamber CEO Heidi Cooper said—

Immediate energy bill relief for businesses is welcome especially as businesses are telling us input costs, like energy, are significantly impacting their ability to grow ...

Our 2023-24 budget extends the payroll tax rate discount for regional employers to 30 June 2030, guaranteeing a rate of less than four per cent for regional businesses. We are maintaining our low tax advantage as Queenslanders pay \$551 less on average than other states and territories. I might repeat that for the committee because it is actually a very important point. We are maintaining our low tax advantage as Queenslanders pay \$551 less on average than other states and territories.

Our top industry, of course, is construction. Seventeen per cent of Queensland small businesses are in the construction industry, building the new homes we need and joining in the big build right across our state. We want to ensure local benefits for small businesses. Our Buy Queensland policy, as I said, has already received heaps of local procurement from local suppliers. We also have the Business

Basics Grants Program, which has supported recipients with \$5,000 each. I have some statistics for the committee: in Broadwater; five small businesses shared \$25,000, Coomera had 10 small businesses share \$50,000; Mermaid Beach, 28 small businesses shared \$140,000; Logan, five small businesses; Macalister, 11 small businesses; and Hervey Bay, nine small businesses.

**Mr TANTARI:** Premier, with reference to the objectives on the first page of the SDS across building Queensland, growing our regions and supporting jobs in existing industries like agriculture and new industries like hydrogen, how is the budget supporting the necessary water infrastructure across our state?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We know that water security is important to all Queenslanders no matter where they live. We have invested over \$5.2 billion in water infrastructure since 2015, supporting more than 3,400 construction jobs. That includes work on the largest dam in Queensland in the Burdekin Falls Dam in Townsville. We are going to give \$440 million towards the Burdekin Falls Dam improvement and raising project. This is on top of a previous \$100 million for this project. The Townsville Enterprise CEO, Claudia Brumme-Smith, said—

Water security for our region remains our top priority and we look forward to working with the government as this project progresses.

In Cairns we are backing what Advance Cairns calls an ‘essential piece of infrastructure’. Queensland and the Commonwealth are each putting \$107 million into the Cairns Water Security program with council funding the rest. The project aims to meet the growing water supply needs in Cairns and secure an additional source from the Mulgrave River.

In Central Queensland we are investing \$983 million in building the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline, securing additional water for residents, existing industrial customers and, really importantly, the emerging hydrogen export industry so that water pipeline will provide the water that is needed to facilitate the absolute growth in this hydrogen industry for Gladstone. We are putting in place the infrastructure to actually bring about all of the jobs that will come with the industry.

In Southern Queensland we will deliver the \$270 million Toowoomba-to-Warwick pipeline providing drought contingency to residents in the Southern Downs.

**CHAIR:** We are getting close to the end of the time allocated for the consideration of the proposed expenditure. There were some issues that we said we would revisit. My understanding is the Auditor-General wants to revisit a question? Apologies, you were looking stunned at that. Is there something you wish to revisit?

**Mr Worrall:** I want to add further clarification in relation to the question around electricity wholesale prices. There was an increase, which I will come to. That is due to high prices for gas and coal, planned and unplanned coal-fired power station outages across the national electricity network including Callide C and Swanbank. Swanbank also reduced supply. Heavy rainfall, heatwaves and a cooler winter led to higher demand and lower output; and transmission line outages, particularly the upgrades to the Queensland-New South Wales interconnector, reduced the transfer of electricity from the national grid into Queensland to meet those supply shortfalls, or to meet the demand.

In relation to what that meant for the prices, there was an 162 per cent increase in the wholesale electricity price from 2020-21 to 2021-22 for Queensland, so I think it went up about \$100 per megawatt hour in that period.

**CHAIR:** Regarding the allegations around a staff member in Minister Ryan’s office, there was some confusion about whether a question would be revisited. Is there any further update on that issue?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No. My understanding is that if there are any issues the appropriate body would be the CCC or the police.

**CHAIR:** Thank you. Further, I do not remember this question being taken on notice but there was a question from the opposition leader about a press release and whether there was any change to the figures involved. Is there any update you can give at this time?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to take that question on notice.

**CHAIR:** Formally on notice?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Formally on notice.

**CHAIR:** Lastly, there is a question on the spending of funding in the health and hospital announcements. Is there any update you wanted to give at this point on the percentage spent on funding referred to in the health and hospital announcements? It might be a question that is better addressed to the health minister.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My understanding is the question was answered by the Leader of the Opposition who asked the question.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We can double-check your answer.

**CHAIR:** My understanding is that there was some detailed information about the cost of a project that was not undertaken and that you did not have the answer. Ms Hastings, from the Office of the Governor, is there any update you would like to give?

**Mrs Hastings:** Thank you for the opportunity to pull out the information. Government House received an initial quote for the concept of electrifying the Rolls Royce of around \$270,000. Officers at the Office of the Governor consulted with officers at the Department of Energy and Public Works around the technical specifications, but the project did not progress a step further.

**CHAIR:** Understood. Does the Public Sector Commissioner have any update?

**Mr Mackie:** Thank you, Chair. I think the Leader of the Opposition raised a question about the Working for Queensland survey from 2021. The Leader of the Opposition can correct me if I am wrong, but I think that was around the question to do with 'my work as a negative impact on my health'. I think you said 30 per cent. It was 28 per cent in 2021. The reason that I could not give you a direct answer at the time is because the survey, content and questions have been changed quite significantly. There is not an exact corresponding question to that at the moment, but there are some questions around 'whether my work makes me feel emotionally exhausted'. In the 2022 survey, that is at 22 per cent. There is another question about 'my work leaves me feeling physically exhausted'. That is at 14 per cent. Twenty-two and 14 per cent—it is reduced if we equate that to the former 2021 survey question of around 28 per cent. Still, to my mind, that is still too high. I think a better number is zero.

**CHAIR:** Commissioner, I certainly feel both of things in dealing with the opposition leader today. I am not sure about anyone else.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Independent to the death, Chair.

**CHAIR:** With that, I note that there are not any questions on notice.

**Mr CRANDON:** A point of order: I believe there was a question on notice in relation to a question that I asked the Premier and the Premier said 'I think the director-general can take that on notice'. I took that to be that the director-general was taking it on notice and I then moved onto my next question. The question I put to the Premier was: are any current ministerial staff alleged domestic violence perpetrators? The *Hansard* will show that the Premier did then say, 'I think the director-general can take that on notice.' Because of that response, I went to my next question. Can we confirm that there is a response?

**CHAIR:** It was referred to the director-general. Director-General, is there any update on that issue that you would like to give?

**Ms Hunter:** If the member has any evidence about potential criminal offences, the member should provide that evidence directly to the QPS, the Queensland Police Service.

**Mr CRANDON:** That is not the question that I asked, Chair.

**CHAIR:** No, I understand.

**Mr CRANDON:** There is no answer, Chair.

**CHAIR:** I did not hear the question that way, but I have given you full licence to put that question. We have had an update from the director-general, which is in line with the format that we would normally have of addressing any questions if there is any detail. We, therefore, note that the percentage funding on health and hospitals is a question to be taken on notice. I apologise, but, at this stage, the committee—

**Mr CRANDON:** Chair, point of order. You appear to be dismissing the specific question that I asked of the Premier that the Premier has avoided answering by punting it across to the director-general—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The director-general is in charge of ministerial staff.

**Mr CRANDON:**—who then did not answer the question. I put the question to the Premier again: are any current ministerial staff alleged domestic violence perpetrators—yes or no?

**CHAIR:** I understand that the Premier, at the time of putting that question and now, directed those matters to the employer of the ministerial staff.

**Mr CRANDON:** So Director-General: yes or no?

**CHAIR:** Order! You have raised a point of order. The Premier directed that question to the director-general.

**Mr CRANDON:** Refusing to answer.

**Mr STEVENS:** No answer means 'yes', obviously.

**CHAIR:** This is disorderly. The director-general, in my memory at that point, gave an answer that may not have satisfied the member given the sensitive nature of the issues and she has again updated further with a secondary answer. I appreciate, and I have given you an opportunity—

**Mr CRANDON:** It seems like a protection racket, Chair, quite frankly. It was a very direct question and you are accepting that the response that was given was a reasonable response.

**CHAIR:** Member for Coomera, that is unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw.

**CHAIR:** Thank you. I note that question is to be taken on notice. The committee has resolved that the response to the question on notice is to be provided to the committee secretariat by 10 am, Friday, 4 August 2023. If you need to confirm any of the exact wording, the proof of the transcript of the hearing will be available on *Hansard* and the parliament's website within approximately two hours or staff members watching the archived broadcast. I would not revisit it yourself, Premier.

Thank you, Premier. I thank you, the officials and the departmental officers for your attendance. Several years ago, the Clerk commented that the preparation that public officials give in thinking through what questions might be asked is very useful in examining their own role in the Public Service. I thank all of those who are in attendance who possibly went through that mental process, but were not asked any questions. Before we finish Premier, is there anything else you would like to?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes. I thank you, Chair, and all the members of the committee—

**Mr PURDIE:** It's a running blog.

**CHAIR:** Member for Ninderry, that is unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw. I am very disappointed with that comment.

**Mr PURDIE:** I withdraw.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I was thanking the members of the committee. I also thank my director-general, my chief of staff and all of the officers and representatives who have been here today. As you stated, Chair, a lot of work goes on behind the scenes. People start preparing for this after the budget, so there has been months of preparation. I thank the committee for the way in which they have examined the budget. I think it is one of the most calm estimate's hearings that we have had to date. Thank you.

**CHAIR:** I thank the Premier. We will now adjourn for a break. The hearing will resume at 2 pm, with the examination of the estimates for the portfolio areas of the Treasurer, the Minister for Trade and Investment. Thank you.

**Proceedings suspended from 1.39 pm to 2.01 pm.**

## ESTIMATES—ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE—TREASURY; TRADE AND INVESTMENT

### In Attendance

Hon. C Dick, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment

Mr B Kerdel, Chief of Staff

#### **Queensland Treasury**

Ms M Kelly, Acting Under Treasurer

Mr J Fredericks, Director, Cabinet Legislation and Liaison Office

#### **QIC Limited**

Ms K Rampa, Chief Executive Officer

#### **Queensland Treasury Corporation**

Mr L Allen, Chief Executive

#### **CS Energy Limited**

Mr D Busine, Chief Executive Officer

#### **Motor Accident Insurance Commission, Nominal Defendant, National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland**

Mr N Singleton, Insurance Commissioner

#### **Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (Powerlink)**

Prof. P. Simshauser AM, Chief Executive Officer

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 **CHAIR:** The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2023 for the portfolio areas of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. I am Linus Power, the member for Logan and chair of the committee. Mr Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach, is the deputy chair of the committee. The other members of the committee are Mr Michael Crandon, the member for Coomera; Ms Melissa McMahon, the member for Macalister; Mr Dan Purdie, the member for Ninderry; and Mr Adrian Tantari, the member for Hervey Bay. The following non-committee members have sought and been granted leave to participate in the hearing and are present for this session: Mr David Janetzki, the member for Toowoomba South; Ms Fiona Simpson, the member for Maroochydore; and Mr Michael Berkman, the member for Maiwar. We welcome them to the committee and hope they can help us with our examination of the Appropriation Bill. The committee will examine the Treasurer's portfolio areas until 6 pm and will suspend proceedings for a break from 4 to 4.15.

I remind all those present that this hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament—something that could have been better noted in the previous session. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in the parliament apply to this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to only one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. In respect of government owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that any member may ask a question that the committee determines will assist it with its examination of the relevant Appropriation Bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided. I intend to guide this afternoon's proceedings so that relevant issues can be fully explored and ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members.

While the use of mobile phones is not ordinarily permitted, an exception has been made for staff who are assisting our witnesses here today and who have been permitted the use of their devices for this purpose. I do ask, however, that all phones and electronic devices be switched to silent mode to avoid any interruptions to the proceedings. I also remind you that food and drink are not permitted in the chamber except by motion of the committee.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Treasurer, Acting Under Treasurer, officials and departmental officers and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisors to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the Treasurer or Acting Under Treasurer. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of Treasury and Trade and Investment open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Treasurer, welcome. If you wish, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

**Mr DICK:** Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon to you and good afternoon to members of the committee. Earlier today the committee heard from the Premier about the many good things contained in the state budget and those things that are delivering for Queensland. So rather than cover the same ground, I will focus on the opportunity costs associated with this budget and the projects that would not proceed because of the LNP's position on progressive coal royalties—projects like CopperString 2032; projects like new pumped hydro deep storage dams at Borumba and in the Pioneer Valley; projects contained in our transformative Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan; projects like new and upgraded hospitals that form part of the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan; of course our state's Big Build—the project supported by our record-breaking \$89 billion infrastructure program, 65.5 per cent of which this year will be invested outside greater Brisbane; and our nation-leading cost-of-living relief, delivering electricity bill rebates of up to \$1,072 to Queenslanders.

All of these things can only be done because of our new progressive coal royalties. The corollary of that is that without progressive coal royalties locked in for the long term those investments could not be delivered by the LNP. Progressive coal royalties are one of the central features of this year's state budget. Given that, any member asking questions about the measures in this budget can only do so credibly if they have a clear and unequivocal position on those royalties. On that matter, I would welcome the member for Burleigh to join this committee because he made it clear during budget week that he opposes the royalties. Similarly, I would welcome the member for Condamine, who famously said the LNP did not vote for progressive coal royalties. We do not know the member for Toowoomba South's position on progressive coal royalties. Most importantly, we do not know the Leader of the Opposition's position on progressive coal royalties.

Earlier this month News Ltd journalist Duncan Evans from the Mackay *Daily Mercury* raised this very point in his article. That article said—

The future shape of Queensland's lucrative coal royalty regime is uncertain, with opposition LNP members split in their support ...

I table the requisite copies of that story for the benefit of the committee. The Leader of the Opposition has refused multiple opportunities to say clearly that he will keep progressive coal royalties unchanged in their entirety permanently. Chair, it is not the same and, frankly, it is not good enough for the leader of the LNP to say, as he keeps saying, that 'he won't stand in the way' of spending. That non-position leaves the door open for the LNP to cut taxes, cut royalties and, as a consequence, cut jobs, infrastructure and services. You have the member for Burdekin saying he will 'sit down' with the mining industry to talk about royalties. The only reason he would sit down to discuss royalties is to cut them, including eliminating progressive coal royalty tiers.

The leader of the LNP refers to our position as a scare campaign—another one of the disingenuous phrases he uses when he is caught out with nowhere to go on important matters of public policy. Our concern is genuine and legitimate and based on the very track record of the LNP when they were last in government. When the member for Broadwater sat in Campbell Newman's cabinet they introduced tax cuts that cost the budget over \$900 million. The LNP used tax cuts to create a budget black hole which they then used to justify the worst cuts ever seen in Queensland history. The LNP sacked 14,000 workers. The LNP sacked 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. Did the current Leader of the Opposition learn anything from that appalling abuse of power? No, because in his own words last week he said he has only one regret about his time in that government. You might think sacking 14,000 workers would be that regret or telling the people of Kingaroy—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr PURDIE:** He cannot even talk about his own budget.

**CHAIR:** Sorry, Treasurer, but there is a point of order. Deputy Chair, point of order.

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you, Chair. We are here to talk about the government's budget today, as I understand it, yet the Treasurer cannot even talk about his own budget. He is talking about a maybe should we be in government next year perhaps and a 10-year-old budget, so can you bring the Treasurer back to the budget that he should be proud to serve?

**CHAIR:** I have been listening carefully. At the beginning the Treasurer announced that he was going to look to threats to the budget and examine the alternatives.

**Mr STEVENS:** With respect, there are no threats this year to the budget.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We are here to talk about his own budget. We are talking about one 10 years ago.

**CHAIR:** The opening statement is the Treasurer's to make and I return now to the Treasurer.

**Mr DICK:** As I anticipated, I have touched a sore point. You would think sacking 14,000 workers or telling the people of Kingaroy they would have to sell Tarong power to get a new hospital, but, no, the Leader of the Opposition's only regret concerns council depreciation schedules. I kid you not, Chair. Chair, today is about the proposed expenditure of this state for this year and progressive coal royalties are absolutely at the heart of this budget.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Point of order, Mr Chair. I note that the Treasurer tabled a paper, but he did not seek leave as a non-committee member.

**CHAIR:** I do find this a spurious point of order designed to—

**Ms SIMPSON:** With respect, it is actually the standing orders.

**Mr DICK:** I will seek leave to table the newspaper article.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Non-committee members cannot table something without following the rules and I bring this to your attention, as you obviously know what the standing orders are.

**CHAIR:** As the deputy chair and myself have discussed, we will obviously peruse the documents and then move a motion to either give leave to the tabling or not, as the case may be. I find that a spurious point of order designed to break up the hearing of the process here and completely out of order because at the first available opportunity is normal practice that we would seek leave. That is very disappointing.

**Ms SIMPSON:** With respect, the person seeking to table something has to do that at that time as a non-committee member as opposed to the committee members where there is a different process.

**CHAIR:** Member for Maroochydore, the deputy chair and myself have discussed this issue and are quite comfortable with it. I ask you to not argue with the chair on the ruling. Treasurer, this has been interrupted. We will give you some largesse to continue and if you need to restate a point we will let you do that.

**Mr DICK:** Not long to go, Chair. The position of our government on the finances of this state and progressive coal royalties is absolutely crystal clear. So now it is high time for the LNP to be honest and to come clean. They will either say that these royalties will stay in place or they will say they are going to change them. I know the member for Toowoomba South will speak now and I call on him right now, along with the member for Mermaid Beach and the member for Maroochydore, to commit the LNP to keeping progressive coal royalties in their entirety without change permanently. Thank you, Chair.

**CHAIR:** I take it that the Treasurer has sought leave to table the document in front of us?

**Mr DICK:** I seek leave to table that article from the Mackay *Mercury*.

**Mr STEVENS:** It is a newspaper article.

**CHAIR:** It is a newspaper article. That is correct. Leave is granted. We now turn to questions. I normally turn to the deputy chair who is indicating that the shadow Treasurer, the member for Toowoomba South, has a question.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Let us talk about your budget, Treasurer, not a 10-year-old budget, long in the rear mirror. The Premier abandoned the multijurisdictional land tax in September after serious concerns were raised by economists, academics, property experts, lawyers and tax professionals that it would worsen Queensland's housing crisis and yet that same day, Treasurer, your spokesperson said, 'The Treasurer stands by everything he said about land tax.' Is that still your position today?

**Mr DICK:** That matter has been dealt with by the parliament. What I will say—I will try and assist the committee with more relevant matters—here we are with the LNP criticising me for talking about their history and then of course the first question—

**Mr STEVENS:** Point of order. There is no opportunity for the Treasurer to go off on his own bat. He has to be restricted to the question and basically answer the question succinctly.

**CHAIR:** I am sure the Treasurer is aware that he has to be aware of the question as put. The Treasurer is aware of that. With respect, we are only four words into the Treasurer's answer.

**Mr STEVENS:** They were the critical ones, Chair.

**CHAIR:** We do not quite know where the Treasurer is going, but the Treasurer does know his answer has to be relevant to the question.

**Mr DICK:** With respect, Chair, I was criticised, I was interrupted. The standing orders make no prescription about what the opening statement might cover and, of course, the LNP, as they always do, rudely interrupted when I only have five minutes to open. The criticism levelled at me was casting back and the very first question, of course, is not relevant to the current budget; it harks back.

Maybe I can assist the committee with some relevant information about housing investment in Queensland. In fact, relevant data was released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that relates to building approvals. For building approvals for the month of June 2023, there has been a 28 per cent increase in building approvals in this state. Of most significance, the approvals for attached dwellings—that is, high density units—are up 83 per cent for the month. We are lifting well above the pre-COVID baseline. We are also bucking the national trend, I am pleased to inform the committee. In the same month total dwelling approvals across Australia were down 7.7 per cent. So, up 28 per cent in Queensland, down 7.7 across the country and attached dwellings were down 16.2 per cent but up 83 per cent in Queensland. When it comes to housing investors and housing investment, which goes to the heart of the member for Toowoomba South's question, I am pleased to report that housing finance to investors is up 5.4 per cent in Queensland in June—double the national average of just 2.6 per cent. I think that is a total refutation, a total repudiation, can I say, of the nonsense LNP narrative that land is not being released or that investors are fleeing Queensland.

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Acting Under Treasurer. Many experts argued that the multijurisdictional land tax would drive up rents and drive out investment in the middle of a housing crisis. Did Treasury ever undertake modelling to determine how much would be raised, how many people would be caught by the multijurisdictional land tax and how, in fact, it would be collected?

**Ms Kelly:** Treasury undertakes economic and policy analysis across a wide range of domains for a range of purposes. Most significant is the budget, which is the focus of today's hearing. Budget papers provide an explanation for Treasury's view on these matters, including formal forecasts, assumptions et cetera, that underpin our forecasts and they can be found in Budget Paper 2 at appendix C. Of course, Treasury undertakes analysis on any policy proposal that is put before government. I note section 1.7 of the *Cabinet Handbook* states—

Cabinet documents are diverse in their form and may broadly be defined as documents that, if disclosed, would reveal any consideration or deliberation of Cabinet, or otherwise prejudice the confidentiality of Cabinet considerations, deliberations or operations.

Accordingly, I am limited in what I can say with regard to the proposal that was put before executive government.

**CHAIR:** I recognise that the Treasurer made the point that this is obviously not part of this budget. Our debate and questioning is of a very widespread nature, but I do give some largesse to those answering the questions about initiatives that are not part of this budget to give us context.

**Mr JANETZKI:** To the Acting Under Treasurer, the Deputy Under Treasurer said in September that the potential impacts on investment from this reform are not expected to be significant. Recent analysis found that prior to the passing of the new tax, Queensland was the nation's top destination for property investors with 40.9 per cent of all investment transactions. As soon as the multiple land tax jurisdiction was announced, that figure dropped to 33.9 per cent. Does Treasury have any modelling to support the September assertion from the Deputy Under Treasurer?

**Ms Kelly:** Treasury, as I said, appropriately considers any reforms put before government including land tax arrangements. At the estimates hearing Treasury did indicate that they expected the impact on the investment to be negligible but we are no longer proceeding with those changes. As I said before, on any modelling or analysis put before executive government in terms of its decision-making I am really limited in what I can talk about there.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, so there was definitely modelling undertaken in respect of the multiple land tax jurisdiction?

**Ms Kelly:** As I said, it is Treasury's role to undertake analysis on a range of issues that are put before the executive government.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am sorry to labour the point, Chair—

**CHAIR:** It is a little bit repetitious and the Acting Under Treasurer's answer has not been unclear. Unfortunately, previously I put multiple repetitive questions so I will allow it.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am trying to draw a distinction, Chair, to the Acting Under Treasurer. There is a difference between the role of Treasury and whether Treasury actually undertook the modelling. I am wanting to determine whether modelling was actually undertaken in this circumstance.

**CHAIR:** With respect, two questions ago the Acting Under Treasurer gave the role of cabinet and had made that answer clear. If you wish to put the question again, it may be that you get a different answer so we will put it to the Acting Under Treasurer.

**Ms Kelly:** Respectfully, I think I have answered the question.

**CHAIR:** We are not asking you to necessarily change your answer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will move on.

**CHAIR:** I do not want to restrict the answer. We want to make sure that witnesses are not required to change their answer to a question that is repeated.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We will move on, Chair, thank you.

**CHAIR:** Are you sure?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes, that is fine. I will move on, thank you.

**CHAIR:** Member for Toowoomba South, I want it recorded that I am happy to put that question.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, I note that the acting revenue commissioner is in the room today. I am turning now to a private ruling released by the Queensland Revenue Office on 22 December. It is a ruling that upends business structures that care for the most vulnerable in our community, the sick. Can the Acting Under Treasurer outline what consultation the Queensland Revenue Office had with the medical profession and not just general practitioners but also dentists, physiotherapist and radiologists?

**CHAIR:** There are a few things bundled in there, an inference about who took that action and also the consequences. We will put the question.

**Ms Kelly:** I am assuming that you are referring to the payroll tax.

**Mr JANETZKI:** That is correct.

**Mr DICK:** Application for GPs that existed for 20 years.

**Ms Kelly:** The contractor provisions in the Payroll Tax Act have been in place in their current form since 2008 and the Queensland Revenue Office has not changed how it administers those provisions in relation to businesses that run medical practices. On 3 February the government announced an amnesty in relation to payments made to contracted general practitioners that will expire on 30 June 2025. The amnesty recognises the need to support medical practices to come into compliance with the payroll law with the least disruption possible and notes the significant pending and ongoing reforms to Medicare. Taxpayers eligible for the amnesty will not be required to pay tax in respect of payments made to contracted GPs up until 30 June 2025 and for the previous five years. Medical practices have been able to register interest in the amnesty since 10th February and to date we have 93 medical practices register.

The QRO has and continues to engage with industry representatives regarding the amnesty to work through relevant issues and to provide greater clarity to medical practices and advisers on this issue. For example, the QRO has published web content on the administrative arrangement. I know they have met with peak body representatives to provide further information regarding the ruling and to clarify the payroll tax treatment that, again, I confirm has been in place since 2008.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, the budget revealed that \$100 million per annum may have been recovered had payroll tax on practice payments to contracted GPs been collected. Can you describe for us the basis for Treasury reaching that figure of \$100 million per annum?

**Ms Kelly:** The estimate is based on assumptions including the number of contracted GPs in Queensland, the average taxable wages of those practitioners and the proportion of contracted GPs' taxable wages on which employers have been paying payroll tax. The assumptions for this were

informed by available information and data including the Australian government Department of Health and Aged Care data on general practice workforce providing primary care services in Australia, information collected by the QRO through audits of medical centres paying taxable wages and surveys of the sector published by the RACGP.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, can you furnish us with the number of medical practices and impacted doctors? Are those numbers available now?

**Ms Kelly:** Honourable member, I would refer back to my previous advice that it was informing policy of the executive government at the time and would be informing CBRC and cabinet contributions so I would be limited in what I could provide to the group.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The amnesty that has been announced by the Treasurer relates to general practitioners. That is a \$100 million per annum amount that will now be forgone over the next three years, and I might come back to that amount shortly. Can you detail for us the amount of payroll tax that is now going to be collected from other practitioners caught up in the private ruling issued by the Queensland Revenue Office—medical practices including dental clinics, physiotherapy practices, radiology centres and other relevant health service providers? How much revenue is expected to be collected because of the change in that tax ruling from those particular medical practices?

**Ms Kelly:** So I am clear, member, the amnesty applies to GPs so you are just talking about GPs?

**Mr JANETZKI:** That is what we expect to collect from general practitioners once the amnesty has ended, roughly. What are we collecting in the next number of years from all those other practices?

**CHAIR:** I think it mentioned forgone revenue in the beginning of the question and then moved on to other things.

**Ms Kelly:** I do not have that information at hand, honourable member. I would seek to provide advice on what we can provide by the end of the hearing.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Acting Under Treasurer. Member for Toowoomba South, do you have any other questions?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Chair. If Treasury can forecast, though, how much will be collected from general practitioners, surely there would have been some analysis undertaken with respect to all of these other medical practices—physios, dental, radiology?

**Mr DICK:** Why? It is only GPs who have asked for it.

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Acting Under Treasurer. Surely there was analysis undertaken so as to determine how much extra would be collected because if it is \$100 million per annum for general practitioners there must be an awful lot of increase and additional payroll tax to be collected by the state.

**CHAIR:** I know this question said 'surely' it must have happened but it is still effectively the same question. I want to say that witnesses do not, on repetition of the same question, need to change their answer but I will put the question again.

**Ms Kelly:** The amnesty just applies to GPs. It is not intended at this point in time, as far as I am aware, to apply to other medical practitioners. I am not aware of modelling that has been done on specific areas, whether it be physios et cetera. What we generally do is we will have broad line items around revenue. We will not necessarily go down to specific industries or cohorts in terms of that analysis. We would only look at that if we were looking to change a policy position and were requested to do so by the government.

**CHAIR:** I think we have time for one more question, member for Toowoomba South.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, this change to payroll tax interpretation applies to doctor groups that provide intensive care services and emergency services to private hospitals. What modelling has Treasury undertaken to understand the impact on state hospitals of private hospitals potentially closing their intensive care or emergency department units?

**Mr DICK:** Point of order. It is a completely hypothetical question—

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is a straight yes or no, Treasurer.

**Mr DICK:** No-one has ever suggested, other than the member for Toowoomba South, that there is any impact.

**CHAIR:** I apologise, but we were having a discussion with the deputy chair.

**Mr DICK:** The premise of the question is false.

**CHAIR:** Could ask for your indulgence, member for Toowoomba South, and ask you to repeat the question? I apologise for that.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will move on to the next question because I have foreseen the answer to the last one.

**CHAIR:** I have not ruled in favour of the Treasurer's point of order. Let me make that clear.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will move on to my next question. Acting Under Treasurer, what modelling has Treasury undertaken to ascertain the impact of this new tax on bulk-billing rates in Queensland?

**Ms Kelly:** I will go back to the statement I made at the beginning which is that the contractor provisions with regard to payroll tax have been in place in their current form since 2008. The Queensland Revenue Office has not changed how it administers those provisions in relation to businesses that run medical practices.

**CHAIR:** We probably have a little bit more time. Unfortunately, because of the interjections during the Treasurer's opening remarks, we are running a little bit late.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, what modelling has Treasury undertaken with Queensland Health to ascertain the impact of this new tax on increased ambulance call-outs at a time of record ramping?

**Ms Kelly:** I reiterate that it is not a new tax, but we have not done modelling on that.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 3 of the Treasury SDS, will the Treasurer advise the committee on the Big Build and the role the capital works program plays in advancing Queensland's state priority and what role royalties play?

**Mr DICK:** It is a question that is critical to the revenue base of the state and the fiscal position of the government. Of course, when called upon in the most important committee hearing for the Treasury portfolio—the budget estimates committee hearing—the member for Toowoomba South refused to express an opinion on this. It is not hard to say, 'We support the royalties.' It is the simplest possible thing you could say. We will keep them as they are without change permanently. That is the position of the Palaszczuk Labor government. The significant revenue that has been generated by those progressive coal royalties is supporting so many aspects of the expenditure in the budget. Yet again, the LNP refuses to declare its position on these progressive coal royalties now and permanently. It is not hard to say, contrary to what the members for Condamine or Burleigh have said, that the government will not be sitting down—I can assure you, member for Macalister—with coal companies and will not be looking at opportunities to cut royalties.

In answer to the question, as outlined in Budget Paper 3, a record capital program of \$89 billion over four years is locked in in this budget for our Big Build. It is critical to the future of Queensland. As Queensland continues to grow and diversify, continued investment in infrastructure will support productivity growth and enhanced standards of living. The Big Build provides for productivity enhancing infrastructure across all regions of the state for a number of purposes: firstly, to improve the competitiveness of Queensland's traditional industries and support growth in new and emerging industries; secondly, to provide the critical social infrastructure needed to support essential health and other services to meet the needs of a growing population; thirdly, to better connect communities around the state and strengthen their resilience in the face of future global challenges and natural disasters; and, fourthly, to support job creation and attract people, skills and private investment to our state—and to our regions more particularly—as well as improve overall liveability. What it means is that the Big Build will continue to create more jobs in more industries by leveraging Queensland's strengths, growing our traditional and emerging industries, expanding supply chains and seizing opportunities in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond.

