



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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Phone (07) 3553 6344

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## TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

### ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of assent: 22 November 2023

A Bill for an Act to amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, the Land Sales Act 1984, the Land Title Act 1994 and the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

22 November 2023

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 22 November 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 22 November 2023 [[1990](#)].

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Absence of Member



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

### REPORT

#### Auditor-General



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General *Report 3: 2023-24—2023 status of Auditor-General's recommendations*. I table the report for the information of members.

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General Report 3: 2023-24—2023 status of Auditor-General's recommendations [[1991](#)].

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### Code of Ethical Standards



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, an updated Code of Ethical Standards and associated Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members has been approved following a review by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly of the 57th Parliament, in accordance with section 86 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. I table the code and associated guidelines. The new code will also be available on the parliament's website from this morning.

*Tabled paper:* Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Code of Ethical Standards together with The Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members, November 2023 [\[1992\]](#).

### Petition Responses and Answers to Questions on Notice, Due Dates



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, due to the Christmas shutdown period, in accordance with standing order 7, responses to petitions tabled this week under standing order 125 and answers to this week's questions on notice under standing order 114 are due on Monday, 8 January 2024. The *Notice Paper* and the questions on notice and petitions databases will reflect this due date and the Table Office will advise relevant departmental officers.

### School Group Tour



**Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from St John Fisher College, Bracken Ridge, in the electorate of Sandgate.

## PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk—

### Redlands, 2032 Olympic Whitewater Stadium

394 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent the proposed land at Birkdale in Redland City be developed for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Whitewater Stadium and designate the existing Penrith Whitewater Stadium as the 2032 Olympic Canoe Slalom venue [\[1973\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, lodged and sponsored by the honourable member indicated—

### Kingaroy-Barkers Creek Road, Upgrade

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 998 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade the three single-lane sections of Kingaroy-Barkers Creek Road to a two-lane standard [\[1974\]](#)[\[1975\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, sponsored and lodged by the Clerk—

### Moreton Bay Region, Migratory Shorebirds

3,287 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to ensure the protection of Moreton Bay's migratory shorebirds [\[1976\]](#)[\[1977\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the honourable member indicated—

### Gold Coast Hinterland, Fire Danger Rating Signs

**Mr Boothman**, from 901 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate the Fire Danger Rating signs in the Gold Coast hinterland as soon as possible as a safety priority ahead of this year's severe bushfire season predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology [\[1978\]](#).

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

### Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area, Regulations

1,309 petitioners, from two petitions, requesting the House to remove the regulations limiting the number of dwellings and/or the 100ha limit on subdivisions in the Regional Landscape and Rural Production Area, assess on a case-by-case basis depending upon use, environmental value, and by applying section 13 of the *Human Rights Act 2019* to its activities [\[1979\]](#)[\[1980\]](#).

### Domestic and Family Violence, Sentencing

1,578 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate that regardless of age, gender, beliefs or mental state, any person found guilty of domestic violence resulting in death be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole or release [\[1981\]](#).

### Brisbane Valley Highway, Repair

490 petitioners, requesting the House to instruct the contractor to redo the repair work recently carried out on The Brisbane Valley Highway between Blacksoil and Fernvale to a higher standard [\[1982\]](#).

### Government Housing, Solar Panels

588 petitioners, requesting the House to install solar panels and batteries on as many government homes as possible [\[1983\]](#).

### Coronavirus, Reporting

886 petitioners, requesting the House to explain the reasons for no longer reporting COVID deaths in Queensland [\[1984\]](#).

### Housing Supply, Holiday Rentals

650 petitioners, requesting the House to address the housing crisis by limiting access to holiday rentals to a part of an existing home and only if the owner of that property is living there when the rental occurs [\[1985\]](#).

### Shark Nets, Ban

1,111 petitioners, requesting the House to ban all shark nets in Queensland [\[1986\]](#).

### Malanda Atherton Road, Speed cameras

818 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the concerns relating to the unmanned portable speed detection device positioned on Malanda Atherton Road in September and to suspend all infringement notices issued by this device at this location while this matter is properly and independently investigated [\[1987\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

17 November 2023—

[1914](#) Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator—Annual Report 2022-2023

[1915](#) Memo, dated 17 November 2023, from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and Leader of the House, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to members of the Parliament, advising of the 2024 parliamentary sitting calendar

20 November 2023—

[1916](#) Queensland Health Departmental Standard: Competency requirements for licensed technicians undertaking pest management activities with pesticides and fumigants—version 2, 6 October 2023

[1917](#) Queensland Health Departmental Standard: Competency requirements for authority holders dealing with poisons—version 2, 6 October 2023

[1918](#) Annual Report on the administration of the Environmental Protection Act 1994—1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

[1919](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—Annual Report 2022-23

[1920](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—State of Wet Tropics 2022-2023: Rescue and recovery of threatened Wet Tropics species and ecological communities

[1921](#) Commission of Inquiry to Examine DNA Project 13 Concerns—Final Report, 17 November 2023

21 November 2023—

[1922](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 55, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 23 August 2023 and 12 September 2023

[1923](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 42, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 23 August 2023 and 10 October 2023

[1924](#) Oath for appointment as Acting Queensland Ombudsman and Inspector of Detention Services of Ms Angela Pyke, dated 21 November 2023

[1925](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. D'Ath), to an ePetition (3895-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,223 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to ensure victims of crime are compensated for stolen or damaged vehicles

22 November 2023—

[1926](#) Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD): Volume 1 of 2—version 13, 22 November 2023

[1927](#) Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD): Volume 2 of 2—version 13, 22 November 2023

[1928](#) Final Response from the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (3941-23) presented by the member for Callide, Mr Head, and an ePetition (3923-23) sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Head, from 472 and 1,345 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to support truth in sentencing principles whereby the perpetrator serves the full sentence imposed reflecting the severity of the action

- [1929](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 214, 57th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the State Development and Regional Industries Committee on 26 May 2022 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, government response

23 November 2023—

- [1930](#) Professional Standards Councils—Annual Report 2022-23: Erratum
- [1931](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Hon. Dr Miles), to an ePetition (3901-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,574 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent the proposed land at Birkdale in Redland City be developed for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Whitewater Stadium and designate the existing Penrith Whitewater Stadium as the 2032 Olympic Canoe Slalom venue
- [1932](#) Response from the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women (Hon. Fentiman), to an ePetition (3969-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 2,083 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the proposal of private Obstetricians treating public patients in return for being able to birth their private patients in Far North Queensland public hospitals
- [1933](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3958-23) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 686 petitioners, requesting the House to install noise amelioration barriers adjacent to the Coomera Springs residential area on the M1
- [1934](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3960-23) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 332 petitioners, requesting the House to install noise amelioration barriers adjacent to the Brookside Circuit residential area, Exit 41 of the M1

24 November 2023—

- [1935](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 56, 57th Parliament—Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2023
- [1936](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 40, 57th Parliament—Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023
- [1937](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 41, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 23 August and 10 October 2023
- [1938](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 43, 57th Parliament—Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023
- [1939](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 44, 57th Parliament—Land Valuation Amendment Bill 2023
- [1940](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 45, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into scrap metal theft
- [1941](#) Statutes Amendment (National Energy Laws)(Emissions Reduction Objectives) Act 2023 which received Royal Assent on 21 September 2023
- [1942](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 37, 57th Parliament—Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023
- [1943](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 51, 57th Parliament—Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023
- [1944](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 52, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 23 August 2023 and 12 September 2023
- [1945](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 38, 57th Parliament—Public Records Bill 2023
- [1946](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 39, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 23 August and 12 September 2023

27 November 2023—

- [1947](#) Response from the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women (Hon. Fentiman), to a paper petition (3978-23) presented by the member for Callide, Mr Head, and an ePetition (3955-23) sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Head, from 10 and 3,926 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to return full birthing services to Biloela Hospital
- [1948](#) Response from the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water (Hon. Butcher), to a paper petition (3980-23) presented by the member for Buderim, Mr Mickelberg, from 96 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent the proposed sub-meter charge by Unitywater on unit owners

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

##### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

- [1949](#) Medicines and Poisons (Poisons and Prohibited Substances) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 162
- [1950](#) Medicines and Poisons (Poisons and Prohibited Substances) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 162, explanatory notes
- [1951](#) Medicines and Poisons (Poisons and Prohibited Substances) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 162, human rights certificate

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

- [1952](#) Medicines and Poisons (Pest Management Activities) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 163



- [1953](#) Medicines and Poisons (Pest Management Activities) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 163, explanatory notes  
[1954](#) Medicines and Poisons (Pest Management Activities) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 163, human rights certificate

Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [1955](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 164  
[1956](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 164, explanatory notes  
[1957](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 164, human rights certificate

Environmental Offsets Act 2014, Vegetation Management Act 1999:

- [1958](#) Vegetation Management Regulation 2023, No. 165  
[1959](#) Vegetation Management Regulation 2023, No. 165, explanatory notes  
[1960](#) Vegetation Management Regulation 2023, No. 165, human rights certificate

Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [1961](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 166  
[1962](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 166, explanatory notes  
[1963](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 166, human rights certificate

Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936:

- [1964](#) Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 167  
[1965](#) Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 167, explanatory notes  
[1966](#) Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 167, human rights certificate

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006:

- [1967](#) Education (General Provisions)(Barcaldine State School P-12 Campus) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 168  
[1968](#) Education (General Provisions)(Barcaldine State School P-12 Campus) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 168, explanatory notes  
[1969](#) Education (General Provisions)(Barcaldine State School P-12 Campus) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 168, human rights certificate

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982:

- [1970](#) Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 169  
[1971](#) Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 169, explanatory notes  
[1972](#) Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 169, human rights certificate

## MEMBERS' PAPERS


The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Toohey (Mr Russo)—

- [1988](#) Information Commissioner Report 1: 2023-24—Publishing information about council meetings and discretionary funds  
[1989](#) Information Commissioner Report 2: 2023-24—Follow-up of Report No. 1 for 2021-22: Audit of Sunshine Coast Regional Council's implementation of recommendations: Compliance with Right to Information and Information Privacy

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Federal Labor Government, Infrastructure Funding

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.36 am): Queensland is the fastest growing state in Australia, with 2,000 people moving here every week. That is more than every other state combined. You can't blame them, honestly, can you! Five years ago our population reached five million, and next year it will reach 5½ million. That is why we cannot delay the need to build the roads, schools, housing and hospitals our state needs. We need them now, and we need the federal government to step up to its commitment to help us provide them.

Tomorrow, the Deputy Premier will lead a delegation of Queenslanders to Canberra. It includes seven mayors as well as representatives of the Trucking Association. They know the need to provide for our decentralised state. They know that a failure to provide this infrastructure will only drive up costs and therefore the cost of living. Queensland is doing more than its fair share already. We are spending more on infrastructure in Queensland than the federal government is spending in the whole of Australia. When our delegation meets with infrastructure minister Catherine King tomorrow, they will explain Queensland's position. We will not stand for being underfunded, like Queensland has been for so many

years under the former coalition government. The invitation stands to the Victorian-based minister to come to Queensland and see what it is really like here, because her plan demonstrates one thing: she simply does not understand Queensland.

Next week I will be attending National Cabinet in Canberra, where infrastructure cuts will be on the agenda. I know none of my colleagues want to see cuts made to their infrastructure budgets, but as Queensland continues to grow we cannot take our foot off the accelerator. We need infrastructure and we need it delivered.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, there is a running commentary this morning. It is going to cease or I will start naming members.

### Second Bruce Highway



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.39 am): The Bruce Highway is the spine of our state. It connects communities, families and industry, but as Queensland grows we need a second major freight route to keep goods moving. That is why our government—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Nanango is warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is not a fake Bruce Highway. That was your plan.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. It will—

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

**Mr SPEAKER:**—assist the House if your comments come through the chair, please, Premier.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** That was the point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You are pretty quick off the mark. I still have to make rulings.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is why our government is backing the inland freight route, known as the Second Bruce, through a \$200 million investment. That is our fair share of the \$1 billion project. The Second Bruce, aptly named, is a key freight connector that will provide truckies with a dedicated route inland of the Bruce.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** For goodness sake, grow up.

**Mr SPEAKER:** That is not helpful. Leader of the Opposition, I thought I gave everyone some clear guidance earlier. I do not believe there is anything particularly controversial that the Premier is saying.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is a 1,185-kilometre stretch—


**Mr Saunders** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—from Mungindi to Charters Towers that will take pressure off the busy Bruce and keep communities connected, especially during flood events.

Today I can share some important news. Early works have begun, kickstarted by a \$20 million bridge upgrade over the Dawson River just north of Injune. This is part of an early works package totalling more than \$107 million to upgrade culverts, widen bridges and strengthen key sections of the route, and builds on \$109 million in works already delivered in partnership with the federal government. It is this partnership that we want to see continue. We want the federal government to retain the \$800 million they have committed to the Second Bruce and maintain their commitment to 80-20 funding. This is a nationally significant freight route that could deliver a 23 per cent gain in productivity and reduce travel time for truckies from Far North Queensland to Melbourne by four to five hours. It could also take up to 49 per cent of trucks off the Bruce, getting Queenslanders home safer and sooner. Our government understands how important this road project is for regional Queensland and the freight community, so we are getting on with the job of delivering the Second Bruce.

### First Home Buyer Grant; Social and Affordable Housing


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.41 am): There is nothing more important than having a roof over your head, and our government knows how much cost-of-living pressures are holding back Queenslanders, especially the young, from buying their first home. We are easing those pressures with the largest cost-of-living relief package in the nation.

I recently joined the Treasurer, the Minister for Housing and the member for Jordan in Springfield to announce that our government is doubling the First Home Owner Grant, from \$15,000 to \$30,000, for eligible first home buyers until June 2025. It means that more Queenslanders will be able to enter the market. It is the equal highest First Home Owner Grant in the country. It is estimated it will help 12,000 buyers to unlock their dream first home—buyers like Ethan, a 22-year-old carpenter who joined us at Springfield. He and his girlfriend are looking to buy their first home, and the grant will bring their dream closer. Vaishnavi told me that the stars were aligning to allow them to buy their first home. She and her husband had seen the grant on Instagram and headed out to view the display homes. This boost is funded by our government's progressive coal royalties—a regime that gives back to Queenslanders, a regime those opposite will scrap. Over the last three years our government has supported more than 24,000 households into their first home, with \$365 million in grants.

Our government is continuing to step up and increase the supply of social and affordable housing. We have bought the 84-room Park Hotel in Spring Hill to support those at risk of homelessness. Tenants are moving in to 18 one-bedroom units at Redcliffe, delivered in partnership with community housing provider Bric Housing. An extra \$23 million has just been announced to support the vulnerable, with short-term accommodation to help at-risk tenancies and for after-hours homeless outreach centres. I know this is really important as we head into Christmas and we see that there are tents around Brisbane and underneath bridges. This \$23 million will go a long way to help our non-government organisations find housing for people at risk of homelessness, especially during this time of year.

Finally, housing shortages, rental stress and cost pressures are national issues, not just here in Queensland, and our government knows the difficulties. We will continue to help Queenslanders stay, move into or buy safe, affordable accommodation.

### Federal Labor Government, Infrastructure Funding

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.44 am): Queensland has embarked on the biggest decade of infrastructure delivery in our history—our Big Build. It is needed because Queensland is leading the nation in growth. We are delivering the projects that Australia's economy needs, from the Energy and Jobs Plan to CopperString 2032 and major transport infrastructure like Cross River Rail as well as Bruce Highway upgrades and our Brisbane 2032 infrastructure legacy. The Big Build is creating jobs, improving services, protecting our lifestyle, growing our economy, boosting our regions and helping secure a brighter future for our kids. Over half of the Big Build is in regional Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is standing up for our fair share of funding, to get what was promised and to deliver the projects Queenslanders need. That is why tomorrow I will be taking a delegation of Queensland mayors in Canberra to meet with the federal infrastructure minister, to ensure Queensland is not worse off. We have already had to go it alone on major infrastructure projects like Cross River Rail, under the former Morrison government—a project that would have been built and jointly funded now if the LNP had not rejected Australian government funding. Our government is on the side of Queenslanders and will always put Queenslanders first.

Queensland is already delivering billions in additional revenue to the Australian government. If the Australian government needs to look at cuts to reduce inflation, it should look elsewhere. Infrastructure cuts are not the solution. In fact, investment in infrastructure that increases productivity is likely to reduce pressure on inflation over the longer term, and that would be especially true when it comes to Queensland. Every one of our road and rail upgrades and extensions is needed to keep Queensland moving. We are already experiencing extraordinary population growth, and this growth will accelerate due to the Australian government's expanded migration program. That is why we should be getting more funding from the Australian government, not less, so we can keep delivering Queensland's Big Build.

## Home Ownership



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.46 am): Home ownership matters to Queenslanders. It is how families build wealth and economic security for the long term, and home ownership matters to the Palaszczuk Labor government. That is why our government has a constant and consistent track record of using all available mechanisms to increase housing supply and to get more Queenslanders into their own homes.

Capacity constraints around the residential housing market are easing. Following the end of HomeBuilder activity, ABS data shows dwelling approvals have fallen 18 per cent over the year to September back to pre-COVID levels. That means now is the right time to harness excess capacity as it becomes available. To do this, our government has doubled the First Home Owner Grant available to Queenslanders building or buying a new first home.

Increasing the grant from \$15,000 to \$30,000 until 30 June 2025 means Queenslanders now have access to the most generous First Home Owner Grant for new builds in Australia. Of the 12,000 new home owners expected to be assisted by this grant, 3,800 would not otherwise have been able to consider buying their own home. That is real, tangible and meaningful assistance, and it is assistance that has been backed in by the Master Builders Association of Queensland. Master Builders chief executive Paul Bidwell said, 'It's tried and tested—it does work.'

Queensland Treasury analysis shows that our government's targeted approach equates to less than two-tenths of one per cent of the total value of property sales in Queensland between now and June 2025. More importantly, this grant is only payable for new housing supply. In that way it does not affect the price of existing stock. Treasury officials say, 'The boost to the First Home Owner Grant is not expected to have any material impact on overall prices in the market.'

There are some people who find it hard to describe themselves as a friend of public servants. If those people will not accept the analysis of Treasury officials, they can always listen to AMP chief economist Shane Oliver. Mr Oliver said the impact of the Palaszczuk government's boost would be minimal on market prices given the scale of the incentive compared to the overall sector—minimal impact on the market but a huge, life-changing difference to the lives of Queenslanders who can now afford to buy their own new home, one of the most important pieces of infrastructure any government can help deliver.

## Federal Labor Government, Infrastructure Funding



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.49 am): The Palaszczuk government remains very concerned about the federal government's infrastructure review and its impact on Queensland. A case study of that impact is our recently announced additional commitment to the Varsity Lakes to Tugun M1 upgrade. The Palaszczuk government announced funding in time to save the 300 jobs that depend on this project and to complete the project. The Palaszczuk government had sought federal government funding, on a 50-50 basis, of the \$500 million cost escalation due to the La Nina weather impacts, flooding, asbestos treatment and removal, inflation and PFAS issues. Instead, the Australian government has agreed to fund only \$70 million, leaving Queensland to step in to save the jobs and to get the project completed.


The Commonwealth proposes to break up much of Queensland's funding into road corridors. The Bruce Highway, for example, is broken up into three corridors, each with a cap on funding. When the federal government claims that its corridor packages 'give states flexibility', what it means is that it is refusing to provide additional funding to deal with nationwide cost pressures and is forcing states to choose which projects to drop.

The Deputy Premier is leading a 'Team Queensland' delegation to Canberra to lobby the federal government for a better deal for Queensland. Everybody in 'Team Queensland' knows that without ongoing 80-20 funding for Australia's most decentralised state, with the largest road network in the nation, we will see fewer infrastructure projects and fewer lives saved on our roads. Over time, abolishing 80-20 funding will mean that in future there will be less federal funding for the Bruce and Warrego highways and for other important freight corridors.

There are cost pressures across our infrastructure program, as there are in every state and territory. Arrangements in the National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure provide that a significant change in the scope or cost of a project must be agreed in writing between the parties. I have sought agreement from the Australian government to change the value of several projects, but the Infrastructure Investment Program has added a frustrating delay to these negotiations.

While the Australian government has published a list, it has not formally written to me, as is usual practice. This should occur after the Australian government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. I will provide more information to Queenslanders between the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and our own state government midyear budget update. Queenslanders can rest assured that the Palaszczuk Labor government will always fight for our fair share of federal funding from Canberra.

### Education Infrastructure


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.52 am): Since 2015, the Palaszczuk government has invested more than \$12 billion in education infrastructure across Queensland. That means millions of dollars invested in new schools, classrooms, halls, playgrounds and tuckshops—and the list goes on. We are delivering world-class learning environments right across the state, with \$2.1 billion for education infrastructure in the 2023-24 budget alone. This is part of Queensland's Big Build—an \$89 billion investment over the next four years, with more than half being spent in regional Queensland.

Since 2015 we have delivered 25 new schools, with two more due to open in 2024 in Redland Bay—Scenic Shores State School and Bellbird Park. We are investing around \$145 million for the construction of these two schools, supporting an average of 85 construction jobs over the life of the projects. We have also invested over \$800 million in 46 special schools across Queensland—an achievement the Palaszczuk government is very proud of. This investment has delivered four brand new special schools—in Cairns, Caboolture, Palmview and Coomera—with planning underway for another special school in the Logan area.

In the last week or so I have had the pleasure of seeing the fantastic results of our education infrastructure investment. At Coolum State High School in the electorate of Ninderry I officially opened the school's new \$20 million learning centre, which the school has named Gagal-Gira—an Indigenous word for 'shining light'. I visited Mudgeeraba Special School in the electorate of Mudgeeraba to officially open a new \$15 million learning centre. How wonderful it was to get a tour of the new facility by school captains Erin and Jay. At Miami State High School in the electorate of Mermaid Beach I opened the school's new \$13 million sports hall. It was great to see this magnificent new sporting centre of excellence and it was really good to see all local members there as well. We are continuing to deliver 37 new halls, which were part of our 2020 Great Schools Great Future policy. This will see new halls completed at Pimlico State High School in Townsville, Warwick State High School in Southern Downs, Woree State School in Mulgrave and Clifton State High School in Condamine.