In 2023-24, the Queensland government will invest \$20.32 billion in capital directly supporting around 58,000 jobs across the state. A record \$13.3 billion, or 65.5 per cent, of this capital program, will be invested outside the Greater Brisbane region, supporting 38½ thousand jobs. In 2023-24, the capital program is to be delivered in the midst of a building boom, with heightened competition for materials and labour. The government has made the deliberate decision to meet these higher costs—I said that in my budget speech—as well as increase infrastructure investment to support a growing Queensland.

That can be contrasted with the approach of the LNP. We see the \$10 billion infrastructure cut list. Every time a program increases in cost, the LNP's response is, 'That is a blowout, it is an overspend and it must be cut.' Take social housing for example, member for Macalister. In this budget, we are

proudly investing \$778 million to deal with higher construction costs for our existing social housing program. Under an LNP government, that waste must be cut. That would mean cutting 1,500 homes from the pipeline and 1,500 more Queenslanders at the very least would find themselves homeless.

There are many other projects where costs have increased unavoidably. It does not matter whether you are putting on a back deck or a shed in the back yard, extending your home, building a new home or delivering the Big Build, every Queenslander knows that the costs of projects have increased unavoidably—everyone in Queensland except those in the LNP. We make absolutely no apology for growing our capital expenditure to meet those costs, to deliver on our promise and to deliver the capital works program we have designed for Queensland.

There are so many highlights in this budget that are being funded through that Big Build. There is almost \$7 billion through the transport portfolio for projects such as Cross River Rail, stage 1 of the Coomera Connector, Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3 as well as major upgrades to the Bruce Highway, the M1 and Pacific Motorway and our important state rail network. We are also investing \$1.6 billion on health infrastructure, with a focus on increasing bed capacity across the state. There will be seven satellite hospitals—we just opened one yesterday at Caboolture. All of those are due to open in 2023-24, including at Kallangur, Ripley, Eight Mile Plains, Tugun, Bribie Island and Redlands.

In education we are investing over \$1½ billion to support students and teachers by ensuring that facilities in Queensland state schools are world-class and continue to meet demand and support contemporary learning requirements. We are delivering \$1.1 billion for the delivery and supply of social housing across Queensland through our Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, including meeting higher construction costs, as I mentioned, and to boost the QuickStarts Queensland program target by 500 homes.

Of course, the 2023-24 Queensland budget includes a landmark capital investment of over \$19 billion over the forward estimates to deliver on the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, a vision of our state based around renewable energy, transmission, supply and storage—not a future based on the LNP's vision of nuclear energy. This is the absolutely avowed and committed policy of the LNP, articulated by the federal LNP leader, Peter Dutton, supported by the federal LNP Queensland National Party leader, David Littleproud, and led by the shadow federal energy minister, Ted O'Brien, a Queenslander. That is the choice. The choice is about a government investing in infrastructure across the state with a vision for clean renewable energy to power homes, cities and industry or an energy system that is based on nuclear energy. It is about time the state members of the LNP said where the modular nuclear reactor is going. It will have to be built near a metropolitan city and it will have to be built near water. It is the only way to deliver nuclear energy.

Where, member for Maroochydore, is Ted O'Brien going to site his modular nuclear plant on the Sunshine Coast? Surely he would not be so hypocritical and dishonest to suggest other parts of the country should generate nuclear power and not his own backyard. No-one believes that. That is the choice that exists. Of course, I thank the member for raising royalties in the context of infrastructure. If you are serious about the Big Build, the Energy and Jobs Plan, the jobs that that supports and the revival and renewal of regional Queensland that is coming because of this, you have to support progressive coal royalties entirely and permanently.

For the avoidance of doubt, the government can only make these very substantial investments that I have mentioned in productivity-enhancing infrastructure because of progressive coal royalties. Other states that do not have progressive coal royalties simply cannot keep up with this level of investment. Our government will not promise, as the LNP has, to sit down and review royalties—or, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, he will try to cut taxes wherever he can. If you cut taxes you cut revenue and you must cut investments, jobs and services. Because the LNP will not say that it will keep progressive coal royalties, that means our record infrastructure investment is under threat. I repeat my call to the LNP to simply say: we will keep progressive coal royalties—lock, stock and barrel.

**Mr TANTARI:** Treasurer, with reference to page 21 of the Treasury SDS and Queensland's compulsory third-party scheme, will you provide the committee with an update on the operation of the scheme including any changes in insurer participation?

**Mr DICK:** Before I answer that, I want to refer to the disgraceful interjection from the members of the LNP that nuclear energy will be sited in Woodridge. That is absolutely typical of the LNP. Of course, this is their avowed policy and they would of course seek to punish a community like Woodridge, because they have always looked down on communities like Woodridge—always. 'The bogans from Logan': we remember what Campbell Newman said. The people of Logan have never forgotten that, and we never will.

**Mr STEVENS:** Chair, point of order: the Treasurer is misleading the committee. It was proven through *Hansard* that the former premier never said that. The Treasurer should withdraw.

**Mr DICK:** It is your interjection. It is your interjection I am referring to—when you said you are going to put a nuclear power plant in Woodridge.

**Mr STEVENS:** I made no such suggestion.

**CHAIR:** Order! I just might draw a line. I am not certain about your point of order. You are making a point of order about—

**Mr DICK:** I will turn to the answer, Chair.

**Mr STEVENS:** The Treasurer should withdraw his comments in relation to what the former premier said about ‘bogans from Logan’. He has used his quote.

**CHAIR:** This is not under any standing orders. If there has been a misleading of the House, we have a process for dealing with that within the committee; however, I would draw a line under that. We have the question from the member for Hervey Bay, Treasurer.

**Mr DICK:** It surprises me not one jot that the member for Mermaid Beach continues to defend Campbell Newman. It does not surprise me at all. If Campbell Newman is upset, let him write to the committee. Let him write to the parliament for a citizen’s right of reply if he says he did not say that, because everyone knows what happened.

**Mr STEVENS:** So you are happy to abuse people? In your position, you are happy, with the protection of the parliament, to abuse—

**CHAIR:** Order! If you have a point of order, raise the point of order. I draw a line under that.

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for the question about CTP—a very important question. I am sorry I got upset about my community. I am sorry. When I heard that, it made my blood boil. I appreciate the committee’s interest and the member’s interest in Queensland’s CTP scheme and the opportunity to put the facts on the record in relation to its ongoing operation.

The CTP scheme plays a vital role in providing unlimited liability protection to the owner or driver of a vehicle that causes injury to another person—a very important part of our statutory insurance schemes in Queensland. The current class 1 CTP annual premium is \$369 and is paid efficiently as part of the vehicle registration process each year. With the average cost of a claim exceeding \$120,000 and some claims costing over \$1 million, the cost and protection of a CTP policy represents excellent value for money and also ensures that injured people will be compensated for their injuries.

Queensland has the most affordable CTP scheme in mainland Australia. I am very pleased about that. I want to acknowledge here the work of the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, led by the commissioner. That is the leading motor accident insurance commission in the country, and I want to acknowledge Neil Singleton and his team for their great work in keeping premiums down and running a very efficient scheme. It is one of the few schemes that preserves important common law benefits for people injured through no fault of their own.

Our government is rightly proud of Queensland’s CTP scheme, having initiated scheme reviews in 2016 and 2023, introducing the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland in 2016 and implementing important claim-farming reforms in 2019. These initiatives have all focused on protecting injured people and preserving the integrity and sustainability of the scheme.

In March 2023 I directed the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, regulator of Queensland’s CTP insurance scheme, to undertake a review of the scheme to ensure it continues to deliver ongoing affordability and fairness. The review is focused on exploring opportunities to further improve the current scheme while preserving important aspects that are working well, including injured persons’ right to unfettered common law benefits—a very important part of the scheme as well. MAIC undertook public consultation and received 19 submissions, I am pleased to inform the committee, from stakeholders across the insurance industry, legal community, advocacy groups and the general public. Submissions were quite varied, and the majority of stakeholders congratulated the government and MAIC for maintaining a well-run scheme that is serving the community well.

While the feedback to the review was being considered, RACQ advised that, for their own commercial reasons, they had made the decision to exit the scheme effective from 1 October this year. RACQ’s exit from the scheme has required urgent action by MAIC and the Department of Transport and Main Roads to ensure RACQ policies will be reallocated to another insurer for their next registration renewal date after 1 October 2023. RACQ will remain responsible for existing policies issued up to and including 30 September 2023 until their renewal date. RACQ will also remain responsible for meeting the costs of all claims that may arise under those policies.

Motorists and injured people can be assured that MAIC and DTMR are working to ensure a smooth transition so there is no loss of coverage for motorists and no loss of benefits or delay in receiving compensation for injured people. While MAIC and DTMR undertake these urgent steps, the scheme review has been put on hold, given the importance of ensuring the scheme remains stable, with no need to increase premiums for motorists. MAIC will complete the scheme review, I am advised, and complete that report once actions relating to the RACQ exit have been completed.

I understand there has been some public commentary about RACQ's withdrawal from the scheme. I have seen media articles outlining that RACQ was trying to offload its entire insurance business to IAG in particular, but it was reported that IAG has chosen not to proceed. I am not sure if the issues RACQ had with CTP were connected with that matter—I cannot really assist the committee any further with that—but I can outline the history as the government understands it. RACQ has been a licensed CTP insurer since 1999 and achieved market growth to around 27 per cent share of the overall CTP market, or approximately 1.3 million policies. Over recent years the RACQ have indicated their portfolio growth had increased their exposure to higher risk motorists and was resulting in their portfolio incurring unsustainable losses, ultimately leading to their decision to exit the scheme.

Prior to their exit, I am advised, RACQ advocated for scheme reform based on a premium equalisation mechanism as the best solution to address what they perceived as an imbalance in the way premiums and profits were shared across all insurers. The commission, my department, my staff and I have all met with or spoken with RACQ at various points to hear their concerns and views of the matter and the CTP scheme. I am advised that the remaining insurers and several other stakeholders have strongly opposed the premium equalisation mechanism. Instead, their view can be best summarised, I am advised, that a poor-performing insurer should be allowed to exit the scheme rather than be saved through legislative reform.

The CTP scheme is profitable for insurers at an overall level, I can inform the committee; however, it is a competitive market and the profitability outcomes vary across each of the four insurers. While licensed insurers must operate within the legislative and regulatory rules and responsibilities of the scheme, they are able to develop their own business strategies and ways to grow their portfolios and manage their claims.

The different approaches adopted by the insurers have resulted in different profitability outcomes. The government in the day does not determine the business strategies of those insurers or their viability. That is ultimately a matter for the executive and the board of these large financial institutions. MAIC is actively monitoring compliance under the legislation to ensure all insurers play by the rules, and it will continue to monitor the stability and security of the scheme. As I have indicated, that scheme is very well run and well managed, and Queenslanders can have confidence in the ongoing suitability, sustainability and effectiveness of the scheme going forward.

**Mr JANETZKI:** My next question is to the Acting Under Treasurer. I return to the payroll tax issue for general practitioners. Has Treasury modelled how the changes will affect the access of residential aged-care facility residents to their visiting GPs given a large proportion are not currently charged a gap?

**Ms Kelly:** As I said, our modelling on the impacts of the amnesty was informed by a range of data that was available to us at the time. The assumptions were informed by, as I said, the department of aged care, general practice providing primary care services in Australia, information collected by the QRO on audits of medical centres, and surveys by peak bodies in the sector.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can the Acting Under Treasurer provide the rationale for the Queensland Revenue Office requiring practices issued with payroll tax liability notices to pay the full amount of the liability assessment before they can appeal to QCAT or the Supreme Court? I note the acting revenue commissioner is here in the room.

**Ms Kelly:** I will take that on advice and come back to the committee before the end of the hearing. It is a very detailed question.

**CHAIR:** The Acting Under Treasurer might try to revisit this at the end of this session—

**Ms Kelly:** Before the end of the hearing.

**CHAIR:**—or when you have the opportunity and if you can indicate that you have that information from the people who are assisting you.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, to be eligible for an amnesty doctors need to complete an expression of interest form and that finishes on about 29 September. To date, how many expressions of interest have been lodged?

**Mrs McMAHON:** She has already answered this—93.

**CHAIR:** This did seem to be included in an earlier answer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** No.

**CHAIR:** When questions are repetitive, witnesses do not need to continue to expand on the answer they have already given. If they have helpful information, they are free to give it. If you wish to repeat the same answer, you will not be under pressure from the committee to further expand.

**Ms Kelly:** As at 30 June, 93 medical practices have registered for the amnesty.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Is the Acting Under Treasurer expecting more or many more by the end of September?

**Ms Kelly:** I would be giving an opinion there.

**CHAIR:** It is cause for speculation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have another question to the Acting Under Treasurer. Let me flip it the other way then. Has Treasury been advised of any practices or doctors who will be withdrawing their services or closing their doors because of this change to the interpretation of payroll tax in Queensland?

**Ms Kelly:** I am not aware of that advice to the agency. If the commissioner has been advised, I am sure by the end of the hearing we can come back to you on that.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We will take that on notice.

**CHAIR:** The process of taking questions on notice under standing orders is something that can only be undertaken by the minister. We have an undertaking from the Acting Under Treasurer to attempt to revisit it by the end of the session. If you wish to ask the Treasurer if he wants to formally take it notice, you can but the way I heard the Acting Under Treasurer is that they were attempting to revisit that by the end of the session.

**Mr JANETZKI:** To the Acting Under Treasurer, Mark recently opened a new medical centre in Robina. Despite being granted the amnesty until 2025 on his existing centre, he is being charged on his new one. Can you explain why one is caught by the new tax and the other is not?

**CHAIR:** Within the standing orders there are rules about naming people only to the point necessary for the question. Keep that in mind for future questioning.

**Ms Kelly:** If the member would like to provide us with the details, I am happy for Queensland Treasury to look into those specific circumstances.

**Mr DICK:** And help the individual if he needs advice.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, initially the Queensland Revenue Office was intending to backdate bills five years. Can the Acting Under Treasurer provide background as to why this would be the case when under the Tax Administration Act there is discretion up to five years? Why would there be a set time frame of backdating for five years given the millions of dollars that could potentially be at stake here for medical practices and other allied medical health professionals across the state?

**Ms Kelly:** As I referred to earlier, taxpayers eligible for the amnesty will not be required to pay payroll tax in respect of payments made to contracted GPs until 30 June 2025 and for the previous five years. That was the decision of government taken at the time.

**CHAIR:** Do you have anything further?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will move on.

**CHAIR:** I note that, if it was a policy decision, the question is best directed to the Treasurer rather than the public servant involved.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, how much money has the government spent on coal royalty related advertising across all media since 1 July 2022?

**Mr DICK:** It is not \$40 million. I can assure you of that.

**CHAIR:** Order, Treasurer!

**Ms Kelly:** The campaign regarding coal royalties involves television, radio, digital channels, billboards and shopping centre displays. The initial stage of the campaign cost approximately \$1 million and ran over June and July 2022 following introduction of the new royalty regime. The second stage of the campaign is currently underway and was launched on 21 June. The second stage is budgeted to cost just over \$1.5 million. Both stages have been progressed through the Government Advertising and Communication Committee process and were approved by executive government.

**CHAIR:** I might take a little bit of the government's time on this particular issue. Treasurer, how important is it that when big business is attacking a government decision we do speak to the people of Queensland about the decisions that government has made to protect our future revenues?

**Mr DICK:** It is critically important, particularly when the campaign is not based in fact and seeks to mislead Queenslanders. It is very important that Queenslanders understand how the royalties are being used to benefit them—and that is what that campaign is about. It speaks to the support we are providing to LifeFlight, a critically important emergency care service for Queenslanders wherever they live in the state. We are powering our future through clean renewable energy, including the development of the Borumba pumped hydro scheme. The last shot of the digital advertisement or the broadcast television advertisement is on Borumba Dam. It is very important that Queenslanders know that that money is being reinvested into hospitals, including the construction of the new Moranbah Hospital. Moranbah is a community that has generated so much wealth and opportunity for Queenslanders and for our state and has not benefited from—

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take that interjection. It is in one of your electorates, member for Maroochydore. I thought the people of Burdekin might be interested that the government is investing in one of your electorates to build a new hospital—a community that has not seen a new hospital, if I am not mistaken, for 40 years. It was ignored, of course, by LNP governments, but we are funding a new hospital, just as we fund hospitals in Kingaroy and other parts of the state. We are funding a new clinic in Blackwater, as I understand it.

Those investments are going ahead. Queenslanders need to understand that the money we are generating from a non-renewable resource that once mined, once it is shipped away from our state, can never return—it cannot be grown again; it can never be produced again. That resource belongs to Queenslanders. When we generate revenue from that, we give it back to Queenslanders. The reality is that coal companies have benefited from record high prices and record profits, so everyone is succeeding in Queensland.

**CHAIR:** We return now to the member for Toowoomba South.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, has Treasury estimated what proportion of the progressive royalty tiers will be lost due to horizontal fiscal equalisation?

**Ms Kelly:** The extent to which additional royalty revenue may be redistributed away from Queensland in GST depends on the extent to which the revenue is due to increased prices compared to changes in policy to increase royalties due to higher tiers. In the latter years of the budget forecast GST revenues have been adjusted down somewhat since the 2022-23 budget update, recognising that increased royalty revenues will be subject to some redistribution through the GST horizontal fiscal equalisation process. I think it is really important to point out, however, that the states' and territories' share of GST revenue fluctuates over time based on the Commonwealth Grants Commission assessment of each state's fiscal capacity and expenditure needs. Some key drivers of changes to Queensland's and all states' share of GST are factors that are not within Queensland's specific control, including the impacts of changes in royalty revenue from iron ore in Western Australia and transfer duty collections in New South Wales.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, my question related to the proportion. I understand the methodology. Is there any understanding yet of the proportion that could be lost under horizontal fiscal equalisation?

**Ms Kelly:** As I said, the dollars received in any one year will result in redistribution of the proportion two years later spread across three years. As I indicated, they are already reflected in our forecasts. It is quite a complex modelling arrangement for GST, which, as I said, will be impacted by a whole range of factors in not only Queensland but other states and territories. It is reflected in the forward estimates.

**CHAIR:** I have allowed repetitive questions a number of times, but I do counsel the member to try and move to new issues.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, has feedback been received from industry or capital markets regarding increased sovereign risk of investing in Queensland since the coal royalty broken promise?

**CHAIR:** Just to clarify, in economics sovereign risk usually refers to debt repayments by a nation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I do not need you to facilitate, Chair. I do not need you to pontificate. Just get through it, right? Come on.

**CHAIR:** Is that the meaning that you intended that word to have, or did you have some other meaning? I will put the question to the Acting Under Treasurer.

**Ms Kelly:** As articulated in question on notice No. 8 around mining investments, we have seen a range of coal producers showing interest in Queensland. Companies including Whitehaven Coal, Peabody Energy, Stanmore, Coronado and Pembroke have made public statements or taken action since the new tiers were introduced indicating clear plans to continue to invest in Queensland's coal industry. Based on Queensland Mines Inspectorate data, coalmine workers directly employed in mines by the Queensland Mines Inspectorate as at 31 March 2023 totalled 41,865 persons. This is very close to the highest level on record, which was 41,980 in September 2012.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, has Treasury received any feedback from industry or capital markets in relation to increased investor concern for Queensland since that decision?

**CHAIR:** Is the question whether businesses like paying more tax?

**Mr JANETZKI:** I do not need you to rephrase the question, Chair. That is completely disorderly. We have had to be lectured by you all day.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Point of order, Chair. That is out of order.

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is a straightforward question.

**CHAIR:** I do apologise. I was out of order, and I thank the member for Maroochydore for pointing that out. I probably should not do that and I respectfully thank you.

**Ms Kelly:** Treasury is always monitoring markets, capital markets and investments. As per question on notice No. 8, we have seen significant interest in mining investments in Queensland since the tiers were introduced.

**CHAIR:** My apologies to you too, member for Toowoomba South.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you. Acting Under Treasurer, on 15 March the Treasurer was quoted on the record saying, 'Every cent of these new royalties is being reinvested into regional Queensland right now.' Can Treasury provide a breakdown of every cent of the \$15.3 billion in royalties for the last financial year, including \$5.7 billion from the new tiers, and where they are being invested in regional Queensland?

**Ms Kelly:** As outlined in the budget papers, the revenue from coal royalties is obviously part of the budget. The larger budget revenue lines are given the ongoing strength of coal prices in particular, hard coking coal prices since the 2022-23 budget update. The new progressive coal royalties have seen an uplift of \$7.2 billion over the five years from 2026-27. The additional revenue raised from coal royalties has allowed the government to invest more than \$16 billion towards economic and social infrastructure and essential services to meet the needs of Queenslanders across all regions of the state, including coal royalty regions. I could go into detail on where the additional coal royalties generated by the new tiers were spent.

As I said, in the 2022 update the government committed to utilise the uplift in royalty revenue to fund \$4 billion in productivity-enhancing investments across regional Queensland. This includes a \$3 billion long-term asset held by the Consolidated Fund and \$1 billion provided as equity investments in the public non-financial corporations sector. In the 2023-24 budget the government is providing an additional \$6 billion in funding for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Energy Storage Project. This brings the government's total investment commitment to \$10 billion for relevant public non-financial corporations sector investment projects funded by general government sector equity injections and supported by coal royalties. They include things such as CopperString, pumped hydro, the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline, CleanCo, wind and solar projects, the Burdekin Falls dam, the Gladstone Ports Corporation northern expansion—I could go on. They invest hundreds of millions of dollars in regional Queensland to capitalise on global opportunities. These include things such as the Regional Economic Futures Fund, the common user infrastructure to support development and extraction of critical minerals, the Resources Community Infrastructure Fund and the Queensland Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund. We have also allocated \$520 million in investments to the Low Emissions Investment Partnerships program. We have more than \$4.5 billion in investments to ensure that Queenslanders who reside in the regions have access to world-class health. That includes things like \$3.6 billion for new or expanded hospitals and \$920 million for the 10-year agreement with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Under Treasurer. The Treasurer announced earlier this year that the government will put in place an automatic land tax exemption process for the principal place of residence for eligible owners based on appropriate verifying data. What work has been completed on this so far, and when will this be completed if it has not already been?

**Ms Kelly:** Queensland is highly competitive compared with other jurisdictions. The current thresholds at which land tax becomes payable in Queensland are among the most generous in Australia. The tax-free threshold of \$600,000 is one of the highest in the country. The generosity of Queensland's land tax threshold is even more apparent when the threshold is put in the context of other major states having higher comparable average house and associated land values. In addition, land tax in Queensland is subject to a system of three-year averaging of the land value and—

**Ms SIMPSON:** And in respect to principal place of residence.

**Ms Kelly:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** The interruption was not necessary. The Acting Under Treasurer is being responsive to the question.

**Ms Kelly:** As you point out, to make it easier for landowners to apply for an exemption for land tax for the property they live in, the government is putting in place an automatic exemption process for the principal place of residence for eligible owners based on appropriate verifying data. Money was set aside in the budget this year to implement that exemption process.

**Ms SIMPSON:** When will that be completed?

**Ms Kelly:** As I said, in the 2023-24 budget the government committed to providing additional funding of \$1 million to implement and operationalise that exemption. In terms of the specific timing of when that will be put in place, I will need to get back to the member by the end of the hearing.

**CHAIR:** That is something you will endeavour to get back to?

**Ms Kelly:** I will.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I have a further question to the Acting Under Treasurer. The Palaszczuk government has introduced two taxes on Queensland property held by foreign investors. Now a recent New South Wales ruling has found foreign investment surcharges to be in breach of the Commonwealth double taxation agreements. What steps has Treasury taken to address this ruling?

**Ms Kelly:** Like New South Wales, in Queensland an additional amount of duty applies to certain transactions where a foreign person acquires residential land. A surcharge rate of land tax also applies in Queensland for foreign companies, trustees of foreign trusts and absentee individuals. Several other jurisdictions also impose similar surcharges on foreign owners. The additional amount of duty imposed in Queensland and the surcharge rate of land tax is administered under Queensland's duty and land tax regimes which are not harmonised with the regimes in New South Wales or any other jurisdiction.

Issues arising from the determination in New South Wales do not necessarily give rise to the same issues in Queensland or other jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction will consider any such matters in the context of their own legislation. For example, Victoria has published information confirming its position has not changed in light of the New South Wales announcement and will continue to apply the Victorian provisions in all foreign purchases and absentee owners. Additional foreign acquired duty and the surcharge rate of land tax continue to be administered in accordance with the legislation as passed by parliament in Queensland.

**CHAIR:** I now turn to government questions. Treasurer, I wish to follow up on the issue of revenue from the coal royalties changes, with reference to page 3 of the Treasury SDS. There is a lot of misinformation I think about these things, but I am looking forward to your view. Will the Treasurer update the committee on the coal royalties regime? Has there been any impact on investment in that sector?

**Mr DICK:** That is an excellent question. There has been a great deal of discussion—some of it incorrect—about the impact of the new coal royalty tiers on investment in resources and the coal industry more broadly, so I thank you for the question. The progressive coal royalty tiers that we introduced in last year's budget—introduced with complete fidelity to the promise made to the people of Queensland that there would be no new or increased taxes imposed on them—have been successful for Queensland in a number of ways.

I heard what you said, member for Toowoomba South, earlier; you tried to sneak it in. Firstly, revenue: we were clearly on track in 2022-23 for a very significant surplus. However, the progressive coal royalty tiers that we introduced have supercharged that surplus, delivering an additional \$5.7 billion in the last financial year. It took what would have been the biggest surplus in the history of the state and turned it into the biggest budget surplus of any state or territory government in history. That is very good news because that surplus has created the financial capacity to deliver the Big Build, the biggest cost-of-living relief in the country, and continued record investment in frontline services.

The other point of success comes through Queensland's positive investment climate. We have been really pleased to see strong ongoing investment in the resources industry, which I outlined in my response to a question on notice, but I am keen to expand on that and also update the committee on some recent advice I received about investment. That industry has not missed a beat. The coal industry has not missed a beat since the introduction of progressive coal royalties. In fact, that beat is quickening, with major new investments progressing. You do not have to take my word for it. Look at the ranking of mining jurisdictions determined by the independent Fraser Institute. Queensland is ranked as No. 1—that is No. 1—in the world as the most attractive destination for investment amongst the major producers of metallurgical coal. This is a report that came out after the introduction of progressive coal royalties. It goes without saying that we rank higher than New South Wales. That is a State of Origin win all Queenslanders should be proud of. That is even when New South Wales has a lower rate of royalties—well, at least for the time being. Hats off to the New South Wales Treasurer, Daniel Mookhey, who has announced publicly that New South Wales is moving ahead with coal royalty increases.

It is worth noting that Queensland's ranking for investment attractiveness actually increased after we introduced progressive coal royalties, moving up five spots. You can see this optimism and opportunity across the industry. Whitehaven Coal, as the Acting Under Treasurer has said, is ploughing ahead with the Winchester South mine. Coronado is proceeding rapidly with its Curragh North underground project. Peabody is working on reopening North Goonyella and giving it very high priority to get that reopening done. There has been an absolute frenzy, a bidding war, among the big resources companies trying to get a piece of Queensland coal action, trying to buy the Blackwater and the Daunia mines from BHP. This includes significant interest being expressed by Japanese companies, particularly JFE, Nippon Steel, Marubeni, Sojitz and Itotchu.

While I am on the subject of Japanese investment, I might add that last month Sumitomo increased its investment in the Hillalong coal project with its joint venture partner Bowen Coking Coal. So, contrary to what the member for Toowoomba South wrote last week, Japanese investors are not bewildered; they are focused on investing in Queensland.

On BHP, there has been an awful lot of misreporting and misleading statements from the LNP's campaign against progressive coal royalties so it is important that we get the facts on the table. For more than 20 years, BHP has been a net disposer of coal assets, consistent with BHP's broader strategy to move away from hydrocarbons. That is not my analysis; that is the independent view of the Bank of America.

When BHP state publicly, 'We're not going to grow our Queensland coal portfolio,' they are describing a state of affairs that has existed for over 20 years. In fact in 2019, long before progressive coal royalties were on the table, BHP approached the government and asked them to amend the law to allow them to sell their mines, including the Daunia mine they have just listed for sale. Of course BHP fully intend to maintain their hard premium coking coal business. That is the market BHP wish to remain in and they want to sustain that business for the long term. That does not mean they will grow the business in volume terms, but they certainly will sustain it. Both BHP and Mitsubishi have been adamant in their statements to the market that they will continue to sustain that premium hard coking coal business for many years to come. If you look through the rhetoric and the hyperbole, BHP are very positive about that part of their business.

I want to update the committee on recent information. I found overnight an article was published by the *Financial Times* with the heading 'BHP expects Indian steelmaking boom to drive its coal business'. The article, which was based on an interview with BHP's chief commercial officer, states—

BHP expects the rampant expansion of India's steel industry to boost its coal business significantly—

The article goes on—

Around 40 per cent of BHP's metallurgical coal—used by steel mills and also known as coking coal—is now heading to India, chief commercial officer Vandita Pant told the *Financial Times* in an interview. The figure is up from 30 per cent in its 2019 financial year.

**CHAIR:** I missed the percentage.

**Mr DICK:** It is up from 30 per cent to 40 per cent. The article continues—

India had become a “very big, big market” for the Melbourne-based company, said Pant.

The article goes on—

That demand would become pivotal to the growth of BHP’s metallurgical coal business in the coming years, Pant added. A decarbonisation push within India meant that demand for high-quality Australian coal, with its lower emissions, would grow.

“As Indian steel mills continue to invest in and get really focused on decarbonisation, which they are, the mix of met coal used by the steel mills will continue to pivot towards higher and higher quality coal, which plays to our strengths,” she said.

So we have Ms Pant saying metallurgical coal is part of BHP’s growth strategy and playing to their strengths. Again, these are all the signs that we have a metallurgical coal industry in Queensland that continues to grow, it is in great health, with strong investment, particularly from Japan.

All of this puts the LNP’s campaign against coal royalties in context. There is no truth whatsoever to the LNP’s claim that investment is suffering because of progressive coal royalties—none whatsoever. I saw the full-page ad today, I can say, Chair, as part of the Queensland resources campaign, a \$40 million campaign against the people’s royalties, claiming that the Valeria mine was cancelled because of coal royalties. That is a total falsehood. The Valeria mine was going to be a thermal coalmine and, according to Ian Macfarlane himself, thermal coal is on the way out.

Of course, there will be a pullback on investment in thermal coalmines over time, but all Queenslanders should remember that Queensland’s coal sector is primarily metallurgical steel-making coal, and there is strong interest in that sector. Even Adam Bandt, the leader of the federal parliamentary Greens political party says we have to keep mining metallurgical coal. The failure of the LNP to distance itself from this misleading campaign and the LNP’s efforts to conceal its position on royalties is disturbing. The Leader of the Opposition has said openly he wants to cut taxes, but if any political party like the LNP wants to cut taxes, then they need to be honest with the people of Queensland and spell out where the cuts will come from and how they will be funded.

We saw what happened in 2012 when the LNP rammed through tax cuts—I am so pleased the member for Maroochydore is here; she was part of that government—creating a revenue hole. So was the member for Mermaid Beach. That is what they do. They rammed through those tax cuts. I am leaving you out of it, members for Toowoomba South and Ninderry; you are just innocent bystanders on that travesty. The tax cuts created a massive revenue hole. What did they do? You create a revenue hole. It is the old two-card trick from the LNP: create a revenue hole and say, ‘We have a massive budget black hole. Out you go, 14,000 workers, out the door; you lose your job.’ Because the LNP refuses to say that they will keep progressive coal royalties permanently, that means the progressive coal royalties regime is under threat, it means public servants are under threat, it means services are under threat, and our Big Build and our record investment in infrastructure is under threat. It is very easy for the LNP to say, ‘We will keep progressive royalties now and in the future permanently, and we will keep them lock, stock and barrel.’

**Mrs McMAHON:** Treasurer, going back to an area we touched on already this afternoon with reference to page 4 of the SDS, will the Treasurer update the committee on the introduction of the GP payroll tax amnesty?

**Mr DICK:** I thought the government would have been thanked for being the only government that introduced the most generous amnesty in the country, but clearly that is not the case—by the LNP, not you, member for Macalister. At the National Cabinet meeting on 3 February 2023, the Premier raised the issue of payroll tax payable by medical practices which is an issue that is affecting every state and territory in the country. As the commissioner for state revenue has made clear publicly, and we heard it articulated again today by the Acting Under Treasurer, the treatment of payroll tax for general practice has not changed in this state for 15 years, since 2008. Let me repeat: the Queensland Revenue Office reviewed the case in New South Wales that set this off, and the QRO has confirmed that they have not identified any aspect that it considers changes the scope, practice or approach to payroll tax in Queensland. That means that medical practices are subject to the same payroll tax interpretations today that they were throughout the entirety of the Newman government in which the Leader of the Opposition served.

There has been some really quite, I think, false and misleading statements put out by the LNP saying that this government has changed the practice. We did not. It is exactly the same payroll tax law that always applied in Queensland and applied when the member for Mermaid Beach and the member for Maroochydore served in the government of Campbell Newman with the Leader of the Opposition. We recognise that there was a widespread lack of awareness of this issue when Queensland sought

to address this by introducing a payroll tax amnesty in relation to payments made to contracted general practitioners which will expire on 30 June 2025. Even though this is an issue across the country, Queensland was the first state to provide an amnesty. Importantly, we have become a pacesetter for the rest of the country, with South Australia announcing a similar amnesty. However, the amnesty in South Australia is for one year only, so Queensland remains the most generous state when it comes to delivering real support for our hardworking GPs. To be clear, we have provided this amnesty at a cost to the budget of \$100 million per year.

The Liberal government in New South Wales would not lift a finger to do anything for general practice. Dominic Perrottet, who was the Treasurer and became the Premier, and Matt Kean who was the Treasurer, would not lift a finger to help general practice in that state. I think that is the difference: you can say one thing in opposition but you always see something different from the Liberal Party when they are in government. The amnesty recognised the need to support medical practitioners.

**Mr Janetzki:** Yes, 26 times.

**Mr DICK:** The amnesty recognised the need to support medical practitioners—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** You are selling, member for Toowoomba South, but no-one is buying. The amnesty recognises the need to support medical practices to come into compliance with payroll tax with the least disruption possible and notes the significant pending and ongoing reforms to Medicare that aim to elevate practice-based care. That is what we are trying to do. We are trying to give support to general practice while those other reforms come through to support general practice in Queensland.

Taxpayers eligible for the amnesty will not be required to pay payroll tax in respect to payments made to contracted GPs up until 30 June 2025 and for the previous five years—again, what I think is a generous contribution we have made. Medical practices have been able to register their interest in the amnesty with the Queensland Revenue Office since 10 February 2023, as you have heard. Expressions of interest closed on 29 September, and details of how the amnesty will operate were published on the Queensland government website on 16 March.

I have heard the LNP criticise the application of payroll tax to large corporate medical practices. The member for Toowoomba South calls it 'Labor's GP tax', something that the party he is a member of did when they were in government. If you do not like it, member for Toowoomba South, the consequences are very simple. It is entirely open for you to remove it. Just say, 'We are going to remove it. We are not going to apply it.' If they do not like it, if they want to exempt general practice from payroll tax, fine; you just need to explain where your \$100 million of cuts are going to come from.

It is okay to sit here and ask questions and complain—complain in the parliament, complain in the community—the party of complaint—we hear that all the time from the Leader of the Opposition—but the truth of the matter is if you do not like something, do something about it. Don't be weak. Don't hide behind slogans. Actually stand up and say what you believe in. If you believe in giving those large corporate medical practices a permanent tax break, say it. But then you have to follow through. You have to follow through with how you are going to fund \$100 million in cuts. That is the truth. The LNP should say what they believe, whether they believe in this, whether they believe in the amnesty and the reapplication of payroll tax to general practice and medical practices on 1 July 2025, or whether they do not. If they do not, how are they going to fund the tax cuts? How will they fund the cuts to jobs, services and infrastructure which would inevitably follow if they did not source another revenue stream to the state?

**CHAIR:** With reference to page 3 of the SDS and CopperString, will the Treasurer update the committee on CopperString 2032 and especially its role in unlocking North Queensland's energy potential?

**Mr DICK:** That is a great question and an incredibly transformative infrastructure project for the north of our state, both the minerals in the North West Minerals Province and also those in the north-east. This is the most transformative infrastructure project for the north of Australia but certainly for the north of Queensland since the arrival of the steam locomotive. It is a \$5 billion project which will connect Mount Isa to the national electricity market but at the same time assist the state in unlocking half a trillion dollars in the critical minerals in the earth of that part of Queensland—the next minerals boom for Queensland.

As you know, Chair, we have taken full public ownership of the CopperString 2032 project—1,100 kilometres of transmission lines that will run from Townsville to Mount Isa. Powerlink, the state's publicly owned transmission business, will deliver the project. The project is bigger than first planned.

Our expanded \$5 billion investment will deliver higher transmission capacity for that section between Townsville and Hughenden, from 330 kilovolts to 500 kilovolts, to unlock additional renewable energy, jobs and growth. It is those three things: connecting that part of Queensland to the National Electricity Market, unlocking those critical minerals but also allowing us to connect the renewable energy generation from that part of the state to the national energy network. It is a win-win-win for that part of Queensland.

Of course, this is a very significant investment in infrastructure. That could, as I say, help release \$500 billion in critical minerals in North Queensland. It will be part of the background of our transmission SuperGrid that we are building across Queensland. It will maximise the opportunity for new large-scale renewable connections, optimising system strength and supporting our new renewable energy targets of 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035. That \$5 billion investment locks in our government's commitment to public ownership of Queensland's transmission assets.

Construction of the project is expected to support 800 direct jobs over six years and thousands of new jobs in critical minerals, mining, manufacturing and construction. Early works are progressing this year with almost \$600 million of construction work in 2023-24 with the project expected to be completed by 2029. This is a great nation-building project that Queensland is delivering for Australia again.

Importantly, our support is locked in and it is locked in within Budget Paper No. 3. It is a line item. You can see it because it is expenditure in this financial year. I draw the member for Toowoomba South's attention in particular to this because I heard the member for Toowoomba South in his budget reply put this allegation on the parliamentary record—I have never heard him withdraw it—that 'Queenslanders are still waiting for CopperString to appear in the budget.' I would have thought a man of business, a banking executive, would have understood how to read the balance sheet of the state.

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is not a balance sheet.

**Mr DICK:** However, he put that in the parliament, has never apologised and has never withdrawn. So I would refer the member for Toowoomba South to Budget Paper 3, page 47—

**Mr JANETZKI:** How much? Fully funded?

**Mr DICK:**—where it is in black and white, in clear language that anyone can understand. I would ask the member for Toowoomba South to stop misleading Queenslanders.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Is that an additional \$5.7 billion to coal royalties? How much is that funded?

**Mr DICK:** I would ask him in particular to stop his leader misleading Queensland, because the Leader of the Opposition has been out there in the public saying CopperString is not in the budget—

**Mr JANETZKI:** It is not fully funded.

**Mr DICK:**—just like their fantasy claims that the fund to support the Path to Treaty was not in the budget, that the Housing Investment Fund when that was announced was not in the budget—

**Mr JANETZKI:** How many houses?

**Mr DICK:**—and of course now they own it. Now they want to own those funds.

**Mr JANETZKI:** How many houses, how many hospitals?

**Mr DICK:** We are not sure what they would do with the Path to Treaty Fund. They would probably get rid of it. The reality is it is locked in in the budget. The Leader of the Opposition was just flat wrong and it is another example of the opportunism of the Leader of the Opposition and his fundamental untrustworthiness.

**Mr STEVENS:** Chair, the next treasurer—I mean the shadow Treasurer.

**CHAIR:** I am not sure that is the correct title. Member for Toowoomba South, the shadow Treasurer?

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you, Deputy Chair, for the support. I appreciate that. Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity. My question is to the Treasurer. It was reported in October that former CS Energy chair Jim Soorley made a misogynistic slur against a public servant. As a shareholding minister what action did the Treasurer take against Mr Soorley at the time?

**Mr DICK:** Mr Soorley has now resigned as the chair of CS Energy, he has departed the organisation and the matter has come to an end.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I assume from the Treasurer's answer that no action was taken by the Treasurer as shareholding minister against Mr Soorley at the time for the misogynistic slur?

**CHAIR:** Hold on. We need to be careful about impugning or bringing forward facts that were not actually revealed.

**Mr DICK:** My responsibilities are set out in the Government Owned Corporations Act. This is a claim that was made not in the context of anything that was done in his capacity, as I understand it, as the chairman of a government owned corporation. It had nothing to do with that entity or the exercise of his duties and responsibilities, so the phrasing of the question and the imputation contained in it are totally misleading. Mr Soorley has left the organisation and those claims have nothing to do with the exercise of his responsibility. My responsibilities are set out very clearly in the Government Owned Corporations Act.

**Mr JANETZKI:** In that respect, Treasurer, how many times did you raise concerns about rising power prices resulting from Callide's unplanned outage with the former CS Energy chair Mr Soorley?

**Mr DICK:** My responsibilities are set out in the Government Owned Corporations Act. It is very clear what I am required to do as the Treasurer. I like this phrase 'the unexplained outage' from the member for Toowoomba South. It was an unanticipated, unexplained to this point and unexpected explosion at a power plant. That is what it was. There is an investigation going forward on that and we all look forward to receiving the outcome of that.

The truth is this is a very serious matter and the government has acted very quickly and promptly to respond to it to ensure that we can rebuild that generator. I can tell you this, Chair, it is a generator owned by a government owned corporation. It is a generator controlled by the people of Queensland. If the LNP had had its way, we would have had to beg someone in New York, London, Tokyo or Frankfurt or one of the capital centres of the world to rebuild it. We would have had to beg them.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** That is totally incorrect. That is false and misleading and you know it, member for Mermaid Beach. We would have had to beg the capital markets of the world—those big companies, whoever would have owned it under their policy—to rebuild it. We are rebuilding it for Queensland so it can stay in public ownership and it can form part of the network that we need to have as we move to renewable energy generation.

Those generators will play an important role in maintaining the frequency of our energy system. Of course, we are protecting the jobs of workers through this process. We are going to bring that generator back online; that is very important. I have given directions to generators in relation to their bidding practices. I have made that clear as part of my responsibility under the Government Owned Corporations Act to minimise the cost of electricity to Queensland consumers, and that is in line with the national approach to action on reducing energy prices for Queenslanders.

Of course, because we own those generators, because of our coal royalties, we are able to give back to Queenslanders the biggest cost-of-living relief package of any state or territory government—\$1½ billion. I see the member for Hervey Bay nodding. Pensioners in his community will receive \$1,072. Pensioners in Logan will receive that as will pensioners in Macalister—in fact, across all of the electorates that the honourable members represent on the committee. Some of those pensioners will pay nothing for electricity. Some may go into credit to carry forward beyond this financial year. The only reason we can do that is because we own our public assets; we own our electricity system in Queensland. Of course, our strong fiscal management, our strong budget management in Queensland, means we have that capacity to give back to Queenslanders bigger and better than any other state in the country—lower prices, I can say, than in New South Wales and Victoria.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have a question for the Treasurer. Was Mr Soorley's resignation in any way related to the misogynistic slur that he made against a public servant from the CS Energy chairman?

**Mr DICK:** Not to my knowledge. He just wrote a letter to me saying he was resigning—correction, to the shareholding ministers.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Has Callide's unplanned outage led to Queenslanders paying more for power?

**Mr DICK:** Chair, a point of order: is that an opinion that is being sought from the witness? He is running a power company.

**Mr JANETZKI:** He is competent and capable to answer the question.

**CHAIR:** If it was an opinion, it would also be an opinion from yourself.

**Mr DICK:** His job does not involve the market pricing of electricity.

**CHAIR:** He might be free to point that out. If it was an opinion, it would be equally an opinion from yourself. We had questions like this of the Auditor-General in previous questioning who pointed out that there was a variety of factors that feed into pricing.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Chair, we do not need a commentary. We have a witness here.

**CHAIR:** I am agreeing with you and overruling the Treasurer. Give us a break.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Come on, let's get moving. Let's go.

**CHAIR:** I am disagreeing with the Treasurer and overruling him, but I do wish to explain to the Treasurer why I am overruling him. With that, I put the question to Mr Busine, the chief executive officer.

**Mr Busine:** I thank the member for the question. Wholesale prices are impacted by a range of factors—geopolitical issues, international commodity prices including gas and coal, local and international supply chains and Australian generator closures and outages where they are in transmission. There are a significant number of factors that will speak to energy prices. Clearly, we are extremely focused on the return of the Callide C units to continue to put downward pressure on the prices. As the incoming CEO, that is a focus for me.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have a couple of more technical questions. I am not sure how much detail you will be able to give because of commercial-in-confidence, but what price does CS Energy currently purchase its coal for?

**CHAIR:** Mr Busine, you know your business, its internals and the nature of commercial-in-confidence. I will let you take the question.

**Mr Busine:** CS Energy has coal arrangements for both coalmines that we own. We own the coalmine at Kogan and we use that coal for our Kogan generation. We have commercial arrangements with Batchfire Resources for our coal at the Callide mines. Then, we also trade the Gladstone Power Station units which are under commercial arrangements for the Gladstone Power Station to purchase the coal. There are separate arrangements for each of our units.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I appreciate that it is commercial-in-confidence. Has the price at which CS is purchasing its coal for increased over the last two years?

**Mr Busine:** Thank you for the question. What I can say is that for Gladstone coal, those are commercial arrangements that would have been impacted by international coal prices. However since December this year, we have been acting under a direction which has impacted the price of coal—implementing a \$125 cap per tonne. The prices for coal that we have at Kogan and the coal that we have at Callide have not been materially impacted by international factors, given that we own the Kogan coal and that we have long-term arrangements with Callide.

**Mr JANETZKI:** When are those contractual arrangements likely to end? Are they longer term contracts or medium-term contracts?

**Mr Busine:** Yes, they are longer term contracts with some extension periods within them for the Callide arrangements.

**Mr JANETZKI:** So, longer term, five—

**Mr Busine:** The Callide contracts are out to 2035.

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question is for the Treasurer. Can you please provide us with a breakdown of the amount of public, community and affordable housing that has been funded from the Housing Investment Fund?

**Mr DICK:** I am happy to come back to the committee with greater detail but we have made public announcements, member for South Brisbane, on what we have invested in. I have done that in the parliament, by media release, or by media statement. I have made those details clear, but I am happy to give you the numbers. Insofar as I was responsible for the Housing Investment Fund, I am happy to provide that information to you. That fund is now the responsibility of the housing minister.

**CHAIR:** You will come back with that information, or the housing minister will?

**Mr DICK:** I am happy to come back.

**CHAIR:** There is a note that you will come back with that information by the end of the session.

**Mr DICK:** The two broad tranches will be housing that we have agreed to commence through an agreement with the Brisbane Housing Company, supported by the Australian Retirement Trust and the Queensland Investment Corporation. Then, there are other homes that are funded by the state through the Housing Investment Fund to purchase homes that are currently in the National Rental Affordability Scheme. That is the broad picture, but I will come back with some details there—some numbers.

**CHAIR:** Noted for the purposes of keeping a record.

**Mr DICK:** Yes.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Mr Busine, I heard the Premier talk this morning about Callide C being fully operational planned for the middle of next year. Is there any contingency built into that timeline, and is there any possibility of slippage?

**Mr Busine:** We currently have our dates advised to the market for a return to service of the units progressively from January through to July of next year. If we were to ascertain that those dates needed to be updated, then we have an obligation to update the market. We now have the cooling towers both demolished and the contracts established for the rebuild, which will start to occur this month. We are extremely focused on getting that rebuild done. If there is through the course of the construction and the recommissioning any need to change those dates, then we have an obligation to do so.

**Dr MacMAHON:** For the Treasurer: according to the budget, the changes to coal royalties only apply to coal that is sold at super profit levels. That means the Government's new coal royalties will only account for six per cent of coal royalty revenue by 2024, which is very low. Is there a plan to increase the base amount of royalties for coal, gas and other resources so that beyond these super profit levels, Queensland can still enjoy these increased revenues?

**Mr DICK:** It is a tiered system; it is a progressive system. As prices go up, the state can recover money, at times for very high prices and profits—that is the reality. The government has no plans to change any other aspects of the royalties scheme that are currently in place in Queensland. We do not intend to make any further changes, notwithstanding the vigorous \$40 million advertising campaign that is being run against the government by the Queensland Resources Council. As I have said publicly, we will not be changing those royalty tiers by one cent or one percentage because Queenslanders deserve to benefit from those record high prices.

As prices moderate, of course we will be mindful of how those companies operate in the state and so there will not be any change to the tiers as they currently exist. The tiers remain frozen, which was a promise we made to the resources industry—a freeze will apply for 10 years. We did not come to government, like the LNP, consult with no-one at any time ever and drop new royalties in our first budget. That is what happened in 2012 and, of course, the member for Mermaid Beach and the member for Maroochydore know what it is like to drop that change on the coal industry without any reference at all. We do not intend to change any aspect of what we are doing with coal royalties. We think we are getting a sufficient and fair return for Queenslanders, which is all we were ever planning to do.

**CHAIR:** I now turn to the member for Macalister.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 3 of the Treasury SDS, can the Treasurer provide the committee with an update on the pumped hydro projects and their role in supporting Queensland's clean energy aspirations?

**Mr DICK:** This important pumped hydro program involving two projects is critical to the clean, renewable energy future for Queensland. There were some false claims made during the budget debate, including by the member for Toowoomba South who struggled to find the reference for the project in the budget papers when they were there in black and white, but this is so critical to our state and all members of the parliament need to appraise themselves of those projects and the investment program we have as a government. Over four years our government will deliver an investment of \$6 billion to deliver the \$14.2 billion Borumba pumped hydro project and associated transmission connection infrastructure. That investment will support the delivery of the two gigawatt 24-hour Borumba pumped hydro project and stage 1 of the 500-kilowatt Borumba transmission connection, so connecting the pumped hydro scheme to the network. On behalf of the government, Queensland Hydro, an entity we have created, is progressing with detailed analysis of the five-gigawatt Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro located 75 kilometres west of Mackay. Both of these projects are proceeding and they will help do what we all want the clean renewable future for our state to do—reduce power prices in our state. The cheapest form of energy is renewable energy.

There was some discussion earlier in the hearing about the impact of what had happened at Callide on power prices and power prices generally, and I might seek to inform the committee around that. Queensland is part of a connected national network, the National Electricity Market or NEM. NEM is one of the largest interconnected electricity systems in the world. There are more than 500 registered generators, five state-based transmission networks linked by cross-border interconnectors and 13 major distribution networks that supply electricity to end-user customers. In geographic span, the NEM is the largest interconnected power system in the world with 40,000 kilometres of transmission lines

and cables supplying around nine million customers. The prices paid are the product of that national market—I want to make that clear to the committee—including electricity being exported and imported to and from Queensland. Of those 500 generators in the market, I do not think it is correct in my opinion to say that an incident at one of those 500 generators is necessarily going to have a specific attributable impact. The impact will depend on how other participants in the national market respond by increasing supply, the cost of their imports and so on.

What we can say is that energy prices have risen across the entire market, including Queensland. I am pleased to say that the default market offer in Queensland for 2023-24 at \$1,970 is better than New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia—and that was before we announced our rebates. After we have provided those rebates, Queenslanders will still be better off than those other states. I would also say that the premise of the questions that have been put by the opposition today that the incident at the Callide C4 generator is the result of some problems in the organisation are wrong. The truth of the matter is it was an unanticipated explosion at a power station. We are getting to the bottom of that, but the cause of the incident is yet to be established. Until we know the reason for that explosion, we should not be jumping to any conclusions either as to the cause of the incident or its consequences.

**Mr TANTARI:** Treasurer, with reference to page 3 of the Treasury SDS, will the Treasurer update the committee on Queensland's key economic indicators and how Queensland is positioned relative to other Australian economies?

**Mr DICK:** Queensland is in a strong position—that is the short answer—principally because of how we handled the pandemic. Notwithstanding the urges of many that we should open our borders, our world-leading response to COVID has led to a world-leading economic response and the people of our state who were so diligent and disciplined and hard working during the pandemic are the ultimate beneficiaries of that discipline, diligence and hard work. After all of the difficulties that they lived through during COVID, there is a dividend being returned to them because of the strength of our economy, but none of that has happened by accident. Rather, that has been by deliberate decisions of our government to protect our people and then deliberate economic and fiscal decisions we made as a government to support them.

Our economy is leading the nation, I am pleased to report to the committee, on numerous indicators, with fundamentals that are the envy of New South Wales and Victoria. Queensland's domestic economic activity as of the March quarter 2023 is up 11 per cent compared to pre-COVID levels, higher than the 9.8 per cent growth recorded in the rest of Australia. Following strong growth of 4.4 per cent in 2021-22, the overall Queensland economy is forecast to grow a further two per cent in 2022-23 and strengthen to three per cent growth in 2023-24. Compared with the national and other main states' published budget outlooks, the Queensland economy is expected to outperform those other jurisdictions over the forward estimates. With forecast growth of three per cent in both 2023-24 and 2024-25, Queensland's forecast gross state product growth is the highest among all the major states. In comparison, the New South Wales latest published forecast is for economic growth of 1½ per cent in 2023-24 and 2¼ per cent growth in 2024-25. Victoria's latest forecasts are 1½ per cent growth in 2023-24 and 2½ per cent growth in 2024-25. Queensland's forecast economic growth is also much stronger than national economic growth forecasts delivered by both the Reserve Bank of Australia and the federal Treasury.

Queensland's employment has risen a record 278,000 persons, or 10.8 per cent, since pre COVID in March 2020—the strongest jobs growth in the nation—while the state's unemployment rate has fallen 1.8 percentage points to an exceptionally low 3.8 per cent over that period. Queensland's employment growth forecast also compares favourably when we look forward, being the highest or equal highest of all the main states in each year from 2023-24 to 2026-27. The employment rate across the outlook years in Queensland is broadly similar to other jurisdictions—strong. We will probably have a little increase in unemployment but by Queensland's standards historically low, and that just sets a great platform for our state for the future.

**CHAIR:** Treasurer, we have seen a lot of economies have some spotty recovery from COVID. With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Treasurer update the committee on Queensland's economic recovery since the COVID pandemic?

**Mr DICK:** In a sense that is a consequential question on what we have heard previously in the hearing and just before about where we are and what it means for the future. Our economy, as I said, has outperformed the nation. It is reflected in our health and economic response. In the face of higher interest rates and price pressures, Queensland's domestic economy still grew by four per cent in the March quarter in 2023 to be 11 per cent higher than pre COVID. That beats national growth, which is very good. We have had strong employment growth, as I have talked about. Our net interstate migration

has been strong. Net interstate migration since the June quarter 2020 was 112,000 persons. To put that in context, that is the largest total across Australia and close to four times more than the next best, Western Australia. Overseas migration continues to rebound. After the borders reopened in early 2022, our year average overall population growth of 2.1 per cent in 2022 was the highest in the nation, so we have had strong population growth.

In the business sector I am pleased to report to the committee that based on the NAB Monthly Business Survey operating conditions in Queensland remained resilient and above the national average in June 2023. On the trade side, Queensland exporters have benefited from a significant rise in global commodity prices in recent times, including the coal industry, and I acknowledge the benefit they are receiving from that increase in global commodity prices.

The annual value of Queensland's overseas exports peaked in December 2022 at \$137.9 billion but have remained at elevated levels since then, totalling \$130.8 billion over the year to May 2023—17 per cent higher than the same period a year earlier. The strength of Queensland's economic recovery from COVID-19 saw the state's economy grow by 4.4 per cent in 2021-22, two per cent in 2022-23 and, as I have said, forecast to grow three per cent in 2023-24 and 2024-25. We are in a strong position to go forward, to lead the nation when it comes to growth, and I think that is something all Queenslanders should be proud of.

**CHAIR:** The deputy chair seems to be indicating that a four has been scored, or else he could be indicating that time for questioning before the break has been reached, which I think is what he is indicating. With that we will take a break and resume at 4.15 continuing with the examination of estimates for the portfolio areas of Treasury and Trade and Investment. Thank you.

**Proceedings suspended from 4.00 pm to 4.16 pm.**



**CHAIR:** I welcome back the Treasurer and officials. We will now resume the examination of the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of Treasury and Trade and Investment. I think we are up to opposition questions.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can we have Ms Rampa, CEO of QIC, to the table. QIC has a significant stake in Thames Water which is in significant financial hardship. Given Thames Water paid no dividends for five years, did QIC ever consider selling out in that time—of their interests?

**Ms Rampa:** I thank the honourable member for Toowoomba South for that question. I note the Treasurer has addressed this matter in a response to the question on notice. Given the commercial sensitivity of the issue it would not be appropriate for me to add anything further at this stage.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Just one follow-up question. How many QIC investments would be classified as high risk in your framework, roughly speaking?

**Ms Rampa:** It would be a very, very low number and we run a diversified portfolio so usually, through that diversification, it provides opportunity where there is corresponding pressure on investments.

**Mr STEVENS:** My question is to the chief executive officer. For the QIC, was the decision to invest in a 25 per cent share of the Titles Office made without government instigation and what were the short-term saleable assets exchanged by QIC as per the auditor's report to the government for the \$1.8 billion 25 per cent share?

**Ms Rampa:** I thank the honourable member for that question. I was not the chief executive officer when that investment was made so I am not privy to the decisions that were made at that point in time. But I do note that the Treasurer has responded to a range of questions in relation to the Titles Office and I do not have anything further to add.

**CHAIR:** Do you want to put a question to the Treasurer?

**Mr STEVENS:** I will go to the Treasurer in a moment, but my question now, back to the CEO, is whilst you may not have been here for the initial decision, you would have seen through the books what assets were exchanged for that 25 per cent share.

**Ms Rampa:** No, I have not gone back in the history to have a look at that, but the asset is owned by the Queensland Future Fund and there is a defined strategy for the Queensland Future Fund and the Debt Retirement Fund and that asset is appropriate for that vehicle.

**Mr STEVENS:** I will now go to the Treasurer. Was the government involved in the decision that instigated the sale of 25 per cent of the Titles Office to the QIC, with QIC and the former CEO's negotiation, and also what were the short-term saleable assets that the QIC provided in return for that? They did not pay cash, they put some short-term saleable assets back to the government for that 25 per cent or \$1.8 billion share. You would be privy to that information.

**CHAIR:** Treasurer, the deputy chair is, no doubt, nothing if not persistent on the issue.

**Mr DICK:** The corporatisation of the titles office was, of course, a decision of the government and we are proud to have made that decision. Of course, the nature of that transaction, its effective operation and its consequence and benefit for the people of Queensland have been the subject of a detailed examination by the Auditor-General.

**Mr STEVENS:** With respect, Chair, to the Treasurer, that does not answer the question and what I am looking for, and which the Treasurer should know. I understand that the titles office was created as a company et cetera. There was a decision by the QIC to invest and take 25 per cent of the titles office. You would have been, I am sure, as the Treasurer, involved in those discussions and you would remember what short-term saleable assets were exchanged because no money changed hands, as per the auditor's report. There were saleable assets from the QIC's portfolio given in exchange. I would like to know what those short-term saleable assets were.

**Mr DICK:** I respectfully ask the member not to impute or suggest matters to me that he believes are in my knowledge. He could ask me a factual question and I will give him a factual answer. I do not intend to add anything further. You have my response.

**CHAIR:** Member for Maiwar?

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question is to the QIC as well. It is in relation to QIC's existing 25 per cent stake in the Brisbane Airport Corporation which, as you know, has faced criticism following the construction of its new runway and the scheduling of additional flights that are having significant environmental and social impacts. Has QIC assessed its investment in BAC against the Sustainable Investment Classification Framework in your Sustainable Investment Policy, including the environmental, social and climate impacts of the new runway and flight paths and if so what was the outcome of that assessment?

**Ms Rampa:** That investment is owned in one of the funds of QIC. We have an interest in that fund. With all investments, an environmental study would have been conducted at the time of the airport extension. That would have been obviously approved at the time by the investment committee and the range of co-investors, which are some of the largest investors in this country that we co-own that asset with in our fund. I would add that all of our assets are assessed on an environmental perspective on an ongoing basis.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Further to that, can you share with us what avenues exist for the shareholding ministers in QIC to intervene to address the community's concerns around flight noise and do they have any say, for example, about whether QIC might divest its BAC shareholding?

**Ms Rampa:** No, it is a matter for the fund and the investors in the fund. As I said, it is not a QIC balance sheet. We manage the asset on behalf of other large institutional investors. They all sit on investment committees. They are very aware of the issue and they are running, obviously, a very strong community engagement project and plan in order to resolve the issues within the community.

**Mr BERKMAN:** For clarity, can you share with the committee the details of that investment fund, which fund is it and/or what are the major institutional shareholders you referred to a moment ago?

**Ms Rampa:** It is owned in our Global Infrastructure Fund, called QGIF 1.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Finally, has the QIC or the fund more directly, I suppose, assessed its exposure to financial risk from a potential class action lawsuit around the additional flight noise and from residents who are affected by noise attributable to BAC?

**Ms Rampa:** Those issues are an ongoing matter for the investment committee and the investors in the fund. This would be discussed at every board meeting and every investment committee meeting. All of those issues would be taken into account into what is the impact on the asset, on the holding of the asset, the valuation. I know that the investment team are working very hard to try to reduce or do whatever they can to improve the situation. The reality is that it is critical infrastructure and it has been operating as an airport for some time, but they try to manage those issues as best as they can and they would be, on a constant basis, reviewing any long-term impact.

**CHAIR:** I note the member for Maroochydore has a question.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr Chair. I have a question for Ms Rampa. QIC paid \$95.7 million in bonuses to its executives last year—more than it made in after-tax profit and double the dividend it paid back to the government. The bonuses, dubbed performance remunerations, totalled roughly \$120,000 per eligible employee. How much of the bonuses paid relate to the performance of the Housing Investment Fund?