In addition to this, we are investing more than \$10 million for accommodation upgrades at our schools of distance education. This will enable students from remote areas to come together to meet with their peers and engage face to face with teachers at mini schools, sports days and graduations. We have now delivered refurbished overnight accommodation at schools of distance education in Cairns, Charters Towers, Longreach and Emerald. They have now welcomed back students to these upgraded facilities. The Outstation, Shed and Tuckerbox buildings at Emerald and the famous 'Quarters' at Longreach campus have been given a new lease of life and made safe for use. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring schools are places where children can learn and teachers can deliver a world-class education. We will continue to invest in accessible and inclusive learning environments right across our great state.

### Ralstonia

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.55 am): I would like to update the House on a significant matter impacting Australian hospitals. On Friday, Queensland Health issued an urgent patient safety alert advising hospitals to remove certain saline products immediately following a bacterium outbreak which had been identified in New South Wales. The products appeared to be contaminated with the bacterium *Ralstonia*. The TGA issued a quarantine notice at the same time. *Ralstonia* is normally found in soil and water. Whilst it does not normally cause infection in humans, it has previously been tied to outbreaks in healthcare settings from contaminated medical fluids. It is especially concerning to those with significant underlying medical conditions or who have implanted medical devices.

This is a national issue first identified in New South Wales and involves products imported from overseas. In mid-September, New South Wales health authorities asked Australian states to be on the lookout for *Ralstonia* cases after a cluster of infections were identified but with no apparent cause. There are now 44 suspected cases across the country. Ever since the New South Wales initial alert,

Queensland laboratories have been on the lookout for *Ralstonia* cases. The organism was identified in the blood of an elderly patient in a Queensland private hospital who has subsequently passed away. I take this opportunity to express my condolences and heartfelt wishes to the family of this patient who I am sure will be feeling the loss at this very sad time. I can also confirm today that there are five probable cases now in one other private hospital.

Last week, microbiologists in the ACT identified Indian and Greek saline products as a possible source of contamination. These products have been immediately withdrawn from use in Queensland. I am advised that this brand of saline is in use in seven Queensland Health hospitals and facilities, but we are not currently aware of any cases of *Ralstonia* in Queensland public hospitals. Our Central Pharmacy is also working with Queensland Health sites to ensure there is sufficient stock of alternative saline products. I am not aware of how many private hospitals and day hospitals have been using these products, but they have all been notified to quarantine them from use. Queensland Health representatives are continuing to actively participate in the national outbreak investigation meetings which are being led by New South Wales. I will continue to keep Queenslanders informed of these developments. The Chief Health Officer will also provide an update later today.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders. That is completely uncalled for.

### Weather Events; Police Service, Recruitment



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.58 am): Queenslanders know that we live in a land of extremes, and that is exactly what we are seeing right now: rain, storms and below-average temperatures in the south of the state and severe heatwave conditions developing in the north. State Emergency Service crews responded to 17 storm related calls for help in the Ipswich, Scenic Rim, Logan, South Burnett and Rockhampton areas yesterday. Rain areas will continue across eastern Queensland during today, though the risk of heavy rain has now eased. However, severe thunderstorms with local heavy rainfall, damaging winds and large hail will be possible across the southern interior of the state today. The severe thunderstorm risk will become more likely across southern and south-eastern Queensland on Wednesday, and there will be potential for isolated very dangerous thunderstorms with locally giant hail and destructive winds during this afternoon. Severe to locally extreme heatwave conditions will develop across parts of northern and Central Queensland this week and a heatwave warning is current.

In addition, Queensland will always back the front line to support the community, and the Queensland Police Service is continuing its aggressive, agile and innovative approach to recruitment. I am advised that the Queensland Police Service has appointed new officers, the regional recruitment officers, who will be based in various regions across the state to further enhance the recruitment capacity of the Queensland Police Service. These regional recruitment officers will be based in Townsville, Rockhampton, on the Gold Coast, in Toowoomba and in Brisbane, but they will deploy to all regions across the state when needed. The primary focus of these newly appointed positions is to further increase what is, I am advised, an already very healthy recruitment pipeline. It is no wonder it is healthy; the campaign has really ramped up. Anyone watching the many replays of Australia's great win in the One Day International World Cup cricket last week could not fail to have seen the 'Try it on' TV campaign inviting young people to consider a career in policing. It is not just cricket; it is police recruitment, too.

Police recruitment is going to the movies. Movie goers will see the police recruitment campaign on the big screen when they go to see the new *Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom* movie or *The Marvels* movie. There are currently nearly 600 recruits undergoing training in our police academies. This is a Queensland record. I am advised there are almost 1,600 applicants in the recruitment pipeline. That includes more than 300 international applicants and more than 200 interstate and New Zealand police applicants. This is significant because, depending on their level of experience and its recency, those applicants with previous police experience can be fast-tracked through training and can complete their course in roughly half the time it takes a new recruit.

The Queensland Police Service is undertaking its biggest ever recruitment campaign because it is the biggest ever investment by a Queensland government in community safety.

## Housing Supply



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.01 am): When Queenslanders need a hand they know the Palaszczuk government is always there to help them, especially when it comes to our Big Build, whether it is rebuilding social housing after the North Queensland floods in 2019 when more than 700 homes needed repair or when we fixed more than 2,000 social housing dwellings after the 2022 rain bomb. Since 2015 we have delivered record numbers of social and affordable housing. In fact, we have delivered almost 5,000 homes and there are another 787 under construction today.

Right now we are delivering 195 homes for teachers, nurses and police, and we are delivering those homes more quickly. Through an innovative partnership between 11 building companies and QBuild, we are delivering homes right across regional and remote Queensland in the Big Build. We have cut construction times by up to 75 per cent and reduced costs by up to 20 per cent, meaning homes can be ready for transport in around 12 weeks.

Nowhere does rapid building matter more than in a big build following a natural disaster. Just a few weeks ago bushfires tore through the Western Downs communities where tragically more than 53 properties were lost. Now QBuild is delivering an emergency Big Build with more emergency accommodation underway in the community of Tara where additional homes will be ready in just a matter of weeks. I can also announce today we have handed over the keys to the first homes under the Modern Methods of Construction initiative to brave Queensland Police officers in that very same Tara community.

Labor is delivering more police and we are delivering them more homes more quickly, and I inspected those homes last week. They are high quality, functional, energy efficient, landscaped and ready to occupy, but they also send an important message to local police in regional and remote Queensland who have been through the unimaginable that the Palaszczuk government has their back. We will always stand with and support local frontline workers in regional Queensland. That is why Labor builds big, because we believe in services for all Queenslanders no matter where they live. We believe in taking action to cut the cost of living and taking pressure off private rentals. Queenslanders deserve a safe and secure place to call home and that is what Labor is delivering.

## Rookwood Weir




**Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.04 am): If anyone needs further proof of the Palaszczuk government's record of water infrastructure delivery they need look no further than Rookwood Weir. I am pleased to advise the House that this amazing infrastructure project is now complete. When I was sworn in as the water minister, the Premier said delivering Rookwood Weir was a priority for me in my portfolio. As a proud Central Queenslander, I was more than happy to take on that challenge. Last Wednesday was an absolutely fantastic day out at Rookwood Weir. Almost three years to the day I was sworn in, I stood alongside the Treasurer and the member for Rockhampton to help celebrate the completion of this fantastic infrastructure project.

The significance of this piece of infrastructure cannot be underestimated. Let me set out some of the numbers from this project. There were nearly 360 workers at the height of construction. They overcame six inundations during the project and also had a COVID shutdown for two weeks. They poured 131,000 cubic metres of concrete and undertook 800,000 cubic metres of earthworks. All of this was to unlock 86,000 megalitres of additional water for Central Queensland, equivalent to 34,400 Olympic-size swimming pools, and that will be delivered every year. This water will also create over 500 jobs in the region.

This weir is the biggest weir built in Australia since World War II. It will provide water security for Central Queensland. It is already helping to create a new high-value agriculture sector and will usher in new jobs in future industries. This weir is the real deal. It is good for construction jobs, it is good for agriculture, it is good for local roads, it is good for urban water security and it is also good for the future hydrogen industry in Central Queensland. When it comes to the infrastructure our communities need, the Palaszczuk government delivers time and time again. The weir is not only Australia's biggest weir built since World War II; it is the biggest piece of bulk water infrastructure delivered in the nation in over a decade. Do honourable members know what the biggest one was before that? It was Wyaralong Dam—another Labor built dam here in Queensland. That is right: we invest and we deliver.

We had to drag the former LNP federal government kicking and screaming to help support this new project of a weir in Rockhampton. We will always stand up for Central Queensland and demand our fair share from Canberra. That is how we got commitments from the current federal government for the Mount Morgan pipeline, Paradise Dam, regional water assessments and the Cairns Water Security Project. Regional Queensland knows that the Palaszczuk government will always go in to bat for them so that we can deliver the infrastructure and the jobs that are needed to grow this state.


### Rural Economic Development Grants

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.07 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government takes pride in helping to deliver the infrastructure Queensland needs and creating good jobs along the way, particularly for our friends in the primary industries sector. A wonderful example of this is Rural Economic Development grants administered through the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority as part of my portfolio. These RED grants, which offer up to \$200,000 to fund projects which generate economic and also employment opportunities in primary production, have been very popular indeed.

Over the last five years these grants, started by this Palaszczuk Labor government, have provided \$13.3 million in funding to support 59 regional agribusiness projects, creating an estimated 2½ thousand new direct and indirect jobs. Our government's commitment to infrastructure extends throughout the entire state and RED grants are helping producers all over Queensland. We are providing funding for Oz Strawberries on the Sunshine Coast to expand their packing shed infrastructure and to build a coldroom; Ross Shearing in Barcaldine to service wool producers throughout Outback Queensland with a specially designed trailer; and Daintree Fresh in Lakeland in the member for Cook's electorate, which is using an upgraded packing facility to export fresh produce to Japan, which I saw and promoted just last week.

As the Minister for Rural Communities, I have to also mention that there is still more work to ensure regional Queensland gets the infrastructure it deserves. I share the disappointment of those on this side of the House at the federal government's announcement to cut infrastructure projects across Queensland. Our rural communities need Bruce Highway upgrades and many other great projects that Canberra appears to have put on the chopping block. Why should a rail loop in the heart of Melbourne have priority over regional roads? I am heartened to hear that the Queensland Farmers' Federation and other groups representing the agriculture industry will be accompanying the Deputy Premier as part of the 'Team Queensland' delegation to Canberra. They will do a fine job at communicating to Minister King just why rural and regional Queensland deserves our fair share of federal funding.

### Social and Affordable Housing

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (10.10 am): Queensland is very proud to have increased both public and community housing. We have built thousands and thousands of homes, and through our big social housing build we have thousands more on the way. Between the July and September quarter, I am pleased to update the House that we found a social home for 848 households, and last week we welcomed some more Queenslanders to their new home. I joined the Attorney-General in Redcliffe, where 18 new places have been completed in partnership with Bric Housing—unleashing the community housing sector to help older Queenslanders downsize, with the added benefit of freeing up larger homes for families. These are Queenslanders like Rose, who was excited to move from her three-bedroom house in Kallangur, where she had been living by herself, to downsize to a more modern, accessible place, and people like Ron, who had been forced to move several times over the past three years after the former federal LNP government ended the National Rental Affordability Scheme. The retired industrial engineer said—

This new unit means a heck of a lot to me. It's a big relief. I'm close to the hospital, public transport, and I don't have to worry about moving again.

I've got a lot of friends around the area and I'm also close to the places where I sing and play guitar for charity.

We had the privilege of hearing from him when we visited.


It is not just our Big Build that we are getting on with; we are also buying more places to help those who need more immediate support and accommodation. Last week I joined the education minister to announce that we have bought the 84-room Park Hotel in Spring Hill to give some of the most vulnerable Queenslanders a safe place to stay. By purchasing this hotel, we will be able to provide



rooms and essential wraparound services for the long term. We do not have to keep going back to the owners each time to renew the lease and it means we can spend money refurbishing rooms and communal spaces to give residents the dignity and respect they deserve.

We also announced a \$23 million boost to support families. Already our Immediate Housing Response for Families fund has helped pay for 160,000 nights of accommodation. That is 7,680 households that have been helped through this funding. I was very pleased to join the education minister to boost this funding to make sure those services can help more families to ensure they have a roof over their head. Building and buying homes and accommodation is more than just about providing a roof over someone's head; it is about giving people a safe place to stay and making sure they get the support they need. It is only Labor governments that know the value of that and it is only Labor governments that are delivering.

### Fee-Free TAFE


 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.12 am): The Palaszczuk government is delivering the economic and social infrastructure needed to support a growing Queensland. Our Big Build investments in infrastructure are not just boosting Queensland's productivity and competitiveness; they are supporting job creation and industry development across Queensland, including significant infrastructure projects across Queensland's regions. These investments are strengthening the resilience of our communities, supporting growth and improving livability. We talk much about fee-free TAFE, which we introduced in Queensland in 2016, and we are especially proud of our \$200 million Fee-Free TAFE joint initiative with the Australian government this year, with Queenslanders embarking on new careers and upskilling through 87 priority qualifications at TAFE Queensland, CQ University and Mater Education. Not only are we making it easier for Queenslanders to get the training they need for their dream career; we are saving them tens of thousands of dollars in their pursuit of that career, with more than 65,000 people participating in Fee-Free TAFE just this year alone.

We are not just making our TAFE courses more financially accessible; we are making them more physically accessible as well. Since 2017, the Palaszczuk government has put close to \$290 million into building new and upgraded existing training facilities across Queensland. I was in Rockhampton the other week with the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel, turning the first sod on the \$10.2 million stage 1 TAFE Centre of Excellence which will see over 350 students go through the construction trade.

There is so much more underway through TAFE training infrastructure projects: the new \$40 million Eagle Farm TAFE Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing Centre; a \$7 million Ipswich Metal Trades, Manufacturing and Robotics Centre at Bundamba TAFE; a \$4.74 million Townsville Advanced Manufacturing Skills Lab at Bohle TAFE; a new \$4 million Cairns TAFE Advanced Manufacturing Skills Lab; a \$1 million Bundaberg TAFE Advanced Manufacturing Skills Centre; a \$3.5 million Agriculture and Horticulture Centre at Bundaberg TAFE; and a \$7.5 million Mackay Ooralea Trade Training Centre expansion, which the member for Mackay opened the other week on my behalf. We are going gangbusters with our TAFE upgrades. Thousands of workers are helping to fill these jobs and they themselves are beneficiaries of our Fee-Free TAFE. We are investing in Queensland and Queenslanders.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### Comments by Member for Mundingburra, Apology


 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (10.15 am): With regard to my contribution on Wednesday, 13 September 2023 to the private member's motion, I acknowledge that my comments may have been misleading. Whilst it was not my intention to mislead, I now recognise that my language used could have been more precise in light of the ruling delivered by the Deputy Speaker of the day. I therefore offer my unreserved and sincere apology.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mundingburra.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.16 am.

### Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. When the Premier looked for a reset for the Queensland health crisis, she removed the member for Redcliffe from the portfolio. In recent weeks under this minister we have learned of two tragic deaths, another Health IT debacle, a deadly fungal outbreak and today a failure to clear a backlog of scans. After nearly nine years and four health ministers, does the Premier admit she got it wrong in the appointment of this health minister?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Definitely not. Every health minister who has been working in this government has worked hard for the people of this state. Let me tell members what these health ministers have done collectively. They have—

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am getting there.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Miller, you will direct your comments through the chair or you will cease your interjections. Member for Broadwater, you will wait to hear the answer.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What every single health minister has been committed to is working for the people of this state and restoring the savage health cuts that were inflicted by those opposite.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You cannot hide from the devastation that those opposite did—

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Since March 2015 our Queensland Health clinical workforce has grown by over 19,800 FTEs, including 3,400 more doctors, 11,700 nurses and midwives, 3,200 allied health professionals and over 1,300 ambulance operatives. That is what our government is doing. Not only that, but we have a plan for the biggest hospital build in this state: over \$9 billion building brand new hospitals in Coomera, in Bundaberg and in Toowoomba and a brand new dedicated Queensland Cancer Centre—the first of its kind in Queensland, ensuring that people who go through that devastating diagnosis of cancer have a world-class health facility.

On any given day there are a range of factors that happen across Queensland. They include 646 surgeries a day, 12,891 people receiving care in our hospitals and 776 people who are scanned for breast cancer. These are the services that are provided to Queenslanders every single day. I will always back our health staff. They know what will come their way if those opposite ever regain the government benches.

### Ambulance Service

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Forest Lake single mum Cath Groom died waiting for an ambulance. The health minister apologised and promised she would look into what happened. How many category 1 and 2 patients were waiting for an ambulance the night Cath Groom died?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Again, I want to express my sincere condolences to Cath Groom's family, and in particular her son. The QAS Commissioner and I have spoken at length about this issue. The QAS is working directly with the family and have met with the family on a number of occasions. That night was a particularly busy night for the Ambulance Service. There was a huge surge in what they call code 1 cases across the south-east. They were in regular contact with Cath and were prioritising other urgent cases. They did continue to check in with Cath to make sure her condition had not deteriorated. Again, the ambulance commissioner and I have said it took too long to get to Cath. We apologise for that. They should have had an ambulance there much sooner. They are reviewing that case. That will include looking at how many code 1A, B and Cs were called that night and, of course, they are working with all of their staff as well.

Can I say as well that that particular week there was a huge surge in cases across the south-east, particularly as a result of the number of COVID cases and a heatwave, and there was also a 15 per cent increase in presentations to the emergency department at Ipswich Hospital. We know it was an incredibly busy time. We also know that the work that we have been doing as a government to reduce ambulance ramping is starting to show signs of improvement, but when you have a fortnight where there are huge surges in calls to the ambulance service and presentations to emergency departments, it is always important that we bring the heads of our emergency departments together to look at what more we can do.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, I believe the minister is being responsive to the question as asked. I would hope that you would like to hear the answer as much as I do.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Not only did we bring together the heads of our emergency departments, who work really hard each and every day, but we also brought in the QAS representatives as well and, as you all know, we announced an additional \$20 million to immediately provide extra capacity within the system, because that is what governments do. When there are surges and increases in demand you bring together the people with the expertise, who do this day in and day out, to make sure we are giving them the resources they need to meet the community's needs. I want to say again that we have the busiest ambulance service in the country. They have some of the best response times in the country. I am so proud that we are the only service in mainland Australia that is free. That will not change under a Labor government.

### **Far North Queensland, Infrastructure Projects**

**Mr HEALY:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on how the Big Build is delivering for Queensland and is the Premier aware of any other approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Cairns for the question. It was an absolute pleasure to join the member for Cairns, Minister Crawford, the member for Cook, the Minister for Tourism and yourself, Mr Speaker, in Cairns for Tourism Week—especially the tail end of that week at a wonderful awards night celebrating how great our tourism industry is across Queensland. We know how important infrastructure is, not just to our tourism industry, but, of course, to the fine Cairns Convention Centre that we opened, and which actually hosted that tourism event. It hosted nearly 1,000 people on the Friday night. We also had the opportunity to start the \$47 million Wangetti Trail, which is expected to generate \$300 million in economic benefit. It will be an international drawcard. People will be able to travel to Palm Cove and walk the trail all the way up to Port Douglas—in consultation, of course, with the First Nations people. The member joined me in looking at the brand new screen studio, which will be ready to open early in the first quarter next year—a great asset for Cairns.

We are also building the roads. We have delivered the Smithfield bypass; upgrades to the Bruce Highway—over \$500 million between Edmonton and Gordonvale; and \$45 million for the Kennedy Highway between Cairns and Mareeba, which was completed this year. All these projects supported around 5,000 jobs. In good news, I can advise the House that the unemployment level in Cairns is now 3.2 per cent. This is extraordinary. It was 7.9 per cent under the LNP. They do not like to remember that. Having a good quality job and creating more jobs and bringing those unemployment levels down is good for families, it is good for communities and it is good for the region. The people of Cairns and the Far North should be very pleased with that unemployment level of 3.2 per cent.

We know that that is all at risk because of the federal government's infrastructure cuts. Queensland is a decentralised state. We have great cities outside of our capital in Brisbane and that means we need the funding. That is why the Deputy Premier will be leading a delegation to Canberra to support Queensland's fair share. This side of the House will always stand up for Queensland. That side of the House will always have its head in the sand.

### **Ambulance Ramping**

**Mr KRAUSE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Wayne Irving had his heart attack while waiting for a bed in the emergency department of Ipswich Hospital. The health minister apologised and promised she would look into what happened. How many ambulances were ramped across South-East Queensland the night Wayne Irving died?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I know that the death of Wayne Irving is being felt by constituents in the member's community. I again want to acknowledge Wayne Irving's family. The family are involved in the clinical case review into their father's death that is underway. I have spoken to Lauren. She has my personal mobile number. If there is anything else that she needs from me, my office or Queensland Health at any point in time I have told her to please let me know.

Again, I want to say, as I did earlier, that that particular week the Ipswich emergency department had a 15 per cent increase in demand. It was a very busy week for our paramedics and for our doctors and nurses, our frontline staff, at the Ipswich Hospital. As I said, we have announced an additional \$20 million to immediately help some of our busiest hospitals. In particular, at the Ipswich Hospital we have announced 36 beds. Recruitment is underway right now to get those additional beds into what is our busiest hospital. Our hospitals are under pressure. We have been very up-front about that. Hospitals across the country and across the world are under pressure.