**Ms Rampa:** The remuneration structures at QIC are varied and we do not work through an individual specific fund or investment. We generated value to the state of \$3.7 billion. Remuneration is a very small component of that. We are a global fund manager, a global alternate asset manager. We hire the best executives and investment executives in the marketplace. We meet market on remuneration. I would point out, and this is disclosed in the report, that for FY22 the profit for QIC and distribution increased by 27 per cent and the remuneration increased by only 20 per cent.

**CHAIR:** Are there any further questions?

**Mr STEVENS:** I have a follow-up question to the CEO now that I have had that clarification from the Treasurer in relation to the matter I raised. Does the QIC have a policy or any policy of bartering short-term saleable assets for investments in assets they cannot sell such as their 25 per cent share in the titles office?

**Ms Rampa:** I really do not understand what you mean by ‘bartering’. We make appropriate investment decisions based on the mandate and the investment strategy of every single fund and we do that to the highest order.

**Mr STEVENS:** For the CEO’s edification, ‘bartering’ means exchanging one good for another. What you have done basically, as I understand it—not you personally as it was prior to your time but the QIC which you represent—is bartered short-term saleable assets that were in your portfolio for a 25 per cent share of an asset that you supposedly are not able to sell. That was what I was trying to get through.

**Ms Rampa:** As I said, I was not privy to the decisions made at the time; however, all of those decisions would be made through investment committees—made by boards where we have independent directors—and the appropriate investment decision on its merits would have been made as we do in every instance and every investment decision that is made at QIC.

**Mr STEVENS:** In relation to the policy, are there any other projects or times when the QIC exchanges some of its portfolio assets for investment in other projects?

**Ms Rampa:** No. Every investment decision—hold, buy or sell—is made on the merits of those investments.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Treasurer, upon your appointment as Treasurer it was reported that you said the government would reduce the use of external consultancies and contractors by government with a view to ending arrangements where possible. How much has been spent by the government on external consultancies since you were reported as saying that?

**Mr DICK:** If the question were to be asked properly and in context, that statement was made shortly after my appointment as Treasurer in the context of the savings and debt plan. That is the context of that statement—not an unlimited unconditional statement—but a statement made in the context of the savings and debt plan of which all members of the committee will be fully aware—the savings target of the savings and debt plan has been fully achieved. This goes to the conduct of the member for Toowoomba South: I have just become aware of some more conduct of the member for Toowoomba South in relation to some social media posts he has just posted in relation to this hearing which are greatly concerning.

In response to questioning, the committee was provided with extensive details on the analysis and work done in determining the value of land tax measures in regards to: the GP payroll tax amnesty; the investment appetite for Queensland minerals resources; and the repairs undertaken at the Callide C power station. I could not care less what the member for Toowoomba South thinks of me or says about me, but I do care about the hardworking public servants at this table and sitting behind me. In those posts he was deliberately misrepresenting hardworking public servants who came to this hearing today. On all of those matters, those questions were not directed to me but to public servants. All of them diligently, honestly and faithfully answered the question. I am calling on the member for Toowoomba South to delete those posts and to apologise to the public servants for publicly misrepresenting the diligent answers that they gave today.

I seek leave of the committee to table the incorrect, misleading and inappropriate social media posts posted by the member for Toowoomba South on social media. I ask him to withdraw it, delete it and apologise.

**CHAIR:** I will just have a look at that, thank you.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, I ask a follow-up question in respect of how many contracts Queensland Treasury currently has with PwC?

**Ms Kelly:** At present, there are no PwC contracts, contractor consultants or contractors engaged with Treasury.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I accept that you are relatively newly appointed but, in the recent past, has Treasury ever shared confidential information with PwC in respect of making tax policy in Queensland?

**Ms Kelly:** Treasury, including QRO which is part of Treasury, adopts the confidentiality and conflict of interest arrangements that are part of the whole-of-government procurement policy arrangements. Previous engagements with PwC for internal audit, risk management and tax compliance all used the standard terms and conditions for engagement of contractors and consultants which imposes obligations in relation to confidentiality and conflict of interest. In terms of the Queensland Revenue Office, it certainly ensures that there are strict protocols in place in terms of access to data. No data would leave the building.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Has Treasury provided confidential information in respect of making tax policy to PwC? I understand that they are the guidelines and the parameters, but has any confidential information been provided to PwC by Treasury, incorporating Queensland Revenue Office, in the recent past?

**Ms Kelly:** As the honourable member may be aware, PwC was our internal auditor for a number of years. As Treasury's provider of internal audit services, PwC was authorised to have access to information considered necessary for the purposes of conducting reviews in accordance with its internal audit charter.

**CHAIR:** Leave has been sought that the tweet be tabled.

**Mr STEVENS:** Is it tabled from the Treasurer?

**CHAIR:** He sought leave, yes.

**Mr STEVENS:** I notice the Treasurer has been talking to Elon Musk as the document has all these little Xs over it. We are happy just to table it, Chair.

**CHAIR:** I believe that the person talking to Mr Musk is Mr Janetzki, because it is his tweet.

**Mr DICK:** Wrong again.

**CHAIR:** Order! Is leave granted? All those in favour? Against? Carried. Treasurer, obviously some of these items are not discussed. This may be misleading, but we have no power to actually implement that. That is something separate to this committee.

**Mr JANETZKI:** A follow-up question to the Acting Under Treasurer? That was in respect of PwC. Has Treasury, incorporating Queensland Revenue Office, ever provided confidential information with respect to taxation matters in Queensland to other members of the big four?

**Mr DICK:** On a point of order: perhaps the member can properly by corporate, or other business name, identify the companies which he is referring to?

**Mr JANETZKI:** EY, Deloitte, PwC.

**Mr DICK:** He just said, 'The big four.' I am asking him to properly identify for the purposes of *Hansard*.

**Mr STEVENS:** For *Hansard*?

**Mr DICK:** No, for the witness so they know what you mean by 'the big four'.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Ernst & Young, PwC, Deloitte, KPMG.

**Ms Kelly:** Are you talking about this financial year?

**Mr JANETZKI:** In the recent past. I accept that you have been recently appointed. To the best of your knowledge and drawing on the other expertise that is sitting in the room.

**Ms Kelly:** As appropriate, Treasury draws on the expertise of consultants or contractors in certain circumstances. We obviously do appropriate tests to ensure when we need the services of the big four. In terms of accessing the services of the big four and any other contractors or consultants we engage, as I said earlier, we ensure that we have the standard terms and conditions in place around confidentiality and conflict of interest. In terms of access to information, they would be provided access to appropriate information for them to conduct whatever the project is which they have been engaged to do. If there is sensitive or confidential data in there, we will ensure that that has been desensitised. We have protocols in place to ensure that data and information does not leave the building in terms of Treasury.

**CHAIR:** Treasurer, before the break I asked about the economic recovery and growth in the Queensland economy. Of a different importance is the operating position in this year's budget. With reference to page 3 of the SDS, will you update the committee on how our operating position compares to other Australian economies?

**Mr DICK:** I am pleased to provide you with that response. As I indicated before the break, we have had a very strong economic response to the pandemic. That has resulted in strong economic activity continuing in Queensland, effectively without break, during the pandemic and subsequently. That makes us the envy of the eastern seaboard. It is important to note that that has had a very significant benefit when it comes to our operating position. The record operating surplus of \$12.305 billion in 2022-23 was driven by unprecedented growth and unprecedented strength in coal royalties. As I said, it is the largest budget surplus in Queensland history. It follows a record budget surplus for Queensland that we set in 2021-22. Our net operating surplus in 2022-23 contrasts with the deficits of the big states on the east coast. The deficit in New South Wales is \$12 billion—

**CHAIR:** It is a mirror.

**Mr DICK:** That is exactly right, Chair. It is the exact opposite: a \$12 billion deficit in New South Wales. That was released by the then New South Wales government in the 2022-23 pre-election budget update. The budget deficit in Victoria, as announced in the 2023-24 budget, is \$10.3 billion. I think it is interesting to note during the time of trial during the pandemic the performance of Queensland compared to New South Wales and Victoria. We came out the best, as Queenslanders always do.

As royalty revenue normalises, though, the budget will return to more modest operating surpluses across the forward estimates, with the exception of 2023-24. We anticipate a one-off operating deficit of \$2.182 billion this financial year, reflecting our significant cost-of-living relief measures. That is being rolled out this financial year. That is the \$1.438 billion for additional electricity bill relief to support households and small businesses—something we can only do because of progressive coal royalties which our government has committed to. With the benefit of those progressive coal royalties in successive budgets now, those windfall revenue benefits have been targeted towards fiscal recovery, providing scope to both fund a large capital program and have a lower reliance on debt, both this year and going forward.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Treasurer, with reference to page 2 of the Treasury SDS, can you please update the committee on what the Queensland government is doing to improve regulatory policy in Queensland?

**Mr DICK:** That is an important question—something that is overlooked on occasions. We are committed as a government to ensuring regulatory settings minimise costs to businesses while providing necessary safeguards for Queenslanders and, of course, its environment. The government supports this through a best practice regulatory framework designed to ensure that the development, review and administration of regulation is necessary, effective and efficient.

Our government's regulatory reform agenda focuses on three core elements: first, rigorously assessing new and amending regulations to ensure regulation is necessary, fit for purpose and well designed; secondly, improving the existing stock of regulation by reviewing and reforming regulation; and, thirdly, improving the way regulators administer and enforce regulation—a very important matter: better regulating as well as trying to improve regulation generally.

In terms of new regulatory proposals, the government will introduce a new better regulation policy from September this year. Under that policy, an impact analysis statement will need to be prepared for all regulatory proposals, setting out the costs and benefits to businesses, individuals and the wider community. Regulatory impact assessment analysis is an important step in ensuring regulation is an enabler of economic growth and supports the wellbeing of Queenslanders. The relevant portfolio agency will be responsible for approving impact analysis statements. This occurs in other jurisdictions as well. To enhance transparency, approved impact analysis statements, even for proposals not assessed as having significant impacts, will be published on the responsible agency's website. No other jurisdiction in Australia provides this level of transparency for the regulatory impact analyses it undertakes in developing regulation.

Queensland Treasury's Office of Best Practice Regulation will enhance the support it provides to agencies, so we will reach out and conduct outreach work when developing regulation through extended technical advice to support best practice impact analysis and policy development. We have commenced already through Treasury a program of engagement and training to prepare agencies for that transition.

**CHAIR:** Treasurer, as you know, I represent the growing Logan region. With reference to page 2 of the Treasury SDS, could you please update the committee on how the budget is supporting good jobs and better services in that growing Logan region?

**Mr DICK:** We are both honoured to represent electorates in the City of Logan, along with the member for Macalister. We are honoured to represent that community but also to support a growing community through the budget this year to support good jobs and better services and enhance the great lifestyle we have in Logan.

In this year's budget in the Logan region we are making a range of investments to support jobs and infrastructure and enhance lifestyle. That includes \$1.4 billion for productivity-enhancing infrastructure and capital works, estimated to support 4,100 direct jobs in our region; \$3.4 billion on health for the Metro South hospital and health service, effectively supporting the operations of Metro South, some of which is in the City of Brisbane but much of which is in the City of Logan; \$128 million on education to maintain, improve and upgrade schools; \$50 million to expand and improve social housing; and \$11 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. I know that is a great program supported by you and the members for Macalister and Hervey Bay. You go to graduations in our communities. The beauty of that program is that not only does it provide a pathway to employment; it also provides a pathway to aspiration and success. Many people who complete Skilling Queenslanders for Work are so proud to do that because they receive one of their first qualifications—sometimes their only qualification. We are so pleased to be able to support that, to help them to get into the workforce and to enhance workforce participation. There is \$6.4 million for homelessness services, to provide essential housing and support services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Logan is not immune to that pressure.

In terms of capital investment, there is \$143 million as we continue to roll out the \$1 billion expansion and improvements to the Logan Hospital. I know that you, Chair, and the member for Macalister have attended that hospital on many occasions. We have money to support the expansion of the hospital—208 additional beds in stage 1, the rapid expansion modular ward with 28 new beds and the new, refurbished maternity project. The member for Macalister and I were delighted to attend that opening with the health minister recently. That will make a major improvement to birthing services for our community. Stage 2 of the Logan Hospital expansion, as part of the \$1 billion investment, will deliver an additional 112 extra overnight beds and more surgical theatres. That is going to be a great improvement.

There is more money for the upgrade to the Pacific Motorway between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill—\$110 million out of \$750 million. Interestingly, in our community a 200-megawatt Greenbank battery storage facility will be built, capable of powering 60,000 homes for two hours during the evening peak. We will be investing \$85 million out of \$325 million. That is our Energy and Jobs Plan coming to life in Logan. I know that is something that is important to you, Chair—

**CHAIR:** I have visited the site.

**Mr DICK:** I acknowledge your attendance at that site to have a look at the rollout of the project. I know that the Assistant Minister for Treasury, the member for Jordan, is also a big supporter of that investment which will support her community. I thank her for her attendance today at the hearing.

There is \$68 million to construct Everleigh State School—that is an important project for you, member for Logan—to open to students as soon as we complete that. We opened stage 1 in 2022. Stage 2 will increase the capacity of the school to cater for up to 1,400 students. That is a big school, because it is dealing with big growth in the area.

We have made a lot of investment in the community. I could go on at length. New investments include the Springwood Ambulance Station, and refurbishing and replacing the Beaudesert courthouse—\$22 million. There is money for local libraries in Logan. I think that is a really important initiative by our government. There is \$1.7 million to support public libraries in Logan as part of the Public Library Grants program. As I said, there is more money to support digital infrastructure in the Logan City Council—\$1.3 million out of \$2.5 million. There is more money for the detailed design, construction and fit-out for the Logan Riverine Discovery Centre at Eagleby. I know that is important for the member for Macalister. That is \$951,500 out of a \$2.8 million investment. There is more money to support Logan Together, a great program—

**CHAIR:** Great program.

**Mr DICK:** I acknowledge your interjection, Chair. It is a great program that supports our youngest children in Logan—kids zero to eight. It is a commitment we have made for many years as a government. There is \$750,000 out of \$3.8 million to support the wellbeing of every child from zero to

eight years. There is more money to support—and this will be something that will be dear to the heart of all members of the committee. There is \$500,000 out of a \$1 million total spend for new kitchen facilities to support food tourism experience at the Beenleigh Rum Distillery.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr DICK:** I acknowledge the acclamation of all members of the committee for that investment, particularly the member for Mermaid Beach—

**Mr STEVENS:** It is part of the old Albert shire.

**Mr DICK:** I acknowledge the mayor's contribution—the connoisseur of rum, someone who knows well the contribution that the Beenleigh Rum Distillery has made to our state.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** Thank you, member for Coomera. I will take that interjection as well. It is a fantastic facility and in this century is being repurposed for a new and continuing life. That is a great tourism centre. I think anyone in the south-east who goes up the motorway sees that. I am really pleased about that.

**Mr STEVENS:** It needs an off ramp.

**Mr DICK:** Let's deal with the Tourism Experience Development Fund and its impact on the Beenleigh Rum Distillery first, member for Mermaid Beach. I can assure you, member for Logan, and the member for Macalister that there will be no investment in a new nuclear facility anywhere in the City of Logan in this budget.

**CHAIR:** That is good to hear.

**Mr STEVENS:** Or Caloundra or Pumicestone!

**Mr TANTARI:** One good turn deserves another. I will take my opportunity to be parochial about Hervey Bay and the Wide Bay region. I ask the Treasurer: can you please update the committee on how the budget is supporting better services and a stronger economy in Hervey Bay and the surrounding Wide Bay region?

**Mr DICK:** Thank you for that question. In a similar way I know you have advocated strongly since your election as the member for Hervey Bay to support your growing community. We have seen some terrific economic growth in Hervey Bay during the pandemic as people opened their eyes in our state to the beauty of regional travel. We saw that bounce back in tourism and the bounce back subsequent to the pandemic. That has allowed us to make some enhanced commitments in that community given the strength of our budget and the strength of our economy.

There is \$1.9 billion for infrastructure in the Wide Bay region, supporting 5,200 direct jobs. There is almost \$850 million to support the operation of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service. The member for Hervey Bay and I had the privilege of attending the Hervey Bay Hospital recently. I acknowledge your advocacy for your community for the expansion of that hospital, for the delivery of greater services and also for the expansion of ambulance services in your community.

There is \$56 million to maintain, improve and upgrade schools in the Wide Bay. There is \$71 million for disaster recovery and betterment projects to support local government assets impacted by natural disaster events. We are still rolling that out. The more we strengthen our fiscal position and strengthen our budget position, the better we are able to deal with those unanticipated natural disaster events which regrettably strike Queensland more frequently than other parts of the country. We are still rolling out investments for disaster recovery betterment and resilience following natural disaster events in 2019 and 2023. There is more money to expand social housing—about \$66 million. There is more money for Skilling Queenslanders for Work—\$8 million.

There is \$170 million out of a \$1 billion total spend to construct a new highway between the existing Bruce Highway interchange at Woondum, south of Gympie, and Curra. I know that is an important investment for that community—actually for all of the Wide Bay, and anyone who travels on that road will benefit from that. That investment will improve traffic flow, safety, flood immunity and travel times. It will support at least on its own 576 direct jobs during construction.

There is \$116 million out of \$1.2 billion for the Paradise Dam improvement project. Some said we were never going to rebuild Paradise Dam, but we have. We have kept our promise and we are now delivering that. There is \$116 million out of \$1.2 billion to continue planning and undertake preconstruction activities prior to major construction works commencing in 2024. That project will deliver long-term water security for the Bundaberg region by returning the dam's capacity to 300,000 megalitres

and will ensure the dam continues to operate safely during extreme weather events—a very critical and important aspect of that project. Rebuilding and reinforcing the dam will create around 250 jobs during construction and deliver significant flow-on benefits for local businesses obviously, as well as supporting primary producers and others in the region who are reliant on this critical water supply.

There is \$52 million out of \$1.2 billion for the construction of the new Bundaberg Hospital, delivering around 121 new overnight beds across intensive care, coronary, medical, surgical, paediatric and mental health care. That is very important. Construction of that new hospital is expected to support almost 3,000 jobs—2,880. Completion is expected in the second half of 2027. It is part of our \$10 billion capital program across Queensland which is the biggest hospital building program in the country.

We have some more investment going to Hervey Bay Hospital—I know something that is very important to you, member for Hervey Bay. There is \$23 million out of \$82 million for the fit-out of level 2 of the clinical services building and a new 22-bed adult acute mental health inpatient unit. That will provide about 35 additional beds, including 10 more intensive care beds and a new rooftop helipad. It will support 215 jobs. The new mental health inpatient unit will create 30 full-time health jobs locally—so not only jobs during construction but ongoing healthcare jobs in the future.

Of course we have money going into big renewable energy projects. There is \$200 million for the development of the 500-megawatt Tarong West Wind Farm near Kingaroy—Australia's largest publicly owned wind farm. We are very proud of that. That is something that will not just support that region but support all of Queensland. That comes off our history of investment.

There are 426 extra nurses since our election. That is a 27 per cent increase in the number of nurses. There are 157 extra doctors. That is an increase of 42 per cent. There are 75 extra ambulance officers—an increase of 30 per cent. There are 58 extra firefighters—an increase of 54 per cent in the region. I do not have those numbers to hand but I know that, whatever happens, Labor always invests in the front line and certainly invests more than the LNP ever does.

There are a number of other projects highlighted in the Wide Bay Regional Action Plan: \$8 million for the Kepnock State High School; \$3.5 million for the Maryborough area brigade headquarters; \$2.9 million out of \$9.2 million for a major capital upgrade of the K'gari Central Station day use area—I know that is very important to you, member for Hervey Bay; \$2.6 million out of a \$5.9 million total spend for the Scarness Beachside Tourist Caravan Park. I was pleased to visit that with the member for Hervey Bay. That is going to be a magnificent contribution to your community.

That is fine. I have plenty more to go through. Clear your throat as you need, member for Mermaid Beach. I will come to a very quick conclusion. There is \$2.1 million out of a \$2.2 million total spend to construct additional specialist classrooms at the James Nash State High School. I would go on but I will defer to my friends in the opposition.

**CHAIR:** The deputy chair felt that you were going on too long about Hervey Bay. I now turn to the member for Toowoomba South for a question.

**Mr TANTARI:** He cannot go on long enough!

**Mr JANETZKI:** I have a question to the Acting Under Treasurer just to finish our discussion about consultancies. Treasury's internal audit contract with PwC ended 30 June. Who has been appointed to replace PwC with that internal audit contract?

**Ms Kelly:** I have some details on that. On 5 June, Treasury advised PwC its engagement to provide internal audit services would cease on 30 June. It was also directed to cease work on existing audits at that point in time. On 7 June, Treasury advised the partner from PwC that his appointment as the head of internal audit had ceased and we appointed a Treasury employee as the head of internal audit who has the appropriate qualifications.

As I said, as at 30 June PwC was informed that all other engagements between Treasury and PwC for professional services were terminated or not renewed. What I can confirm is that on 19 June Treasury issued a request for a quote for the provision of internal audit and risk management services using a selective process for all suppliers—except PwC—currently listed on the standing offer arrangement. The process is currently underway to appoint a new internal auditor.

**Mr JANETZKI:** The process for undertaking that review will take a period of time, during which the Treasury internal appointment will serve as internal auditor for that period of time?

**Ms Kelly:** Yes.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Will the length of time you expect the tender period to go on for be three months, six months or—

**Ms Kelly:** We will process it as quickly as possible.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can I call up Mr Singleton from the Motor Accident Insurance Commission. Welcome, Mr Singleton. What does RACQ's withdrawal from CTP in Queensland mean for the review that is currently underway?

**Mr Singleton:** I believe the Treasurer covered this question in his earlier statement. I will not repeat what he said.

**CHAIR:** Do you want it repeated?

**Mr JANETZKI:** No, I do not need to have it repeated. I was just looking for Mr Singleton's perspective, but if it is the same as the Treasurer's I will leave it there. Mr Singleton, is increasing premiums to underpin the sustainability of the scheme now likely?

**Mr Singleton:** No, the insurance premium is based on risk factors, the number of claims and the cost of claims. It is not affected by the withdrawal of RACQ.

**Mr JANETZKI:** This question is for the Acting Under Treasurer and relates to the Queensland Revenue Office. The Queensland Revenue Office website crashed on 20 July, the day on which annual payroll tax returns were due together with payment. No stakeholder communication was provided until 4 pm. How much has been spent in the past year on increasing capacity to support lodgements and payments to be made on the right day?

**Ms Kelly:** Can I ask the honourable member to clarify what he is asking?

**CHAIR:** It might be a point of clarification. If you need to make a statement, then it might make it clearer for the Acting Under Treasurer.

**Mr JANETZKI:** It could also be clear if we had the acting revenue commissioner as well, but I accept that the Acting Under Treasurer will answer. I understand that the website has gone down on a number of occasions. On 20 July it was particularly concerning for businesses that no stakeholder communications went out until 4 pm. If this has happened in the past, did QRO invest more into making sure it does not happen in the future?

**CHAIR:** Acting Under Treasurer, if you need to receive other information, there are a number of other issues on which you will endeavour to get back to us. I may be pre-empting you.

**Ms Kelly:** I am aware of the incident. I also understand that the acting commissioner extended the time frame for submissions to support stakeholders. In terms of your question around whether it has happened in the past and what we have done to address that, I will seek to come back to you before the end of the hearing.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, my concern is that the communication was only issued to businesses at four o'clock on the day, and they were under the assumption that they had to make their lodgements and payments. I will take on notice that you will be coming back with information as to what was done to try and alleviate those concerns and that it will not happen again in the future. The Queensland Revenue Office was rebranded in 2020. How much did that rebranding cost?

**Ms Kelly:** I do not have that information at hand.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can you possibly provide that information?

**Ms Kelly:** I will seek to provide the information before the end of the hearing.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I want to explore the combination and realignment of the justice function of SPER with the revenue collection service of QRO. Acting Under Treasurer, can you tell us the cost of collecting each debt in SPER?

**CHAIR:** Meaning, of course, the average cost. We do not want a list of every single—

**Mr JANETZKI:** Yes.

**Ms Kelly:** As per page 9 of the SDS, the average cost per \$100 of revenue and penalty debt collected was \$4.74. Sorry, I should say that in 2023-24 the estimated number is \$3.46.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Can I call up Mr Leon Allen, QTC CEO. Mr Allen, thank you for joining us at the main table. Since becoming CEO of QTC in February the entirety of the executive leadership team has left QTC. What was it about the performance of the then executive team that led to them leaving?

**Mr Allen:** Like all good organisations, QTC is adapting its workforce to the changing environment. We continue to deliver on its core objectives to the highest possible standard. Based on benchmarks for the financial services industry, QTC currently has a very average level of turnover. QTC's employees, including executive management, are employed under individual contracts and appointed under the Queensland Treasury Corporation Act 1988. It is critical that Queensland Treasury

Corporation's employment practices are competitive in financial markets and attract and retain high calibre employees to execute our strategy. I would note that in 2022-23 we saw the first material change in QTC's leadership in 12½ years. That, as you would be aware, was precipitated by the resignation of the former CEO and the deputy CEO.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Mr Allen, upon commencing as the new CEO were you comfortable that Queensland's debt arrangements and borrowing requirements had been appropriately managed? It was a significant change, and obviously there are going to be some changes when there is a new CEO. I am well aware of that; I have been in enough businesses myself. It seems extraordinary that the entirety of the executive leadership team would leave. Were you comfortable with the performance of the borrowing arrangements of QTC?

**CHAIR:** I do think that 'comfortable' is subjective and personal, but I think we know what you are getting at so I might put the question to Mr Allen.

**Mr Allen:** QTC is a high performing organisation. It has performed to that high level over its extended period and it continues to do so. This last financial year alone, \$13½ billion of funding raised, some \$393 million in returns to the government more generally; on an unaudited basis, a payment of a dividend and an operating result over \$150 million. I think that underlines the strength of the operation.

As I say, to the extent that leadership renewal is a necessary and good practice within any organisation, that has certainly transpired. As I noted with the resignations that occurred in terms of the deputy CEO function, I have made a decision not to replace that function. I think we can streamline operations at QTC and we have certainly taken the opportunity to do that. We also combined two former managing director roles into a chief operating officer role—again, looking to streamline operations. I think that will be beneficial for the long-term success and performance of the organisation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Mr Allen, thank you for that. In regards to the people who have stepped into those positions—whether they are in an interim basis or have been permanently appointed—can you speak to their experience and qualifications?

**Mr DICK:** We need a specific case, don't we—'those people'.

**Mr JANETZKI:** There are only so many in the executive leadership team.

**Mr DICK:** I do not know, but it is very broad. It is hard for the witness to answer.

**CHAIR:** I assume he is going to say that there is a variety of educational backgrounds that he finds appropriate.

**Mr JANETZKI:** We do not need the chair answering the question.

**CHAIR:** To be honest, the question answers itself, but anyway I call Mr Allen.

**Mr Allen:** On an interim basis, we leveraged capability within the business—so people with risk experience and background into the chief risk officer role; people with people and culture capabilities into that function; people with finance, data and tech capability into that function; people within advisory business into that function.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Were they internal appointments or reassignments or from ministerial offices?

**Mr Allen:** Everyone in that business was within the business already when I arrived, except for one individual I have received on secondment from Treasury. I am pleased to say that through initiation of recruitment processes, we have been able to identify a new chief operating officer in Kulwant Singh-Pangly, who will start with us in mid to late September. He joins us most recently as the CFO of Rest Super. Nathan Cowen will join us next week as the chief risk officer. He is an individual with some 20 years with Goldman Sachs, most recently as the head of Asia-Pacific risk and head of global commodities and a member of the enterprise risk group for Asia-Pacific to give you some indication of the capability we are bringing into the organisation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Thank you for that. I have more questions but Mr Allen can be excused, Chair. Treasurer, will you reverse Treasurer Trad's 2019 amendments to the Auditor-General Act which enabled sharing of protected information with the Treasurer and Queensland Treasury which impacted adversely on independence?

**Mr DICK:** We are going back in time, aren't we, Chair? It is not currently the policy of the government to do that.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Perhaps a follow-up question to the Treasurer in respect of the current appointment process in relation to the Under Treasurer's position. I noticed we have the Acting Under Treasurer today, with an 'acting' in front of her title. Can the Treasurer enlighten us as to the recruitment process and when a formal permanent appointment will be made?

**Mr DICK:** That process is being conducted—as all appointments of chief executives—by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The question needed to be directed to the Premier.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Acting Under Treasurer, I understand there are a number of consultative committees that are run out of the Queensland Revenue Office. I was wondering when the last time the tax advisory board met with representatives from Treasury? And can you explain their activities over the last 12 months?

**Ms Kelly:** I will come back to you before the end of the hearing with that information.

**CHAIR:** We note that some information will come back at the end of the session. We might need to reserve some time to answer these technical questions at the end. My question is to the Treasurer. My family comes from a long history of mining and natural resources jobs. With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Treasurer advise what support the government is providing for the development of our traditional and also the emerging natural industries?

**Mr DICK:** Your family's history is similar to many Queenslanders because the resources industry has given so much to our state over many generations. That will continue because Queensland is the place to be for natural resource development. We saw that just a few weeks ago at the World Mining Congress where the world came to Queensland. It was an opportunity to showcase our mining credentials to the world. I was very pleased to host an investor forum focused on critical minerals. We had more than 200 participants at that investment forum—all absolutely excited about the future of critical minerals in Queensland, particularly our new critical minerals strategy and all that that presents for the state and the world and the investment we are making in the development of critical minerals \$245 million.

Queensland has the resources and the skilled workforce. We have got the ambition to turn that investment into clean energy, and that is the investment and the clean energy that our nation and our world needs. That is what we focused on at the World Mining Congress. Hosting the World Mining Congress was important for us also, given our position as the world's fourth largest coal producer. Queensland is also second in the world for lead production, third for bauxite and zinc, and fifth for silver. I think it is important for Queenslanders, including young Queenslanders, to know that. Our state has a long and proud mining history. There is going to be a great future for mining and we need skilled workers in particular to help us develop that industry in the future.

We also have a proven track record in our state of mobilising to develop new sectors, from gold to coal to CSG. We have a thriving met sector. I was very pleased to take 30 companies on a trade mission to South America to Expomin, the biggest mining conference in South America in Chile a couple of months ago to show Queensland met's ingenuity, invention and expertise. I saw firsthand the demand for their services and their technology. Our state has set new records for our exports, reflecting the surge in the value of Queensland coal in particular.

Support for the development of traditional natural resources industries includes as part of our Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan providing \$68½ million over five years starting in the 2022-23 budget to support transformation of the Queensland resources industry. The budget is providing additional funding of: \$21 million over two years to implement the Frontier Gas Exploration grants program to help unlock significant gas resources in the Bowen and Galilee basins; \$520 million very importantly is being provided in this budget to establish the LEIP program, the Low Emissions Investment Partnerships program, to fast-track capital investments at our metallurgical coalmines in particular to rapidly reduce emissions.