The meeting that I held on Friday agreed to five initial measures, including increasing the number of triage nurses, funding dedicated medical commanders, ensuring rapid access services and surgical assessment units, funding GPs to employ patient care facilitators—something that the AMA had been calling for us to do—and, importantly, increasing access to medical imaging after hours on weekends. That was our plan that I announced on Friday. It was interesting to see the Leader of the Opposition get a question—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). Whilst the question started with a particular case, which the minister has addressed, the question was how many ambulances were ramped across Queensland the night Wayne Irving died.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister is being generally relevant to the subject matter, but I will ask her to come to the particular elements of the question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** As I said, that night was a particularly busy night. As I said, there was a 15—  
**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am sorry, Minister. Members to my left, I have just asked the minister to look at her contribution and immediately you have all chimed in. You must allow a member to respond.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We have a plan to reduce ambulance ramping. Wasn't it interesting yesterday when the Leader of the Opposition was asked what the LNP's plan would be? It was pretty embarrassing for the Leader of the Opposition to be asked for just one idea—one idea.

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

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

**Mr POWELL:** My point of order is on relevance under standing order 118(b).

**Mr SPEAKER:** Please resume your seat, member.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Sandgate. At the time of the previous point of order, the minister had just on a minute to go. She still has 40 seconds to go. In 20 seconds, I have not heard that she has not been relevant. Minister, you have 37 seconds remaining.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Not one idea other than, 'Oh, we would have targets'—

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Maroochydore, you can leave the chamber immediately for one hour. I do not call the House to order to be topical, trivial or for my own amusement.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Maroochydore withdrew from the chamber at 10.30 am.*

**Ms FENTIMAN:** 'We would have targets.' What are those targets? 'We can't say what the targets are, but we'd definitely have more staff.' In this year's budget, in our plan, we outlined what our targets are: 200 more paramedics. They have all been employed and they are all out in the community keeping Queenslanders safe. If the opposition actually want to do something about ramping then maybe they can tell us what their plan is. It is a complex issue and on this side of the House we are absolutely committed to reducing it and we have a plan.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, members' correct titles will be used. I have given you enough guidance. You are warned under the standing orders. To all members of the House, I could not hear the last 15 seconds and I am sure that Hansard could not either. Members from both sides of the House were interjecting.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Kawana's interjection I find personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, I did not hear it.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, it was not the member for Kawana; it was me. I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Redcliffe, the member has also been warned.

### Public Service

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier please provide an update on the government's commitment to frontline services, and is the Premier aware of any other approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. Of course, before she entered parliament the member was a very well-respected principal. She told me that when she was the principal of Glenala State High School and student numbers were increasing, under the Newman government the number of teachers declined. That was very common across the state.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I take that interjection. On this side of the House we value our public servants. We value the men and women of this state who get up every day and do their job. Whether on the front line as Police Service men and women, ambulance officers, doctors, schoolteachers, cleaners or frontline desk workers, our public servants do a great job.

As I said in answer to an earlier question, we have restored the savage cuts because we remember what it was like going into communities and talking to people who had lost their jobs. We know the words of those opposite. We know the words of Campbell Newman when he said there would be no forced redundancies and what that meant when they were elected: in the following budget, 14,000 public servants lost their job. Those people were not just numbers on a piece of paper; they were real people with families and friends. People still remember it to this day. Last week we heard the Leader of the Opposition echo those exact words: 'no forced redundancies'. There is nothing new from those opposite.

**Dr Miles:** 'Nothing to fear'.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: there is 'nothing to fear'. I take the interjection of the Deputy Premier. Nothing has changed. Over there we see the same faces that were part of the Newman government. They are still there. They pretend to be different but they are not because leopards do not change their spots.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** And you are included, member for Everton.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, direct your comments through the chair.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Since 2015 we have delivered 3,700 new nurses and midwives, 5,100 new teachers, 2,100 new teacher aides and over 260 new firefighters. On this side of the House we will always back our frontline service men and women. On that side of the House, 'no forced redundancies' means massive cuts.

*(Time expired)*

### Ambulance Ramping

**Mr HEAD:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Is the minister aware of any other cases since she was appointed health minister where patients have died waiting while ramped?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I am not aware of any of those cases.

### Infrastructure Projects

**Ms KING:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Could the Deputy Premier please advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is standing up for Queensland infrastructure, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any other approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Pumicestone for her question. I know how pleased she is to see the Palaszczuk government's investments into infrastructure in her electorate. Yesterday I was pleased to join the health minister, the police minister and the member for Pumicestone at Caboolture Hospital to open the new Clinical Services Building. It is a beautiful new facility, just as the community of Moreton Bay deserves. The new \$359 million building provides 130 new beds and treatment spaces. We know that the Moreton Bay region is growing rapidly, and the Palaszczuk government is making sure that it has the services and infrastructure it needs. The new Clinical Services Building will allow Metro North Health to employ an additional 283 healthcare staff—not duds, as the LNP would have you believe, but 283 hardworking staff delivering to the Moreton Bay community. The building includes fantastic new facilities for our ambos to bring people to when they are sick.

The new Clinical Services Building would not have happened if the LNP had their way. Not only did they not plan for a Caboolture Hospital expansion when they were in government—they did not plan for any hospital expansions when they were in government—but they actually opposed this one in the 2017 election. They said it would never happen. They said it was a waste of money to deliver a world-class hospital to the people of Caboolture.

**A government member:** Shame.

**Dr MILES:** Shame, indeed. Nobody on this side thinks it is a waste of money to deliver quality health care in Caboolture. Everyone on this side believes that the people of Moreton Bay deserve fantastic facilities and that the people who work there deserve to be supported. They do not deserve to be called 'duds'. They do not deserve to be threatened with redundancies. They do not deserve to have their entitlements attacked.

The Leader of the Opposition uses the exact same words as Campbell Newman when he threatens our health staff with redundancies. Throughout this week he has been campaigning against paid meal-break penalties for our paramedics. Again, it is the exact same thing that Campbell Newman did. Those opposite want people to stop comparing them to Campbell Newman. If you want that, you have to stop sounding like Campbell Newman. You have to stop acting like Campbell Newman. Unless you do that, everyone will think, 'It looks like Campbell Newman, sounds like Campbell Newman and acts like Campbell Newman so it is just like Campbell Newman.'

*(Time expired)*

### Integrated Electronic Medical Record, Outage

**Mr MICKELBERG:** My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to media reports that clinicians on the Gold Coast recorded in the clinical notes of a deceased patient that the outage of the state's digital medical records system resulted in medical care being delayed. The minister said that there was no advice of clinical or patient safety issues. Can the minister explain why her advice differs from the records created by medical experts who were in the room?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. Again, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work that our frontline staff did right across the state during the outage of the ieMR. I again stress that we have very strong processes in place. If medical records go down, they move immediately to paper systems. They can still access patient medical records; they just cannot update them. Given the system was down for several hours at some of our biggest hospitals, the fact that clinical services continued to be delivered and patients continued to be treated right across Queensland is testament to the amazing frontline doctors, nurses and allied health professionals in our hospitals.

In relation to the issue that the member has raised about the Gold Coast, firstly I want to acknowledge and pay tribute to the man's family. Losing a loved one is never easy. I can confirm that the case was reviewed by the clinical governance team on the Gold Coast and found to have absolutely nothing to do with the electronic records outage. Again, we are not aware of any impacts to patient safety as a result of this outage. I do want to stress that some specialist outpatient appointments had to be rescheduled. I understand five elective surgeries at QEII had to be postponed. They have all now been rebooked. All in all, considering that there was an outage by a third-party vendor—and I understand that it was because of the firewall of that vendor—our clinicians did an absolutely amazing job that day and I want to thank them.

### Home Ownership

**Mr WALKER:** My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping to get more Queenslanders into their own homes, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Mundingburra for his question. As the member for Mundingburra heard in my ministerial statement, we are working hard to get more Queenslanders into their first home. We have done that by doubling our First Home Owner Grant. It is now the highest in the country. Importantly, we have done that without pushing up the price of housing for other Queenslanders. I am pleased to say to the member, in the city of Townsville that the median price of a new house and land package is \$428,000. That means there is plenty of opportunity in electorates like Mundingburra, Thuringowa and Townsville for people to build a new home under that threshold of \$750,000. They can be built in a way that does not disadvantage other Queenslanders. That is a real and tangible contribution to delivering more homes for Queenslanders across the state.

I am asked by the member about alternatives. What would Queenslanders seeking a new first home get from the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP? They would see no plan at all, no plan except for the creation—wait for it—of a new ministerial title. The member for Toowoomba South does not have much to do as the shadow Treasurer, so he had to be given another title—shadow minister for home ownership.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** No plan, no policy, no substance and not one new dollar allocated to any new home in the state. I thought that the shadow Treasurer—sorry, the shadow minister for home ownership—might have supported that, but his complaint—more whingeing—was that there needed to be more talking by the government and less action. What he said was: we should have spent more time talking and less time acting.

The member should have spoken to the member for Kawana. What did the member for Kawana say? He said that our doubling of the First Home Owner Grant was 'a step in the right direction'. That is what he said. He did not have far to go. He just had to go one seat down to talk to him. That is all he had to do. Of course, the member for Kawana had the lofty title of 'shadow minister for finance'. Remember the good old days, Mr Speaker? That was another title without any substance or meaning whatsoever. That is the form of the Leader of the Opposition. The one thing the Leader of the Opposition did not tell any members of the shadow ministry was that none of it would happen under him because there would be no progressive coal royalties. Progressive coal royalties are funding the new grant for first home owners in Queensland.

It does not matter whether it is home ownership, cost-of-living relief, delivering new hospitals or CopperString 2032—none of that will happen under the opposition because the Leader of the Opposition will axe progressive coal royalties. He will give back the money to the coal companies but will not give it to first home owners in Queensland. That is the difference between us and them.

### Ambulance Ramping

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. With reports of extreme ambulance ramping on the Gold Coast yesterday afternoon, exactly how many Gold Coast-based crews were free and available to respond to over half a million people?

**Dr MILES:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask that the member verify the claims in her question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. I do not believe that it requires verification. I will ensure that the question can be answered as it does appear to ask for some significant detail, which may not be readily available.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. As I have said time and time again, we are doing everything we can to tackle ambulance ramping. What our frontline doctors and nurses at the Gold Coast University Hospital—Dr David Green and his team—do not need is the LNP taking a photo of multiple ambulances at the hospital and sending it direct to media outlets describing it as a 'ramping crisis'. That is what they do not need.

Do members want to know what happened at the Gold Coast University Hospital yesterday? Fifteen ambulances arrived within 10 minutes. Most of those ambulances turned around within 30 minutes. Yesterday, staff at the Gold Coast University Hospital, one of our nation's busiest, biggest

hospitals, did an amazing job. Despite so many ambulances turning up at the same time, almost all patients were seen within the clinically recommended time frames. I have spoken to Dr David Green about their experiences at the hospital yesterday. They were flat out, but do you know what? They never once reached capacity. At the end of the day, they still had bed capacity for Queenslanders. That is testament to the amazing frontline staff at our Gold Coast University Hospital. It would not have been hard for the member for Mudgeeraba to at least call—

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister, please resume your seat.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members to my right.

**Mr POWELL:** My point of order is on relevance under standing order 118(b). The minister has demonstrated a level of knowledge of the matter, but the question specifically was how many ambulances—

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to interrupt you, member. I will ask you to be very careful about the points of order you are raising regarding relevance. My job is to determine relevance—not other members of the House. Secondly, the minister is, as I hear her, being responsive to the question as asked. She still has—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members to my right. She still has one minute and 26 seconds remaining. I ask the minister, if she can, to address the direct element of the question. I do caution you, member, that I know what your role in the parliament is, but I do not want to see interruptions with potentially frivolous points of order.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, I do not need any assistance, member for McConnel.

**Mr Sullivan** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Who was that member? Member for Stafford, you are warned under the standing orders. While I am at it, member for Bundaberg, you are very lucky you are not exiting the chamber given how much you have been interjecting this morning. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It would not have been hard for the member for Mudgeeraba, representing many of those frontline staff in her electorate, to pick up the phone and maybe just ask what was happening at the Gold Coast University Hospital yesterday, or members opposite could have contacted my office—

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** That is right. I take that interjection: they do not care. They are more interested in scoring cheap political points.

**Ms BATES:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The question was: how many ambulances were free—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, I will interrupt you. I have been listening to the answer. I do not believe that point of order is valid. I will ask you to resume your seat. I would appreciate in the future that, if I am trying to give you guidance, you listen to the guidance I am trying to offer. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Again, I want to thank Dr David Green and nurse unit managers Matt and Hayley for the amazing work they did in keeping patients—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are already on a warning. You are continually interjecting. Regardless of how passionate you are, you are under a warning. You will leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 10.49 am.*

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier!

**Mr Hinchliffe:** Most disorderly, Deputy Premier!



**Mr SPEAKER:** Very disorderly, member for Sandgate. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Kawana, given that you cannot use members' correct titles, you are warned as well.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, because I have really just been trying to once again acknowledge Dr David Green and nurse unit managers Matt and Hayley for the amazing work they did in keeping patients flowing through the emergency department yesterday afternoon.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Queenslanders, including those opposite—including the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Broadwater, both Gold Coast members—should be so proud of the work that is happening at the Gold Coast University Hospital. The fact that they had such a surge in patients yesterday and never once reached capacity is a testament to the work they are doing and the resources we are providing our busiest hospitals. Thank you to frontline staff. Shame on the opposition for taking cheap shots and trying to score cheap political points rather than having any practical solutions.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Glass House, as your interjections were designed to disrupt the minister—I was not going to do the same—you are warned under the standing orders.

### Public Service

**Ms PEASE:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping Queensland's public sector workers with cost-of-living relief, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. I know how much she values the public servants in her area, often advocating for the wonderful work that they do day in, day out throughout all of our electorates. If there is one thing the Palaszczuk government is proud of it is that we want to ensure our hardworking public sector workers receive fair and decent wages. We do this with the ability to negotiate enterprise bargaining agreements—something those opposite were absolutely unable to do during the whole time they were in government. It is something about which they should hang their heads in shame. When we talk about alternative approaches, not only did they embark on sacking thousands of hardworking public servants but they could not even negotiate one enterprise bargaining agreement. What a difference with this side of the House.

We know that at the moment no worker, whether they are in the private or public sector, is immune to the pressures placed on them by a very high inflationary environment. We do not want to see our hardworking public servants going backwards. We do not want to lose them in a particularly tight labour market. We want to ensure that when they go to work they are happy and they are well paid, with decent wages and entitlements. Under our agreement, in a very high inflationary environment where the Reserve Bank has increased interest rates nearly 13 times in a row—almost unprecedented—we want to make sure our hardworking Public Service keeps pace.

As part of the agreements that were struck well over 12 months ago—we have been talking about this for quite some time—there was a cost-of-living payment adjustment and that was linked to the cost of inflation. Inflation at the March quarter 2023 was 7.4 per cent. Our wage increases were four per cent, so the cost-of-living adjustment, which is leading the nation and looking after our Public Service, kicked in. It kicked in at various stages due to the timing of when those bargaining agreements were paid. Nurses and midwives received theirs in May; police and teachers received theirs in August; firefighters received theirs in September; and teacher aides, school cleaners and school support staff received theirs in October—as examples.

When we talk about any alternative policies, not only was the Leader of the Opposition asked once, not only was he asked twice, not only was he asked three times how they would address the Public Service numbers but there were no answers, no policies and no ideas.

### Health System, Scans

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. In July the minister told Queenslanders that the backlog of X-rays, CT scans and ultrasound scans was 'unacceptable' and her department said they would be cleared by last month. Reports today show that as of last Tuesday there were still over 40,000 unread scans for things like cancer at GCUH alone. Is this another example of Queenslanders paying for another announcement leading to another broken promise?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I am pleased to say that the member for Kawana does have his facts wrong again. The backlog of cases at the Gold Coast University Hospital has gone from 54,000 cases in July—which, as I have said, is unacceptable—down to 17,000 today. That is an excellent result from the hardworking clinicians at the Gold Coast.

There are also scans, obviously, that come in each and every day that are being progressed but have not reached the threshold of a backlog. We rely on partners in our private sector who are also facing delays, but that is why the work is ongoing. In recent years there has been a 12 per cent increase in demand for scans at the Gold Coast and at the same time we are facing global workforce shortages.

I want to remind everyone in this House and every Queenslanders that it is important to note that every single image has already been seen and acted upon by the treating doctor—every single image has been seen. The subsequent reporting by a radiologist is a quality assurance check—very important, mind you, but it is a quality assurance check designed to capture potential errors or omissions. They are doing all of the work they can. They are working with the private sector. They have it down from 54,000 to 17,000. They are doing a great job.

### **Train Manufacturing Program**

**Mr McCALLUM:** My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services. Will the minister please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's success in bringing train manufacturing back to Queensland, and is the minister aware of any alternatives?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for his question and for his support for Queensland-made trains—made here for Queenslanders. I was pleased to be in Maryborough with the member for Maryborough, the Assistant Minister for Train Manufacturing, for the start of heavy construction work on our Queensland-made train manufacturing facility at Torbanlea, near Maryborough. Only under this government would that have happened. I want to thank the member for Maryborough, who has turned the town of Maryborough around after it was facing a grim future after those opposite sent train manufacturing overseas. We all know how that ended up—disability noncompliant trains that we are still fixing to this day. I believe we have fixed about 56 of them and we are making our way to 75.

It was a great day in Maryborough. It was also a great day because of a new announcement that was made by Hyundai Rotem, the partners of Downer, who announced a new contract—a \$30 million contract—for a steel-forming factory in Maryborough to supply the form parts of the carriages made locally. This is something that is usually done overseas. This will be done in Maryborough—another 20 manufacturing jobs on top of all the jobs we have coming in terms of making trains in Queensland for Queenslanders under this government.

You know that this would only happen under this government, Mr Speaker. Why do I know that? We saw recently the document released by the Leader of the Opposition: 'right-wing priorities for Queensland'. In the 'right-wing priorities for Queensland', was the word 'manufacturing' mentioned? No. There was not a word on manufacturing in his big vision statement. There was absolutely nothing in it. The Leader of the Opposition had another opportunity at the Media Club to outline his vision at length, to show us some depth, to show us some policy. What did we get? We got a highly defensive effort—no new policies other than to say, 'I'm not like Newman. I'm a new man!' How can you be a new man when you were with Newman in the Newman cabinet?

The Leader of the Opposition is trying to pretend that he is something he is not. He even used the same terminology as Newman: 'no forced redundancies; you're all safe'. Do you remember that? It is hard to say you are a new man when you say this about Campbell Newman—

In that moment, that one second in time, I realised I was dealing with someone special. To me, that was a defining moment.

...

I'll remember that moment until the day I die.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr BAILEY:** He is not a new man: he is just a little Newman.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, the period for responding to the question has expired. I ask you to resume your seat.

### **Taringa Railway Station, Accessibility**

**Mr BERKMAN:** My question this morning is to the Minister for Transport. Taringa train station is still only accessible by stairs, making it entirely inaccessible for people in wheelchairs, those with mobility issues and people with prams. Will the minister listen to the more than 1,700 people who signed my petition and commit to adding the Taringa train station to the Station Accessibility Upgrade Program?

**Mr BAILEY:** This government takes accessibility on our train network very seriously. I believe that we have now upgraded eight stations and we have another five stations under the Queensland Rail program. Some of them have had early works done already—I think Bundamba and a few other places—with heavy work to start in January. We also have accessibility upgrades for Salisbury into Dutton Park—that string of old stations. We have finished Fairfield and Yeronga. There is work going on at Dutton Park and Rocklea, with Salisbury and Moorooka to come. The Ekka station will become a full-time station and it will be fully accessible. As well, there are four new underground stations that are being built to disability compliant standards. We now have accessibility upgrades covering about 82 to 83 per cent of the commuters across the network. Necessarily, accessibility programs in the early stations have been targeted—not just by this government, but by other governments—in high-volume stations for maximum benefit, and then we work our way through the system. I understand that the member would like to see an accessibility upgrade at Taringa. We are looking at that and many others.

In terms of where the next tranche of upgrades will be, I cannot give the member a commitment about timing at this stage in terms of that station. It will be upgraded at some point in the future, as all stations will be upgraded in the future. At the moment we have a program of five new ones, adding to the considerable number under Cross River Rail. We have never seen this level of accessibility work being done on our stations at one time. We will continue that program. There are more than half a billion dollars going into the Queensland Rail program in addition to the Cross River Rail program.

Accessibility is something that we take seriously. We are making sure those new trains we are building in Maryborough are disability compliant. It is one thing for stations to be compliant, but you have to make sure the trains are compliant as well. We are currently fixing the NGRs that were ordered by the previous government. We can necessarily only do eight of those at a time in order to keep the network rolling. I believe that we have fixed 56 out of a total of 75 NGR trains that were ordered by the Newman government. We will complete that next year.

In terms of the issue at Taringa, I am happy to keep the honourable member informed of future deliberations, but there will need to be a future tranche of upgrades after the current ones. That will start in January next year.

### **Water Infrastructure**

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Would the minister please advise the House of the benefits of public ownership of our water assets, and are there any alternative views?

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the member for the question. I know how passionate she is about infrastructure and government owned corporations in Queensland. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has invested over \$5.2 billion in water infrastructure in this state, creating over 3,400 jobs in the process. Much of that is through publicly owned water providers such as Seqwater and Sunwater. Keeping our assets in public hands is critically important. It means that we can deliver the infrastructure our communities need while making sure water is affordable for our people. We will always be motivated by what is right for Queenslanders. By keeping our assets in public hands, we can now deliver in the water space a significant dam safety program. We will always prioritise the safety of our people. We will have important water infrastructure projects that our community needs. We have: discounts and rebates for irrigators; pensioner discounts which are critically important, particularly at this time; our new recently announced concealed leaks policy, saving people thousands of dollars; and bulk water at an affordable price in Queensland. Our publicly owned water asset infrastructure means that Queenslanders will always be our shareholders in water infrastructure and our No. 1 consideration when making decisions.

All of this would be at risk under an LNP government. They have previously said that new water infrastructure must be built by the private sector. What does that tell us? Despite several chances, they have failed to outline any plan in the water space in Queensland for water infrastructure and security. Hiding their plan and being secretive only means one thing: the LNP will dust off their old WaterQ document—their blueprint for cuts and their blueprint for the privatisation of the water sector here in

Queensland. We hear how they talk about the desalination plant in Tugun. They have probably never been there because they hate it. They do not even know what it does for us in Queensland. When they were last in government in Queensland they also planned to cut pensioners' water discounts.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** That is right. They wanted to rip away discounts for our pensioners here in Queensland. While on the radio last week the member for Nanango was given an opportunity to talk about the LNP's plan for water. There is an election coming up. It was a golden opportunity. The member said, 'You know me, Peter. Many of your listeners have heard about our big, bold water plans in the past.' I waited to hear what the plan was. What was it? There was nothing. Their plan is nothing. The plan for the LNP in the water space is nothing. Their big, bold plan is for cuts. Their big, bold plan is a plan for nothing here in Queensland when it comes to the water space. Only Labor in this state can be trusted with our water assets and infrastructure—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Lister** interjected.

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

### **Cooloolool Great Walk**

**Ms BOLTON:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement. With regard to my letter to the minister in September regarding transitioning the Cooloolool Great Walk eco project to one that meets the needs of Gubbi Gubbi peoples to create jobs and return to country without impacts through permanent built accommodation, can the minister report on any progress made?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Noosa, I would ask that in future you consider the preamble of your question. It is bordering on being too long.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I thank the member for Noosa for the question. I want to acknowledge how she has been truly representative of her local community in presenting to me some very strong concerns of her community towards the Cooloolool Great Walk project, particularly the proposal for a private proponent to develop in the national park.

To put this into a bit of context for the House, we are talking about some further development on an existing 102-kilometre hiking trail from Noosa North Shore through Cooloolool to Rainbow Beach. It is an extraordinary part of the state and an extraordinary opportunity for people to access and see that. You can understand our great interest in wanting to make sure that it is more accessible for more people in the community. I want to acknowledge the member for Noosa's correspondence and assure her that we have been working through the process with the private proponent to understand if they can deliver their plan within their approvals and budget. There is further work going on, and I will come back to that in a moment for the member for Noosa's benefit. I highlight how committed we are to seeing great outcomes in our national park estate and sensitive areas that deliver opportunities for people to see and enjoy the great parts of our state, but not in way that is going to do damage and not in a way that is going to affect the values of those important areas.

While I am on my feet in relation to this issue, I note that the chair of the local LNP branch who is running for the Noosa council, Leigh McCready, publically stated on her Facebook page, 'I oppose commercial development in national parks.' This seems to be a new LNP position. The shadow tourism spokesperson—and not many people know who that is; it is the Leader of the Opposition—talks a big game about a 20-year tourism plan but has no details. Perhaps this is the new detail. Perhaps this is why he cannot engage in the ecotourism sector because the LNP now do not support any concept of private investment in national parks. I want to assure the member for Noosa that we will work with the local community, the member for Noosa and indeed, most importantly, the traditional owners, the Gubbi Gubbi people, to ensure there is an outcome at the Cooloolool Great Walk that is in line with community expectations.

*(Time expired)*

### **Agriculture Industry**

**Mr MADDEN:** My question without notice is of the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting farmers and the agricultural sector, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I thank the member for the question. I acknowledge that the member comes from a farming community. Like members in this place, he knows that Queensland farmers are amongst the very best in the world. If you ask Queensland farmers who is looking out for them—farmers like leading beef grazer Terry McCosker from Rocky and our top aquaculture farmers, like Pacific Reef Fisheries, which deliver our incredible tiger prawns—they will tell you who is looking out for them. They will say that it is this side of the House—it is Labor—that is looking out for farmers in this state. They know that Labor is delivering for farming communities, not those opposite.

They will tell you about the \$35 million in direct farming energy tariffs that have been delivered by this Queensland Treasurer. They will tell you about the \$570 million Rookwood Weir project delivering for farmers. They will tell you about the \$943.5 million in rural health facilities being delivered by this health minister. They will tell you about the 200-bed expansion to the Ipswich Hospital, which is supporting families in the member's electorate.

From Ipswich to the Outback, those on the land know that it is Labor that is backing them. It is why we are delivering energy savings for Queensland farmers. In fact, this side of the House has delivered \$2.1 billion in power bill savings to farming communities across regional Queensland since 2017. Farmhouses and homesteads are all getting \$550 in energy bill relief right now. Farmers know that it is Labor that stands up for them. It is why I can announce that next year, in early 2024, Labor will deliver a new program for farmers to cut power bills and emissions even further.

Farmers know that it is Labor that stands up for them. Quite frankly, farmers know that the LNP do not stand for them anymore because LNP senator Matt Canavan even rejoiced when he spoke about his core constituency, saying, '95 per cent of our voters don't farm, aren't farmers or don't own farm land.' It is why they do not back a fair share for Queenslanders of those massive coal royalties—those profits that coalminers are making. The LNP are not about backing farmers because that is not their core constituency anymore. Their core constituency is the coal lobby. They are weak on coal royalties and they are weak on climate change. They do not stand for anything on that side of the House. They do not even stand for Queensland farmers anymore.

### Fire Ants

**Mr CRANDON:** My question is to the Premier. Why did the Premier not know that fire ants had crossed the New South Wales border, and can the Premier advise if the government is still pursuing an eradication strategy?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes, I am aware now that the fire ants crossed the border.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Oh, grow up!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, that is not helpful. I will wait for silence, members.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As I said yesterday, there is a national program that is tailored at the eradication of fire ants. It is a biosecurity program. It is run through the federal department and it works closely with the state department, Minister Furner's department.

**Mr Head** interjected.

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

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Gladstone, you are also warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am advised that fire ants were detected south of the Queensland border on 24 November. The detection is about 10 kilometres south of the Queensland border and about 20 kilometres from the nearest known infestation in Tallebudgera. There are six confirmed nests. All are at an industrial development site. I am advised that all nests have been destroyed using liquid insecticide.

**Mr CRANDON:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The specific question was—

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. Member, you have been here long enough to know that the Premier has ceased her contribution. There are no supplementary questions in this parliament.

## Home Ownership

**Mrs MULLEN:** My question is of the Minister for Housing. Can the minister update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to help Queenslanders secure home ownership, and does she know of any alternative approaches?

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## MOTION

### Business Program



**Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.16 am):** I move—

1. That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages, as follows:
  - (a) second reading debate, with separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
  - (b) the consideration of the bills in detail together; and
  - (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.
2. Notwithstanding anything contained in the standing and sessional orders:
  - (a) the time limits and order for moving the second readings in 1. shall be: Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, 30 minutes; followed by the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts, 30 minutes; followed by the Leader of the Opposition or nominees, 30 minutes each bill; and
  - (b) the time limits and order for reply to the second readings debate in 1. shall be: Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, 20 minutes; followed by the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts, 20 minutes.
3. That the following business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum time as specified:
  - (a) the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill;
  - (b) the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill, cognate debate, maximum 3 hours and 30 minutes; and
  - (c) the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, to be completed by 5.15 pm on Thursday, 30 November 2023.
4. The following time limits for the bills listed in 3. apply:
  - (a) the ministers to be called on in reply:
    - (i) for the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill, cognate debate—30 minutes before expiry of maximum time; and
    - (ii) for the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, by 4.55 pm on Thursday, 30 November 2023.
5. If all stages of the bills listed in 3. have not been completed by the specified times in 4. respectively, Mr Speaker:
  - (b) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration;
  - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate;
  - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
  - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. This year has certainly been a big year for all Queenslanders, and the parliament is no exception. The motion before us today outlines four bills which the House will consider: the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which had considerable debate last sitting and will finish today; the cognate debate of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill, which have been allocated a total of three hours and 30 minutes for debate; and the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which has been allocated the remainder of the week, until 5.15 pm on Thursday.

As we all know, during the last sitting week of any calendar year we conclude the week by all coming together in this chamber to reflect on the year's successes ahead of the Christmas period. As this is the last sitting week, I would like to reflect on the year that was. This House has sat for 37 days so far, and not all in this chamber. We have taken the parliament, the people's house, to the people of Far North Queensland in Cairns in what was an historic sitting. We saw a few bills introduced and an important piece of legislation debated and passed, the Path to Treaty Bill, which I know those opposite have now sadly walked away from.

I am advised by a brief look at the parliament website that during this year, excluding this week: 28 government bills have been introduced; five non-government bills have been introduced, with only one from the LNP for the entire term; 32 bills have been referred to committee; 604 questions have been asked during question time; 1,380 questions have been asked on notice; 457 important ministerial statements have been made; 200 private members' statements have been made; and there have been many more speeches.

I could spend a while listing off statistics, but I will not. We all know that a lot of work occurs in this chamber on behalf of the people of Queensland each sitting week, but it is equally important to acknowledge the work that occurs outside of this chamber, in particular when it comes to legislation and preparing for sitting weeks. I take this opportunity to thank the hardworking and dedicated public servants of the Queensland public sector for their work each and every day. While we regularly acknowledge the front line, we should equally acknowledge and thank those in the back offices—the policy officers, the legal officers, the drafters, everyone who is part of the policy generation cycle. It is these people the Palaszczuk government thanks for their work in assisting the government develop policy and draft legislation which ultimately is debated in this chamber on behalf of the people of Queensland.

On behalf of the government, I wish to thank Tony Keyes, the Parliamentary Counsel, and deputy parliamentary counsels Sandra Lawson, Katy Le Roy and Ian Larwill and their entire team for their dedication and work they do. Drafting legislation is not easy. The Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel takes the policy that executive government wishes to enact on behalf of the people of Queensland and drafts it into law. This is a highly technical skill—one which should not be underestimated. As the first law officer of this state and Leader of the House, I thank them on behalf of the people of Queensland for their service.


It would be remiss of me not to thank my own department, the mighty Department of Justice and Attorney-General, for their continued work each and every day, noting we are responsible for 213 pieces of legislation, and including our strategic policy and legal services, the legal policy powerhouse of the government.

In my role as Leader of the House, I would like to thank the staff of the cabinet office, in particular Linda for her work in coordinating the legislative agenda across government and managing the various departments before and during each sitting week.

Last, but not least, I want to thank Darren Cann for his knowledge and expertise of the procedures of this House and his support for myself in the role of Leader of the House. I even managed to last one week without him and parliament continued. It is a challenging job at times, and I know that the office of the Premier and my staff and I are very grateful.

As we all know, we are merely custodians of our seats for a period of time, but it is the people of this parliament who are generally still here when we leave. As such, I take this opportunity to thank the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, and his staff for their dedication and efforts this year and every year in ensuring the people's House works like clockwork. I particularly would like to thank them for their amazing efforts in supporting the regional sittings of parliament in Cairns—something I know firsthand is not an easy thing to do, but something that is truly enriching for Queenslanders.

I also acknowledge the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the panel of deputy speakers. While I note that we are still in November and the House is not sitting on Christmas Eve, like it was in 1909 when it adjourned at 9.15 pm on 24 December, I do wish to take this opportunity in the last debate on the business program motion as we head into the Christmas period to wish everyone who works in this building or is associated with this building a safe and happy Christmas period. With those words, I commend the business motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.21 am) It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas, and I am happy to join the Leader of the House in acknowledging the amount of work done by the Clerk of the Parliament and all the parliamentary officers. Whilst Christmas is just around the corner, that is about it for sharing in the views of the Leader of the House. It will not come as any surprise that we will not be supporting the business motion that has been circulated. There are so many pieces of legislation that will have debate truncated this week that I am not going to take up any more time debating why. Those opposite know full well why. We stand ready to debate each and every piece of legislation and therefore cannot support this motion.



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (11.22 am): Once again, the opposition is playing politics with an ordinary, sensible ordering of the business of this House, as happens with chambers right across this country and, in fact, across the Western world that have speaking lists where prioritisation has to happen from all parties. We have this silly political point being made by the member for Glass House on behalf of the opposition. It is a waste of everyone's time. The only positive thing we can say is that it was a short speech from the member for Glass House and necessarily I am going to be the same.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members!

**Mr BAILEY:** My speech will be short. Although I always love a few interjections from the opposition, I will keep it short. Let's get on with the business of the week. The business motion is sensible, logical and ought to be supported.

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

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 49—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 36:**

**LNP, 31—**Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

**KAP, 3—**Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

Pair: Skelton, Nicholls

Resolved in the affirmative.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.28 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in these standing and sessional orders, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services be permitted to immediately introduce three bills, table each bill, the explanatory notes and statement of compatibility, and deliver one explanatory speech for all three bills with separate questions being put for the first readings.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.28 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Disaster Management Regulation 2014, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights, and I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 [\[1993\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[1994\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1995\]](#).



## STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

### Message from Governor



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.29 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The message from Her Excellency the Governor recommends the State Emergency Service Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL 2023

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to establish the State Emergency Service and for related purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 28 November 2023

*Tabled paper*: Message, dated 28 November 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the State Emergency Service Bill 2023 [1996].

### Introduction



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.29 am): I present a bill for an act to establish the State Emergency Service and for related purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper*: State Emergency Service Bill 2023 [1997].

*Tabled paper*: State Emergency Service Bill 2023, explanatory notes [1998].

*Tabled paper*: State Emergency Service Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [1999].

## MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

### Message from Governor



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.30 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The message from Her Excellency the Governor recommends the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL 2023

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to establish Marine Rescue Queensland and for related purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 28 November 2023

*Tabled paper*: Message, dated 28 November 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 [2000].

### Introduction



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.30 am): I present a bill for an act to establish Marine Rescue Queensland and for related purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper*: Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 [2001].

*Tabled paper*: Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, explanatory notes [2002].

*Tabled paper*: Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [2003].

These bills represent the first stage of legislative amendments designed to improve our emergency services and how we manage natural disasters and other similar events in Queensland. One of the greatest risks that we face in Queensland is natural disasters. Our environment and climate makes Queensland one of the best places in the world to live, but it also comes at a cost. We are one of the most disaster-affected states in Australia. Over the past decade, we have experienced almost 90 significant natural disasters and weather events, ranging from fires to floods and cyclones to storms.

Unfortunately, the risk of natural disasters is growing. The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements noted that 'the 2019-20 severe weather season provided only a glimpse of the types of events that Australia is likely to face in the future' and that 'Australia is facing increasingly frequent and intense natural disasters, a significant number of which are likely to be compounding. Governments will need to prepare for more large-scale multijurisdictional crises.'

A priority of the Palaszczuk government is the safety of our communities. We take that responsibility seriously, and we recognise the importance of our emergency services agencies performing optimally. A series of reviews of our emergency services has been conducted, culminating in the KPMG *Independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services* and the Inspector-General Emergency Management's Review into Queensland's Disaster Management Arrangements. The goal of these reviews included ensuring the sustainability of the delivery of emergency services could be achieved and enhancing our disaster management arrangements. This government has accepted recommendations made in these reviews, bringing to pass the need for these bills. These bills will establish the State Emergency Service and a new marine rescue service, namely Marine Rescue Queensland, in standalone acts. The Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill will tie these organisations into the Queensland Police Service through making the necessary administrative arrangements for this to occur.

Currently, marine rescue services are conducted by the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association of Queensland, which has 26 squadrons and about 1,400 members, and the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association of Queensland, which consists of 21 flotillas and around 1,200 members. These organisations patrol our coastline, providing an invaluable maritime service to the community. Their services include disaster response, medical evacuations, marine radio monitoring, educating the public on safe boating practices and, in particular, providing assistance to police to conduct search and rescue operations.

The Blue Water Review and the subsequent independent review identified a need for an integrated statewide marine rescue service, as the existing services may operate in unclear and occasionally overlapping areas with varying levels of service delivery. The Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 addresses this issue by establishing Marine Rescue Queensland as a marine rescue service for the Queensland community. The Marine Rescue Queensland membership will consist of: the Marine Rescue Queensland chief executive, known as the chief officer; Marine Rescue Queensland employees; and Marine Rescue Queensland volunteers, who will be appointed by the Police Commissioner to perform different roles and functions.

Consistent with recommendations made in the independent review, the commissioner's functions are designed to ensure that Marine Rescue Queensland can be administered effectively through strategically aligning Marine Rescue Queensland with other emergency services agencies. The commissioner may determine the boundaries of a Marine Rescue Queensland area where a Marine Rescue Queensland unit may be established. This can only occur after the commissioner considers the local needs for the area and whether it would be appropriate for a Marine Rescue Queensland unit to be established at that location.

The Marine Rescue Queensland chief officer is responsible for the day-to-day efficient management of Marine Rescue Queensland at the state level and must give effect to any direction given by the commissioner relevant to the functions of Marine Rescue Queensland and its members. The management of Marine Rescue Queensland units at the local level will be the responsibility of a Marine Rescue Queensland unit commander, who will ensure the unit's members are well trained, appropriately equipped and acting in compliance with established procedures. At a regional level, Marine Rescue Queensland coordinators will have oversight of a number of individual Marine Rescue Queensland units and will be able to facilitate the coordination and cooperation of these units' efforts.

Further, the bill will establish statutory powers and protections for Marine Rescue Queensland as an organisation and its members and for the community it serves. For example, the bill will authorise Marine Rescue Queensland members who are performing their functions to enter a place if there is a situation likely to result in immediate harm to another person, property or the environment if action is

not taken. For instance, a Marine Rescue Queensland member may come across an unoccupied vessel floating in a sea lane, causing a navigational hazard and presenting a clear risk to safety. To gain control of the vessel, the bill provides the Marine Rescue Queensland member a clear authority to board the vessel so that it may be safely steered and recovered for its owner. This power is balanced, as a Marine Rescue Queensland member cannot enter the place if the occupier is present unless reasonable attempts are made to inform the occupier of the need to enter and obtain their consent. As a matter of common sense, this requirement is not necessary if meeting this requirement would result in danger to a person or property.

I am confident that the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill will lead to enhanced marine rescue services and better interoperability between units by providing better clarity around Marine Rescue Queensland's members' roles and responsibilities, consistent training and standardisation of procedures and policies, and enhanced asset management.

Another recommendation from the independent review outlined that the State Emergency Service should be better aligned with the Queensland Police Service. The State Emergency Service is a not-for-profit organisation consisting of State Emergency Service units established within local government areas. Currently, there are 75 SES units comprising 303 SES groups, supported by a large cohort of thousands of volunteers. The SES provides an essential service to the community by providing assistance during floods, storms or other similar events. Often the police and the SES work together on search and rescue operations, disaster response, traffic management and other tasks that support the community.

The rationale underlying the recommendation to transition and better align the State Emergency Service with the Queensland Police Service is the recognition that certain functions undertaken by the police and the SES are already closely aligned. The State Emergency Service Bill 2023 will meet this recommendation by providing the commissioner with functions that will assist in the administration of the SES. Consistent with the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill, the SES bill will provide that SES membership will consist of the SES chief officer, SES employees and SES volunteers who will be appointed by the commissioner to perform different roles and functions.

The commissioner may establish SES units within local government areas with the agreement of the relevant local government after making certain considerations to determine if it is appropriate to do so. Command and control of the SES will be achieved through the commissioner appointing SES members into a variety of roles, including that of SES chief officer, SES commander and local controller of an SES unit.

At a state level, the SES chief officer will be responsible for managing the efficient day-to-day running of the SES as a whole and is obliged to give effect to any direction given by the commissioner relating to the function of the SES or SES members. Management of SES units will remain the responsibility of a local controller of an SES unit who must ensure that:

- the unit's members are appropriately skilled;
- their equipment is appropriately maintained; and
- the unit and its members perform SES functions in accordance with relevant policies, procedures and directions.

At a regional level, SES commanders will have oversight of a number of SES units and can advise local controllers about SES unit resources that may be made available from outside of their local government area and will be able to promote cooperation and coordination between SES units. This bill will allow SES members who are authorised rescue officers to continue to exercise their powers as needed by relocating relevant provisions that currently exist in the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990. Both the Marine Rescue Queensland and SES bills will provide protections for Marine Rescue Queensland and SES members and their respective organisations by prohibiting:

- the unauthorised use of restricted expressions; and
- the impersonation of a Marine Rescue Queensland or an SES member.

This acknowledges the regard that Marine Rescue Queensland and SES members hold, or will hold, in the community. These emergency service members deserve to be well respected, as they are relied upon by the public in times of need.

Members of the community should be able to expect that a person declaring themselves to be a Marine Rescue Queensland member or an SES member are, in reality, from these organisations and words such as 'MRQ', 'Marine Rescue Queensland', 'SES' or 'State Emergency Service' should not be misused, particularly for the purpose of raising funds.

Similarly, both the Marine Rescue Queensland and the SES bills will protect the reputation of these organisations and their members through providing measures that allow for the suspension of a Marine Rescue Queensland or SES volunteer and SES members employed by local governments. These members are not subject to the disciplinary arrangements under the Public Sector Act 2022, and it is critical for the reputation of Marine Rescue Queensland and the SES that there is a mechanism available to suspend any member from their duties if the person would be subject to discipline if they had been a public sector employee or if the proper and efficient management of the SES or Marine Rescue Queensland would be prejudiced if the person was not suspended.