As I said, support for our emerging natural resource industries, such as critical minerals, is also significant with a \$245 million investment to be delivered through the Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy. As part of that \$245 million investment, there are a number of initiatives that we have launched: Reduced rent for new and existing exploration permits for critical minerals, reducing that rent to zero for the next five years, which is worth an estimated \$55 million; establishing critical minerals zones, initially at Julia Creek, Richmond and around Mount Isa, with \$75 million to support investment and renewed focus in advanced critical minerals projects; establishing Critical Minerals Queensland, a one-stop office to oversee the development of the sector and help drive and attract international investment; \$5 million to target mining waste and tailings for critical minerals and \$8 million for scientific research including circular economy initiatives, providing \$1 million to foster research in environmental, social and governance excellence.

Central to what we are doing is the \$100 million Queensland Critical Minerals and Battery Technology Fund. That was open to applicants about a month ago, on 30 June this year. That fund will provide support to enhance the extraction and processing of Queensland critical minerals and

accelerate very importantly development of battery technologies and other advanced materials. We have also committed \$5 billion, as I have said earlier, to deliver CopperString 2032, with \$594 million delivered over the next year to start construction. There are a range of initiatives in place.

Very importantly, we invested money into our Common User Facility in Townsville. That is a \$75 million investment to initially focus on vanadium, but other rare and critical minerals in the future to particularly help small miners develop their ore and produce that in a way that they can take to market so they can attract capital investment to expand their mining prospects. There are a number of initiatives we are adopting and implementing to support the resources sector in Queensland. We are very pleased to be able to do that.

**Mr TANTARI:** Treasurer, I would like to now reference page 3 of the SDS which has received enormous interest within the community, particularly if you can advise of any electricity rebate support available for Queenslanders in this year's budget and how it compares to other states and federal programs?

**Mr DICK:** We have the most significant Cost of Living Rebate, the electricity rebate program, in the country. I thank you for your question, member for Hervey Bay, because it is something that we should be clearly explaining to Queenslanders. That budget that I released in June will deliver greater and more widespread cost-of-living relief than any other government in Australia, state or federal—the \$1.483 billion in additional electricity bill support for households and small businesses. I have not referred to that previously, but small businesses will benefit from that rebate program in partnership with the federal government. We are more than doubling the size of the federally agreed support package for Queensland under the National Energy Bill Relief Fund. As part of that package, all 2.2 million Queensland households will automatically receive a \$550 Cost of Living Rebate for their electricity bills in 2023-24. Some states are not providing that general relief to all households; they are only providing relief to vulnerable households and to small business as part of the agreed federal package. We have expanded that significantly, and we are very pleased to do that. As I touched on earlier, 600,000 vulnerable households will receive a total of \$1,072 from our government. We have money going to eligible small businesses—I think 205,000 of them; if I am wrong, they will be corrected by Treasury officials here today. They will receive an automatic rebate of \$650. That is helping small business with the increasing cost of electricity.

Very importantly, we have the Uniform Tariff Policy in our state. No matter where you live, whether you live in Torbanlea or in the Torres Strait, every Queenslanders pays the same tariff. That requires an investment of \$500 million a year to offset energy costs and ensure regional Queensland electricity prices are comparable to the South-East. I think that is a great thing our state does. When you hear those numbers that I talked about earlier, the biggest electricity network connected for a nation in the world, you just think of the nature of that infrastructure, the nature of benefits that we provide through a government owned, publicly owned, energy system. I think that is something we should all be proud of. It is something that Australians should be proud of, that we connect this network, except for Western Australia; that we are all connected. I think that is important. There are challenges in delivering that electricity, both through the capital investment and otherwise, but I think it is a very significant thing we have done in this budget to put cost of living at the centre of the budget and deliver that benefit back to Queenslanders wherever they live in the state.

**CHAIR:** Torbanlea really does not get mentioned enough in estimates, does it? It got its go this time. Do you have a follow-up question, member for Hervey Bay? Torbanlea gets mentioned again.

**Mr TANTARI:** Another question in the round of cost-of-living support. Thank you for your answer to the last question, Treasurer. With reference to page 3 again of the Treasury SDS, are you able to advise the committee of the concessions available in the budget for Queenslanders to tackle the national cost of living?

**Mr DICK:** If you live in Torbanlea, Chair, you will get concessional benefits that run across a range of areas—essentials like electricity, transport, health, housing, education and training services. You know what, Chair? You do not have to live in Torbanlea; you can live in any part of Queensland and benefit from our concessions.

**CHAIR:** Like Howard?

**Mr DICK:** I do not want to get into the Torbanlea-Howard fight. I do not want to do that here today. I know they are very proud communities. Whether you live in the Wide Bay, any of those big communities like Hervey Bay or Bundaberg, or the small towns and the small communities, everyone benefits from the \$8.2 billion in concessions we have locked in, in this budget—

**Mr TANTARI:** It is huge.

**Mr DICK:**—a 21 per cent increase. I take the interjection from the member for Hervey Bay. It is a huge investment, and we make no apology for doing that, using the revenue that we have generated as a state, particularly through coal royalties and giving it back to Queenslanders. We have \$1.6 billion in new and expanded cost-of-living relief. Some \$1.5 billion is that additional electricity bill relief that I have talked about. I have mentioned the benefits that go to Queensland households.

We have a range of other measures that I think is important to talk about because they help tackle the cost-of-living pressure facing Queenslanders. Some Queenslanders are not aware of those benefits, and I think it is incumbent on all members of parliament to explain to Queenslanders the benefits that they are entitled to. There is \$670 million to continue providing the government managed housing rental rebate targeted to low-income families and individuals. That helps offset rent increases for low-income households and individuals. There is \$206 million to provide motor vehicle, boat, special interest vehicle and heavy vehicle registration concessions. There is \$83 million to continue to provide the textbook and resource allowance to assist parents and caregivers with the cost of textbooks and learning resources.

There is \$70 million over four years to increase the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme. So, for people living in places like Hervey Bay, but more broadly in the bush or regions where they need to travel for essential medical treatment, they will receive additional benefits through the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, expanded by an additional \$70 million over four years. There is \$43 million over five years to reduce Queensland's learner licence fees. There is \$23 million over four years to reduce the cost of replacing Queensland driver licences, photo identification cards and industry authority cards from 1 July this year.

There is \$22 million over four years to support the new initiative of the nursing and midwifery student regional placement allowance. That is \$5,000 per student. So, if students have to do their final year of training as a nurse or a midwife, they will be supported with a \$5,000 cost-of-living allowance. That is a way to not only support student nurses and midwives with cost-of-living relief, but to open their eyes to the benefits of working in regional parts of Queensland. That is very important as well.

There is \$4.8 million over two years to extend the availability of FairPlay vouchers. That is our SwimStart program to eligible children aged zero to four years for learn-to-swim activities. There is \$2.7 million over two years to extend and expand School Breakfast Programs in areas experiencing hardship, and \$315,000 to provide grant funding to Foodbank to deliver critical food relief. I want to recognise Foodbank, along with all the other community-based food relief agencies. There are many in Logan. I met recently with some people from Lighthouse based at Loganholme. There are many community organisations, not just in Logan, but throughout Queensland—on the Darling Downs, on the Gold Coast, on the Sunshine Coast—that make a big difference. We are doing our best to support them going forward.

**CHAIR:** I want to follow up on some measures that are not glamorous, but are important. Referencing page 9 of the Treasury SDS, can the Treasurer update the committee on the performance of the Debt Recovery and Compliance program, including any recent milestones? It is something that the committee has a focus on over time.

**Mr DICK:** It is a matter of interest to many Queenslanders. I want to recognise the work of the Queensland Revenue Office and also the team that works in the State Penalties Enforcement Registry seeking to recover money that is due and owing to Queenslanders. I am very pleased that SPER has delivered a record \$400 million return to Queenslanders—\$400 million in collections for the financial year—an increase of more than \$100 million over the previous year.

That result coincides with another successful operation for SPER in the state's south-east targeting repeat traffic fine offenders where officers seized 58 vehicles and collected more than \$1.7 million in cash. That operation saw SPER officers execute seizure warrants at locations across Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast, taking its haul to a record 360 vehicles seized for the past year.

I am advised that SPER officers have collected over \$1.7 million in cash and seized 58 vehicles across South-East Queensland in recent weeks. This includes seizing a Mustang, a Porsche Cayenne, high spec utes and even a Harley-Davidson from debtors. I am further advised that eight of these will be sold because the owners refused to pay. It is interesting that these debts become due and owing to Queenslanders but some people adamantly refuse to pay for whatever reason. I do not know; it is not the way I was brought up. Some people refuse to pay and they would rather see their assets seized and sold than do the right thing by their fellow Queenslanders. These are people who have demonstrated they are unwilling to obey the road rules and they have endangered other road users through their actions.

I can inform the committee that one of these debtors incurred more than 20 traffic fines in the past 12 months alone including one dozen speeding fines. SPER has now taken their vehicle. On behalf of the government, I make no apologies for seizing vehicles where people disregard the safety of others and adamantly refuse to pay their fines that are due and owing.

We are absolutely committed to recovering money owed to the people of Queensland. It is why we implemented the Debt Recovery and Compliance Program. That program has been a great success. It has invested in SPER's field enforcement capabilities to target those debtors who continue to break the law and rack up fines on occasion with impunity. Those who endanger others in the community and refuse to pay their debts are running out of places to hide. SPER is finding them, seizing their assets and selling them. The success of this operation is consistent with our rationale for investing in SPER and its hardworking officers.

The Debt Recovery and Compliance Program has generated revenue and collections of \$734 million over 2½ years. The program was approved in September 2020. That is very significant. Due to the success of the program in generating additional revenue and collections for Queensland, we will provide funding from 2024-25 of another \$49.4 million over three years and \$16.9 million ongoing. This has been a great success. It is a testament to the hard work of SPER officers, but they are delivering and generating a return on that investment to Queenslanders. That is money that we can then reinvest in schools, hospitals, roads and other essential services and infrastructure that we are delivering for Queenslanders.

**CHAIR:** This is something that the deputy chair and I have followed with legislation and questioning for a number of years.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I would like to ask a question to the acting Under Treasurer. What was the value of the SPER debt that was written off in June 2023?

**Ms Kelly:** Debt write-off in 2022-23, as the Treasurer just said—

**Ms SIMPSON:** For June?

**Mr DICK:** For the month?

**Ms Kelly:** For the month of June?

**Ms SIMPSON:** Correct.

**Ms Kelly:** I have the annual of figure of \$107.8 million for 2022-23.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Given that the Treasurer answered question on notice No. 734 up until halfway through June, that would mean we still do not have a breakdown just for June. Could I please have the June breakdown for how much was written off and how much was satisfied by the use of a work and development order? For June, could I please have the breakdown of the amount of debt that was paid, written off or satisfied by the use of a work and development order?

**CHAIR:** My understanding is that is the same question that you asked before.

**Ms SIMPSON:** No, it is for June. We heard the amount for the whole of year. I was asking for the June amount given that there is a month-by-month breakdown in a question on notice, but we do not have the June amount because the Treasurer did not answer for June as a whole.

**CHAIR:** I understand. In this case the acting Under Treasurer in your first question clarified was it for June and then provided the figure that she had at that point. So you have asked the question before. I do not know if the acting Under Treasurer can add anything to that.

**Ms Kelly:** As I said, I have at hand the annual figure for 2022-23 of debt write-off of \$107.8 million. In terms of work development orders, the annual figure for 2022-23 is \$4.9 million.

**CHAIR:** I was just explaining that I did not think it was a lack of understanding from the acting Under Treasurer. She clarified that she knew what the question was and explained that she had a particular figure that might be of help to the committee.

**Ms SIMPSON:** So was there a higher amount of write-off for June, or did you envisage that was fairly consistent with previous month-by-month write-offs by SPER?

**CHAIR:** This is going to be an exciting answer! Acting Under Treasurer, for the third time?

**Ms Kelly:** The figure I have before me here is the 2022-23 annual figure. I do not have the June figure with me.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Could you take on notice to provide the June breakdown?

**CHAIR:** Of course the acting Under Treasurer cannot, under the standing orders, take a question on notice. However, you could endeavour to see whether there is a possibility of getting back to the committee by the end of the session. Have you finished, member for Maroochydhore?

**Ms SIMPSON:** I have other questions, but I would appreciate if the Under Treasurer could undertake to come back to the committee before the end of business.

**CHAIR:** I do not think that the acting Under Treasurer had the answer and was avoiding it. She clarified that she understood—

**Ms SIMPSON:** I am happy for her to come back to the committee with the advice. My next question is to the Treasurer. The Coaldrake review recommended that the Auditor-General be allowed to independently set basic rates for audit fees without the Treasurer's approval and be given the discretion to undertake performance audits on government owned corporations. When will these recommendations be implemented?

**Mr DICK:** The implementation of the Coaldrake review is a matter that is being led by the Premier. There were questions asked of her today. The member for Maroochydhore was part of the committee for that hearing and those questions should be properly put to her. It is also part of a legislative process that is moving through the House.

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question to the acting Under Treasurer is: was any action taken by the Privacy Commissioner against Treasury in connection with the 8,400 people whose enforcement notices were incorrectly sent to another person in May 2022?

**CHAIR:** Last year in estimates we had the same issue.

**Ms Kelly:** As the honourable member has pointed to, in May 2022 there was a data-processing error that impacted a batch of SPER enforcement notices which resulted to notices being sent to the wrong individuals. I can confirm that system changes have been implemented and validated by a suitably qualified third party to ensure that the error does not occur again.

Of course throughout the process we kept the Office of the Information Commissioner informed of every step of the process and what was occurring. We ensured they knew what was being provided to the debtors and what steps we were taking to rectify the issue. To date, the Office of the Information Commissioner has accepted four complaints for mediation with Treasury. Two complaints have been resolved and two have been finalised on an unresolved basis.

For June 2023, \$77.13 million worth of debt has been paid, written off or satisfied via the use of a work and development order. Of this debt, 48.2 per cent was paid, 51.1 per cent was written off and 0.7 per cent was satisfied via the use of a work and development order.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I call Mr Busine, again, from CS Energy.

**Mr PURDIE:** I appreciate this question might predate your tenure, but I am hoping that in preparation for today, or otherwise, you have been briefed on it. Why did CS Energy resign their membership of the Queensland Resource Council and did the Treasurer or anyone else from government ask them to quit?

**Mr Busine:** I will have to take advice on that because I am only new into the role and I do not have the background on the reason for the resignation, so I would rather take advice and come back to you.

**Mr PURDIE:** I am happy for you to do that; thank you. I refer to the collapse of Genuity, a 50 per cent partner in the Callide power station. What negotiations have been held with other potential partners or the government in respect of potential joint venture partnerships?

**CHAIR:** I will leave commercial-in-confidence issues with you.

**Mr Busine:** CS Energy is currently working with the administrators who have been appointed to IG Power. We are in discussions with the administrator and we have had direct conversations with both the ultimate owning parties of the joint venture. At this point, that process is ongoing. There has been no finality to it and we remain in conversations.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Have the administrators set out any timeline for coming to some significant decisions?

**Mr Busine:** I think that there are no firm timelines. The administrators currently have their next meeting of creditors on 1 September and they are considering what their next steps are at this point in time.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Have the options available to the administrators been canvassed publicly in meetings, or will they be canvassed more generally in the 1 September meeting?

**CHAIR:** Obviously, there is a commercial-in-confidence issue with sensitive things.

**Mr Busine:** The way I can answer that is an administrator will have a number of steps that it can take, and they are not steps that are particular to our set of circumstances. They will have a range of options they will look at. It will be a decision that they make and put to the creditors at the time.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Mr Busine, you can be excused; thank you. I call Professor Simshauser from Powerlink. It was reported in the *Australian* in November that Powerlink came under pressure from the Treasurer and that Powerlink did not ultimately then renew its QRC membership. Can you confirm whether those reports are accurate and, if so, what was that pressure?

**Prof. Simshauser:** No, I have not spoken to the Treasurer at all about QRC.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Excellent. Thank you Professor, you are excused. I direct my next question to the Acting Under Treasurer. I am interested in a couple of things that are very topical at the moment. Has Treasury undertaken any work in relation to artificial intelligence or ChatGPT, or have any functions within Treasury started using them?

**Mr DICK:** It is not in the business of supporting the LNP.

**Ms Kelly:** There is a piece of work that is being led by the digital department in the department of transport and the Chief Information Officer that is looking at exactly that issue and the processes, policies and protocols that would go around that. We had a briefing of the leadership board quite recently on the whole-of-government approach that will be undertaken. I know that Treasury is contributing to the consultation.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Is that a function that is specifically tailored for Treasury, or does it have a broader reach—a whole-of-government approach?

**Ms Kelly:** A whole-of-government approach.

**Mr JANETZKI:** When did you say the project would be coming to its conclusion? It will obviously have to be open-ended in some respects, but is there an end date when there will be some findings made or something publically said about it?

**Ms Kelly:** That would be a question best directed to the appropriate department because they are leading the project.

**CHAIR:** We will not going to use ChatGPT to write our report. I want to make that clear.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I am watching your speeches in parliament!

**CHAIR:** We will move to a question from the member for Macalister.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 3 of the Treasury SDS, will the Treasurer update the committee on cost-of-living support for families and parents with kindy-aged children?

**Mr DICK:** It is a great program. Kindy as a general principle is a great program, but we are so pleased to have announced in the budget the new commitment by our government to support free kindy for every four-year-old child in our state from 1 January.

**CHAIR:** We are just annoyed that our kids are too old!

**Mr DICK:** There is always opportunity to produce more Queenslanders who might benefit from the program. I am not in the business of quoting Peter Costello ever, and I will not start today. I would endorse this program, though. It is 15 hours of free kindy each week for all four-year-olds from 1 January 2024. It is a \$645 million commitment over the forward estimates and around \$189 million a year going forward. That is 50,000 additional Queensland children who will attend kindy for free. Those families will receive a cost-of-living benefit of \$4,600. In addition to relieving cost-of-living pressures for families, free kindy will remove costs as a barrier to participation in a kindergarten program. This will support labour market participation for parents and improve educational outcomes. On all measures, it is very important.

By adding \$645 million to the current kindy program, our government's total investment in kindergarten will be \$2 billion over four years, and I think that is something to recognise. We will also focus that investment on attracting and retaining a quality workforce. We will need kindergarten teachers to assist us in this program. I have had the privilege of visiting kindergartens, as have all members—regardless of where they sit on the committee table. I attended the C&K kindergarten in Kingston recently to see some of those young children being taught by some brilliant early childhood and care teachers, many of whom have had very long careers working in kindergarten. I acknowledge

Mrs King, my kindergarten teacher, who I saw some time ago at St Bartholomew's Anglican Church at Mount Gravatt. It is a church well known to the chair, but not one that he attends and worships at. I have a fond memory of Mrs King—and that is a long time ago for me, I must add.

I do not think we can praise those kindy teachers enough for what they do. I was privileged to attend the Harty Street Kindergarten in Coorparoo with the Premier and the member for Greenslopes, the Acting Speaker, a few weeks ago. This is a 60-year-old community kindergarten and the two or three generations of children—maybe more—that have been through that kindergarten that have contributed to Queensland have been very important. I have a few matters that I would address the committee on, if I may, when we are in a position to do so. Given the time, Chair, if that is satisfactory to the committee?

**CHAIR:** We do have a lot of issues. If we have some extra time we might return to questions, but if you have some information you can provide for the committee on some of the questions—

**Mr DICK:** I might do that to assist the committee, and that is my practice, as members of the committee know, to try and assist you as quickly and as early as possible in this process when you raise matters that cannot immediately be answered, so I want to address some of those issues.

The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about modelling done on the effect of a purported change to payroll tax and what effect that would have on physiotherapists, dentists, radiographers and other health service providers. In a separate question, the member for Toowoomba South asked about modelling on the impact of the purported change on aged-care residents and their access to general practitioners. As the Acting Under Treasurer has made clear on a number of occasions during the hearings, there has been no change to payroll tax arrangements in Queensland since 2008—I made that point as well—so there is no change that could be modelled for those cohorts or any cohort. The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about GPs supposedly withdrawing services because of payroll tax. I am advised by the Queensland Revenue Office that the answer to that question is no.

The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about payroll tax liability notices and appeals to QCAT or the Supreme Court. I am advised that this is the longstanding position which has been in place since early 2002—that is, 21½ years ago. Where a taxpayer is dissatisfied with a decision on their objection, they may appeal to the Supreme Court or apply to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal for a review of the decision. It is a legislative requirement that they must have paid the whole of the amount of the tax and late payment interest payable under the assessment to which the decision relates before they can appeal or seek a review. That is what the law provides.

The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about the timing of the automatic exemption from land tax for principal place of residence that I announced earlier this year. I am advised the automatic land tax principal place of residence exemption applies to the 2023-24 land tax year and ongoing years. The automatic exemption will commence from October 2023 when the Queensland Revenue Office begins issuing land tax notices for these types of landowners. I am advised work underway includes providing information on the Queensland Revenue Office website, stakeholder and client engagement, system development, and staff readiness activities.

The member for South Brisbane asked about the amount of public, community and affordable housing funded through the Housing Investment Fund. As I touched on during the hearing, the Housing Investment Fund is now administered by the Minister for Housing, but I am advised the Housing Investment Fund has 1,500 homes approved. The first two developments in Redcliffe and Chermiside will deliver 118 homes. Construction on the Chermiside site commenced on 14 July 2023 and Redcliffe is expected to commence shortly. I am advised that the Brisbane Housing Co. expects tenancing of the Chermiside development to commence in the middle of next year and tenancing for the Redcliffe development to commence late next year. However, I make the point that the Brisbane Housing Co., like every construction entity in the state, is not immune to the impact of the rising cost of labour and construction materials when it comes to construction, including retaining an appropriate builder to build those premises, and the delay in those projects should not be put at the feet of the Brisbane Housing Co. and nor should they be criticised by anyone. They are a great organisation that has produced and supported Queenslanders for many years.

I am further advised that the government has also committed to purchase 335 ex-National Rental Affordability Scheme homes in Townsville and South-East Queensland for social housing through the Housing Investment Fund. These are properties that would otherwise have been lost from the social and affordable housing market. I am advised the first 94 properties have been purchased, with 82 tenants now moved in.

The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about meetings of the tax advisory board. I am advised that the Queensland Revenue Office works with stakeholders to engage with industry on issues relating to tax, royalty administration and penalty debt and regarding ongoing business activities and new initiatives or policy changes all of the time. I am advised, however, that the Taxation Consultative Committee met twice in 2022-23. It subsequently met on 12 July 2023.

On the titles office, although no undertaking was made in response to the member for Mermaid Beach about the titles office, I am happy to provide some further information for the member and the committee. The Auditor-General's report 11 of 2021 titled *Establishing the Queensland Future Fund* clearly describes Queensland's titles registry structure following its transfer. Page 7 of the report notes—

The Debt Retirement Fund transferred part of its ownership of the Queensland Titles Registry to other Queensland government funds and entities. In exchange, it received more liquid investments from these entities.

More liquid investments include assets such as cash, equities or bonds. This is, as the member would know, standard investment management practice where portfolios are rebalanced through the exchange of one asset for the equivalent value of another asset. This practice is not described as 'bartering' by QIC, I am advised, or any global funds manager to our knowledge. The rebalanced asset allocation of the Debt Retirement Fund as at 30 June 2022 was reported on page 19 of the Queensland Treasury's 2021-22 annual report.

The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about the cost of the Queensland Revenue rebranding. I am advised the QRO rebranding occurred in a staged way to align with already planned system and business changes. On this basis, the rebranding was met from within internal resources with no additional cost. The member for Toowoomba South asked the Acting Under Treasurer about the QRO website issues. Payroll tax clients are required to lodge an annual return on 21 July each year. Due to the number of taxpayers, the system comes under increased load at this time. On 18 July 2023 system issues were experienced in QRO's core revenue management system impacting performance, with brief outages experienced. On 19 July 2023 messages alerting taxpayers of performance issues were placed on QRO's phone message system and online portal. Despite remedial actions undertaken, issues continued to persist on 20 July. On the afternoon of 20 July 2023, I am advised in view of the system issues the commissioner approved an extension of the lodgement from 21 July to 28 July and notified taxpayers accordingly. Any penalties or interest that may otherwise arise due to late lodgement will be remitted. Importantly, the system did not crash and many clients continued to lodge and pay their returns during the system degradation as I am advised. QRO continues to investigate the root cause. In the meantime, additional capacity was implemented before the due date. Notwithstanding the performance issues experienced, I am advised QRO maintains a 99 per cent uptime on system availability and no capacity concerns were evident before the system degradation.

With regard to the Queensland Resources Council, there was discussion about whether Queensland government entities should be members of the QRC. I cannot speak for the decision makers of those entities; all I can say is from my perspective I do not think Queensland government entities should be funding the QRC to run a campaign against the Queensland government. It does not seem an appropriate use of taxpayers' money when a campaign is being focused on the government. However, the QRC did receive \$930,000 from the Queensland government for the workforce program that they run assisting under-represented groups to get into mining. When they are doing things on a nonpartisan basis and not attacking the government, then we should support the QRC in the work that they do. I think that brings us almost to time, Chair. Can I thank you and the committee members—

**CHAIR:** I think there is one last question we could fit in from the member for Hervey Bay.

**Mr DICK:** Certainly.

**Mr TANTARI:** Treasurer, I reference page 3 of the Treasury SDS, and this is a good bookend to how you opened the session today. Will the Treasurer update the committee on Queensland's regional investments, especially in resource communities, that have been facilitated by progressive coal royalties?

**Mr DICK:** The additional revenue raised from coal royalties due to the ongoing exceptionally high prices, both progressive coal royalty tiers and royalties generally, including the revenue raised from the new progressive coal royalty tiers, has allowed the Queensland government to invest more than \$16 billion towards economic and social infrastructure and essential services. I think the Acting Under Treasurer did a very good job explaining where that investment went, but the truth of the matter is that we are investing more back into regional Queensland than we have generated from the uplift in royalties we have received as a consequence of exceptionally high prices and that money has clearly gone back

to regional Queensland. Some of those matters I have touched on include CopperString, the Fitzroy-to-Gladstone water pipeline, CleanCo investment, SunWater's Burdekin Falls Dam improvement and investments in CS Energy, the Gladstone Ports Corporation, the northern land expansion and on it goes, but it is very important that we invest back into regional Queensland.

**CHAIR:** We are now reaching the end of the time allocated for the consideration of the proposed expenditure for the areas of responsibility administered by the Treasurer. I want to thank you, Treasurer, Acting Under Treasurer and all of the officials and departmental officers for your attendance. Before we conclude, Treasurer, is there anything you would like to add before we end this session?

**Mr DICK:** I just wanted to thank you, Chair, and the committee members. This process is a very important part of our parliamentary and democratic process in Queensland. I do appreciate the engagement of all members and I am always pleased to appear before the committee. It is part of my duty and responsibility as a minister of the state and I am very pleased to do so as the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. I also want to very briefly acknowledge Queensland Treasury staff, the staff of our government owned corporations and our commercial statutory entities and authorities for their work. They do incredible work for the state. They also do incredible work preparing for these hearings and I want to thank them for their hard work to support this process, to support the democratic accountability process of our state and to support the prosperity of the state in everything that they do.

**CHAIR:** I also want to thank those many officials who perhaps did not get put into the hot seat. I know that you have put a lot of work into preparing to be accountable to the people of Queensland through this process, and that means that you have to reassess the work you have done throughout the year. I thank you for that hard work even if it was not fully realised. I just want to say, Acting Under Treasurer and Treasurer, they have all been so attentive in the background. You might not have noticed. It was honestly like it was 'Barbenheimer' up here that they were focused on because there were no nodding heads.

**Mr DICK:** It must be the committee, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Possibly. The committee will now adjourn for a break. The hearing will resume at 6.30, at which time the committee will commence its examination of the estimates for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. Thank you to all who have participated today.

**Proceedings suspended from 6.01 pm to 6.30 pm.**

**ESTIMATES—ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE—TOURISM,  
INNOVATION AND SPORT; OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS SPORT AND  
ENGAGEMENT****In Attendance**

Hon. SJ Hinchliffe, Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement

Ms K Adams, Chief of Staff

**Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport**

Mr A Hopper, Director-General

Mr C Anderson, Deputy Director-General, Tourism

Mr A Sly, Deputy Director-General, Sport and Recreation

**Stadiums Queensland**

Mr T Harris, Chief Executive Officer

**Tourism and Events Queensland**

Ms P O'Callaghan, Chief Executive Officer

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 **CHAIR:** The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2023 for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. I am Linus Power, the member for Logan and chair of the committee. With me is Mr Ray Stevens, the member for Mermaid Beach, who is the deputy chair. The other members of the committee are Mr Michael Crandon, the member for Coomera; Ms Melissa McMahon, the member for Macalister; Mr Dan Purdie, the member for Ninderry; and Mr Adrian Tantari, the member for Hervey Bay. The following non-committee members who have sought and been granted leave to participate in the hearing and are present for this session are Mr David Crisafulli, the member for Broadwater and Leader of the Opposition; Mr Sam O'Connor, the member for Bonney; and Mr Tim Mander, the member for Everton.

The committee will examine the minister's portfolio areas until 9:00pm. I remind those present tonight that the hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament apply to this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. In respect of statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent, or appropriate public guarantees are being provided. I intend to guide these proceedings so that relevant issues can be explored fully and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members. Officers are permitted to use their mobile phones and electronic devices but should ensure they are switched to silent mode. Also, I remind you that food and drink are not permitted in the chamber.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the minister, director-general, officials, departmental officers and, of course, the many members of the public who are up above us who cannot be seen on the broadcast. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of tourism, innovation and sport open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes. Minister, would you like to make a statement?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Please, Chair. Thank you. The 2023-24 budget invests in the things that matter to all Queenslanders: tackling the cost of living, service delivery and the biggest infrastructure build ever undertaken by a Queensland government. The ongoing transformation of Queensland's

rebounding visitor economy is also a key focus of the 2023-24 budget. In November last year we released *Towards Tourism 2032*, a tourism industry strategy, a collective framework to guide the industry and government partnership to deliver long-term growth and success for Queensland's tourism industry. Six months into the 10-year plan and we have already made, as an industry, great progress towards achieving the ambitious target of achieving \$44 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by 2032. The most recent Tourism Research Australia data for the year ended March 2023 shows Queensland is still Australia's No. 1 holiday destination and achieved \$31 billion in overnight visitor expenditure. This shows we are on track to meet our interim target of \$34 billion by 2027 and that final target of \$44 billion by 2032.

In this year's budget the Palaszczuk government committed to increasing Tourism and Events Queensland's base funding to \$125 million a year for the next four years. A multiyear funding guarantee recognises the importance of tourism as an industry that supports our regions and sustains Queensland jobs. It also provides more security and an ability to forward plan to deliver on the outcomes in line with *Towards Tourism 2032*. I am pleased to release today TEQ's new blueprint which describes TEQ's long-term strategy and lays out the foundations for future growth. I look forward to tabling a copy of it when an opportunity arises. I know Ms O'Callaghan and the team at TEQ have been working hard on the blueprint and I look forward to sharing more about it, as I say, tonight. The budget also includes \$20 million for the growing future tourism program designed to support tourism experience development in priority areas over two rounds. It will focus on coastal and marine, heritage and culture, eco and sustainable tourism. I am also pleased to announce tonight that the first \$8 million round of the growing future tourism program will open tomorrow and I will provide some more details throughout the evening.