In fairness to the subject member, the commissioner must consider all reasonable alternatives available to the volunteer such as a change in duties or location prior to suspending the member, and the suspension period is only for the time necessary to investigate the matter of complaint. This amendment will benefit the subject member as an opportunity is afforded to investigation of an allegation, and if it is found to be baseless the subject member may continue with their work and their contribution.

Additionally, the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 will deem Marine Rescue Queensland and SES members as staff members of the Queensland Police Service. This will ensure that:

- Marine Rescue Queensland and the SES have consistent governance and command structures;
- IT systems will have consistent security settings and frameworks;
- information sharing processes are streamlined; and
- efficiency gains may be made by reducing the duplication of any policies or procedures.

This bill will ensure that existing civil liability protections for the SES and its members will continue to apply to the SES and will extend these protections to Marine Rescue Queensland and its members.

This bill will also address a part of the larger disaster management reform program that is currently underway. Queensland's disaster management arrangements operate through a tiered system outlined in the Disaster Management Act 2003, which allows for a progressive escalation of support and assistance to affected communities through disaster management groups that operate at a local, district and state level.

The Queensland Disaster Management Committee is the paramount group providing strategic leadership to all other disaster management groups. The Queensland Disaster Management Committee's membership consists of ministers, supported by directors-general, observers and invitees by the chair of the Queensland Disaster Management Committee, who is currently the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 will formally establish the State Disaster Management Group, which will be available to provide early strategic oversight of disaster operations and make recommendations to the Queensland Disaster Management Committee about disaster management strategies and policies. The State Disaster Management Group will be chaired by the Premier and its members will consist of core ministers, departmental officials and statutory officials well versed in disaster management, allowing strategic decisions to be rapidly made and disseminated.

I will foreshadow that in the future I intend to introduce a further bill that will address the remaining recommendations from the independent review and the review conducted by the Inspector-General of Emergency Management that also require legislative reform.

This government is delivering the largest change to disaster management this state has seen for many years. The Reform Implementation Taskforce, led by Special Reform Coordinator Steve Gollschewski, has been leading these reforms and has been overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the reforms while maintaining service delivery. The Reform Implementation Taskforce is collaborating closely with all stakeholders across state and local governments to ensure a measured, consistent and cohesive implementation of the changes.

This work is supported by this government's commitment to a total funding package of over \$578 million over five years with \$142 million per annum ongoing, which is already resulting in increased resources for our emergency services and greater numbers of full-time emergency service personnel. For example, our State Emergency Service uplift will see an initial \$16.8 million dedicated to this organisation with additional fleet purchases and an increase of 30 full-time-equivalent positions for the 2023-24 financial year. The allocation of a further 30 FTE positions for the following 2024-25 financial year will see the number of SES FTE grow to 219. This is only a small snapshot of the

investment in disaster management that this government has made. The allocation of the ongoing \$142 million per annum is expected to significantly enhance the efforts of fire and emergency services in Queensland.

I must acknowledge that the greatest contribution, though, is from our emergency services personnel—the staff and officers of the fire and emergency services volunteer agencies. Thousands upon thousands of outstanding Queenslanders donate their time and energy to provide a broad range of fire and emergency services to assist our communities during our greatest times of need. We cannot thank them enough. Their work is incredibly important and is valued by all Queenslanders, by this government and by this parliament. It is incumbent on us to ensure that these emergency service personnel are placed in the best position possible to continue to operate efficiently and effectively. These bills achieve this objective by making the changes needed for this to occur. I commend the bills to the House.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

### First Reading



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.48 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

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

## STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

### First Reading



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.48 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

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

## MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

### First Reading



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.49 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee


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

## EMBLEMS OF QUEENSLAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 16 November (see p. 3663), on motion of Mr Hinchliffe—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.49 am), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution to the debate of the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill enables the official recognition of a state fossil emblem, *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni*. I have it on good authority that Cooper, Australia's largest dinosaur housed at the Eromanga Natural History Museum, ran a very close second to muttaburrasaurus. Putting aside the competition between Cooper and the muttaburrasaurus, they do actually have something in common: they are both found in the same Queensland catchment, the Lake Eyre catchment. That brings me to the consultation regulatory impact statement for the Queensland Lake Eyre Basin which has been released by the state Labor government. In his introductory speech the minister referred to the fact that the state fossil emblem will support economic development and palaeo tourism in the outback of Queensland—that is, provided the state Labor government regulatory environment allows this to continue. Those involved with tourism in the Lake Eyre Basin, where our fossils are found—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member, I will continue listening for about another 30 seconds, but I think you are going to need to demonstrate how this is relevant to the bill that is before the House.

**Ms LEAHY**: Mr Deputy Speaker, those who are involved in the fossil tourism industry in the Lake Eyre Basin are concerned that the regulatory impact statement will impact on the economic development of the region and palaeo tourism. Fossil digs are carefully excavated from the ground, often in areas where there are ancient riverbeds and flood plains. It is disappointing that this state Labor government seems to be on the one hand creating symbolism through this bill for fossils but on the other hand threatening the economic development—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Pause the clock. Resume your seat. I am just going to take some advice. Member, is the regulatory impact statement you are referring to directly related to this bill?

**Ms LEAHY**: Mr Deputy Speaker, the minister mentioned in his introductory speech—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Member, simply mentioning a word does not give people licence to pursue other issues in their contribution to the second reading debate. I will ask you again: is the regulatory impact statement directly related to the bill before the House?

**Ms LEAHY**: It does actually deal with tourism, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: It may well deal with tourism, but does it relate directly to this bill before the House?

**Ms LEAHY**: It does deal with tourism and also the minister referred to the state fossil emblem and economic development—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Again, I am not finding this relevant to the long title of the bill. I would ask you to move on.

**Ms LEAHY**: In conclusion, I look forward to the Economics and Governance Committee visiting the Eromanga Natural History Museum, which houses Cooper, Australia's largest dinosaur. I do think that you will find that there will be a lot of discussion about this and I do believe that we will be showing Labor the door in '24.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** : Order! It is probably a good time to remind the House of those members who are on a warning: the members for Nanango, Maryborough, Mudgeeraba, Coomera, Maroochydore, Broadwater, Everton, Stafford, Bundaberg, Sandgate, Kawana, Glass House, Southern Downs, Callide and Gladstone.



**Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (11.53 am): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, particularly as I serve as the shadow science minister. I would be disappointing my younger self if I did not take the opportunity to contribute to probably the only debate in this place that will predominantly relate to dinosaurs. I am of course among countless Queenslanders who were in absolute awe when they visited the Queensland Museum as a kid, back in the nineties when the first *Jurassic Park* film came out.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** From my own side! That is just terrible, isn't it?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members!

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Thank you for your protection from my own members, Mr Deputy Speaker. These prehistoric creatures are a gateway to a fascination with science for so many young people and we need to be doing all we can to encourage even more young Queenslanders to study science and to pursue a career in STEM, so it is fitting and important that we have such an iconic ornithomimid as our state's fossil emblem. The *Muttaburrasaurus*—meaning the lizard from Muttaburra—*langdoni*, which is in honour of Doug Langdon, roamed our state 112 million to 103 million years ago in the forests which lined the inland Eromanga Sea. It was likely seven or eight metres long and 2½ metres high and would have weighed nearly three tonnes. It had a beak-like snout to cut through tough plant-like material such as ferns and cycads and grinding teeth further back into its mouth. It also probably had fleshy cheeks and is theorised to have communicated by making a special call through its nose-like hollow chamber.

Like other members, I want to pay tribute to grazier Doug Langdon, who made this incredible discovery exactly 60 years ago while mustering. In his words, it 'put Muttaburra on the map', and I acknowledge his widow, Pearl, who shared with the committee the beautiful story about how her late husband made this amazing discovery and put himself and his town in the history books. It has undoubtedly done that, with prehistoric or palaeo or dinosaur tourism being another important way of getting people to visit our outback, leading to important economic benefits. From the submissions to this bill we can see that the Eromanga Natural History Museum hosted 15,000 visitors in the last year alone, and other government data shows that over 122,000 visitors to the outback, or around one in four, go to the region because of these attractions.

The Queensland Museum team, led by Dr Bartholomai, made the first Australian dinosaur skull discovery at the site found by Doug. This was the start of a 17-year process to catalogue and clean the fossil fragments. For two decades it was the largest complete dinosaur ever found in our nation. The Lake Eyre Basin is one of the most magnificent natural environments in our state and the *muttaburrasaurus*'s bones were discovered in rocks which would have been at the bottom of this inland sea, with the body believed to have been washed out to that sea before sinking into the mud and being preserved for tens of millions of years for Doug to find.

The *muttaburrasaurus* was the clear winner in the vote to choose this fossil emblem. It is quite a feat to win a campaign over 100 million years after you have become extinct, but the *muttaburrasaurus* received 2,409 votes, beating out our nation's largest discovered dinosaur, the *australotitan*, which received the much smaller number of 1,179 votes. The *muttaburrasaurus* had the important support of the Maranoa regional, the Winton shire, the Barcaldine shire and the Flinders shire councils as well as David Elliott from Winton's Australian Age of Dinosaurs museum who said it is 'unique to Queensland', it 'represents our state on behalf of Australia' and that it is 'the right choice'. This will be the first dinosaur to be a fossil emblem of any jurisdiction in the nation. I hope this leads to even more interest in homegrown science and I have no doubt it will further increase tourism to this part of our state. I encourage all Queenslanders to consider making a trip out to this region. I further encourage all Queenslanders to make this tired, chaotic Labor government extinct next October.



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.58 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, which was introduced into the chamber on 14 September 2023 by my colleague the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement, the member for Sandgate. I want to thank the member for Logan, the chairperson of the Economics and Governance Committee, for his strong stewardship of the bill through his committee's consideration. We know that Queensland is a decentralised state and regardless of where you live in Queensland you should have the ability to engage in the democratic process, and I am pleased to see that the Economics and Governance Committee ensured that Queenslanders had the ability to input into the consideration of this bill.

I note that the committee travelled to Winton and Muttaborra to undertake public hearings and a public forum on this important legislation. These opportunities allowed regional Queenslanders an ability to engage in person in the democratic process. I saw a few pictures of these forums in the committee report and I thank the committee and, indeed, the member for Logan for the foresight and proactive measures they took by going to Western Queensland to meet face to face with regional Queenslanders about a piece of legislation that is relevant to them. I read with interest that at the Muttaborrasaurus Interpretation Centre the committee met with Mrs Pearl Langdon, the wife of the late Doug Langdon who discovered the dinosaur fossil near the Thomson River in the early sixties. It would have been such an amazing opportunity for those committee members to hear firsthand from someone with a connection to someone who discovered something so significant right in their own backyard.

As outlined in the committee report, Winton is where the 2020 campaign to establish a state fossil emblem originated and Muttaborra is where the proposed fossil emblem was first discovered. In addition to these two regional public engagements, public departmental briefings occurred about the legislation, including the associated parliamentary amendments. I understand that the Economics and Governance Committee is also undertaking an inquiry into prehistoric dinosaur and palaeo tourism in Outback Queensland and they took the opportunity when in regional Queensland to invite early input and commence conversations with key stakeholders regarding their inquiry. We look forward to the committee's considerations and report on this matter.

As members will know, the bill will amend the Emblems of Queensland Act 2005 to officially recognise the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* as Queensland's state fossil emblem. By introducing a new fossil emblem for Queensland, the bill reflects and responds to community interest in fossils, in dino tourism and in having an emblem that symbolises this unique aspect of our natural environment, culture and history. I am sure that many in the community would have visited the Dinosaur Garden at the Queensland Museum, which I have been told is a wonderful destination to visit, and would have heard about the recent dinosaurs of Patagonia exhibition. My kids absolutely loved visiting them when they were younger. The Muttaborra dinosaur may not currently be as well known as T-rex, but we are working with the tourism industry to change that. There are amazing opportunities to explore the rich and diverse palaeo experiences in our own backyard, and the state fossil emblem will provide a unique symbol for those experiences.

The proposed introduction of a fossil emblem for Queensland, the Muttaborra dinosaur, will provide a unique symbol, a touch point, that will help bring these palaeo experiences together for the tourist market. I encourage members of the House, and all Queenslanders, to follow the path of our prehistoric fauna, to go in search of our fossil emblem and the other short-listed fossils and many more. Start the adventure along the Dinosaur Trail through Winton, Hughenden and Richmond. Muttaborra is the home of the proposed fossil emblem, the Muttaborra dinosaur, a land-based herbivore of the Cretaceous period. The Muttaborrasaurus Interpretation Centre has interpretive displays and a history of the dinosaurs. With so many dinosaurs and so much to see, I encourage all Queenslanders to take advantage of the rich and unique Outback experiences available in our state.

As Leader of the House it would be remiss of me not to discuss the amendments which relate to the parliament, which some might say is the more important part of this bill, but I will let others decide.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I hear the Minister for Tourism scoffing. I withdraw those comments. Of course they are important amendments in this bill. As members know, if a member is absent there are provisions for proxy voting, which requires a doctor's certification to be provided to the Speaker and then the Speaker announces it in the House. This provision has been used at least once during this term and it became apparent that there could be a better way. As such, this bill amends the Parliament of Queensland Act to update the process by which a member of the Legislative Assembly in a state of ill health has their request for a proxy vote notified to the Assembly. The main change will be that the Speaker will not have to read out the medical certificate but just advise the Legislative Assembly. We know that our committees do their work either in person, via email or remotely via teleconference et cetera and while this has been the standard practice for many years I am advised the Clerk indicated that some amendments would be required to ensure that the important work undertaken by our committees electronically and remotely is validated. As such, this provision is retrospective.


**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Talking about practices of the House! When the House is sitting, Queenslanders are able to come and see their democratic system in action live and close up. We see Queenslanders each and every sitting come into the public gallery just above us to watch various debates or question time.



However, appropriate safeguards and security need to be implemented to ensure the safety of members, staff and visitors to the precinct. While the Queensland Police Service can act when there is a disturbance at the request of the Speaker, an amendment is being moved to the Parliamentary Service Act to rectify an oversight from 1995 which has meant that for the purposes of the Parliamentary Service Act on sitting days the Assembly chamber and galleries are not taken to be part of the parliamentary precinct. Ensuring that these spaces are captured as part of the precinct for the purposes of by-laws is important. We have had many examples of our chamber being disrupted by people coming in either chanting, yelling or throwing things over the balcony. While free speech and political speech is a cornerstone of our democracy, it should not interfere with the workings of this chamber. Amendments in this bill will also enable certain evidence to be provided to prosecute people who may disrupt this chamber. The majority of these amendments stem from requests from the Committee of the Legislative Assembly or the Speaker and I note that the Acting Speaker outlined these amendments to the House earlier this year.

Once again, I want to thank the member for Logan and his committee for their consideration of the legislation. I thank the minister for tourism for bringing this bill to the House. It is an important bill for our tourism sector. With those few words, I ask all members to support the bill.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (12.06 pm): I consider myself fortunate to be among the last to speak on this bill, the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, because I was able to absorb some of the debate last sitting week and talk about some aspects of it to the students and staff at Greenlands State School in my electorate of Southern Downs. It was wonderful to talk to the kids about how we had a dinosaur debate in parliament. That aroused the interest of the kids more than anything else we have done in the course of the year in this parliament.

I would like to reflect, as many others have, on my experience of seeing dinosaur fossils and being a dinosaur tourist here in Queensland. I had the great fortune, among my many Air Force postings when I was in the Australian Defence Force, to be assigned to the then governor-general and later as the then governor of Queensland's aide-de-camp. I have very happy memories of us flying into regional Queensland on lots of visits. One of the best was when we went to the Australian Age of Dinosaurs and saw Dave and Judy Elliott on their property outside of Winton.

**Mr Madden** interjected.


**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection from the member for Ipswich West.

**Mr Madden:** And a lovely man.

**Mr LISTER:** Yes, a lovely man. Great Queenslanders. It was great to see, even at that relatively early stage—it was about 16 years ago—that there were scientists there working on exposing the fossils and the bones and learning about them. It was wonderful to learn about and see these fossils. I know that the governor at the time, Quentin Bryce, took great delight in being a visitor there.


Central to the discussion of this bill has been tourism and the importance of fostering and encouraging tourism to Western Queensland to avail ourselves of the treasures that are there in dinosaur form. Obviously I would love to see that facilitated. I urge the government to make sure that they spend what is required to keep the roads in good order so tourists who are going out to see these treasures have a good experience and do not go back and say, 'Don't go out that way, there are too many potholes.' It is tough enough with the danger of hitting kangaroos on the road without having to have your car bashed apart on some of the roads due to potholes. I am sure my honourable friend the member for Warrego would share in that concern of mine.

I support the amendments to the Parliamentary Service Act. It is important that there are measures to prosecute misconduct in the gallery. It is a great privilege of our House to be here and know that we are protected from capricious acts by strangers. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.09 pm): I rise to make a very short contribution to the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This omnibus bill amends multiple acts including the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. In the part of the bill that focuses on the Parliamentary Service Act 1998, amendments clarify that the parliamentary precinct includes both the Assembly and the gallery whilst the Assembly is in session and that the Speaker or those acting in that role will be able to give evidence to a court of a direction given in relation to a person's behaviour on the parliamentary precinct. The bill also amends the Parliament of Queensland Act in relation to voting as a proxy.

The main purpose of the bill relates to the state emblems of Queensland and adds the *Muttaburrasaurus* as the state's fossil emblem. The *Muttaburrasaurus* lived in the Cretaceous period, about 100 million years ago. At that time, the earth looked very different to how it looks today. Many landmarks, such as the Himalayas, had not been formed. The atmospheric composition was very different. Dense jungles and Sahara-like deserts crisscrossed the planet. Interestingly, the moon was about 4,000 kilometres closer to the earth than it is today and dinosaurs covered the planet. Many adults and children are fascinated by the dinosaurs, and declaring the *Muttaburrasaurus* as the state fossil emblem is certainly worthwhile.


I want to highlight the importance of grey nomad tourism that feeds into townships throughout the state. We need to make sure that those towns have the workforce they need. Not only do we as a parliament need to do everything we can but also the Labor government needs to do everything it can to ensure that those towns have strong workforces and also the infrastructure that tourists need. I will keep my contribution very short. I wish the *Muttaburrasaurus* a long and prosperous reign as the fossil emblem of this state.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (12.11 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill that is before the House. In October last year, Queenslanders had their say on what dinosaur should be recognised as the state's official fossil emblem and they overwhelmingly chose the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni*, a species that roamed across Queensland more than 100 million years ago. The skeletal remains of the dinosaur were first discovered 60 years ago north of Barcaldine, near the Outback town of Muttaburra, which is obviously its namesake. The discovery has been a major tourism drawcard for the town ever since. The government believes that by amending the act and recognising the *Muttaburrasaurus* as our official fossil emblem we will put the spotlight back on Outback Queensland towns by showcasing what they have to offer and, in turn, generate valuable economic prosperity for the regions.

Queensland has a rich palaeontological history. Many of the Southern Hemisphere's key dinosaur finds are in Outback Queensland. Those locations account for an estimated 11 per cent of all Outback Queensland tourism, which equates to almost 122,000 visitors. Our new fossil emblem will be a unique representation that will help to showcase Queensland's rich palaeontological discoveries and history. The state's fossil emblem will support economic development and palaeo tourism in Outback Queensland.

When the Palaszczuk government was first approached to name an official fossil emblem, the minister formed a working group to determine which dinosaur species would be chosen. They worked alongside the community, including relevant cultural heritage groups and traditional owners. Twelve options were shortlisted and put to the vote. A four-month consultation process, from April to July last year, generated nearly 9,000 responses. The *Muttaburrasaurus* was a clear winner after securing 27.55 per cent of the vote, which is a lot more than some of the primary votes of those opposite. On 22 October 2022, the Palaszczuk government rightly named the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni* as Queensland's fossil emblem.

I call on all members to agree to amending the Emblems of Queensland Act 2005 as required to officially recognise the state's fossil emblem. The state fossil emblem will support existing Queensland government investment, including funding allocations to deliver a road map to grow dinosaur tourism across Outback Queensland. No extra cost is required; all associated costs of the proposed bill will come out of existing budget allocations. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (12.14 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and, indeed, for their support of the bill. As I noted in my second reading speech, the bill amends the Emblems of Queensland Act 2005 to officially recognise the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni*, or the Muttaburra dinosaur, as Queensland's state fossil emblem. The bill also makes a number of amendments to legislation relating to the Queensland parliament to improve and clarify certain parliamentary processes and procedures.

I will start by addressing those aspects of the bill that progress a number of technical amendments to the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 to improve and clarify parliamentary processes and procedures. These amendments are about stopping the institution from becoming a fossil. I acknowledge the contributions made by members during the second reading debate that addressed those particular aspects of the amendments contained within the bill. In particular, I provide reassurance to the member

for Glass House, who was concerned that the privileges of members of parliament are protected in the amendments that will affect the House. I reassure him of that. I note the broad bipartisan support for the bill and I am keen to address some issues raised by members throughout the debate.

As many members of the House have done when addressing the bill, I thank the Economics and Governance Committee for their examination of the bill and thank the stakeholders who provided submissions and attended the public hearings in both Winton and Muttaborra. I note the comments from members of the committee who had the opportunity to travel to Winton and Muttaborra. When they visited Muttaborra, committee members had the fantastic opportunity of meeting with Mrs Pearl Langdon and hearing firsthand her recollections from late 1962—I say ‘late 1962’ to reassure the member for Logan that I have this correct—when her late husband, Doug, found the first fossil bone. As members have mentioned, it was not until early 1963, when the wet season ended, that Queensland Museum representatives travelled to Muttaborra and found the fossil bones, including the head. The fossil was later named *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* in recognition of the town where it was found and Doug Langdon—and very deserved recognition that is. Now, with the official recognition of the muttaburrasaurus dinosaur as the state’s fossil emblem, Muttaborra and Outback Queensland are well and truly on the map, noting that Muttaborra is the geographic centre of Queensland.

In my second reading speech I stated that the Emblems of Queensland Act 2005 will not prescribe a particular image to depict the fossil emblem. I note that a number of members raised concerns around representation, specifically the members for Mermaid Beach and Ninderry. This is consistent with the approach for other state emblems such as the koala, the anemone fish, the brolga, the sapphire and the Cooktown orchid. I reassure members, because I think they will be pleased to hear and certainly this is in line with my views on the matter, that the Queensland government will use an image provided by the Queensland Museum that depicts a reconstruction of the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* skeleton. The Queensland Museum has confirmed that its fossil image may be downloaded from the Queensland government webpage for educational, informational or personal purposes.

There is a concern around the way in which representation of dinosaurs might be used, so I clarify that the fossil record does not dictate those representations. In fact, I think we can be victims of our mindsets around how prehistoric dinosaur animals appeared. We are actually a bit afflicted by the naming, too, because the name gives an image of lizards. There is the idea that those prehistoric animals appeared more like lizards as we know them today. I think this is a challenge for us all because it has become so ingrained from what we have learned, often from 19th century thinking and understanding that was not informed by more modern science.

The more modern science would suggest to us that those animals were far more closely related to modern birds. It does make one completely rethink how they might have appeared. We are not prescribing a representation of the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni*; we are allowing science to further develop and be responsive to that in terms of how it is depicted going forward. I am particularly proud that those images that are held by the Queensland Museum will be the primary reference point, because they are the images of the fossil. Let us remember: we are not declaring a Queensland state dinosaur; we are declaring a Queensland state fossil. Much like the clownfish that has become synonymous with the Great Barrier Reef and the koala in other parts of Queensland, it is expected that the emblem will be recognised very much as a symbol of the Queensland Outback and add to the unique selling proposition that exists for the region.

The Queensland government will continue to work closely with the Outback Queensland dinosaur tourism industry to identify opportunities to leverage the emblem. It was good to hear so many members in contributing to the debate seek that opportunity. In their contributions many members included references to Queensland dinosaurs. As I said, being a pedant—everyone knows that I am one of the biggest pedants in the House—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Despite protestations, to prove that I am, I do want to make the point that, at the time that the muttaburrasaurus was roaming the earth, 93½- to 105½-million years ago, Queensland did not exist. I am just putting it out there! As the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* fossil was discovered in 1962, we should refer to it as the Queensland fossil, not the Queensland dinosaur. I note that there was evidence presented during this debate and during the committee process that the muttaburrasaurus has been found exclusively in Queensland. That does make it very much a Queensland fossil.

I also note in the Leader of the Opposition’s contribution that he again referenced his 20-year tourism plan. He has been talking about it for years, yet there is no further detail other than it is a 20-year plan. The Leader of the Opposition continues his small target strategy, promising very little and keeping

any policy plans very vague. As we know, it is now less than a year out from the next election. There have been some references made to that during this debate. The tourism industry deserves to know what the LNP 20-year plan entails. Currently, through our Towards Tourism 2032, the industry has a collective framework to guide the industry and government partnerships to deliver long-term growth and successful Queensland tourism with well-articulated goals and milestones. What does the 20-year tourism plan entail? The same old cuts, slash and burn; who knows?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Minister, let's move on, please.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I reiterate that there has been much debate during this second reading debate on the bill around the tourism industry. It is not surprising that we want to see good quality outcomes. The importance of palaeo tourism—and the work that the committee has committed to continue to do—was recognised by a number of people during Queensland Tourism Week last week at both DestinationQ and at the Queensland Tourism Awards. I appreciate this opportunity to highlight again the opportunity that this represents to tourism.

We have heard so many different contributions from members. The ones that struck a chord with me, mainly because they aligned with my experience as well, were those struck by the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni* when they first visited the Queensland Museum. The members for Macalister, Bundaberg—and that included a bit of poetry, which we can move on from—Stafford and Bonney all referenced their visits to the Queensland Museum either as children or with their own children, and often both. I count myself amongst those who have had that experience, but, compared to the member for Stafford, my experiences were at the previous museum at Bowen Hills rather than the one at South Brisbane. I highlight that this is an important opportunity to celebrate the diversity of the palaeo tourism opportunity.

The *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni* was successful in the public voting process. As we have heard during the debate, there were some 2,409 votes received for the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni* and 1,179 votes received for the *Australotitan cooperensis*. Along with a few other members, I keep getting my pronunciation of that not quite right. I acknowledge the member for Warrego's comments about how large Cooper, as he is better known, would have been. He would not have fit into the chamber. It is a very big dinosaur, but muttaburrasaurus is a great symbol of Queensland's whole palaeo industry. It was great to hear wonderful recognition of that from someone as well respected in this field as David Elliott. I could go through all of the other fossils and the number of votes they received, but there are some members here who are getting a bit antsy.

I conclude by acknowledging the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Tourism and Events Queensland and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport, all of which contributed to this. I also acknowledge the students from St John Fisher College in Bracken Ridge, in the electorate of Sandgate, for their great interest in the natural history of Queensland and the great science that they will be learning. That makes me reflect that we heard contributions from others that this will hopefully contribute to the better learning of science, and I am sure it will. We need great STEM outcomes in our education system and more passionate engagement. Certainly, understanding our natural history is a huge opportunity in that regard. I know there is great science taught at St John Fisher College in Bracken Ridge. Equally, we heard some members were inspired more in other subject areas, like poetry, when it comes to their dedication to palaeo tourism.

I again acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the process of assessment, including the auspicious scientists who contributed to the process by coming up with the list of fossils that were considered and voted upon by the community, particularly those Outback communities that were so strongly engaged in the opportunity to promote and celebrate dino tourism and tell their local fossil records history and story. I particularly thank the teams within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Tourism and Events Queensland and the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport who have worked on this process.

I conclude by saying that I am very proud as tourism minister to be supporting legislation that will officially recognise the muttaburrasaurus dinosaur as the Queensland fossil emblem. I note the parliamentary committee is continuing its inquiry into palaeo tourism and will be exploring further tourism opportunities in the new year. My department will work closely with the parliamentary committee in relation to that inquiry and support them. In the face of the broad variety of extraordinary natural history and extraordinary fossil record here in Queensland, the *Muttaburrasaurus langdoni* will be a symbol for all our state's fossil record and celebrate our prehistoric natural history. As I said at the

outset of my speech, dinosaur tourism in Outback Queensland is not just a journey into the past; it has the potential to be a step toward a thriving economic future in our regions. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (12.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (12.30 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

## INFORMATION PRIVACY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### PUBLIC RECORDS BILL

Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 12 October (see p. 3058) and Public Records Bill resumed from 12 October (see p. 3055).

### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.31 pm): I move—

That the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

On 12 November 2023, the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 was introduced into parliament and referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee. The committee tabled its report on 24 November 2023, making three recommendations. This bill contains a wide range of reforms, and I thank the committee members for their thorough consideration of the bill. I would also like to thank those stakeholders who made submissions to the committee and participated in the public hearing. This bill also represents the significant feedback provided by stakeholders following a public consultation process, and I would like to also thank the many submitters to that process.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Office of the Information Commissioner during the development of these reforms, and I particularly thank Ms Rachael Rangihaeata, former information commissioner, for her dedication and commitment in making an important contribution to these reforms over the past 10 years. Ms Rangihaeata's term of office ended on 19 September 2023 and processes are currently underway to find her replacement, who will lead the implementation of these reforms.

The first recommendation of the committee's report was that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support for the bill. I would like to table the government response to the Education, Employment and Training Committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 40, 57th Parliament—Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, government response [2004].

I will later address the other recommendations in the committee's report and foreshadow that I will be proposing amendments to the bill during consideration in detail in relation to those recommendations and to address other issues raised by stakeholders during the committee's inquiry into the bill, primarily by the then information commissioner.

The bill demonstrates this government's commitment to accountability and transparency by clarifying, strengthening and updating the Right to Information Act 2009, the Information Privacy Act 2009, the Criminal Code and other legislation. This is the third bill to implement integrity reforms from Professor Coaldrake's 2022 report *Let the sunshine in: review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector*. The Right to Information Act forms a critical part of Queensland's integrity framework, and the reforms in the bill will improve the operation of that act and its efficacy for Queenslanders.

The bill responds to not only the Coaldrake report but also reports such as the 2017 *Report on the review of the Right to Information Act 2009 and Information Privacy Act 2009*; the Crime and Corruption Commission's report *Operation Impala: report on misuse of confidential information in the Queensland public sector*; and the CCC's Windage report titled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council*. The bill also amends the Right to Information Act and Information Privacy Act in response to developments in case law.

One of the key reforms in the bill is the introduction of a mandatory data breach notification scheme, consistent with Professor Coaldrake's recommendation. This will make Queensland only the second Australian state or territory, after New South Wales, to have such a scheme. The bill requires agencies to contain, assess and notify the Information Commissioner and individuals about a data breach in certain circumstances. The bill also gives the Information Commissioner enhanced powers and functions to support these reforms. Mandatory notification of data breaches builds public confidence and trust in government's handling of personal information and empowers individuals to take action to manage risks and mitigate harm from a data breach.

The bill will also introduce a single set of privacy principles—the Queensland Privacy Principles—which are broadly aligned with the Australian Privacy Principles in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. This is consistent with the Australian Law Reform Commission's 2008 report *For your information: Australian privacy law and practice*, which recommended a scheme for states and territories to enact legislation applying privacy principles in the Privacy Act. To date, only the Australian Capital Territory has principles aligned with the Australian Privacy Principles. The bill will make Queensland the second state or territory to take this step.

Another key reform in the bill is the amendment to the Right to Information Act to provide a single right of access to information, including personal information. This will reduce complexity for agencies and individuals and create a more efficient process for the handling of access and amendment applications. The bill also makes other changes to improve the processing of applications including to modify internal and external review processes.

The bill also amends the RTI Act to support the operation of the administrative scheme which will provide for the proactive release of cabinet information. Recommendation 2 made by Professor Coaldrake in his report was for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to publish cabinet documents within 30 business days of cabinet making a final decision, subject to a number of reasonable exceptions. The Palaszczuk government has accepted this recommendation and the scheme is expected to commence in the first quarter of 2024.

Professor Coaldrake indicated that a proactive release scheme sets a signal from the top that it is fundamentally about building trust in government through increasing transparency of decision-making. The amendments in this bill are to support implementation of proactive release. Specifically, the proposed amendments: provide clarity for applicants and decision-makers under the RTI Act concerning the exempt status of information in cabinet submissions and cabinet decisions, and other cabinet related documents, in view of the official publishing of information by decisions of cabinet under the proactive release scheme; provide protection from civil liability for ministers disclosing information under a publication scheme or other administrative scheme in good faith; and ensure that the public interest immunity in proceedings and processes is not altered by the publication of information

by cabinet or decisions by cabinet to officially publish cabinet information. These are minor amendments that are prudent to ensure the effective implementation of proactive release and to ensure that the intent of the Coaldrake recommendation to make cabinet decision-making more transparent can be met.

The Crime and Corruption Commission's Windage report recommended that council controlled entities should be units of public administration under the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 and also subject to the Right to Information Act. The bill responds to this recommendation but does not implement it exactly as the CCC recommended. This is because council controlled entities and state controlled entities range from small trusts to large corporations and vary substantially in their functions and activities and the extent to which they carry out functions for or on behalf of a local government or state government agency. They are also subject to various existing reporting and oversight mechanisms, including the Corporations Act 2001. As such, it is not appropriate for all of these entities to be required to comply with Right to Information Act obligations.

The bill therefore provides criteria to be considered in deciding whether to prescribe entities as public authorities under the Right to Information Act, including state and council controlled entities. The approach in the bill recognises the broad range of entities controlled by councils and the state and provides a mechanism by which entities can be subject to additional transparency and oversight on a case-by-case basis without instituting a blanket and inflexible approach. I note that the approach in the bill is consistent with the approach in the Public Records Bill, which does not expressly capture council controlled entities in the definition of public authorities and instead allows them to be included by regulation on a case-by-case basis.

The bill also amends the Criminal Code in response to the Impala report. Similarly, following consultation the government has decided not to strictly implement the CCC's recommendation in this report for a new offence. The Impala report noted that the offence in section 408E of the Criminal Code is most often used to deal with public sector employees who improperly access or disclose confidential information but identified a number of challenges and difficulties with the current operation of the offence. The amendments in the bill therefore seek to improve the operation of this offence having regard to those issues raised in the Impala report, including by increasing the maximum penalty.

I would now like to address a number of issues raised during the committee's inquiry into the bill, some of which are also the subject of recommendations in the committee's report. Recommendation 2 of the committee's report is that new section 49 of the Information Privacy Act, inserted by clause 33 of the bill, be amended to require that any extension of time must be only for an amount of time reasonably required for the assessment to be conducted. Currently, clause 33 of the bill permits an agency to extend the period of assessment of a suspected eligible data breach under new section 48 where satisfied that the assessment cannot be completed within a 30-day period. As stated in the government response I tabled earlier, the government accepts this recommendation, and I propose to move an amendment during consideration in detail to incorporate a limitation that any extension only be for a period of time reasonably required for the assessment to be conducted.

Recommendation 3 of the committee's report is that the Attorney-General clarify whether the proposed amendment to the definitions in the Information Privacy Act and Right to Information Act would impact on the rights and entitlements of First Nations people and other Queenslanders in respect of their ability to access personal and family data that may be held by institutions owned by Queensland entities established by letters patent and on truth-telling and treaty processes. The recommendation also asks that I clarify whether there are alternative, less restrictive and reasonably available ways to achieve the same purpose as the proposed amendments at clauses 19 and 84.

The amendments in clauses 19 and 84 of the bill are intended to exclude entities established by letters patent, including such entities established under the now repealed Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861, which I will call the RECI Act. The RECI Act was passed by parliament in 1861 to facilitate the incorporation of religious, educational and charitable institutions. When originally enacted, it allowed letters patent to be issued by the Governor for institutions with religious or secular functions and also institutions for annual or periodical agricultural, horticultural, pastoral or industrial shows. I understand that there were a great many, possibly up to 800, religious entities established under that act by letters patent, including the various dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Uniting Church. Over time, the use of the RECI Act grew and other types of societies and associations became established under that act by letters patent.

Letters patent entities conduct a wide variety of activities. The characteristic of being established by letters patent under the RECI Act does not, of itself, show any connection to a function of government. It is simply an older way of creating a body corporate. If those entities were established in

modern times, they would more likely be established as an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 or a company limited by guarantee under the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001. In fact, I understand that many of the entities have changed their structure and currently operate under those acts and some have had their letters patent cancelled.

The primary object of the Right to Information Act is to give a right of access to information in the government's possession or under the government's control unless, on balance, it is contrary to the public interest to give the access. However, a judicial decision has deemed that letters patent entities under the RECI Act meet the criteria for public authorities under the RTI Act and, hence, the Information Privacy Act because they are either established by the Governor or established under the act for a public purpose.

The definitions of public authority were not made with letters patent in mind, and I am sure it was not parliament's intention to capture such entities within the integrity framework that applies to government merely because they were established by those mechanisms. That is why the bill seeks to carve out letters patent entities from the Right to Information Act and Information Privacy Act and to alleviate the burden on these entities from having to comply with these complex frameworks that apply to government agencies.

While government still considers that the majority of letters patent entities established under the RECI Act should be excluded from the Right to Information Act and Information Privacy Act frameworks, government acknowledges that the scale and scope of entities established by letters patent is uncertain and that there may be a small subset of such entities that may have a closer connection to government and may therefore be appropriate for inclusion within those frameworks. For this reason, and in recognition of the committee's concerns, I foreshadow that I will move an amendment during consideration in detail to remove the letters patent exclusion in amendments in clauses 19 and 84 of the bill. This will allow further consideration to be given to the issues raised and ensure there are no unintended consequences as a result of any exclusion of letters patent entities to ensure that we get this right.

I will now turn to other matters raised during the committee process. Some of the submitters to the committee's inquiry raised concerns about proceeding with information privacy reforms now, ahead of the completion of the Commonwealth government's review of the Commonwealth Privacy Act. I understand the Commonwealth government has been working on the review of the Commonwealth Privacy Act for several years now and released its response to the *Privacy Act Review report* in October 2023. I understand that the next stage of work for the Privacy Act Review will involve the development of legislative amendments informed by a detailed impact analysis and targeted consultation with stakeholders, with the Commonwealth intending to introduce legislation in 2024.

The government acknowledges the importance and benefits of aligning with the Commonwealth framework. However, given they are still some time away, it is important that Queensland's laws remain contemporary and fit for purpose in the meantime. The bill provides an increase in privacy protections for Queenslanders, moving towards the Commonwealth privacy framework as currently legislated. Further changes can be considered once the Commonwealth government's response to the *Privacy Act Review report* is legislated. However, I would like to point out that not all reforms to the Commonwealth Privacy Act will be appropriate for Queensland, given that the Commonwealth Privacy Act applies to organisations under that act which include private businesses with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million.

Another issue raised by a number of submitters during the committee process was a concern about the administrative and resource burden on the Information Commissioner and agencies in relation to the information privacy reforms in the bill. The government recognises that these are significant reforms and has allocated the Office of the Information Commissioner \$11.465 million over four years and \$2.563 million ongoing through the state budget 2023-24 for operational implementation, development of an ICT solution, and training and awareness activities. This funding will support the Office of the Information Commissioner in its statutory responsibilities to provide education, training and guidance in relation to the Right to Information Act and the Information Privacy Act and its new regulatory and statutory functions, including the oversight of the mandatory data breach notification scheme. Resourcing the Office of the Information Commissioner to undertake education and training will assist agencies and entities to implement the reforms.

I note that the Local Government Association of Queensland has expressed concerns about the impact of the reforms on local governments, particularly smaller councils and regional and remote communities. Subject to passage, it is currently intended to commence the information privacy reforms



by proclamation on 1 July 2025, but local governments will not be required to comply with mandatory data breach notification requirements until 12 months after that date. This is intended to reduce the compliance burden on local governments, giving them a longer period to transition to the new mandatory data breach notification scheme. It will mitigate the impact of implementing the mandatory data breach notification scheme at the same time as other reforms.

There are a number of minor and technical amendments that I propose to move during consideration in detail. An amendment will be moved to provide a clearer and simpler way than is already provided in the bill of removing the overlap of the Commonwealth and state privacy regimes for rare instances where entities fall under both frameworks, such as the Queensland Law Society.

Another amendment I propose to move during consideration in detail will alleviate the burden on the Information Commissioner of having to travel throughout the state to receive a demonstration of an agency's data-handling systems and practices by allowing the Information Commissioner to observe a demonstration of an agency's data-handling systems and practices by audiovisual link—where this is possible—without relying on entry powers. This could only occur with consent, noting there may be practical limitations for some agencies in enabling remote access.

I also propose to move amendments to clarify that consent must be requested before an authorised officer of the Information Commissioner can enter any place occupied by an agency, and that entry without consent is limited to circumstances where consent has been sought from an agency but it has not been provided within a stated period. In that case, the authorised officer may enter on a reasonable date at a stated reasonable time.

I also propose to move an amendment to clarify that the functions of the Information Commissioner under section 135 of the Information Privacy Act include promoting understanding of and compliance with the mandatory data breach notification scheme, as suggested by the Information Commissioner.


I also foreshadow that I will be moving a number of technical amendments during consideration in detail to better align the bill's treatment of access and amendment processes under the Right to Information Act to implement recommendations made by the Information Commissioner in their submission on the bill. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General indicated that it would give further consideration to some of these issues in its response to the written submissions to the Education, Employment and Training Committee on its inquiry into the bill.

For example, one of the amendments I propose to move will give the Information Commissioner power to direct agencies and ministers to decide whether documents should be amended following an amendment application and an Information Commissioner decision, in certain circumstances. The bill already includes a similar power in relation to access decisions. Related amendments will provide an objective test for the Information Commissioner to apply when giving directions to an agency or minister to make a decision on an access application after remitting the application back to the agency or minister. Amendments will also provide that the same objective test will apply in relation to the Information Commissioner's powers to refer documents discovered during the course of an external review back to agencies and ministers for decision.

The amendments also include minor, clarifying amendments to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 to update the definition of 'union' due to the withdrawal of the Mining and Energy Union from the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union on 1 December 2023. The definition of 'union' is relevant to the appointment by the union of industry safety and health representatives and procedural matters related to ISHRs. ISHRs have important coalmining safety and health functions under the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, and timely amendments to reflect the union name change will ensure that the appointment of ISHRs and their important functions can continue.

The bill responds to a wide range of recommendations in a number of reports. In doing so, it implements critical reforms which go to the heart of Queensland's integrity framework. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): For the information of members, we have two cognate bills that we are discussing here. We will have two ministers with 30-minute time limits and then two shadow ministers with 30-minute time limits.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (12.52 pm): I move—

That the Public Records Bill be now read a second time.

I want to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for their consideration of the Public Records Bill 2023. I note the committee tabled its report on 24 November 2023. I now table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 38, 57th Parliament—Public Records Bill 2023, government response [2005].

I will during this contribution address the recommendations made by the committee and will provide further explanation of how the recommendations will be addressed. I acknowledge the hard work of the chair, the member for Mansfield, the committee members and the secretariat. I also acknowledge those who appeared as part of the committee's inquiry, including the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the Australian Society of Archivists, the Records and Information Management Practitioners Alliance Global, the Office of the Information Commissioner, and Dr Rose Barrowcliffe, Queensland State Archive's First Nations archives advisor. I also acknowledge the organisations and individuals who made written submissions as part of this process.

This bill will replace the current Public Records Act 2002 with modernised records management legislation, drafted in line with contemporary practice including reflecting the contemporary, diverse and dynamic digital landscape we now operate in. It also reinforces the Palaszczuk government's pledge to instil confidence in Queensland's public sector, particularly regarding the storage, management, preservation and accessibility of public records.