The Palaszczuk government is also continuing to lead Queensland's sport and active recreation industry and support pathways to assist Queenslanders to reach their full sporting potential. The budget will deliver \$10 million for the Inclusive Facilities Fund for sport and recreation clubs to upgrade infrastructure to improve accessibility, safety and inclusiveness. I am also pleased to announce here tonight the \$10 million Inclusive Facilities Fund will open on 27 September. It will open alongside the \$15 million Minor Infrastructure Program round 2 which is being brought forward from next year due to the unprecedented demand for round 1. The smaller sport infrastructure projects do make a big difference in supporting Queenslanders to stay active and healthy.

The Palaszczuk government is also helping families ease the cost-of-living pressure by providing \$4.8 million over two years for SwimStart, which will make more than 30,000 \$150 vouchers available for eligible families for swimming lessons for zero to four-year-olds. Equally, the Palaszczuk government is committed to innovation through the Advance Queensland initiative. Tonight I am pleased to announce an \$8 million super round of the Ignite Ideas Fund that will open in September, with a suite of initiatives to support the ecosystem from early stage pre start-up to scale-up business development. The Palaszczuk government is also backing women in business through an additional \$5 million over two years to expand the Female Founders Program to focus on growing the number of women entrepreneurs in Queensland's innovation ecosystem. I will talk more about these initiatives throughout the evening. However, I want to take this opportunity to thank the officers of the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport and all the related agencies for their work in preparing for this estimates hearing. I also want to thank the chair and the committee for the opportunity to appear before you tonight and speak to this portfolio's appropriation. I welcome any questions your members, or indeed your guests, have.

**CHAIR:** I will now turn to the deputy chair for guidance.

**Mr STEVENS:** We will go straight to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the minister. There are 13 regional tourism organisations in Queensland. Under the minister's funding and plan for tourism in Queensland, how many will there be in a decade?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Those regional tourism organisations are funded via and through Tourism and Events Queensland and ultimately it is the role of Tourism and Events Queensland as the independent statutory authority to design and support the best system, and fund the best system, for our regional tourism network. There has, in fact, been a significant increase in network funding for the RTOs, from some \$7 million per year to \$12 million per year, thanks to the \$15 million over three years Rebuilding Queensland Tourism election commitment from our government. I think it is important that we have demonstrated the support that we have had for the industry. I can contrast that to the cuts that occurred under the Newman government which saw RTO network funding decline and go down to what was a

pretty woeful \$8.8 million in 2013. We are providing the support, but in terms of how that network is shaped up and how it looks I would ask the CEO of Tourism and Events Queensland, as the representative of the independent authority that makes those decisions, to address the question that you have, member.

**Ms O’Callaghan:** Tourism and Events Queensland does not have a position on how many RTOs there will be in the future but we do have a tourism network fund that does fund partnership activities with our 13 RTOs. I want to acknowledge that TEQ has committed \$7 million since 2016 to the tourism network fund and those 13 RTOs and there has been no reduction. There have actually been increases in the funding to RTOs and, in particular, election commitments of late.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I guess this question is to the minister. If TEQ does not have a position and the minister does not have a position, whose decision is it?

**CHAIR:** Minister, if there is anything that you can add to the question?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am a bit intrigued by the follow-up question. I think that means that you did not potentially follow the CEO’s answer.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The CEO said—

**CHAIR:** Order! Let us let the minister finish the answer unless you need to clarify.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am happy to get some clarification.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I believe that the CEO said that TEQ does not have a position on the number of RTOs. I am asking: what is the position then of the government? If TEQ does not have a position, what is the position of the government?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I think where this is all coming from is in terms of some recommendations that were in the action plan for tourism that further informed Towards Tourism 2032, which talked about seeing a reduction in the number of RTOs. Certainly I know there are some discussions going on between different RTOs about rationalising and finding what is the best mix for the RTO establishment in Queensland.

I do not want to put words into the CEO’s mouth but I think what the CEO is saying is that TEQ is willing to work with the network to get the right position and get the right outcome. Ultimately it is their decision because they are the ones who provide and they determine the distribution of the funding so that is then a matter for them to ultimately make a decision about. I think Ms O’Callaghan’s response was to you asking about how many RTOs there are going to be in 10 years time and she is not in a position to be saying that at this point.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Director-General, I want to refer to the departmental budget summary. I am looking at the tourism industry development line item, which was listed at circa \$121 million but the actual was \$92 million. Can you explain the underspend in that?

**Mr Hopper:** If you give me a moment to find the detail, I can talk to that. Member, can you clarify the time frames you were comparing?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is the 2022-23 budget and the 2022-23 actual. The budgeted amount for tourism industry development was \$121 million and the actual spend was \$92 million. I cannot find any reason for that underspend in the explanatory notes.

**Mr Hopper:** Thank you for the clarification, member. The tourism industry development decrease of \$29.2 million is mainly due to the following decreases: \$13.4 million in net deferrals to 2023-24 for various tourism programs delayed by supply chain issues and program funding realignments; \$11.7 million deferral for the Great Keppel Island initiative due to uncertainty about future development on the island and subsequent development of a Great Keppel Island master plan; \$9.5 million deferral for Minjerrabah Futures projects impacted by COVID-19 and building industry delays, and this has been partly offset by an increase of \$5.4 million in new funding previously held centrally for the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the director-general. I want to discuss the Women’s World Cup, which we are all glued to at the moment. What tourism plan and marketing plan has been put in place for during and after to capitalise on the nations that are here and the eyes of the world that are on us?

**CHAIR:** I notice the minister is jumping forward but the director-general has been directed the question. Sorry, Minister.

**Mr Hopper:** There is no doubt that the FIFA Women's World Cup is the world's largest female sporting event and it is the first Women's World Cup to feature 32 teams, which is the same number as the men's World Cup. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 is co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand. A total of 10 stadia in nine host cities are hosting matches.

In terms of the approach to activities, we have certainly seen the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 Unity Pitch in place to celebrate the 100 days to go milestone. It was set up in Brisbane's King George Square from 11 to 16 April 2023. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 Trophy Tour visited Brisbane and surrounds from 28 June to 1 July 2023. In terms of the marketing plan and the activities, we have been working very collaboratively with a range of stakeholders. One of those key stakeholders is fortunately with us here this evening from TEQ, the CEO, Ms O'Callaghan. She may like to add some specific details around the marketing activities in the lead-up to, during and post the tournament that build on some of those matters that I just mentioned.

**Ms O'Callaghan:** It has been an exciting couple of weeks for not just Queensland but Australia. It is great to work with the department and also Tourism Australia on leveraging this opportunity. Our activity has included a marketing campaign that has targeted ticket sales, visitation and increasing length of stay. We have also had a PR strategy to leverage key tournament milestones and maximise media attention. In particular, there was the 100 days to go event. You can see that we have been clearly leveraging this well out. We have managed the four-day Queensland Trophy Tour, as the DG mentioned, taking the tour to Brisbane, Moreton Island, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. We have also coordinated and supported 18 media familiarisations with Tourism Australia. That has been done through their international hosting program. It is great to see a number of those games and matches sold out so we are certainly leveraging this to the best of brand Queensland's ability.

**CHAIR:** It is not so great for me and the girls but I should have prepared earlier.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the director-general regarding the Wangetti Trail project. When you combine property, plant and equipment as well as capital grants for the project, it shows the underspend was close to \$10 million in 2022-23. The year before the underspend was close to \$9 million and the year before that it was just over \$6 million. What confidence can the director-general give the committee that this year will be different?

**Mr Hopper:** I think the key positive reinforcement is that the project is underway. These projects are not without complexity. I think it is probably worth noting that, in terms of the complexity that we are seeing, this project is the longest trail being built here in Queensland for that purpose. It is being built in a significantly sensitive area and it involves engagement with stakeholders including traditional owners, two local councils, a range of leaseholdings and other matters, all of which take significant time to work through and ensure that the activities are commensurate with the sensitive area we are working in and the range of stakeholders have time to be engaged with and provide their feedback. As a result of that over previous years deferrals took place. We have subsequently looked at the timing of expenditure and other matters, which has allowed us to realign that funding. I think it was pleasing last week to see the minister in Cairns to see the turning of the sod and really see the trail now taking another step forward.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I have a further question to the director-general. That project is underway. You mentioned the traditional owners. Have all the Indigenous land use agreements, ILUAs, been signed?

**Mr Hopper:** Thank you for the question member, the Indigenous land use agreements for the southern stage are right now in community consultation. They do have in-principle agreement. We do now need to leave those to work through their natural process, but from all reports that seems to be going very well and very positively. Again, I do not want to foreshadow the traditional owners through that process, but certainly the cultural heritage management agreement is executed and is in place, which has allowed us to move forward with the project.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Director-General, When will the project be completed? We were initially told it would be completed in 2023, then it was 2025 and I think the Cairns Regional Council said construction may take five years. When will it be finalised?

**Mr Hopper:** Thank you for the question member, just let me refer to my notes to make sure I bring up the correct material. It is a very important question that you raise. Again, it talks to the complexities of what we are dealing with here. I talked earlier about traditional owners. This is not, for one second, to step away from the significant, positive impacts in terms of economic, social and environmental gain from this project. These projects certainly can be quite lengthy. We have examples of projects of this nature taking upwards of 10 years to design and construct. In terms of our timings, as we currently forecast them, we certainly have a comprehensive design approach for the trail project

along with specialist resources and technology. We are seeing the learnings from these early stages being applicable to future stages. At this stage our future time frames are beyond what we have already started. The Wangetti South—the Ellis Beach to Wangetti section—design will be resolved in late 2023. The Wangetti South—which is the Ellis Beach to Wangetti section—construction commencement will be in 2024. The Mowbray North—which is the Mowbray River to Port Douglas—design will be in 2024. The Wangetti North design will be in 2024 and the Wangetti North construction will be in 2025. We will be looking to run the ecotourism operator process in the 2024-25 financial year. At this stage we are forecasting and targeting construction completion in late 2026.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Director-General, there seems to be some confusion around the cost of the project. The capital statement says the cost is \$36.2 million. There was an additional \$5.7 million in last year's budget, but that seems to have disappeared. The figure of \$47.1 million is being used in the media. Can you provide some clarity around that and advise where in this year's budget that number is outlined?

**Mr Hopper:** There certainly are a range of figures currently being discussed. Importantly, in terms of the total figure, the total figure set aside for the project is \$47.1 million. Some \$39.1 million of that is from the Queensland government and the further \$8 million has been set aside by the Australian government as its investment into this National Tourism Icons program. As I mentioned earlier, we saw \$5.7 million added in last year's budget which got us to the \$47.1 million. I think the challenge is that, as we progress the design and construction timelines, money is moved forward into years where it will be applied. At a high level, that figure of \$47.1 million is the funding envelope that we are working towards.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Minister, can you advise when the fast ferry from Howard Smith Wharves to Stradbroke Island promised before the last election will be in operation?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** We should start by clarifying that what we are talking about is a capacity for river and marine vessels to get from that central city location out into the bay. As the member flagged, it was announced in September 2022. The Queensland government provided \$5.5 million in funding to Howard Smith Wharves under the Attracting Tourism Fund, as it was at the time, to construct a new river terminal comprising three floating commercial pontoons—upstream for commercial vessels, downstream for large commercial craft and a smaller pontoon for commercial and private craft. That was all about further activating the river and that access to the bay from the river. The project is partially complete, with the first pontoon known as the Mirimar completed in March 2021. The remaining two pontoons are progressing and are due to be delivered by mid-2024, subject to owner's consent—that is the Brisbane City Council—and a development application approval.

Once completed, the project is predicted to provide some 359,000 additional annual visitors and an additional \$13 million in overnight visitor expenditure annually. It is all about activating the city further and certainly making sure that we see the way the Howard Smith Wharves has revitalised that part of the city. Its contribution to the visitor economy has been strong. Securing those river-based operators for the services to access the precinct and the pontoon that we provided support for is ultimately a matter for Howard Smith Wharves.

**Mr STEVENS:** My question is to the minister. Tourism operators using the Cairns marina have written to the minister regarding the fee review that Ports North committed to four years ago. Can the minister advise what actions he has taken since receiving that letter?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** What generally happens where there are matters that are ultimately in the hands of other agencies—and in this instance Ports North, the ports corporation—is that I refer them to Minister Bailey and the Treasurer as the shareholding ministers. I advocate to those shareholding ministers. It is certainly an important matter not just in relation to marina operators but other visitor economy activities that do use and access the port. It is a matter that has been raised with them on all those fronts.

**Mr STEVENS:** Does the minister accept tourism operators' views that they are being used as a cash cow to prop up the government's budget?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I do not accept those views, but I do accept that it is important that fair prices are struck. That is why I will be happy to advocate on behalf of the industry. That is what we will do.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** In parliament in May last year the minister said—

... a city marina with berthing for at least 12 vessels is needed right now. That is the assessment we have done as part of the work we have done with industry and the sector. That is why the state government is exploring long-term on-water solutions.

Can the minister advise if these investigations have been completed, and what are the outcomes?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** As I have said and will continue to say, the Brisbane River is a vitally important part of the city's visitor economy. That is why it has been so profoundly and ongoingly frustrating that Brisbane City Council's current administration has effectively abrogated its responsibility for river access by having absolutely no plan for overnight berthing. That is why it is good that the Queensland government has a \$1.1 million support package on the table to help existing tour operators on the inner city reaches of the Brisbane River to secure alternative overnight mooring facilities. We are also working with the private sector on the delivery of long-term berthing infrastructure options on the Brisbane River.

Let me be really clear: Brisbane City Council controls much of the land and the infrastructure along the Brisbane River's inner reaches. They should be part of the solution, not creating the problems like they have done with development applications that have removed river access for overnight berthing from those approvals.

The Palaszczuk government continues to work with the private sector and with council to find a long-term solution for Brisbane River mooring. I am really pleased to advise that the river marine infrastructure is a focus of that new Growing Tourism Future program, which I made mention of in my opening remarks and launched today, which will deliver on those Towards Tourism 2032 priorities.

Funding of between \$1 million and \$4 million is available as part of an additional round of \$8 million in funding on a one-to-one co-contribution basis, with applicants to contribute at least 50 per cent of the total eligible project costs. This program announced in the 2023-24 state budget will enable and leverage private sector investment for the delivery of new and enhanced tourism related projects in those priority areas including marine tourism.

I encourage proponents with proposals for development of marine facilities that are sufficiently advanced to apply when the program opens tomorrow. That is a further concrete example of what we have been able to do to try to leverage those opportunities. I reiterate: it is very frustrating to see the way in which the Brisbane City Council, who have most of the levers in this space, has stepped away and ignored the river.

**CHAIR:** I call the member for Macalister.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 2 of the SDS and Tourism and Events Queensland's funding increase, can the minister please provide an update to the TEQ funding guarantee?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** As I mentioned, in this year's budget the Palaszczuk government committed to increasing Tourism and Events Queensland's base funding to \$125 million a year for the next four years. A multiyear funding guarantee recognises the importance of tourism as an industry that supports our regions and sustains Queensland jobs. It also provides more security and an ability to forward plan to deliver on the outcomes in line with that Towards Tourism 2032 Strategy.

This increased funding provides them with added certainty to enter into multiyear partnerships; to strengthen their strategic approach to marketing and events investment with tourism and event operators throughout Queensland's regions; to strengthen its negotiating capacity with commercial partners over the longer term; and to boost their ability to acquire as well as retain high-value events with longer planning cycles that will deliver visitation growth.

For the past three years, TEQ's work has been focused on industry imperatives in responding to the pandemic, as we all appreciated, driving recovery and building resistance. Tonight I am very pleased to release TEQ's new blueprint, which describes TEQ's long-term strategy which lays the foundations for future growth. With the committee's position, I will table *The TEQ Blueprint* for the committee.

**CHAIR:** As we were told in the last session, you will seek permission to table.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** As I say, with the committee's permission, I seek leave to table.

**CHAIR:** We will have a look at that information. We appreciate it.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The blueprint's goal is to inspire travellers to choose Queensland as their destination of choice through bold and globally recognised marketing and events that support growing overnight tourism expenditure to \$44 billion by 2032. The industry established that bold target in overnight visitor expenditure, and that proudly signals Queensland's intent to grow our visitor economy, realising economic growth, creating jobs and prosperous communities right throughout the state. It is a target that can only be achieved by all partners—governments at all levels, particularly local government, and industry—working together.

At its heart, achieving this goal requires bold marketing techniques to stand out in a crowded market, new experiences that are on trend for the consumer of today and into the future, and an increase in room stock and airline capacity to provide for the increased number of visitors and room nights required to achieve that target.

A bold target requires bold new thinking. This blueprint has been developed to guide TEQ's role in generating demand and driving conversation to realise the industry's aspirational goal of \$44 billion in 2032. It contains a five-point plan (1) gain the dominant share of Australia's domestic holiday market; (2) assist industry to grow international overnight visitor expenditure to \$11 billion; (3) build a \$2 billion global events calendar; (4) use the strength and influence of Queensland's destinations and industry to maximise opportunities in market; and (5) deliver cutting-edge, high-impact marketing campaigns to drive consumer demand. All of this, of course, is underpinned by that opportunity that the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games presents for Queensland, as a catalyst for greater global awareness, appeal and visitation to the state.

The blueprint has been developed following extensive consultation with industry partners across the state as well as our key government partners. Overwhelmingly there is a desire for TEQ to be bold, to cut through a crowded market and in doing so ensure that Queensland gets more than its fair share of visitation. To achieve this, TEQ has reviewed its internal structure with a focus on ensuring that we are set up to deliver against that five-point plan and that our budget is heavily skewed to demand-driving activity. Finally, long-term goals have been developed that align with our priorities and will enable us to measure progress on it as well.

Given TEQ's new CEO, Patricia O'Callaghan, is here, there is an opportunity for her to say a bit on this. I know that the whole TEQ team are excited about the opportunities that Queensland has over the next decade. They are really energised by the strategy and the plan and what this blueprint represents. I will allow Ms O'Callaghan to say a few words as well on the blueprint.

**CHAIR:** Just before Ms O'Callaghan speaks, leave has been sought to table *The TEQ Blueprint* document. Is leave granted? There being no objection, the document is so tabled. We now turn to Ms O'Callaghan if you want to add to the minister's answer about the blueprint.

**Ms O'Callaghan:** As the minister noted, to receive commitment on \$125 million annually for the next four years gives us certainty in our planning and the ability to leverage those funds to partner further with other government and the private sector. To provide some detail around what that looks like for this financial year, I am really excited to say that around the five-point plan we will be delivering a number of activities. We will be delivering this year bold and high-impact globally recognised marketing initiatives that propel our state forward. We will be ensuring that our campaigns not just leverage the Queensland brand but our destination brands as well. We will be certainly following an airport-led recovery to grow our international OVE, and we will be driving visitation through our partnership and commercial activities.

I am really excited about our global events calendar. We will be further supporting that with a pipeline of major and blockbuster events that support the Green & Gold Runway as well as identifying some of those home grown events that have international potential which we want to support further in key markets. Business events will also be dialled up to really target that Monday to Thursday market as well as support our leisure season. We will also be ensuring that we double our partnership investment so we are leveraging government funds to the best of our ability. I do not want to leave out the fact that digital and tech is going to be an important part of being a productive and efficient organisation and that will be a major focus.

We have realigned. We now have four pillars within our team: marketing, events, corporate and strategy, and commercial and partnerships. I will say that this structure is now being implemented with no job losses. We are very excited about what we have moving forward.

**Mr TANTARI:** Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and the \$20 million Tourism Experience and Infrastructure Grants Program, can you please provide to the committee an update on the program?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am very pleased to answer a question from you, Mr Tantari. I know you are a very strong advocate particularly on behalf of the Fraser Coast region for the tourism industry. The ongoing transformation of Queensland's rebounding visitor economy is a key focus of the 2023-24 state budget. Queensland's tourism sector has enjoyed being Australia's best and quickest recovering state following the pandemic, but government and industry want to build back even better, and the budget delivers on that.

A key commitment in the 2023-24 budget is that \$20 million to deliver key initiatives to support implementation of Towards Tourism 2032. This includes the Growing Future Tourism program, designed to support tourism experience development in priority areas focusing on coastal and marine, heritage and cultural tourism, and ecotourism and sustainability. The program is being offered in a two-stage application process. I am pleased to announce that expressions of interest open tomorrow on 2 August. Funding of between \$1 million and \$4 million is available as part of an initial round, as I said earlier, of \$8 million in funding on a one-to-one co-contribution basis, with applicants to contribute at least 50 per cent of the total eligible project costs.

Round 2 will be launched again as I said earlier in 2024 and will be for \$7 million. It will be informed by industry and stakeholder feedback on round 1. The \$20 million total program also includes up to \$4 million to accelerate tourism business development and build on the support this government has already delivered for tourism infrastructure and investment attraction. These business development programs are planned to be launched later this year and will aim to boost the knowledge and capabilities of tourism operators, with a focus on enhancing visitor experiences and tapping into tech and AI to further enable businesses to thrive, deliver exceptional experiences and exceed visitor expectations.

The program also includes the game changer tourism investment attraction program of \$1 million, which is aimed at driving priority tourism accommodation, infrastructure and experience development. The focus of the tourism investment attraction program is to attract and facilitate investment into built tourism infrastructure geared toward Queensland's priority need areas of accommodation stock, island resorts, built attractions, signature experiences and river and marine space. Funding will be used to undertake market research to guide investment attraction activity, the development of investment collateral, the international promotion of Queensland as a tourism destination, and engagement with investors and developers through participation in conferences and events.

The future holds great promise for our tourism industry as it continues to capitalise on the ongoing Australian love affair with Queensland with an increasing opportunity to welcome international visitors as well.

**CHAIR:** I notice TEQ plan No. 2 has the ambitious goal of increasing international visitor expenditure. With reference to page 8 of the SDS and the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, can the minister provide an update on this important fund and what aviation routes have been secured?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** That is a great question. It has been one of the outstanding programs that we have leaned very heavily into. The Palaszczuk government's \$200 million partnership with the private sector to boost the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund has enabled airports to negotiate with airlines to fast-track more direct flights into Queensland. This aviation war chest, as it has become known, has been fundamental in supporting the return of international aviation to our state. I am pleased to provide an update to the committee. We have seen the way it has blown some other jurisdictions out of the water in terms of the ability to lean into that reconnection.

We know that international aviation connectivity is critical to economic recovery because we all know that more flights mean more tourists. To date, 22 services have been announced to receive support from the \$200 million fund. It is estimated these services will deliver more than 1.69 million inbound international seats, up to \$1.37 billion in overnight visitor spending each year, and support up to 15,266 Queensland jobs. We have partnered with the Brisbane Airport Corporation to deliver direct flights from: San Francisco with United Airlines; Vancouver with Air Canada; Doha with Qatar Airways; Tokyo and Christchurch with Qantas; Taipei with EVA Air; Taipei with China Airlines; Dubai with Emirates; Manila with Philippine Airlines; Ho Chi Minh City with VietJet Air; Auckland, Seoul and Osaka with Jetstar; and Seoul with Korean Air.

In the Far North we have partnered with the Cairns international airport to deliver direct flights from Tokyo Haneda with Virgin Airlines—and Tokyo Narita—and Osaka to Cairns with Jetstar. We have partnered with the Gold Coast Airport to deliver direct flights from Kuala Lumpur with AirAsia X and to Auckland with Air New Zealand. Queensland's airports now have greater certainty to negotiate flights with airlines to facilitate the speedy return of international tourists back to Queensland.

There is one new flight route I want to expand on a bit for the committee because it was genuinely a history-making maiden flight. On Friday, 16 June—you might remember that date because it was the last day we were all together; it was the last day of the budget sitting week—after we rose at a reasonable time, as I think we all recall, I went straight from parliament to Brisbane Airport and had the pleasure of being part of a party to welcome the first VietJet direct flight to Queensland. This flight demonstrated the importance and growing closeness of Queensland's post-pandemic trade and

partnership with Vietnam. The VietJet route from Ho Chi Minh City to Brisbane is expected to land some 176,000 inbound seats, generating more than \$115 million for Queensland's visitor economy over three years. I know that we are off to a flying start. The very first flight arrived with 377 passengers on board. I had the pleasure of welcoming those visitors late on that Friday night after a long parliamentary budget sitting week. We and our aviation partners certainly know how important this service is. Brisbane Airport Corporation CEO Gert-Jan de Graaff said—

Vietnam has been one of the world's best success stories over the past two decades and now has a generation of people eager to explore the world. With direct flights to Brisbane Airport, their ticket to tour Queensland is just a single 8-hour flight away.

The service is another win for Queensland's \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund jointly funded by the Queensland Government and the state's international airports, and is designed to fast-track the recovery of Queensland's visitor economy

I think that is a great endorsement of the work we have done with the airport sector to engage with those airlines internationally to open up new markets. This opportunity to have the quickly growing young middle class in Vietnam, which is keen to travel and experience the world, is going to help assure that Queensland is on their itinerary instead of other parts of Australia. We will continue to work with Cairns, the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and Gold Coast airports to grow international aviation capacity. There is no question that the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund has made a massive difference in that regard.

**Mrs McMAHON:** With reference to page 2 of the SDS and 2032 being the Year of Accessible Tourism, can the minister provide an update on what is being done to increase awareness and capability and deliver an improved visitor experience for those with a disability?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** In November last year the Palaszczuk government declared 2023 the Year of Accessible Tourism in Queensland to ignite change and create opportunities for Queensland's tourism industry to deliver more accessible and inclusive experiences. It is also part of our commitment to make the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games the most accessible and inclusive sporting event in world history. We know there is a significant opportunity for accessible tourism in Queensland, with a national estimated untapped potential of \$732 million or \$1.8 billion when you include the travel partners whom people with a disability often travel with. As part of the Year of Accessible Tourism, \$12 million is being invested in targeted initiatives to help tourism and events businesses better cater to visitors of all abilities and provide greater destination experiences for holiday-makers in Queensland.

To date, 52 businesses and organisations have been awarded Year of Accessible Tourism funding to either be more accessible or develop tools to be used by tourism businesses so they can improve their accessibility. These were awarded across three different grant programs: the Accessible Tourism Infrastructure Grant, the Boosting Accessible Tourism Experience Grant and the Accessible Tourism Enablers Grant. Through the tourism infrastructure grants we have supported 12 tourism and events operators to enhance infrastructure accessibility, including: Etty Bay Cabins and Caravan Park refurbish an existing cabin into an accessible family cabin; Brisbane Powerhouse provide accessible access to the new vertical restaurant; Gold Coast Coachlines purchase four new buses with engineer-certified wheelchair accessible lifts; Ivory's Rock in Ipswich refurbish existing infrastructure to create accessible activity hubs; Maleny Botanic gardens and Bird World purchase two wheelchair accessible buggies; and O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat install a wheelchair accessible lift and all gender accessible bathroom.

The grant also supported Gold Coast Aqua Park to use integrative virtual reality technology to provide an inclusive and immersive tourism experience for those with diverse needs, and the Gold Coast Wake Park will enhance accessibility for individuals with mobility issues by installing modified floating obstacles and jumps, a new walkway, a new jet ski and rescue sled, as well as website information upgrades and staff training. The grant also supports great icons like the Qantas Founders Museum in Longreach. They are installing accessible audiovisual content and upgrading the exhibition design and interpretive signage. They are just some of the terrific projects that we have co-funded with the private sector.

The Accessible Tourism Enablers Grant is supporting five peak and not-for-profit disability organisations to develop products and services that can be used and accessed by tourism and events businesses to become more accessible. These grants have supported the following five organisations: Autism Queensland; CPL—Choice, Passion, Life; Guide Dogs Queensland; Queensland Braille House; and Spinal Life Australia.

The Boosting Accessible Tourism Experiences Grant is supporting 35 tourism and events operators across our state. Just last week I had the opportunity to meet with one of the successful grant recipients, Fun Over 50, which received funding to uplift their accessibility for portable digital audio

devices. I am looking at the chair. He has looked at me and said, 'I am peak in the market here.' It was great to see and hear firsthand how much of a difference this enhancement is making to that business and what they can offer to a diverse set of customers. General manager Cassie said—

This grant will play a crucial role in implementing accessibility plans of the business by providing, in part, the necessary funds to allow significant strides in creating a more inclusive and accessible environment for the business as a whole and to enhance the guest experience.

This fund will allow the company to purchase personal portable digital audio devices for guests to use on tour; upgrade our website to enhance accessibility; and upgrade of safety messages for sight impaired guests.

Accessibility has become a significant factor influencing the travel decisions of guests; they are choosing operators that enhance their brand reputation with overall positive inclusivity, giving the companies that place importance on accessibility a competitive edge

We want all Queensland tourism operators to have that competitive edge. Additionally, we are investing in an awareness and capability program which includes a free online accessible tourism toolkit, eight online training webinars, and six face-to-face and four immersive experience workshops. Overwhelmingly, that is what we have heard from industry during this first part of the Year of Accessible Tourism. They want to hear more and they want to understand more about what that market can mean. One of the great messages that people living with a disability have been providing to tourism operators has been 'Don't be afraid. Just ask us what things will make a difference to our experience.' Breaking that ice has been very important to making this Year of Accessible Tourism a success so far.

**Mr MANDER:** Minister, I am sure you were cheering the Matildas last night, as we all were.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I certainly was.

**Mr MANDER:** Flicking between channels—between the cricket and the football.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I was—

**Mr MANDER:** Sorry, it was a rhetorical question!

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** When I get a question, the format is that I answer the question. I have to contradict you because I was at Brisbane Stadium where the Irish were playing the Nigerians. I was sitting next to the secretary-general of FIFA, where Fatma was watching the Matildas match on her phone and we were keeping track.

**Mr MANDER:** That is a great intro to my question. Minister, Football Australia has released figures that show the federal and state governments have contributed collectively around \$357 million in football programs and infrastructure as a result of the Women's World Cup. Would the minister explain why Queensland's contribution to that figure comes in at \$13.6 million, which is a measly four per cent of that figure?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I think what you will find is that they have not accounted for all of the ways in which we have contributed to the football association across Queensland. There have been a number of presentations of so-called facts around the public expenditure on football by the Queensland government that have been perpetrated and continue to rely on some incorrect and incomplete figures. It is disappointing to see that because it fails to take into account the broader state of how we support football and how that fits in comparison to other codes.

Since January 2015 the department has approved over \$43 million in funding to support the activities of football and futsal across the state, including: \$27 million in capital projects; subsidies of over \$8.8 million to support junior participation in football; and over \$5 million for non-capital funding. An additional \$10 million has also been approved for football and futsal in Queensland under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Most recently, there is the \$2.6 million that has been approved to support the six identified projects that were part of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 legacy.

I note that we had fantastic feedback. I have had conversations with James Johnson, the CEO of Football Australia, and his team. They are very welcoming of the significant commitment the Premier announced last week in relation to the \$8 million for the Queensland Women's Football Legacy Fund. That will see us contributing \$4 million with other funding sources to be leveraged as a result—in a similar form to what we have done with a number of other sports with legacy opportunities, where we have made sure we have leveraged further investment opportunities from those sports that have that capacity to contribute. That is going to maximise the outcomes that these projects deliver.