The bill addresses the recommendations from the 2022 independent review of the Public Records Act 2002. Led by retired Supreme Court Justice, the Hon. John Byrne AO RFD, and supported by a team of experienced subject matter experts, the review was undertaken with the objective of modernising our record-keeping framework. The final report of the review made 27 recommendations to modernise Queensland's records management framework. The review's 27 recommendations for both legislative and non-legislative actions made it clear that the act should be modernised to align with contemporary needs.

One of the common themes that emanated throughout the independent review of the Public Records Act 2002 and during consultation was access to public records. One of the key purposes of the bill is to provide a framework for making, managing and accessing public records in a way that benefits both the present and future generations.

Recommendation 15 of the independent review reflects the importance of access by focusing on an improved access framework. The bill implements the recommendation, including adopting a pro-disclosure approach, with public records being open on transfer to the Queensland State Archives, and with limited triggers to restrict access to the records. It will deliver greater access to records for all Queenslanders and will mean that people will have better access to the records of our state's history. It will open Queensland's cultural legacy and, importantly, preserve this history for generations to come. This is where the Queensland State Archives plays a pivotal role in preserving our collective memory, offering a window into our history as well as a comprehensive record of past events, policies and decisions—providing a deep understanding of how our society has evolved over time and, importantly, supporting the long-term preservation of and access to born-digital public records of permanent value.

The Queensland State Archives is also developing a digital archive to ensure the QSA digital collection is managed in a way that preserves the records' context, integrity and authenticity, and survives technological changes, allowing best practice preservation of, and easier access to, permanent digital records for our community. Many aspects of First Nations perspectives have been absent in historical government records, leaving us with a narrative that does not include important voices. The Queensland State Archives holds the evidence of our uncomfortable shared past and has a crucial role to play in supporting the Path to Treaty's commitment to truth-telling.

The Queensland State Archives hold extensive records stretching back 200 years about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. QSA is currently identifying, digitising and reviewing these records relating to our painful shared history of frontier violence. So far, QSA have digitised more than 18,000 records that relate to First Nations peoples and communities. Decolonisation is about revealing and valuing all perspectives, including those of First Nations people. The review of the Public Records Act provides an opportunity to ensure legislation supports this important work.

The bill adopts a new purpose and set of principles for administering the act, including recognition of the importance of public records for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The current Public Records Act 2002 is silent on the interests and perspectives of First Nations peoples. Drafted and commenced over 20 years ago, the Public Records Act predates the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and does not consider First Nations peoples or communities. The bill

recognises the valuable contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by providing for representation on the Public Records Review Committee, which gives advice to the minister, and the creation of a new First Nations Advisory Group to advise the State Archivist.

The principles outlined in the bill make specific reference to public records relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The principles state—

- The knowledge of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples gained from governing their lands, seas, waters, air and resources for at least 65,000 years prior to British colonisation of Queensland is unique and a priceless asset for Queensland.
- The nature, volume and content of public records relating to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their knowledge is different to that of other Queenslanders.
- These public records may contain content that is sensitive, inaccurate, or offensive and may have been used in the past in a way that disrupted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and communities.
- These public records should be managed and accessed with care to—
  - (i) support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in truth-telling and treaty negotiations; and
  - (ii) contribute to reframing the State government's relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
  - (iii) otherwise support revitalisation of culture and reconnecting communities and families.

The bill recognises the importance of public records and access to those records for First Nations people. Of course, the Queensland State Archives offers a window into our recent history, giving us an understanding of how Queensland has evolved over time. However, this collection provides a colonial perspective. As I said before, the nature, volume and content of public records relating to First Nations peoples and their knowledge is different to that of other Queenslanders. The establishment of a First Nations Advisory Group will enshrine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander decision-making in the management of public records and is a first step towards recognising First Nations data sovereignty within Queensland. The advisory group will provide advice to the State Archivist on how to manage and access public records in a way that supports the goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in matters of truth-telling and impacts on culture, communities and families. This bill will help ensure that our shared heritage is protected for future generations.

There is work still to be done to consider the outstanding recommendations, which will be undertaken collaboratively with key stakeholders. The State Archivist will update government two years after the proclamation of the new legislation on the outcomes of work on the outstanding recommendations.

Debate, on motion of Ms Enoch, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Twelve months ago I asked in this House, 'How much more can Queenslanders afford of a government that has checked out of doing anything?' I asked what the government was doing about families living in their cars. I asked what the government was doing about Queenslanders living in fear in their own homes. I asked what the government was doing about Queenslanders dying waiting for ambulances to arrive. I said that no matter where you turn, the failures of this government were impacting Queenslanders. We hoped that 2023 would be better, but what we got was the worst year of a decade-old government rotting before the eyes of Queenslanders. On Boxing Day, our state went into mourning.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This government has not been in power for a decade. He is misleading the House and he ought to correct himself.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! I will hear the point of order in silence. Minister, can I ask you to come to your point of order?

**Mr BAILEY:** The point of order is that it is not a matter of accuracy.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bonney, you are warned. I had asked your side to come to order. I am trying to hear the point of order so I can rule on it.

**Mr BAILEY:** He is misleading the House with that claim and he ought to correct himself.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, member for Miller, there is a well-established process for members to follow if they believe someone has misled the House. That is not a point of order, and I give a general warning to the House that anybody else taking a point of order like that will be warned.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is almost a decade, Mr Deputy Speaker, but luckily he did not take offence to the fact that he is rotting before the eyes of Queenslanders. On Boxing Day, our state went into mourning and our Premier went into holiday mode. The government's response in January was a 10-point plan. RTIs show how it was put together—on the fly—with a government looking for a political fix instead of trying to fix a youth crime crisis gripping Queenslanders. In contrast to the Premier who this year has avoided talking to crime victims in places like Townsville and Toowoomba, we have spent the year listening to victims of youth crime. What do victims ask? They ask: where is the Premier?

In February, we had the Wacol paedophile precinct breached. There were allegations a girl aged 15 had been able to enter the precinct—the last place a young woman should be. Two toddlers known to Child Safety died in a hot car. The government has been asleep at the wheel, and Queenslanders are asking: where is the Premier?

Also in February, there was the adoption of an LNP breach of bail policy, after Minister Ryan brought the PowerPoint presentation into cabinet. The member for Sandgate had been rolled out 24 hours beforehand to defend the indefensible. We warned of the shortcomings of the legislation. We warned of the danger of not removing detention as a last resort. The community has been calling for leadership for the government to admit that watering down the laws and fewer police have created a youth crime crisis, and they ask: where is the Premier?

In March, there was the scrapping of the independent Olympic delivery authority. The state government made a commitment—a commitment on the world stage—but because of an \$800,000 contract between a couple of Labor mates, we have seen the scrapping of an independent Olympic authority. Where is integrity and the openness that was promised? Where is the Premier?

In April, the Griffith University emergency housing was abandoned—the signature policy of the government's Housing Summit.

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Cairns and member for Ninderry, you are warned.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** After \$2 million was spent, the whole thing was abandoned because of a bushfire risk. The bushland was there before the government made a kneejerk policy reaction, and the right to information shows texts between a former Labor MP DG and a former Labor treasurer to try to give the government an announcement. In the middle of a housing crisis, Queenslanders were asking: where is the Premier?

In May, there was a ministerial reshuffle. The pressure of ambulance ramping and waiting lists had grown too much, so the Premier acts, not by holding anyone accountable, but by doing a reshuffle—the same faces around the same cabinet table. The crisis continues and today we see it deepens. Queenslanders ask: where is the Premier?

In June, poor education outcomes are revealed, where the government shows that it has failed to meet its targets for reading, writing and numeracy in our schools. The government has failed to reach targets for Indigenous students. Queenslanders ask: where is the Premier?

Also in June, there was a \$2.4 billion blowout in train manufacturing. The minister and the Premier knew about it and withheld it from a media release. Again, the government was trying to cover up its political problems. Today, further proof of the cover-up culture continuing—\$3.1 billion—another blowout! As if this government was not running off the rails enough already, today we have another train wreck costing this state billions of dollars. This is a minister who can no longer administer. Minister Bailey said Queenslanders do not care about blowouts. He does not care about blowouts. Where is the accountability in government? Where is the Premier?

In July, fire ants are surrounded, the government says in their media release. I quote: 'New response plan has fire ants surrounded.' Now it is a national embarrassment with almost every Queenslander knowing that they have crossed the border to New South Wales—almost every Queenslander. Today the minister's claims of biosecurity being serious is in tatters, and people are asking again: where is the Premier?

Also in July, Queensland records the highest cost of living. ABS data shows: rents up 8.9 per cent; electricity up 25.4 per cent; health costs up 6.7 per cent; and insurance up 17.1 per cent. All these are things controlled by the state government, and Queenslanders want to know: where is the Premier?

In August, there was a reduction in police numbers. Despite a promise to add 1,450 additional police, under the glare of estimates we discover 202 fewer police. On the back of it, we have a generation of untouchables and police leaving in droves. Where is the Premier?

In September, there was Labor's patient tax readjustment. Despite the Treasurer crab walking back, there are still extra administration costs for our GPs, and after originally calling out the Treasurer, there is no accountability. Again, where is the Premier?

In October, Jackie Trad wins a case to keep the CCC report secret. Again, this government is in protection mode. The LNP provides a bill to be able to clean up this mess and the government stalls. Where is the integrity and accountability the Premier promised nine years ago? Where is the Premier?

In November, \$393,000 for polling—for polling—to ask Queenslanders what they think of this government. Queenslanders would tell them if they knew where the Premier was.

In the last fortnight, the DNA bungle with the minister saying it is time to move on; billions in blowouts that Queenslanders apparently do not care about; Labor cuts from Canberra, but no action until the ink is dry; a death on a ramp; a death waiting for an ambulance; the fungal bungle; digital hospitals going into meltdown with doctors saying it is a war zone and the health minister says it is a technical hiccup. During all of this: where is the Premier?

During all of these months of crises, there is one constant in the deterioration of the youth crime crisis, the health crisis, the housing crisis and the cost-of-living crisis. It all ties back to one thing: all these are a direct result of a government that has been so consumed by themselves, and in a moment the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is going to paint a picture of just how bad and how rotten this government has become.

After nine years of failure, this is the worst for this government, and Queenslanders know it. They know it when they go out in the morning and the vehicle they need to make a living is gone. They know it when they pick up the phone to call an ambulance and they know that hardworking paramedic is stuck at the end of a ramp. They know it when the kids' dream of owning a home disappears before their eyes. Why? It is because this government, after nine years of failure, has had its worst year in 2023.

The battlelines for the next election are drawn: after nearly a decade, have things got better or worse when it comes to the youth crime crisis, the housing crisis, the health crisis and the cost-of-living crisis; and who has the right priorities for Queensland's future? That is what the battlelines are for the next election—a government that is rotting before the eyes of Queenslanders or a united, focused opposition that has the right priorities for Queensland's future. This is an opposition that has listened, that has reflected and that understands that Queenslanders are living through the chaos and crisis of a very bad government. Twelve months ago, we stood in this place and prayed that this government would get better. Nobody expected it to get worse, but it has. I say to Queenslanders: in less than 12 months there is a choice: a fear campaign or the hope that is being offered by the opposition; more cuts, chaos and crisis from those opposite or an opposition that is focused on the right priorities. Queenslanders have a choice. They have the ability to show Labor the door in '24.

### Liberal National Party, Performance



**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.11 pm): The more things change, the more they stay the same. I could not say it any better with regard—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Members to my left, that was unacceptable. The minister had barely uttered a word and your response was childish and ridiculous. I will be warning people from here on in.

**Ms GRACE:** That is all you can expect. The more things change, they more they stay the same from those opposite.

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Scenic Rim, you are warned.

**Ms GRACE:** They have no respect for this place and no respect for anyone at all. They get up and make grave accusations and brave statements, but they cannot deliver on any of them. Do members know who has called them out more than anyone? It is the ex-LNP member for Currumbin. She said that the LNP have sat on the opposition benches—

**Mr Purdie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Ninderry, you can leave the chamber for one hour. You are under a warning.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Ninderry withdrew from the chamber at 2.12 pm.*

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I have two sheets here. I am sure they will print me another one. I can keep filling it with the names of people I am warning and I can keep asking people to leave. The level of interjection is unacceptable.

**Ms GRACE:** They think they are going to shout and scream their way into government. That is how arrogant they are over there.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not need your commentary on my rulings.

**Ms GRACE:** That is how arrogant they are over there. They think badgering the speakers on this side of the House—all of them ganging up—is going to spread the word outside in election land and somehow they are just going to walk into government. Let me say: for all but three years of the past two decades they have presented as a whingeing, weary, policy-vacant bunch of ageing, grumpy individuals. That is exactly what we just heard—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** They are not my words; they are Jann Stuckey's words. That is what we got from the Leader of the Opposition in his latest speech. We do not hear any solutions; all we hear is whingeing and whining from the policy-vacant bunch of members sitting opposite. All of a sudden, we are supposed to accept that they have the answers to everything.

The issues they are raising are legitimate issues that we are well aware of on this side of the House—issues that we are definitely targeting and delivering on—but they are not unique to Queensland. Queensland is not the only state that has had 13 increases in interest rates. Queensland is not the only state where there are housing issues. I will tell members why we have housing issues: for 10 years the Morrison LNP government invested not one additional cent. In fact, they withdrew money from the First Nations housing policy. Can you believe it? Then they get up here, after 10 years of neglect, and place responsibility in the hands of the Queensland Labor government—when every other state is feeling exactly the same pressure.

Cost of living is not an issue only in Queensland; it is all over the country, including in states that have had Liberal governments for many years such as New South Wales. Those opposite should talk to their counterparts there. I never once heard the issue being raised by those opposite, yet suddenly they have had an epiphany. The Leader of the Opposition has all the answers! He is going to have a focused and empowered Public Service. Those words are hollow and insincere. The Leader of the Opposition never met a public servant he did not want to sack. Now we are supposed to believe that somehow they are going to employ all the health workers that Queensland needs. I was working at the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union when he started by sacking nurses in Townsville, in his own electorate. No wonder he had to go down to Broadwater to escape! This is the legacy those opposite leave.

We are supposed to believe that suddenly they have a caring nature towards workers in this state. They tore away every single industrial protection you could imagine. Even injured workers were denied the common law rights that had existed in the state for at least a century. Somehow now they sincerely understand the worth of workers in the state. Nobody will be convinced by that. We will be convincing them. Let me tell you what Queenslanders appreciate. They appreciate a strong economy, because we kept them safe. They appreciate having a job and the lowest unemployment rate. If there is one party in this state that will continue to provide for Queensland, it is the Palaszczuk Labor government.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.17 pm): A Palaszczuk Labor government member has spent five minutes talking about the opposition and not the record of nine years of the Palaszczuk Labor government. This is a bad government with a bad record, with a bad minister. Like the opposition leader said, this government has had a shocker of a year. It has been a shocker of a year for the Labor government—as we colloquially call it, an annus horribilis or, as some of my colleagues say, a ‘terribilis annus’. Whether it is a horrible year or a terrible year, it is a bad year for the Labor government and it is a bad year for Queenslanders under the Labor government.

We absolutely have a kakistocracy in Queensland. ‘Oh, what is that?’ she asks. I will tell members what a kakistocracy is under this Labor government: it is a Labor government run by the worst, the least qualified and most unscrupulous of citizens. It is a bad government. Look at the members over there. Look at the ministers.

Let’s look at the year that was for the Premier. In her valedictory speech at the end of this week, the Premier will start with her trip to Paris—her first overseas luxury vacation to Europe. Then she will talk about Sydney shopping over the weekend before the budget. Then she was singing songs and kumbaya at Splendour in the Grass. Then she lived it up at a few more concerts. Then she went to Italy and sipped Aperol, so she might tell us about Italy. She will then talk to us about the red carpets. This Premier never fronts up when it matters to Queenslanders. She never fronts up in a housing crisis, a youth crime crisis, a cost-of-living crisis or a health crisis. The health crisis is getting worse under Minister Fentiman than it ever was under Minister D’Ath. Would you believe it? Yes, absolutely it is getting worse under Minister Fentiman.

Then the Premier thought, ‘I’ll reset with a reshuffle.’ How has that gone down? There are the same clowns and the same circus. The more things change, the more they stay the same. Talk about copycats; I said that at a press conference months ago about this Labor government when I quoted Bon Jovi, who sang that, and Minister Grace made out they were her words. They were not; it was Bon Jovi who said that. The more things change, the more they stay the same. The Labor circus continues with the unions not backing the Premier and the leaks continue. They are now telling the Premier. Last weekend someone on that side was saying the Premier should consider her position over Christmas. There are leaks against the Premier—bad leaks—every day. I am not going to name her, but she’s had a bad day today. The one leaking against the Premier has had a bad day today, not a healthy day I might say.

Then there are the blowouts and the cover-ups such as Minister Mark Bailey’s \$2.4 billion train manufacturing blowout and cover-up. He said the other day that Queenslanders do not care about budget blowouts. Yes, they do.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that allegation and I ask it be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. Talking about the minister who just took offence, he had a press conference a little while ago. I will tell honourable members who was more surprised that the federal government has released publicly the \$3 billion blowout that the minister said Queenslanders do not need to know about just yet. It was Deputy Premier Steven Miles, who was standing behind him absolutely shocked. It was like Steven Miles, the Deputy Premier, was saying, ‘Left, left, left! Get out of shot. Get out of shot, baby. Get me out of this shot!’

Then there are the rushed laws, chaos and crisis, red carpets, Labor infrastructure cuts, backstabbing by backbenchers, auditions by incompetent ministers wanting to take over from the Premier and, as I just mentioned, the train wreck press conference a little earlier. Do not let this minister near a rail or road project ever again. I am hearing the director-general has asked for a restraining order on her minister being involved in any press conferences about road or rail because everything Minister Bailey touches turns to custard. It is costing Queenslanders billions, but Queenslanders are not going to buy Labor mistruths, Labor blowouts or Labor incompetence anymore.

The Premier does not have enough self-awareness to know that she is the problem; the Labor Party is the problem. If Minister Fentiman were at the Taylor Swift concert I would have seen her mimicking the lyrics, ‘It’s her. She’s the problem, it’s her. It’s she. It’s her. She’s the problem, it’s her,’ referring to the Premier. The only way Queenslanders will sort the chaos and crisis in this government is to show Labor the door in ’24.

### **Queensland Government Procurement Statement**



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (2.22 pm): I am going to assist the House by changing gears a bit and actually speaking to a matter of public interest. I am honoured to rise today to table the annual *Queensland Government Procurement Statement*.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Energy and Public Works: Report titled 'Queensland Government Procurement Statement 2023: Buy Queensland' [2006].

This statement outlines the benefits that this government has delivered in 2023 and our focus for 2024 and beyond in office. The year 2023 has been a monumental year. We launched Buy Queensland 2023, the latest development and advancement of our procurement approach. It is nation leading. It has been benchmarked against the world's best government buying policies. This year we also released the Q2032 Procurement Strategy, one that helps local businesses right across this state, big and small, get match fit ahead of the Olympics and Paralympics, ready to compete on the world stage as part of 'Team Queensland'. Through all of it our mission has been clear: to drive greater value for Queenslanders from every procurement dollar invested on their behalf. I have said this before and I am sure I will repeat it time and time again because the fact of the matter is that procurement is an enormous responsibility for government.

We now invest over \$20 billion annually—\$20 billion that belongs to the people of Queensland. How we invest their money and with whom matters. The Palaszczuk government understands that this can be harnessed—harnessed to back local jobs and help Queensland small businesses thrive, to maximise trainee and apprenticeship hours and to help us meet our clear emissions reduction targets. I am pleased to announce to the House that the procurement statement shows that we are doing just that.

This year we have increased our investment in Queensland small and medium enterprises by an impressive \$960 million, and the LNP calls that a bad year. That is almost an extra billion dollars in the pockets of mum-and-dad businesses right across this state in what most consider to be the backbone of our economy, and the LNP calls that a bad year.

However, we on this side of the House will not rest on our laurels. Looking ahead, we will employ the use of innovative procurement tools like tender invitations and set asides in our category strategies. An updated future procurement system will mean procurement officers will be better able to identify and select a small or medium enterprise. We will be supporting those small businesses through roadshows, the appointment of an adviser and board, and countless specialised tools and programs to level up, to grow and to be in the best position to supply to government. Queensland businesses and their leaders can be proud of the work they have done in this space and the plans they have for the years ahead.

There is more work to be done. The reality is that, if those opposite were in office, that work would go undone because the LNP have no procurement policy. The LNP are a procurement policy vacuum. They have no plan. We know that because in this House they voted against ours. The only thing they have done relevant to procurement in nearly a decade is to vote against Buy Queensland. They voted against it in this House, and Queenslanders have not—and will not—forget that.

Let me remind members in this place today what they voted against. They voted against over \$64 billion of investment in Queensland businesses. The LNP are on record as voting against that, over \$12 billion of which has been in regional Queensland. They voted against 3,200 full-time trainees and apprentices and over \$22 billion of investment in Queensland small and medium enterprises. They do not need to articulate their plan to Queenslanders when it comes to how they will spend taxpayer resources because Queenslanders already know exactly what it would be. It would be to scrap, to sack and to sell: to scrap the progress on good quality local jobs, to scrap that investment in trainees and apprentices, and to scrap investment in small business. That is what is at stake.