The FIFA Women's World Cup legacy fund will offer unique and effective opportunities to support inclusive participation for football right across Queensland, including increasing the quality of infrastructure, such as lighting and irrigation, which makes a difference to access for female players.

Most importantly, it will provide inclusive and accessible facilities that cater for a diversity of participants to ensure all community members, particularly women and girls who have been inspired by following the FIFA Women's World Cup, have that chance to get in there and get engaged. The Football Australia chair, Chris Nikou, told me that this is a golden period for football in Australia and that they were deeply appreciative of the Queensland government for its substantial \$4 million contribution towards the Queensland football legacy fund.

The reality is that, unlike other states, we did not need to spend \$20 million plus on stadia. That is what they did. That is where most of their funds came in. There was some \$45 million by South Australia to upgrade the Hindmarsh Stadium in Adelaide, \$25 million to make changes to AAMI Park and further upgrades to stadia like that. Because we have the best rectangular stadium in the world in the form of, I will say it in this context, Suncorp Stadium, we did not have to do the level of contribution to those upgrades. As you can see, this has meant we have been able to put more into what we deliver in support of community football at the community level rather than in those stadia.

**Mr MANDER:** So you are disputing how those figures have been calculated and you think we have done pretty well in Queensland—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** We can always do more.

**Mr MANDER:** As was mentioned earlier by the director-general, we are having the world's largest women's sporting event and we are part of that. What is the single most significant sporting infrastructure legacy that Queenslanders will enjoy after the Women's World Cup is finished?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** We will see the opportunity for improvements across the board in facilities using that Women's Football Legacy Fund—the privilege that that will provide to community clubs and community facilities across the state. We will see that also out of the Inclusive Facilities Fund that I made mention of earlier, which was announced in the budget. That will help provide opportunities not only for football but also around women's sport, particularly in non-traditional women's codes across the state. We have seen the upgrades that have gone into training facilities which are particularly important, that have upgraded key projects that were the priority of Football Queensland and of Football Australia around the facilities. That included some, as I say, the \$2.634 million to support the six projects that were part of that legacy funding. There were upgrades at Perry Park, at Spencer Park, a significant upgrade at Lions Stadium in Richlands, upgrades at Moreton Bay Central Sports Complex, at Goodwin Park and also at Beerwah Glass House Football Club where we made sure, as part of that funding program, that we got that support out to places that were making a difference to participation in female football.

**Mr MANDER:** I would like to ask some questions of the CEO of Stadiums Queensland, please. Mr Harris, what level of consultation has Stadiums Queensland had with the state government with regard to the cost of the Gabba knockdown?

**Mr Harris:** Can I ask you to repeat the question, please, Member?

**Mr MANDER:** What level of consultation have you had with the state government with regard to the knockdown of the Gabba stadium?

**Mr Harris:** Very extensive in terms of the planning that is currently underway. We are working with a range of departments on the preparation for the Gabba redevelopment. There has been extensive consultation since the decisions around Brisbane being awarded the hosting rights for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. In terms of the development, the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games infrastructure program, including the redevelopment of the Gabba, is being led by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning are in the process of finalising the project validation report process. As part of the project validation report process, Stadiums Queensland has provided a panel of stadium professionals to assist in developing the functional requirements for the new stadium. The functional requirements define what the stadium should include from an operational perspective. Developing the functional requirements has included working with the AFL, Brisbane Lions, Cricket Australia and Queensland Cricket to determine the best mix of patron facilities and operational spaces for a world-class venue.

The Gabba is more than just a Brisbane 2032 Games stadium. It will be a stadium that serves Brisbane well into the future. That is why Stadiums Queensland and the Queensland government are ensuring the venue will be right-sized. Right-sizing the stadium means that we do not spend additional moneys for empty seats when the stadium is used for AFL and cricket. The stadium will have a gross capacity of 50,000 for Brisbane 2032.

It was recently announced that the Department of Education will be relocating the East Brisbane State School to make way for the redeveloped Gabba site. Stadiums Queensland has worked effectively with the neighbouring school over many years and looks forward to supporting the final relocation option once determined by the Department of Education. Importantly, all heritage buildings within the school will be retained and restored for operational or public use as part of the Gabba redevelopment project. Stadiums Queensland is providing functional and operational advice in relation to the future use of those buildings.

The project validation report included the development of a reference design, and Stadiums Queensland has provided input into the reference design which has considered the varied options available for the central cricket wicket. The Queensland government will continue to work with Cricket Australia, Queensland Cricket and other stakeholders on the best option for the wicket block.

At this stage, the Gabba redevelopment should commence in early 2026 and take approximately four years to complete while the site is closed.

**Mr MANDER:** Mr Harris, with regard to the original figure that was estimated for the knockdown, last year the Auditor-General said, 'I don't think there was ever a business case supporting the billion dollars. I think you will find the source of that was a press release.' Did you see any detailed costing with regard to the original \$1 billion price tag?

**CHAIR:** In there you are talking about the construction of the new stadium? Mr Harris?

**Mr Harris:** In terms of the costings, it is a matter that is actually being led, as I referenced in my answer, by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning.

**Mr MANDER:** I am interested in your involvement in that and your awareness of that.

**CHAIR:** I think Mr Harris understands the question, member for Everton.

**Mr MANDER:** I clarified it.

**Mr Harris:** Certainly in terms of the project validation report that has been prepared or is under preparation, there has been a series of documents including costings, reference design material and operational input. It is quite an extensive report, and it is still being finalised. There have been costings in there. Yes is the response to your question.

**Mr MANDER:** You were aware of that original billion-dollar figure that was originally publicised by the government?

**Mr Harris:** The project validation report relates to the work that has been done around the proposed redevelopment. Certainly that is a set of figures that relates to the \$2.7 billion, not a previous costing that you are referencing.

**Mr MANDER:** That was going to be my next question: you are aware of the business costings for the \$2.7 billion?

**Mr Harris:** That is correct, yes.

**Mr MANDER:** Can you explain why it blew out from \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion in 22 months?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I think the difference between the 2021 dollars and the 2029 dollars—

**Mr MANDER:** Sorry, the question is to the CEO of Stadiums Queensland.

**Mr Harris:** On my understanding, there has been a significant range of commentary around this. There has been a whole range of building escalation costs that we are experiencing across our portfolio in terms of just about every capital project that we deal with on an annual basis. It is a matter, I believe, that should be responded to by the Deputy Premier in terms of the detail that sits around those costings.

**Mr MANDER:** I agree with that, but you have seen that and you are aware of that \$2.7 billion figure?

**Mr Harris:** Yes, that is correct.

**Mr MANDER:** Minister, have you seen that figure and aware of how that \$2.7 billion figure has come about?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am certainly aware of the work that has gone into that and aware of the work that is going into the project validation process that Mr Harris made reference to.

**Mr MANDER:** Minister, unfortunately the Ukraine war is still raging and the construction industry is still under the pump, and these are the factors that the Premier gave for the 177 per cent blowout in 22 months for the stadium rebuild. Using that rationale, do you expect the \$2.7 billion to blow out to \$4.6 billion by 2025?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I do not expect a blowout, as you have described it, like that. What I do know, and as I tried to politely point out earlier, is that there is a difference between the 2021 dollars which was the original estimate that was provided in relation to the Gabba rebuild—

**Mr MANDER:** But there is a difference between the 2023 and the 2025 figures, too, surely.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** This is not just about the actual costs. It is also about the figure of what an Australian dollar equates to over time, how that changes, and particularly in a high inflationary environment. I think you can come to terms with that, hopefully. I think this matter has been a convenient football to kick around, to coin a phrase, the difference between the \$1 billion figure and the \$2.7 billion figure.

**Mr MANDER:** They were your figures.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** And the context in which they were developed has been explained, but I do not accept your linear theory.

**Mr MANDER:** Okay. Minister—

**CHAIR:** I just want to note that you do not interrupt the minister when delivering the answer.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you for the guidance. Minister, can you understand why the average Queenslanders who is experiencing cost-of-living pressures, poor health services, severe housing stress and intimidation by young criminals finds it very difficult to justify this blowout of expenditure? Everywhere I go somebody mentions it to me.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am not going to accept the characterisation that you have used. What I do know is that people do appreciate that an independent review of our stadium infrastructure has identified that the Gabba will be considered end of life in 2030. So the need for a redevelopment of the Gabba is not just about the opportunity to put on the very best show in terms of 2032, although it is significant in that regard; it is also about making sure we have a great asset for our visitor economy and for our broader sports economy beyond 2030. The redevelopment with a state-of-the-art stadium in a very historic location is something that a lot of people in the city are excited about.

It also provides the opportunity for that broader development of the Woolloongabba precinct, leveraging off the historic, significant and very important investment in Cross River Rail that has been made by this government. It was put behind time by a government you were a minister in because you cancelled it. The fact that we were able to leverage that in a much better way is going to provide huge opportunities including in terms of housing development in that region and the opportunity that that will deliver. It is really obvious from a range of comments that we are hearing from the LNP that part of the opposition's agenda is a cuts agenda.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**CHAIR:** Order! Member for Everton.

**Mr MANDER:** Every day.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Their cuts agenda will include the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

**CHAIR:** Order, member for Everton.

**Mr MANDER:** Point of order. What relevance does this have to the question—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** It is directly relevant.

**Mr MANDER:**—when everyday Queenslanders are struggling with the cost-of-living and you cannot justify how \$1 billion turns into a \$2.7 billion blowout?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** You have made it clear that a cuts agenda is part of your agenda and it relates to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

**Mr MANDER:** Point of order. The minister is obviously misleading the committee. That is not what has been said. We have asked a very reasonable question with regard to justifying expenditure, the blowout.

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, as you would be well aware, in relation to any suggestion of misleading, you would write to the committee and we will examine that. I know that you are not going to do that because that is not really a point of order. It is not brought up as a point of order. It is not brought up as a point of order in the House. You are seeking to be disruptive to the minister's answer. The minister is being relevant to the question. I return to the minister.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I would further comment that in relation to the questions and concerns about things like cost of living the government more broadly in a range of ways is responding to the concerns and challenges. Just in my portfolio we have, as I mentioned earlier, SwimStart. As of yesterday, there have been some 3,000 registrations of families wanting to make sure they get that opportunity to support zero- to four-years-old to have swimming lessons. The voucher makes a difference to families in that situation. There is no question that we are alive to and are confronting the issues and we are supporting households. You can see that in our \$550 rebate on the cost of electricity, which we can deliver as a government because we own our assets.

**CHAIR:** Member for Hervey Bay?

**Mr TANTARI:** Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and the reference to *Towards Tourism 2032: transforming Queensland's visitor economy future*, can you provide an update on the implementation of the strategy?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank you for the question. As I mentioned earlier, announced in November last year at DestinationQ, *Towards Tourism 2032* is a collective framework to set the direction of tourism in Queensland for the next 10 years. Tourism is a driving force in Queensland's economy. It has been for a very long time, and you know that very well in your part of the world, Mr Tantari. *Towards Tourism 2032* raises the profile of tourism and its importance to the whole of our economy. It directly supports growing Queensland's economy via good jobs, better services and the great lifestyle we get to share via tourism with so many people.

The vision is for Queensland to be Australia's destination of choice for domestic and global visitors seeking the world's best experiences. The industry is aiming to do more than double the tourism overnight expenditure to more than \$44 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by the year 2032. The strategy is a collective framework to guide the industry and government partnership over that long-term growth and broader success.

With industry, we are six months into delivery of the first three-year implementation plan to build and focus, as it says, a sustained effort to grow industry now and lay the foundations for future growth. Under our DestinationQ partnership, the Queensland government and the Queensland tourism industry committed to provide annual progress on the implementation of *Towards Tourism 2032* at the DestinationQ Forum in November 2023, and we have already made great progress in outcomes. We achieved \$32.9 billion in annual overnight visitor expenditure to date, which is well on track to meet that interim target of \$34 billion by 2027 and that final target of \$44 billion by 2032. Regions are embedding *Towards Tourism 2032* targets, actions and strategic themes into their individual destination management planning. As I have already outlined in an answer to the chair's question, our \$200 million joint Attracting Aviation Investment Fund has landed an additional 22 services. There is the launch of the \$20 million music trails with six trails per year over 2023, 2024 and 2025.

I have made mention of the Year of Accessible Tourism, backed by that \$12 million package of initiatives including an accessible tourism toolkit. We are boosting Queensland's nature-based tourism experiences and sustainability credentials through programs such as our \$9.2 million Activate Ecotourism Infrastructure initiative and the \$2 million eco-certified Tourism Destination Program, another element that was highlighted very significantly in the *Towards Tourism 2032* strategy.

There is also \$7 million from the Queensland government for the Queensland government Convention and Exhibition Centre Economic Recovery Bid Support Program, which is increasing Queensland's attractiveness as a business event destination and the \$3.5 million Great Barrier Reef Education Experience Program, on which I get amazing feedback from operators in the central and northern parts of the state.

There is also the \$27 million Regional Tourism Recovery Program and our Tourism Experience Development Fund supporting some 50 projects across Queensland. We hosted the 34th edition of the Australian Tourism Exchange on the Gold Coast—the ATE—with over 2,300 international delegates, buyers and media representatives. Seeing that happening here in Queensland after a bit of a break was significant.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** They had a great time there. They packed it out. The feedback I received was about how it was right-sized; it worked very well for them. We have been delivering successful tourism promotion as well as campaigns such as Days Like This and Queensland is Calling as well as extending Our Country Advisory Service with five business development officers based from South-East Queensland through to Thursday Island.

The reality is that challenges do remain, including ongoing workforce and skills shortages. They are things that are being experienced right across the economy, but it has been particularly acute in the tourism industry. There is also more work to be done in rebuilding international tourism and ensuring that Queensland is that global destination of choice that we want it to be. However, the reality is that our visitor economy is positioned very well to transform and to grow, and setting our sights very high is proving to be very realistic.

**Mrs McMAHON:** In reference to page 2 of the SDS and the mention of the \$10 million sports infrastructure program, can the minister provide an update on the funding?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** In June, I was pleased to join the Treasurer and Mr Sullivan in the Stafford electorate at the Wilston Grange Gorillas to announce that the 2023-24 state budget included \$10 million for the Inclusive Facilities Fund. The funding for community sport and recreation projects will enhance accessibility, safety and inclusiveness, including for women and girls and people with a disability. I know that Ms McMahon is someone who has had a lifelong passion for sport and participation and who knows what a difference facilities like that can make to seeing more people—particularly women and girls—participate. Getting involved to start with, and staying involved, is very important. It was good to be at Wilston Grange because it is a great example. The upgrades that we have partnered with them on in the past have provided them with an opportunity to build the club. The Gorillas have female teams from under-9s through to seniors off the back of a previous Palaszczuk government investment of almost \$280,000 towards a change room upgrade for female players and umpires.

The new Inclusive Facilities Fund, which I have mentioned before, is another example of the way in which the Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting women and girls in sport. The Palaszczuk government has delivered some 91 female facility projects that we have contributed \$161 million towards over our time in government. In the last five years, we have seen the delivery of 72 female dedicated facility projects that we contributed over \$54 million towards. We will see more projects coming over the next 10 months—even before we get to this next program and project—but we know that more needs to be done. While the profile of women's sport is rising, more runs on the board are needed. That is why we are investing in more significant initiatives that are aimed at improving women's sport and physical activity experiences.

I am pleased to announce the \$10 million Inclusive Facilities Fund will open on 27 September. It will open alongside round 2 of the \$15 million Minor Infrastructure Program. Some \$16.36 million has already been improved for 91 projects across Queensland under round 1 of the Minor Infrastructure Program. With that unprecedented demand we had for round 1 and to meet the industry's needs around making sure we give people more opportunity to do more earlier, we have brought forward round 2 to open in September and align with the Inclusive Facilities Fund to see projects being built through 2024.

The two infrastructure programs will increase community sport and active recreation participation through the provision of spaces that enable accessible, inclusive, safe and quality activities. The \$10 million for inclusive and accessible projects will include upgrades to change rooms and amenities that meet universal design, and provide parent and child facilities. Available funding will be between \$50,000 and \$580,000. The \$15 million Minor Infrastructure Program rounds will be focused—as the last round was—on safe, quality and efficient projects to upgrade fields of play and ancillary facilities including lighting. Under that program, available funding will be between \$50,000 and \$415,000. The two funds aim to deliver deliberate and targeted investment in community sport and active recreation to help reduce barriers, to create more inclusive environments and to enable all Queenslanders to participate in physical activity—especially women and young girls.

These combined funds will support projects that demonstrate the greatest level of project visibility and readiness to help ensure it is aligned with community need. The Activate! Queensland 2019-2029 strategy is all about enhanced, inclusive participation. I encourage committee members to talk to your local communities. I encourage clubs, and indeed councils, to contact their local sport and recreation office to discuss the projects that they have ready to go.

**Mr TANTARI:** With reference to page 12 of the Budget Paper No. 2, can the minister provide an update on the SwimStart program? With reference to the cost-of-living measures, this particular program has had significant interest in my electorate.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I can add some further information around the advice that I was providing to Mr Mander earlier. As part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to easing cost-of-living pressures in this year's budget, \$4.8 million was allocated over two years to provide some 30,000 vouchers for SwimStart to support learn-to-swim activities for zero to four-year-olds. SwimStart will

provide vouchers of \$150 to low-income families to enable Queensland children to build their confidence and love of the water through learning to swim. I know that there are a number of those activities in your electorate of Hervey Bay. Making sure that more families have access is very important. This funding is in addition to the successful FairPlay program—which I know you are very familiar with—which allocates \$7.5 million annually to provide vouchers of up to \$150 to help pay membership registration or participation fees for children aged five to 17 from low-income families.

Last week, I announced that interested parents, carers and guardians, potential activity providers and referral agents were able to register their interest on the SwimStart page. Since this announcement last week on 26 July to yesterday, we have had over 3,000 registrations of interest for SwimStart. This is a terrific response to a new program. From October this year, parents, carers and guardians will be able to apply online for SwimStart vouchers—right on time for the traditional summer season of those activities. Departmental staff will provide the most up-to-date SwimStart information to people who register their interest in plenty of time for the October opening. October is a great time for that program in the lead-up to summer. It builds on the existing FairPlay program where there are more than 120 different activity providers delivering swimming and synchronised swimming activities for Queensland children aged five to 17. We are providing a whole lot of things in that space under FairPlay, but it is good to note that round 9 of FairPlay opened for applications on 26 July, and it is scheduled to close on 4 October.

Since 2019, there have been some 177,241 FairPlay vouchers redeemed by parents, carers and guardians. It is all part of the way in which the Palaszczuk government is committed to easing cost-of-living pressures. SwimStart builds upon the government's commitment to provide a water safety and swimming education program through the funding that is provided through state, primary and special schools to provide support to children from prep to year 6 to have swimming lessons. I encourage those learn-to-swim providers, that I am sure you are talking to, to register their interest and then to become a registered FairPlay activity provider. There might be something that they can do in that space as well, and help make Queensland children water safe. SwimStart will help to improve access to learn-to-swim lessons for children whose families might not otherwise be able to afford them. When you have a barrier like that, it creates a great risk of having little ones who do not have water confidence. It not only provides an opportunity, but it also removes another barrier to physical activity in the longer term.

**CHAIR:** Referencing page 2 of the SDS, there is a mention of the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Plan. Can the minister provide an update on the development of the plan and what it will leave for the state post-Olympics?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I highlight that hosting Brisbane 2032 will create a lasting legacy for our community, economy and environment in the lead-up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games and indeed for the 10 years—if not much more—afterwards. The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games strategy is being developed to set a strategic vision for the legacy outcome and what we want to achieve as a city, state and nation and indeed the Oceania region because of how important that is for the whole of the region in hosting the Olympic Games. As Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement, I am pleased to be leading this work for the Queensland government and to work closely with all of the Olympic Games delivery partners. As part of the development of the Brisbane 2032 legacy strategy, the Hopes and Dreams campaign was delivered, opening in December 2022 and closing in March 2023. Over 12,000 ideas were gathered as part of this campaign from all over Queensland, Australia and beyond.

A key milestone in the development of the Brisbane 2032 legacy strategy was the legacy forum which was held at the Royal International Convention Centre in Brisbane on 22 March this year. Around 500 of Australia's best, brightest and boldest minds attended the forum where four legacy themes were explored in depth and another thousand ideas were shared. At the legacy forum, to underline our commitment to maximising games opportunity, the Premier announced the support for a Paralympic Centre of Excellence to be built at the University of Queensland with a \$44 million Queensland government contribution to be matched by the University of Queensland.

The nearly 14,000 ideas that have been shared through the Hopes and Dreams survey, the stakeholder engagement processes and the Brisbane 2032 legacy forum were summarised in Elevate 2042, the Brisbane 2032 legacy consultation paper which was released for consultation in May 2023 and closed on 25 June 2023. Elevate sought feedback on the draft vision for our games legacy aspirations as well as for the four legacy themes that emerged strongly through the engagement process, including sport, health and social inclusion; a better future for our environment; connecting regionally and globally; economy, jobs and innovation. Feedback was also sought on our two important

lenses that will run through each of the legacy themes and sit at the very heart of the whole legacy strategy, and that is celebrating the world's oldest living cultures and creating a barrier-free society for people living with a disability. Some of the ideas that were heard through the engagement process and showcased in Elevate 2042 include building the most sustainable venues; a First Nations cultural centre; sport for every child; a construction of innovation clusters focusing on augmented reality, biomedical and environmental technology; and South-East Queensland being the world's first inclusive tourism destination. That further consultation received some 497 responses, including 424 from individuals and 73 from organisations that represented a sum total of more than 30,000 persons.

The responses indicated overall support for the themes and the focus areas and around 2,000 practical steps or suggestions were generated to help deliver legacy themes in focus areas. All of the feedback received through the legacy consultation paper is being considered as the 2032 legacy strategy is finalised in consultation with games delivery partners. Brisbane 2032 will benefit the whole of Queensland and as part of the engagement process of legacy planning a free community breakfast was delivered in Cairns by the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport as part of the Far-North Queensland regional parliamentary sitting. I can remember there were a few people who were there on the foreshore, including the deputy chair of the committee who enjoyed that opportunity. It was a great opportunity for the Cairns community to learn more about the legacy coming out of the games and the way in which we are planning for 2032.

Many stakeholders have been engaged throughout the legacy planning process, including the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Legacy Committee, of which I am very pleased to be the chair. That committee comprises 12 members who come from a range of diverse backgrounds including First Nations, business, innovation, the circular economy, tourism and major events, sport, the disability sector and indeed education and the committee continues to contribute their diverse knowledge to experiences, ideas and passion to the legacy planning process. The final Brisbane 2032 legacy strategy is due for release later this year and I am looking forward to the finalisation of that process with our games partners to really fill out what that program provides and gives some more concrete examples. When I say 'concrete' it is not just about bricks and mortar; it is about the benefits and the opportunities that the games can provide.

**CHAIR:** The member for Everton has a question.

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the CEO of Stadiums Queensland. Mr Harris, when will Queensland Cricket and the Lions know what venue they will be playing at over the next few years?

**Mr Harris:** We have had some very extensive conversations with all our key partners at the Gabba, and it is fair to say that there is plenty of work to continue in that space. With the redevelopment of the Gabba, an alternative venue is required for four years from 2026 for the AFL and cricket, including the Brisbane Lions, Brisbane Heat and Queensland Bulls matches. The only current fit-for-purpose venue for both sports during the redevelopment is Heritage Bank Stadium, 84 kilometres from the Gabba on the Gold Coast.

Stadiums Queensland was tasked to undertake an options analysis of alternative venues and the options analysis included the Brisbane RNA showgrounds, Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre, Brighton Homes Arena and Heritage Bank Stadium. The scope of our work focused on the capital requirements to bring venues up to standard, balancing the needs and meeting expectations of stakeholders for contemporary stadia and financial modelling to estimate the operating impact of each of the options on the two key hirers and the key non-financial considerations such as fan experience, transport, operational ease and challenges, and legacy outcomes.

The owners and operators of the venues—the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland, the Brisbane Lions and the Gold Coast Suns—and the two key hirers, the Brisbane Lions and Queensland Cricket, and their governing bodies, AFL and Cricket Australia, provided input into our analysis. Stadiums Queensland has provided its analysis to government for consideration. All options in Brisbane require capital upgrades to meet the minimum guidelines of the individual sporting codes. If it is decided to upgrade a Brisbane venue to host AFL and cricket during the Gabba redevelopment period, urgency and decision of approvals is required to enable works to be completed in readiness for the beginning of the 2026 AFL season. Key considerations with this decision include supporting Queensland sporting organisations during displacement, value for money around capital and operating costs, fan experience and operational impacts. The government will also consider legacy outcomes for Queensland when deciding on the best option for AFL and cricket games during the Gabba redevelopment period.

**Mr MANDER:** Mr Harris, back to you but a different subject. Up until yesterday Stadiums Queensland had not updated their contract disclosure since 2019. Why is that?

**Mr Harris:** I will have to take the question on notice and attempt to report back before the conclusion of this hearing.

**Mr MANDER:** So were you not aware of that?

**Mr Harris:** No. That is the first I have become aware of that.

**Mr MANDER:** Another question along a similar line with the contracts, the value of the contracts that are listed in the contract log do not report the actual value; all they simply say is 'greater than \$10,000'. Why is that?

**Mr Harris:** Again I will take the question on notice and report back before the end of this session.

**Mr MANDER:** Okay. I just want to add that I do not know of any other agency where that happens. I have other ones here in front of me. QBCC, for example, have the exact amount of money that is allocated for every contract.

**Mr Harris:** Sure.

**Mr MANDER:** Minister, I might just direct a follow-up question to you. Does that concern you that contract logs have not been updated for four years?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am certainly keen to hear the response that Mr Harris will bring back to the committee.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Director-General, with reference to page 6 of the SDS—even though I do not have to—could you please explain why less than half of the budgeted money under Advance Queensland through innovation was spent in the last financial year? The allocated money for 2022-23 was \$87 million but the actual spend was just \$34.5 million.

**Mr Hopper:** The variance between the 2022-23 budget and the 2022-23 estimated actual Advance Queensland through innovation decrease of \$52.6 million is mainly due to \$28 million in deferrals for the Innovation for a Future Economy due to revised time frames associated with the delivery of the government's *Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy: 2022-2032 roadmap* and a \$15 million transfer to the Department of Environment and Science for the Research Infrastructure Co-Investment Fund from the Innovation for a Future Economy program.

The original outcome in the 2022-23 budget included scope for science and innovation programs with agreement between the departments reached during this year for distribution of the science programs to meet the objectives and scope outlined by executive government. There was \$9.6 million net deferral for Advance Queensland due to delays with recipients' delivery of project milestones, including Industry Research Fellowships and Ignite Ideas and ongoing delivery of programs such as Regional Futures, Female Founders, the agtech and logistics hubs, the Office of the Chief Entrepreneur and the precinct.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Even with those deferrals, is that actual expenditure part of the \$100 million that was announced last year as the continuation of Advance Queensland?

**Mr Hopper:** I will just seek some advice from my deputy director-general for a moment, Ms Diffey. Could you repeat the question?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** The actual expenditure of 2022-23, the \$34½ million, is that part of the \$100 million of the next phase of Advance Queensland that was announced a year ago?

**Mr Hopper:** Thank you for the question. So, 3.5 was part of the \$100 million, the rest is previous funds.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I think I got that answer back in a recent question on notice, that just 3.5 had been spent on the road map initiatives and a further 89.6 was allocated from 2022-23 to 2026-27. Is that total amount, that 89.6 plus the 3.5, part of the \$100 million announced of the continuation of Advance Queensland?

**Mr Hopper:** Member, if I could address the \$142.2 million budget of Advance Queensland, as you would be aware, the Premier and the minister launched the \$142.2 million *Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy: 2022-2032 roadmap*. Funding for the road map included \$100 million over three years for new and existing programs under Advance Queensland, \$15 million over three years for the Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Strategy and Action Plan; 10.2 million over three years for the innovation action plan and Office of the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur; and \$17 million for the Department of Environment and Science to support priority industry science centres of excellence and partnerships and accelerate university commercialisation.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** The question on notice I got back said it was over five years out to 2026-27, but the minister a year ago said it was over three years. Which one is it?

**Mr Hopper:** Which figure are you referring to?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** The 3.5 spent of the 100 with the 89 allocated. It said over five years in the response that I got, but the minister said it was over three years. I am just trying to get to the bottom of when it is being spent.

**CHAIR:** Did you want to address the question to the minister?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** To the DG, as I said at the start.

**Mr Hopper:** As I understand it, it is over three years.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** That contradicts the question on notice I got which said five years. Are we able to get a breakdown of that funding?

**Mr Hopper:** My apologies. Just to clarify, due to deferrals it actually makes it over five years so hence the reference to five years that you are referencing.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Does that mean that the three-year program announced last year by the minister and the Premier has been extended to a five-year program?

**Mr Hopper:** As a result of deferrals.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Is there a reason for those deferrals?

**CHAIR:** The director-general has already made mention of some of them.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** It is quite a substantial dilution of funding, to have a three-year package announced last year to then be extended to a five-year package. That is a pretty substantial dilution of Queensland's innovation budget.

**Mr Hopper:** I do not think we are looking to dilute. I think in my response a minute ago about the variations I answered that question in terms of how the money had been directed, but I am happy to reiterate. In terms of the 2022-23 budget and the 2022-23 estimated actual, \$28 million for deferral of the Innovation for a Future Economy due to revised time frames associated with the delivery of the government's *Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy 2022-2032 roadmap*; \$15 million transfer to the Department of Environment and Science for the Research Infrastructure Co-Investment Fund from the Innovation for a Future Economy program. The original outcome in the 2022-23 budget included scope for science and innovation programs with agreement between the departments reached during this year for distribution of the science programs to meet the objectives and scope outlined by executive government; \$9.6 million net deferral for Advance Queensland due to delays with recipients' delivery of project milestones, including Industry Research Fellowships and Ignite Ideas and ongoing delivery of programs such as Regional Futures, Female Founders, the agtech and logistics hub, the Office of the Chief Entrepreneur and the precinct.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Minister, why were you not upfront about this? A year ago it was a big press release with you and the Premier that it was being spent—

**CHAIR:** There is an inference in the question. We know where it is going. If we could be careful with the framing of our questions.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Why did it take a question on notice and then questioning the DG here today to find out that that three-year plan that you announced with the Premier last year is now a five-year plan meaning less money is being spent on innovation in Queensland.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** It does not mean less money. It is being spent in a different time frame.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** It is the same money spent over longer. That is less.

**CHAIR:** Order! Minister?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** What it has been a response to is engagement with the sector which has provided advice and information about what is the best timing for the release of such funds and how that works, particularly with some of the projects. I particularly refer to things like the Industry Research Fellowships and Ignite Ideas where we have had feedback through the engagement process around needing to take that period of time for this to be delivered by recipients. Particularly when you talk about these Industry Research Fellowships, and I can give some great examples, and you and the chair will be hurrying me up if I go into some examples of these fellowships—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** He will not. I will.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** He is pretty inpatient. I think what we have seen through these fellowships has been that, particularly the way we have further embedded these fellowships, particularly with working with industry, that those relationships and the backwards and forwards of how they develop some of the concepts and ideas they are working on, it takes more time. The advice we had back from industry, is that they wanted to see this program go over a five-year period, so we have responded to industry and the ecosystems' need rather than insist that something we said in a press release had to happen.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I will go to the director-general again. Director-General, at last year's estimates we found out that almost \$3 million of Advance Queensland funding for a koala genomic research future lab at Dreamworld had been approved by the government to be reallocated to build the Steel Taipan rollercoaster. We were told the project was placed on hold. What progress has been made on the future lab in the last year and has the department requested or received an update from Dreamworld?

**Mr Hopper:** In 2019 the Queensland government committed funding to Dreamworld under the Advance Queensland: Connecting with Asia initiative to support the development of a new tourist attraction that would operate as a research and classroom space for educational institutions, Dreamworld Corroboree stage 2 Future Lab. Following the impact of COVID-19 in early 2020 and to assist in the recovery of the tourism industry, the Queensland government supported the repurposing of this funding for the construction of the Steel Taipan roller-coaster. This decision considered the immediate economic benefits the project would bring to the region recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 and the appeal of a new tourism offering likely to attract returning domestic visitors and international tourists when borders reopened.

Conservation and protection of Queensland's biodiversity and threatened species is a matter for the Hon. Leanne Linard MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Dreamworld's future development plans are a matter for Dreamworld to consider.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Minister, following on from the comment from the director-general that the plans of Dreamworld are up to Dreamworld, last year the Premier said that Dreamworld should do the right thing and continue with the project. Your department approved the reallocation of funding into the roller-coaster. What discussions have you had with Dreamworld regarding this project and whether they will be taking it off hold and proceeding with it?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** For a start, let us be clear that the funding was provided by the department of tourism to attract international visitors. That was the purpose of the funding. The reality was that at the time international borders closed during the pandemic. Dreamworld chose to seek to have that funding invested in a different sort of infrastructure that was going to attract a different sort of tourist.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** And your department approved it.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** We supported that because that is what the industry needed—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Approved it.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** That is what the visitor economy industry needed at the time. The reality is that in relation to koala research the Palaszczuk government provides significant support. We provided an initial \$3 million over two years to SEQ's wildlife hospital network in the budget, including \$1 million for the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital. It is part of the \$24.6 million that the Palaszczuk government allocated to further implement the South-East Queensland koala strategy 2020-25 in the budget. We are doing a really strong piece of work to support South-East Queensland koalas and to support the people who are caring for them. That is in contrast to the way in which we have seen the LNP continually vote against sensible tree clearing laws. We have introduced the strongest koala protections in the state's history and announced the biggest investment, some \$262.5 million, into expanding our national parks. That is what we are focused on. Let me reiterate that I agree—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** We would never put lab funding into a roller-coaster.

**CHAIR:** Order, member for Bonney! The minister has the call.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I was very clear that we are seeing support from our government to those people who are working with the koalas. I certainly have been No. 1 in conversation with the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary about their opportunities to expand further work in their area. There are opportunities that are being announced tonight that would lend into the opportunity for them to apply for support in that space or indeed for Dreamworld to do so, but I would prefer to see Dreamworld investing as they had intended in the first place.

**CHAIR:** Member for Bonney, the time allocated for the questions has—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** You talked about Currumbin but what about Dreamworld? That was the question.

**CHAIR:** Minister, I have a question with reference to page 2 of the SDS in relation to the Paralympic Centre of Excellence. Can you provide an update on that development?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** How do you do this with a straight face, really?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** At the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Forum, which I mentioned earlier, in March the Premier announced the government's \$44 million commitment to the Paralympic Centre of Excellence at the University of Queensland's Saint Lucia campus. The centre will be the very first of its kind anywhere in the world, combining leading research, sport technology, and rehabilitation, participation and training for para athletes in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond. The proposed design includes international standard sport venues, a wheelchair and prosthetics workshop, dedicated testing facilities and classification facilities, which is very important in that regard, telecoaching facilities, accessibility to a student workforce and education as well. It will also provide invaluable research and other opportunities for the community. The University of Queensland is also providing \$44 million to the project and matching funding is being sought from the Australian government.

Of the 4.3 million Australians with a disability, only one in four currently participates in sport while 75 per cent want to participate. This project will help bridge the gap and is an example of the legacy outcomes from hosting the games. The UQ Paralympic Centre of Excellence will use UQ's partnership with the PA Hospital's spinal unit to establish pathways for rehabilitation from accident or trauma through to sport participation and eventually Paralympic pathways. The centre will also focus on providing Paralympic pathways for people with more severe impairments, who are often under-represented in Paralympic categories. One of the areas where we can see our para athletes receiving a greater share of the medal outcomes at future Paralympic Games is all about those higher classification categories where frankly Australians are under-represented. Therefore, it is great to see that this centre will focus on those opportunities.

As I say, the Queensland government is allocating \$44 million in funding towards the Paralympic Centre of Excellence to place Brisbane and Queensland as a world leader in Paralympic research, sports tech and rehabilitation. As I said from the outset, it is the first of its kind globally and a terrific example of how the Olympic and Paralympic legacy can really change people's lives.

**CHAIR:** I certainly value the Paralympics and the Paralympic Centre of Excellence, unlike some of the others who made fun of that question.

**Mr MANDER:** Point of order, Chair. If that was directed at myself—

**CHAIR:** No, it was not.

**Mr MANDER:**—and the member for Bonney, it is offensive and I ask that you withdraw it.

**CHAIR:** Under what standing order are you making that point of order?

**Mr MANDER:** The point of order is that I take personal offence at it and I ask that it be withdrawn

**CHAIR:** I made no reference to yourself nor was it intended to reference yourself.

**Mr MANDER:** Why did you say it? Why was it necessary to make that statement?

**CHAIR:** Because it was suggested that it was laughable, by the member for Bonney. I do not think that that is laughable.

**Mr MANDER:** It is offensive, the inference that you have made.

**CHAIR:** We are going to move on. Member for Everton, there is no standing—

**Mr MANDER:** All day you have done this.

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, there is no standing order under which you are making your point of order. I have ruled on your point of order. We are moving on.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and the \$54.3 million allocated towards the redevelopment of Browne Park in Rockhampton, could you please provide an update on the project and other similar projects across the state?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Before I come to the important issue of Browne Park, there was a slip of the tongue earlier when I was talking about the 74 organisations that represented some 30,000 individuals who contributed to the legacy strategy planning process. It was a slip of the tongue. I should have said 20,000 and not 30,000.

As the member would be aware because I know she is a keen Rugby League person, Browne Park has been the home of Rugby League for 100 years in Central Queensland. These days it is the home of the Central Queensland Capras Rugby League team, which plays in the Queensland Rugby League Hostplus Cup and other competitions.

**Mrs McMAHON:** And the BMD.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** And the BMD. The Central Queensland Regional Recovery Action Plan that the Queensland government has released made a financial commitment of \$25 million in 2020 towards stage 1 of the redevelopment of Browne Park. The vision is for Browne Park to be Central Queensland's leading venue for community, national and international sporting and entertainment events, really adding to the Rockhampton visitor economy and to the community.

Queensland government funding since the initial election commitment made in 2020 has more than doubled to account for significant escalations in the building industry and supply chain, as well as site challenges such as water and sewerage upgrades along with building in of professional sport requirements to host games, including at national Rugby League standards. The \$54 million stage 1 redevelopment will include a contemporary three-level 3½ thousand seat grandstand featuring a timber structured roof, four universally designed change rooms, public amenities, food and beverage outlets, media and coach facilities, corporate areas, a function room, broadcast facilities and offices for the Central Queensland Capras and for the Queensland Rugby League.

**Mr MANDER:** And 3,000 fewer seats.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I am pleased to advise the committee that it is anticipated to deliver over 170 jobs during the construction phase. That is a great example of the allocation towards major projects that are making a difference to sport in our regions. There are a number of similar projects across the state, as Ms McMahon referred to. At Craigslea State High School, in the electorate of Aspley, construction will commence shortly on six-court indoor volleyball facility that was part of a \$10 million 2020 election commitment by the Palaszczuk government. In 2023 an additional \$8 million was committed to the facility's development to meet the school and community's growing needs for indoor multipurpose courts and also the requirements for a badminton training facility for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. I can advise the committee that it will be one of the first venues built for Brisbane 2032 and further that, due to the decades-long link between Craigslea State High School and the broader volleyball community, it is absolutely the perfect place for such a facility.

I have to declare an understanding and appreciation of that, as a former Craigslea State High School student. I can assure you that, from the days when Randall Robinson was the Queensland women's coach and the head of the physical education department when I was at the school, volleyball was integral to the school's environment. I was a bit on the outer with him because I was a tall kid who did not play volleyball. I played the other game instead. Once completed the facility will be made available to the entire community to access and use.

Equally, there are other great facilities. Let us move to North Queensland. In Mackay we have seen the successful delivery of stage 1 of the Great Barrier Reef Arena, known locally as Harrop Park. It was great to see Mr Mander at the opening event alongside me rocking it out to Missy Higgins and Mark Seymour among others.

**Mr MANDER:** Point of order: I was not rocking; I was moving very groovily.

**CHAIR:** Minister, we will get on with the answers.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The facility was delivered on time and on budget and provided a new grandstand with more than 2,000 seats, broadcast, media and corporate facilities, player and official change rooms, and inclusive and accessible facilities. This has brought Harrop Park to the point where it has already gained a reputation in cricket as the best non-capital city venue in the country and they look forward to seeing international standard cricket, AFL and AFLW games being played there in the very near future.

It was a pleasure to be with the Premier and the local member, Minister Grace, on 29 June for the official opening of the National Rugby Training Centre located at the iconic Ballymore site at Herston. This on budget, on time project is part of the Queensland Rugby Union's vision to be a multisport home to women's rectangular sport in Brisbane, anchored by the tenancy of the Wallaroos, who will use the venue for training in the lead-up to the 2025 Rugby World Cup. Australia is hosting the 2029 edition of the World Cup. The reconstruction of the McLean Stand has provided around 3,000 seats, a world-class gym and recovery facilities, a 75-seat theatre, a large function space, multifunction meeting rooms, QRU pathways facilities and administration space.

It was particularly pleasing to see the QRU's commitment to women's sport turn into reality with the recent announcement that the Brisbane Roar women's program will be playing all of their home games in the upcoming season at Ballymore. I expect further content deals will be announced shortly that showcase this terrific facility. What all this shows is that the Palaszczuk government is committed to providing quality facilities for sport right across the state, giving all Queenslanders the opportunity to participate in and view top-class sport in their own communities.

**Mr TANTARI:** Page 2 of the SDS references the implementation of the Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy 2023-2032 road map. Can you please provide an update on what the government is doing to support innovation in Queensland?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The road map announced by the Premier and I in July last year sets out the government's direction, key priority outcomes and initiatives as we further develop Queensland's innovation economy. One of the key priorities identified in the roadmap is to attract and retain innovative businesses in Queensland and to encourage innovative drive enterprises to grow and reach global markets and to create good Queensland jobs. As I mentioned earlier tonight, the Palaszczuk government will be opening an \$8 million super-round of Ignite Ideas. This new suite of programs will consist of \$4 million for Ignite Ideas round 11, \$2.5 million for Ignite Spark round one, and \$1.5 million to expand Ignite Plus. This super-round builds on the success of our flagship Ignite Ideas program and will open in September. Ignite Spark aims to support Queensland-based SMEs with high growth potential to progress the development of an innovative product or prototype to market. The program will support these businesses to advance stage products which are ready to be commercialised. Ignite Spark will fill the gap between when a product has been developed by a researcher but is not yet ready to enter the wider market as a commercialised product. Grants of \$50,000 to \$75,000 will be offered with a matched funding contribution from the applicant. Ignite Spark will also provide a pipeline of innovators who could be those future Ignite Ideas applicants.

This new program will complement the existing suite of grants available for Queensland innovators funded by Advance Queensland, including the Backing Female Founders program, Ignite Ideas and the industry research project fund. Advance Queensland's flagship program is Ignite Ideas which has had 10 rounds to date and which has supported more than 400 companies to commercialise innovative products with grants of up to \$200,000 since 2016. The Ignite Ideas Fund supports Queensland-based small to medium businesses with high growth potential to undertake commercialisation projects. The aim is to strengthen key industries in Queensland, diversify the economy, compete in new markets and create new jobs now and into the future.

Queensland's female founders represents the fastest growing carry of entrepreneurship worldwide and since 2019 Advance Queensland has supported more than 1,500 female founders in their entrepreneurial journey. At the Women in Investment Summit in November 2022 I was delighted to announce \$3 million towards supporting female founders to grow and scale their innovation businesses in Queensland. In this year's budget, as part of the women's economic security package, the Palaszczuk government added a further \$5 million to this terrific program.

We know that not every innovator is seeking fund for their product. Often innovators and entrepreneurs contact my department just seeking advice on how to improve and develop their business competency in investment, sales, marketing and financial literacy. That is why in 2022 the Palaszczuk government launched Ignite Plus, a business development program to provide those past Ignite Ideas Fund recipients with a tailored business support program to develop their skills. Launched in February this year, almost 60 companies taking parts in Ignite Plus have received this additional support which will allow them to be better prepared to scale and expand and better positioned to create new Queensland jobs. The expanded Ignite Plus program announced tonight will provide incubator, accelerator and other business development support services to recipients. Queensland's economic success depends on the success of our innovators and entrepreneurs, from creating new ideas and businesses to scaling and exporting their products and services. That is why it is crucial that we support our innovators at every stage of their innovation journey.

**CHAIR:** Reference to the Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Strategy, could the minister provide us an update on what the Queensland government is doing to support innovative precincts throughout the state?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting innovation precincts across the state which is why we have committed \$15 million for the Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Strategy and action plan. Innovation precincts support growth, productivity and innovation which builds our economy and they form an important part of that Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Strategy 2022-2032.

At the National Tech Summit on 20 July, as I think the Premier made reference to in giving evidence to the committee earlier today, the Premier opened the \$4 million Strategic Initiatives Program, which will deliver grants of up to \$300,000 to existing Queensland innovation precincts and places to develop best practice governance frameworks, investment attraction strategies and operational assessment strategies. The program is part of the three-year \$15 million Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Fund, set up to support innovation precincts drive ideas through to commercialisation, adoption and diffusion.

The Strategic Initiatives Program is the first of three streams under the Queensland Innovation Precincts and Places Fund. Stream 2 provides \$1 million for the Innovation Place Leaders Network and engaging with targeted stakeholders directly. This will develop and strengthen linkages and collaborations within and between innovation places and the innovation ecosystem. Stream 3 is the Regional Precincts and Places Infrastructure and Technology Program. It is a \$10 million program that will provide grants of up to \$1 million for smart infrastructure, technology and upgrades that support future industry focused collaborative projects. Streams 2 and 3 of the fund will both open later this year.

Queensland is home to a number of innovation precincts and places including the Herston Health Precinct, the Boggo Road Innovation Precinct and the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct. As Mr O'Connor appreciates, located at Southport—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** In the great electorate of Bonney, Minister.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:**—the 200-hectare precinct leverages the legacy of the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games infrastructure and it is internationally recognised for transforming lives through health care, innovation, research and next generation technologies. It is home to some of Queensland's key innovation assets including the Gold Coast university and private hospitals, Griffith University's Gold Coast campus and a dedicated start-up and collaboration space, supporting attraction of talent, industry and investment.

The Palaszczuk government is also committed to developing new opportunities which support collaboration and innovation. That is why I was pleased to be with Mr O'Connor at the sod turning for the \$154 million research, design and centre of excellence development at the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct back in May. This new facility, which is due for completion in mid-2025, will be a premium eight-level health and innovation facility fitted out for research, biotech, clinical and education outcomes and will further cutting-edge life sciences work and virtual care via robotic technologies—a very exciting space and place for innovation here in the state.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** A great local member there too.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Some people say that—I say 'some'.

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, do you have a question?

**Mr MANDER:** I do. I have a question for the director-general. Director-General, could you please advise the sports whose core funding has been reduced this financial year compared to last financial year?

**Mr Hopper:** I will get my deputy director-general, Mr Sly, to join us. We can take you through that detail.

**Mr Sly:** We will source that and get that to you within the next 18 minutes, if that is okay.

**Mr MANDER:** Can I also ask how much that has been reduced by? Can you provide that as well?

**Mr Sly:** Yes.

**Mr MANDER:** Minister, I want to give you a challenge. Could you look at question on notice No. 18? Do you have that in front of you?

**CHAIR:** I thought it was going to be one of those ice bucket challenges or something!

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** While we are getting this all together and giving me a chance to read it, I understand that Mr Harris is ready to provide a reply. Sorry, I have misread the note to me. He will be ready to provide a reply in a short moment. I will now read the question on notice.

**Mr MANDER:** This question is about discrepancies between actual and budget capital expenditure. The second paragraph of the answer states—

The net variance of \$45 445 000 includes projects where underspends of \$71 562 000 occurred due to the reprofiling of funding required to match the anticipated timing of projected capital expenditure.

Minister, what the heck does that mean? That is straight out of *Utopia*.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I can speak to the—

**Mr MANDER:** I am interested in that paragraph. What does that paragraph mean?

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, I know you are passionate, but can I have a quick withdrawal on some of the language there? The question still stands.

**Mr MANDER:** I withdraw.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** The member clearly has a concern interpreting the language ‘reprofiling of funding required to match the anticipated timing of projected capital expenditure’. It is pretty clear.

**Mr MANDER:** Who wrote it?

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** What that means—do you not understand words? It is English.

**Mr MANDER:** No, not that.

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Maybe it is English out of your ability but it is English.

**Mr MANDER:** The average Queenslander would have absolutely no idea what that means.

**CHAIR:** Order! We are not engaging in argument backwards and forwards. Minister, if you can answer the question, that would be great.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Do you know what ‘reprofiling’ means?

**CHAIR:** No. Minister, with due respect, I do not want a series of questions about the meaning of words. We all know what reprofiling means.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I have some doubts. The sport and recreation decreases of \$22.7 million is mainly due to the following decreases: an \$18 million deferral for the Local Community Sporting Infrastructure Program affected by factors such as approvals, scope changes, weather, the sporting season—some projects get held off while activities are going on—contractor availability, cost escalation and material supply.

There is also a \$13 million deferral for the Minor Infrastructure Program with planned time frames being pushed out to allow participants time to prepare applications and the impact of the construction industry which has been, as you were making reference to earlier, Mr Mander, volatile with trade shortages and supply chain issues causing long lead times which have impacted on timing of project delivery.

A \$10 million deferral was due to the transfer of the Sunshine Coast Stadium expansion to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning as this is now one of the venues being delivered by the Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure Office. This project now falls within the \$7 billion joint Olympic infrastructure program with the Australian government.

Some of that reprofiling was as a result of, as the answer says, ‘the anticipated timing of projected capital expenditure’. You reprofile in the budget framework when the expenditure is actually going to happen. It is a pretty straightforward sentence, but there are some specific examples.

**Mr STEVENS:** I do not think you understand it either. I think the reprofiling refers to the reassessment of the costing of the project which will be done in further years to come.

**CHAIR:** I do not think so.

**Mr STEVENS:** I am just trying to help you, Minister.

**Mr MANDER:** So it is delays.

**CHAIR:** There wasn’t really a question there, was there?

**Mr STEVENS:** No. I was just helping the minister.

**CHAIR:** I am not sure you are correct. Has the minister concluded his answer or does he wish to respond to the helpful nature of the deputy chair?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** No. I will allow the deputy chair’s helpful advice to stand.

**Mr O’CONNOR:** If people want to hear more language like that, they can watch *Utopia* tomorrow night on the ABC. I think it is on at 8.30 pm.

**CHAIR:** Order! Member for Bonney, we can move back. If you are going to ask ad lib questions—

**Mr O’CONNOR:** No, sorry.

**CHAIR:** It is late at night. Can we just get to the questions?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Thank you, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Order!

**Mr STEVENS:** He just said he was going to go to the question.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Director-General, *The state of Australian startup funding report 2022*, which was put together with some figures from JP Morgan, Deloitte, Silicon Valley Bank amongst others, found that Queensland accounted for just eight per cent of start-up or venture capital funding generated across Australia. That was well behind the 57 per cent generated by New South Wales and the 30 per cent generated by Victoria. What analysis does the department have for the reason we are lagging so far behind?

**Mr Hopper:** I will await the arrival of my deputy director-general, Ms Diffey, so we can provide a meaningful response.

I will draw the member's attention to the \$150 million Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund, which was just launched, which I assume the member is aware of. I am happy to detail that now as to what that entails.

I think it is fair to say that Queensland boasts a diverse and robust economy, providing investors with a wide array of opportunities. The Queensland government continues to move forward with relevance and impact, identifying areas for improvements and refining our initiatives to maximise the insights, strengths and success of Queenslanders.

We have certainly listened to feedback from our stakeholders and, as their needs evolve, so must our initiatives. The very nature of supporting and investing in innovative ideas is to turn them into successful businesses, leading the way, inspiring others and increasing productivity and job creation while improving economic outcomes.

There is certainly leadership and support from this government and direction to us and plenty of foresight and flexibility to allow for that adaptability, identifying emerging opportunities and staying ahead of the curve through the development of key initiatives such as the aforementioned Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund, which of course is managed by the Queensland Investment Corporation—and what a wonderful corporation that is.

The fund builds on our investment in the Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy 2022-2032 roadmap, prioritising increased—sorry, was there a question? My apologies; I will start that point again. The fund builds on our investment in the Advance Queensland: innovation for a future economy 2022-2032 roadmap, prioritising increased investment for companies to start, stay and grow in Queensland. The Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund will invest \$75 million to enhance the venture capital industry in the state and stimulate new investment into innovative early stage start-ups. The fund will operate on a matched funding basis to provide government cornerstone investment to selected venture capital funds and accelerators to assist Queensland start-ups to scale and create high value jobs throughout the state. Not only will this help support local investment; it will stimulate new investment into Queensland.

The program comprises three components: up to \$20 million in matched funding into appointed venture capital firms; accelerator programs to increase deal flow in the Queensland innovation ecosystem; and a development program that will accelerate development and enhance venture capital industry in Queensland. The Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund builds on the success of Advance Queensland initiatives, and I will get to the full list of those in a moment. It is about delivering a bigger pipeline of support to help start-ups in their critical early stages and backing developed innovators to scale up and create Queensland jobs of the future.

Requests for quotes under the Queensland Venture Capital Development Fund closed mid-July. Applications to the fund will now undergo an initial review and assessment by a panel of representatives from the Queensland Investment Corporation against the criteria provided to all applicants. Short-listed applicants will, following robust due diligence, be considered by an appropriate Queensland Investment Corporation investment committee that comprises independent investment expertise and representatives before any investment commitment is approved.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Director-General—

**Mr Hopper:** I have not quite finished.

**Mr O'CONNOR:**—the question was specifically about Queensland being found to have just eight per cent of start-up or venture capital—

**CHAIR:** Member for Bonney, is there a point of order?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Yes. I am trying to get the specifics of the question I asked. Does the department concur—

**CHAIR:** I understand, but the answer is relevant to the question that you asked.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** It is just a bit of paper—

**CHAIR:** You have made that clarification. I will let the director-general continue with his answer.

**Mr Hopper:** Our response is the Queensland venture capital fund—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Just running the clock down, I think. We are almost there.

**Mr Hopper:** I just think it is a wonderful program.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** It is a great program that we delivered—

**CHAIR:** Member for Bonney, do not impugn the motives of the witnesses before us. The director-general has been directly relevant and continues to build exactly on the questions you asked about venture capital in Queensland.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Does the department concur with that eight per cent figure?

**CHAIR:** The director-general has not completed his answer. You interrupted. Director-General, if you could complete your answer.

**Mr Hopper:** Start again.

**An honourable member:** From the top.

**CHAIR:** No. I know it is late at night, but it seems the opposition is getting a bit silly here. He has been asked about venture capital. The director-general is answering the question.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** He is barely holding back his smile.

**CHAIR:** I think he was close to winding up and you can put another question. Director-General, do not go backwards. Please continue with your answer.

**Mr Hopper:** I would not dare go backwards, Chair. Successful investment partners will be contracted in the second half of 2023. The Queensland Investment Corporation also delivers the Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund, which is dedicated to making direct investment in Queensland business and industry, as well as the \$24 million Enterprise Acceleration Fund, established to invest in innovative early stage Queensland companies, supporting increased access to capital and driving jobs growth. These initiatives, along with Advance Queensland, help to create Queensland success stories like sport technology company VALD and online learning provider Go1. With the support of Advance Queensland and QIC these companies are now exporting their world-leading innovations, attracting millions of dollars in investments and creating jobs for Queenslanders. VALD was established in 2015. The company has since expanded its headquarters into large commercial premises in Newstead and employed 180 staff as at November 2022. VALD reports that its suite of innovative human measurement technologies is being used by over 1,000 of the world's most elite sporting teams, clinics, universities, hospitals and defence departments. Go1 has also grown from a small operation run out of a garage in 2015 into much larger and modern headquarters at Underwood, with offices—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Oh, not more paper!

**Mr Hopper:**—also located in Sydney and Melbourne, the United States of America, the Asia-Pacific, the United Kingdom and Europe.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Thank you, Chair. Can I—

**Mr Hopper:** In conclusion, what I would say is there is no current reliable data source available on government start-up support in Australia by state, and certainly the reference that you have made is to but one report.

**CHAIR:** My understanding is that Mr Harris has a clarification on the—

**Mr O'CONNOR:** That was the answer to the question at the end, but we got there. Minister—

**CHAIR:** I understand Mr Harris has an answer to an earlier question put by the member for Everton.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I thought we would get to that in the last five minutes. I have more to go with the minister.

**CHAIR:** Mr Harris?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Can I go to the minister? Minister, Griffith University—

**CHAIR:** I do not know what part of 'Mr Harris' you did not understand. It is very strange this afternoon, member for Bonney. Mr Harris?

**Mr Harris:** Thank you, Chair. I am pleased to report back to the committee that I have checked the open data portal and can confirm that it contains all disclosures as required dating back to 2019. I have checked the website and can confirm that: the data for 2019-20 contains 299 disclosures; the data for 2020-21 contains 245 disclosures; the data for 2021-22 contains in excess of 200 disclosures, and unfortunately I cannot give you a specific number because the format appears to have been changed in the portal in that year and I cannot actually see exactly how many I might find; and 2022-23 contained 353 records. Based on my review of the open data portal, it appears certain search criteria provide differing results. If you enter 'Stadiums Queensland' it gives you a result; if you just enter 'SQ' it gives you a different result; or if you just put the word 'stadiums' in there it gives you a different result. I can confirm to the committee that all contract disclosures have been completed in accordance with necessary government disclosure requirements.

Your second question relates to the specifics of each of the contract disclosures. I am advised that contract values are not specifically disclosed in accordance with the principles of clause 4.1 of the contract disclosure guidelines to maintain confidentiality or privacy where the obligation of confidence arises as a contractual requirement. The guidelines suggest using the RTI requirements as a guide. Stadiums Queensland would not release this information under RTI because of the confidentiality clauses. This is because disclosure would have an effect on future procurement processes, resulting in less value for money.

**CHAIR:** Minister, the member for Everton asked you to respond, and you said that you would wait on the information from Mr Harris. Do you have any response, having seen the information from Mr Harris?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** My response is that the member for Everton, Mr Mander, cannot read English and cannot use a portal.

**Mr MANDER:** Mr Chair, a point of clarification. The CEO has mentioned what he has seen I assume tonight. Can you confirm that those figures were upgraded overnight from yesterday? Yesterday 2019 was the latest figure and today it is 2023. The question is why was that? Are you saying it was because of the search engines?

**CHAIR:** Search terms.

**Mr Harris:** All I can respond to is the data that I can see on the website now. I was not in—

**Mr MANDER:** It is totally irrelevant.

**Mr Harris:** I was not in the open data portal yesterday. You can see in the open data portal when records were updated. There are dates of the disclosures and when it—

**Mr MANDER:** It is totally irrelevant. I will direct the question to the minister, not the public servant. Yesterday 2019 was the latest update. Obviously, if you look at it now—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** From Mr Harris' answer, it sounds like you did not navigate the portal.

**Mr MANDER:** It was not upgraded. You do not accept the fact that that was done in 24 hours?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** From the advice Mr Harris has given the committee, it sounds to me like you did not operate the portal well.

**Mr MANDER:** No, that is not what he said.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** That was what I heard.

**Mr MANDER:** He said he has looked at his phone tonight—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** And he gave advice about how—

**Mr MANDER:**—and seen what it is. I agree with that. That was not the case 24 hours ago.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** You looked at it today and saw it?

**Mr MANDER:** We looked at it yesterday and it had 2019 and—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** You looked at it today and saw all that was there?

**Mr MANDER:** Yes. Correct. It is very easy—

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, this is—

**Mr MANDER:** To check it tonight is ridiculous.

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, this is a question the minister could take on notice. However, I do not know that you are going to like the answer. If you wish to ask the minister—

**Mr MANDER:** The Coaldrake review is a joke. The way that you have treated this lack of transparency is an absolute joke.

**CHAIR:** Member for Everton, this is completely out of order. I was offering that if you wish to have—

**Mr MANDER:** We will ask more questions about it in the future.

**Mr Harris:** Chair, I do have some additional information. The information I have got in front of me is as follows: the data relating to years 2020-21 was updated on 17 November 2021; years 2021-22 was updated on 23 December 2022; and years 2022-23 was updated on 31 July 2023.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** There was outstanding information in relation to the state sporting organisation funding that Mr Sly can provide.

**CHAIR:** Mr Sly, you undertook to get some information for the member for Everton as well

**Mr Sly:** Yes. Just confirming in June 2023, the department approved \$16.577 million through the Active Industry Base Fund 2023-2025. I note also that transitional arrangements have been put in place and that the Active Industry Base Fund was determined by including comparisons of applicants' participation levels, statewide delivery as measured by the presence of affiliates across local government areas and human resources. I also note it is the first time it had been re-evaluated since 2016. Under that program, there were 45 decreases of between \$1,400 and \$130,000, and 28 increases of between \$1,500 and \$87,000. I note also that the department will publish the funding that has been approved.

**CHAIR:** I do not think there was anything else on notice. With that, I thank the minister, the director-general and all of the officials and departmental officers for your attendance. Minister, would you like to briefly add anything before we conclude?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I would like to thank all the committee members and the committee's guests for their tolerance of me and the other witnesses. I particularly thank the staff of the department and the associated entities for all the great work they have done to prepare for today and the opportunity it has provided for us to reflect on our administration on behalf of the people of Queensland.

**CHAIR:** I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Economics and Governance Committee secretariat. I am sure all members join me in thanking Lucy Manderson and Melissa Salisbury who have done an extraordinarily professional job in preparing us for this long day. They have endured the long day and, more importantly, they have endured us through the entire day. I wish to thank them.

That concludes this hearing of the estimates for the Economics and Governance Committee for 2023. I would like to thank the audio people who have such a complex job. Lindsay and his team do a fantastic job every year with the audio and broadcast, and it improves every year. I would like to thank the parliamentary broadcast staff in their booth and especially Hansard who return drafts of the *Hansard* to us so promptly. I thank all of the staff, especially all of the attendants and staff who have assisted us today. With that, I declare the hearing closed.

**The committee adjourned at 9.03 pm.**