Potentially worst of all, the LNP record is clear. They would help companies from places like New South Wales and Victoria and even further afield take Queensland work. Those opposite would let those businesses from interstate or overseas take Queensland jobs and take away opportunities, particularly from young Queenslanders. They would let Queensland dollars fly out of Queensland. From where I stand, there is a difference between a job in Coolangatta and one in Christchurch. There is a difference between a business in Barcaldine and one in Ballarat and there is sure as hell a difference between trains manufactured in Maryborough and those built in India. When your only procurement policy is the lowest price trumps all, that is the LNP way. When your ideology is about privatisation, that is the LNP way. Everything would be up for sale; everything would be on the table. On this side of the House the Palaszczuk government will always ensure Buy Queensland keeps Queenslanders' money in Queensland.



### Gold Coast University Hospital



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.27 pm): It has been the worst year in living memory across Queensland Health under the chaos and crisis of the Palaszczuk Labor government. I take no pleasure in saying that just like last year, 2023 has been another horror year in health, only this year things are worse. Queensland's frontline health staff are exhausted, they are battered and they are broken. Many are considering walking away from their professions. The collective feeling of hopelessness and overwhelming fatigue grows deeper with each passing day. The situation is dire, though that fact still seems to be something which is lost on the Palaszczuk government.

I want to talk about the quite shocking scenes last night at the Gold Coast University Hospital. The images were quite disturbing. The minister suggested that I might like to talk to some of the frontline staff at the facility and the minister will be pleased to know that I had. Who the heck does the minister think I was speaking to yesterday? Doctors, nurses and paramedics painted a very different picture to what the minister said in the chamber this morning and these are their words not mine. One said—

There were patients waiting over two hours, and others who waited a lot longer.

Patients were put on trolleys in hallways not in any cubicles, with paramedics looking after them taking their vital signs.

So chaotic was the situation this whistleblower said that men were forced to pass urine in bottles in full view of the entire triage area. That is totally unacceptable and a degrading experience for all involved.

**Ms Fentiman:** That's not true.

**Ms BATES:** I take the minister's interjection that it was not true. Those are the words of the frontline whistleblower. Another said—

Thanks for helping us and the QAS yesterday. Yesterday was horrific.

I will say it again: the nurses said—

Thanks for helping us and the QAS yesterday. Yesterday was horrific.

Another said—

We are so over it. Morale is really poor.

Which account of the situation should Queenslanders trust: the minister's, in a craven effort to save her own political skin, claiming that everything is fine—'Look away, nothing to see over here, shiny bauble'; or a worker on the front line, shattered after the worst year they have seen in the health system, who was a firsthand witness to the chaotic scenes yesterday at the Gold Coast University Hospital emergency department? There is no choice.

With that said, I take this moment to remind the minister that trying to deny, deflect and distract from the problems in the health system is a well-worn path. It is a path the minister's predecessor walked, and we all know how that ended. It is of course strange that the Minister for Health would use the same playbook as the former minister and now Attorney, because the current minister said that she would be different. Well, this minister is different: she is worse. The failure to provide the whole picture, the failure to front up, the failure to follow up: these are the hallmarks of this minister, who is quickly making a name for herself for these traits, along with one new trait which is starting to emerge—an endless line of apologies. Apologies are fine—in fact, they are necessary—but an apology must be followed up by action or otherwise it is just hollow.

The minister is proving that she is not a minister of action; she is a minister for apologies, and the reason is simple: the minister is not focused on the job she has. She is only focused on the job she wants, and that is the Premier's, and that is why Queensland Health is in crisis. The person in charge of steering Queensland's public health system does not have her eye on the ball. She is not across her brief. In the last few weeks alone we have seen the tragic deaths of Wayne Irving and Cath Groom—Wayne, who was ramped, and Cath, whose ambulance never came. We have seen a catastrophic outage of the state's digital medical record. According to the minister, it was just a technical hiccup. Try telling that to the staff who were scrambling for any information they could get for their patients. I am not sure what the minister's idea of a technical hiccup is, but staff scared of overdosing their patient because records were not available but equally frightened a missed medication could cause deterioration of their patient is not my definition of a technical hiccup.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms BATES:** Clinicians were in uproar when they heard that statement from the minister. With the worst ambulance ramping on record in the country, a surgery waiting list of nearly 60,000 people, a DNA lab mired in a horrible mess and maternity wards still on bypass, the Queensland Health crisis shows no signs of ending. There is only one way to end it: show Labor the door in '24.

*(Time expired)*

### Leader of the Opposition, Performance



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (2.32 pm): A choice between the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Waterford for health minister? I know where my money is and I know where Queenslanders would put their money, too. The member opposite is someone who is so incompetent that she has been tossed out of this House 19 times. The Newman government was hardly a high-performing cabinet, but she could not even make 12 months.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** There is the member for Mudgeeraba on the front bench with all of the other former Newman ministers—leftovers and recycled. You have to do more than rhyme and yell across the chamber, you have to do more than just a few song lyrics and you have to do more than whingeing and whining like the Leader of the Opposition does all the time if you want to have the privilege of forming government in this state. The people of Queensland have never elected a whinger as Premier, and they are not about to start. When the Leader of the Opposition went to the Media Club it was a chance to launch some policies and say something positive. It did not need to be too grand but say something positive. He had the opportunity, but instead we heard a defensive effort by him—saying that he was not like Newman, that he was a new man even though he was in Newman's cabinet and even though he was there with all of the others over there. He failed the test to put forward his vision for the state. The Leader of the Opposition is a lightweight. He is a little Newman in the way he goes about things.

Rhetorical questions are not a substitute for policies. That is what we saw today—more rhetoric and no substance. What is his plan for housing? Who would know? It is a nationwide issue, but he has no plans. In terms of health, there are no policies, no plans and no commitments from the Leader of the Opposition. We know that by not committing to progressive coal royalties he has no way of funding anything in health other than cuts. We know that the cuts are coming from those opposite, because they have no way of funding anything in terms of the existing program. We have one of the biggest hospital rebuilding programs in the nation.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Minister, read from it, put it down or table it.

**Mr BAILEY:** We have three new hospitals and more than a dozen hospital expansions to deal with the interstate migration. Why are people coming to Queensland? It is because they have confidence in this state and this government and this Premier. The criticism of those opposite towards the Premier is insulting. The Premier stood up for Queenslanders throughout the pandemic. She stood up for their health, saved many lives in Queensland and protected the Queensland public while those opposite called on us 64 times to open the borders, long before any vaccinations were available. That irresponsibility from those opposite continues.

Whether we look at issues around energy or health or housing, there are no policies coming from the Leader of the Opposition—just whining, just whingeing. One would think that those opposite would learn from being in opposition, but no. This year they have announced billions in cuts via the member for Chatsworth, who called it 'pruning'. He had a new term for it. We have seen them talk about tough love. The Newman government was tough love. That is what the member for Chatsworth said. We saw their recklessness on energy in that they support nuclear without having any plan, whereas we have the most sophisticated and thorough energy transition plan in the nation. When it comes to the energy transition and infrastructure, we know why those opposite get so offended. It is because we build it. We build railways. We have built Cross River Rail. We build light rail. We fixed the M1. We fixed the Bruce Highway after their cuts when they were in power. We have seen strong economic growth and strong employment growth under this government. We saw the economy crash when those opposite were in power, and look at all of them over there.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr BAILEY:** The members for Broadwater, Glass House, Mudgeeraba, Kawana and Everton are all still there. They have not cleaned out and they have not learned, and there they are flailing and struggling against a government that has been in for nearly nine years. People know what this

government stands for: jobs, infrastructure, new houses and new hospitals. We do not sack nurses. It is a fact that they sacked thousands of nurses when they were in power. The health system has improved and recovered because we are committed to working with frontline workers. That is a fact. I can guarantee that rhyming and whining and whingeing will not get the Leader of the Opposition to the premiership.

(Time expired)

### Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment, Performance



**Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (2.37 pm): 2023 saw the Treasurer's unhinged and irrational performances escalate—the glass jaw, the personal abuse, the inability to deviate from the straitjacket of his heavily scripted talking points. We all know his *modus operandi*, but this year has seen it go to a whole new level. It is a lonely drinking game where the Treasurer thinks the words 'progressive coal royalties' trigger someone somewhere to do something. The Treasurer will deliver MYFER in the next few weeks. It will likely herald higher than forecast coal revenues. The Treasurer will have then collected more than \$60 billion more than he first forecast in his first budget less than three years ago. Instead of honestly reflecting on his failure to ensure these rivers of revenue gold have delivered better services and living standards for Queenslanders, he will dribble on about a decade-old defeated government and some fantastical figments of his imagination: anything but reality, anything but the reality of what is facing Queenslanders right now, anything but the worry they quietly carry with them in their homes, around their tables and in their conversations with their loved ones; their fears about how to pay for food, for clothes, for shelter, for power, for fuel—all this after 13 cash rate increases over 18 months totalling 4¼ per cent under Labor's watch. Queensland is ground zero for the cost-of-living crisis, but the Treasurer just will not talk about it. The reality is that Queenslanders have faced the biggest increases in the last 12 months in the big bills around the kitchen table: rent is up 9½ per cent; health is up seven per cent; transport is up 6.4 per cent; private vehicles, including rego and fuel, are up 6.4 per cent; and insurance is up 15.9 per cent.

He will not talk about how Queenslanders have never felt worse off, how Queenslanders have never paid more tax or been in more debt. He will not talk about the Palaszczuk promised 1,450 police who have never arrived in the middle of a crime crisis and that we, in fact, have 202 fewer police than this time last year. He will not talk about his \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund that has never built a new home and he will never talk about the \$2 million Griffith proposal that amounted to nothing except favours banked between Labor mates. He will not talk about his broken tax promises that have threatened long-term resource investment, pushed up rents in the middle of a housing crisis and increased the cost of seeing a family doctor in the middle of a health crisis. He will not talk about how he and his Labor mates will not fight for Queensland infrastructure projects for more than 180 days, why there is silence over the Hughenden Irrigation Project, Hells Gates Dam and Urannah Dam, let alone all the projects that are on the chopping block. How could he have not talked to the federal Treasurer? His office is next door. I table this photo.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting the electorate offices of the member for Woodridge, Hon. Cameron Dick, and the Federal member for Rankin, Hon. Jim Chalmers MP [\[2007\]](#).

He will not talk about the taxpayer millions for his billionaire mate who boasts about his wealth superpowers. He will not talk about his complicity and the project overruns, the wasteful spending and the deceit of his ministerial colleagues. He certainly will not talk about the internal chaos and crisis gripping the government, how his 576-word manifesto did not mention the Premier by name once and how the Treasurer is that irrelevant the Premier did not even tell him she was leaving the country after sitting beside him all week long. It is that irrelevance that has driven the Treasurer's irrational and unhinged performances, where gormless, show ponying to the left faction is what matters and the worries of Queenslanders are just not his worries. Everyone is polling at the moment—YouGov, the unions and the government—but the Treasurer barely rates a mention: 'Mr Eight per cent' in YouGov. I used to think that the *Dick Daily Echo: Special Christmas Grinch Edition* was parody—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): No props!

**Mr JANETZKI:**—a gross exaggeration for comedic effect. I reckon the CFMMEU were onto something. I reckon they have got the Treasurer pegged perfectly: propping up the front bar out at Moranbah pretending to talk to real people who work for a living. With every unhinged and irrational exaggeration from his mouth he is now a laughing stock. The only way to end the sick joke is to show Labor the door in '24.

### Liberal National Party



**Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.42 pm): If only there was a forum where the member for Toowoomba South could ask the Treasurer some questions. It sounds like he is pitching to get on tomorrow or Thursday's list, but there are only a couple of days left so we will see how he goes. Labor governments have always fought for and protected our Public Service and frontline workers—like during COVID where we backed our frontline workers or like when the LNP cut, sacked and sold our assets. We are on the side that always backs workers.

Even now the Crisafulli LNP opposition are attempting to erase history and tell Queenslanders that they have changed. Last week the Leader of the Opposition made a speech at the Queensland Media Club where he hoped he would put to bed growing concerns about what a Crisafulli government would mean for Queensland public servants. After the 'Right wing priorities for Queensland' document a month or so back, the Leader of the Opposition has tried to fill in a few gaps. That document barely mentioned the public sector, save for a few motherhood statements. We saw the Leader of the Opposition spruik in his address that old phrase that there will be no forced redundancies. He could have used the media opportunity to finally apologise to the 14,000 workers they sacked from the Public Service. Queenslanders have not forgotten the 14,000 redundancies and the families that were affected. Post COVID and during global cost-of-living pressures, imagine if another 14,000 workers were cut and the impact that that would have for families and individuals. We can never trust the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP who were the ones around the cabinet table who made these catastrophic decisions. We should never forget their track record. We need to learn from the past to prevent the same mistakes from happening again. We are seeing history repeating itself when Campbell Newman said in 2012—

So what is our commitment? We have said that there will be no forced redundancies in the general Public Service. That is what we have said: there will be no forced redundancies.

History showed otherwise, of course, and the 14,000 workers, their families and friends have never forgotten.

Jump to last week and the Leader of the Opposition has pledged no forced redundancies. Back in 2020 the member for Nanango promised no forced redundancies and then revealed a plan to cut \$750 million from the Public Service. Back in 2017 the member for Clayfield committed to—you guessed it—no forced redundancies and then unveiled a \$2 billion plan for cuts. This all started in 2012 with Campbell Newman promising no forced redundancies. When the member for Broadwater was in that cabinet he called it 'the cost cutting that had to take place'. Campbell Newman thought little of public servants when he said—

We get the pooper scooper out every day of the week. We have to make these tough decisions.

What a disgraceful thing to say. It is obvious that the seven-point plan of the member for Broadwater is just a smokescreen to cover up what they really want to do. This seven-point plan sets out clear goals and KPIs. We have heard it all before. This is coded language for cuts. The over 250,000 Queensland public servants across this state will not buy into this false promise. We saw in the paper today the Leader of the Opposition is promising more health workers, but is refusing to back it up with even a headline figure. One does not have to scratch the surface too deeply to see it is the same old rusted Newman government underneath the fresh coat of paint. Just like his shameful backflip on treaty, his promises are not worth the paper they are written on.

**Mr Power:** He says one thing and then he does the opposite.


**Mr MELLISH:** I will take that interjection from the member for Logan. There was another detail I did notice in his Media Club speech. He tried to give himself a bit of gravitas, he tried to give himself some intellectual depth by calling for the reinstatement of the Queensland Productivity Commission. He has been out there saying they would listen to a Queensland productivity commission and take their recommendations very seriously. What is his track record? What does the leader actually think about productivity commissions? One would assume he wants to bring back the Queensland Productivity Commission and that he would respect the work that they would do. In 2014 when he was a Newman government minister he said in a written response to a draft Productivity Commission report—

The Queensland Government is disappointed with the content of the Draft Report, which is lacking in evidence-based recommendations ...

He also said in this chamber in 2014 that some of the recommendations should be 'kicked so far into touch that we never hear about them again'. That is what he thinks of productivity commissions. He did not respect their work when he was a minister but now he wants to bring one back in Queensland

despite not valuing the work when he was a minister. What would be the point if the Leader of the Opposition abuses them if they disagree with them? Again, do not trust what this Leader of the Opposition says, look at what he does. The reality is there is no way he can balance the books of the easy ride he is gearing up to give on royalties without making deep cuts in the public sector. Maybe they do not even want to balance the books. After all, no LNP at a state level or a federal level since the LNP have formed has ever delivered a budget surplus. That is over a dozen budgets at a state and federal level with zero budget surpluses. They are poor on the economy, they are poor on the public sector and all we need to do is look at their track record.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Housing**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.47 pm): When it comes to the housing crisis, there is no doubt that 2023 has been the worst year in the 10-year reign of the Palaszczuk government. At no time in the history of Queensland has it been harder for a Queenslander to buy a house, harder for a Queenslander to rent a house, harder for a Queenslander to just get shelter. Everybody in this House, if they are honest, can testify to the fact that if they go to any regional city and go through the parks and to the riverbanks of those cities they have never seen so many homeless people in tents, sleeping in parks and sleeping under tables because of the crisis that lays at the feet of the Palaszczuk government.


This government plays with people's hearts by continuing to make announcements and not fulfilling those announcements. The current minister, the third housing minister in the last nine years, is playing from the same playbook once again and coming out and supposedly talking about facts. Let us talk about the facts of the housing crisis in this state. Despite a 150 per cent increase in demand in social housing since the Labor government came to power in 2015, despite them saying they have built, or inferring that there is, an additional 4,000 extra social housing properties, the independent Productivity Commission tells us the fact that there has been only 1,400 extra houses built in the last nine years to increase the portfolio, which is less than three per cent.

The same independent Productivity Commission tells us that, not just this year but the year before, on a per capita basis the spending on public housing in Queensland was the lowest in Australia. Let us look at the way that they want to again try to manipulate the figures. They came to estimates last year and proudly stated that the social housing waiting list had been reduced. What they did not mention until questioned in estimates was that last year more people had been culled from the social housing list than were given houses. Again, they give false hope and deception rather than focusing on the biggest issue in the state, which is increasing supply.

They promised a new prefab home hub and they said that they would build 80 homes a year. Again, that was an empty promise as now they have said they can build only 30 a year. They promised the Griffith University accommodation, as mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer. For six months they maintained that deception. They had to cobble together an announcement before the Housing Summit, which was a summit they were dragged to, kicking and screaming. That announcement was put together by a director-general who is a former Labor member of parliament and the Chancellor of Griffith University, who is also a former Labor member of parliament, because they were told, 'We need something to announce tomorrow.' Six months later and \$2 million down the drain, despite promise after promise, that announcement did not come to fruition. As the shadow Treasurer said, Griffith University said, 'Don't worry. We'll bank that.' There is a favour to come.

We might as well make the \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund worth \$10 billion when it comes to the number of houses that have been built. There is promise after promise and announcement after announcement, but not one person is in a house today because of the Housing Investment Fund. Anything they have announced has been delayed time and time again. Instead of building new properties they buy already existing properties, making even worse the rental stress that people are under. Never has Queensland suffered such a crisis with regard to housing. Having a home is the most basic of human needs. This is a government that claims it is for the people. Guess what: the people are unhappy! The people know that the government cannot fulfil the promises it makes, that the promises it makes are empty. There is only one solution: show Labor the door in '24.

### **Renewable Energy**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.52 pm): One after the other, opposition members have talked about the last 12 months but there is one thing they have not mentioned that I absolutely will: our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. One year on—just 12 months later—it is delivering investment and jobs and it is putting downward pressure on power prices in Queensland. We have led the nation when it comes to the connection of new solar farms, with 183 megawatts. We are also leading the

nation when it comes to the connection of new wind farms, with another 128 megawatts. We are now powering Queensland, with over one-quarter of our power coming from renewables—an increase of over 20 per cent in the past 12 months alone.

Recently, the Australian Energy Market Operator confirmed that Queensland has the most reliable energy system of all mainland states in the National Electricity Market. It also confirmed that our wholesale power prices have dropped 71 per cent because of our nation-leading increase in wind and solar energy, which is the cheapest form of energy. In fact, under the Palaszczuk Labor government we have seen 52 new large-scale wind and solar projects, which represents over \$11 billion worth of investment. That has delivered over 8½ thousand jobs in construction alone, with the majority of those being in regional Queensland.

We are producing over six gigawatts of renewable energy, which is abating 14.5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year. That is the result of the deliberate decisions we have made: continued public ownership; more renewables, which is the cheapest form of energy; and the largest cost-of-living package in the nation that includes electricity rebates of \$550 for households and \$1,072 for concession card holders and seniors as well as cashback rebates on energy-efficient appliances. The really exciting part is that we are only getting started. Over the next four years we will be investing more than \$19 billion in publicly owned energy and we have over \$160 billion worth of investment in the pipeline when it comes to wind, solar and batteries.

All of that is at risk under the LNP. We know that public ownership is going to be at risk because they will sell off our energy assets, just as they tried to do last time. Workers will be at risk because they will be sacked, just like they were last time, including from Swanbank in my Bundamba community. The LNP's recently released 'wrong priorities' document did not contain one dollar of direct cost-of-living relief. It is more of a brochure that is trying to parade as a policy document. It states, 'An LNP Government will prioritise structural cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders.' They will prioritise 'structural cost-of-living relief' but gives not one dollar of direct support for Queenslanders in the middle of a national cost-of-living crisis. In fact, the only policy that they have come out with, the only policy that they have owned up to in the past 12 months, has been to maintain power stations. Guess what: any power station that is part of the National Electricity Market has a legal requirement to do that, so it is not really a policy at all.

Queenslanders cannot trust the LNP. They have their secret plan for nuclear. They have refused to rule it out and their federal mates are pushing it right across the country. It is the most expensive form of energy that will drive up prices. They have not been open with Queenslanders about where they will put nuclear generators or where they will put the waste. Their federal counterparts are pushing a moratorium on renewables, which is the cheapest form of energy. Again, that would drive up prices.

The LNP cannot be trusted. You cannot even trust them when they come into this place and vote for something. They have no plans. They have no policies other than to play politics and, of course, to cut, sack and sell. Queensland will go backwards under the LNP. They are a dangerous risk to our otherwise bright future.

## INFORMATION PRIVACY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### PUBLIC RECORDS BILL

#### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from p. 3715, on motion of Mrs D'Ath, and Public Records Bill resumed from p. 3717, on motion of Ms Enoch—

That the bills be now read a second time.



**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (2.57 pm), continuing: To clarify my earlier comments, the State Archivist will update government two years after the passing, rather than the proclamation, of the new legislation on the outcomes of work on the outstanding recommendations. The update will also report on the success of the implementation of the bill.

The Public Records Bill is a significant step forward for Queensland's public records and is acknowledged by the Australian Society of Archivists as a world-leading example of archival legislation. The Australian Society of Archivists, ASA, applauded the Queensland government for its decision to


review and propose improvements to the legislation through the current bill. During the public hearing, this legislation was acknowledged by Mr Adrian Cunningham, an archival expert representing the ASA, to be an excellent and world-leading piece of archives and records legislation. In particular, Mr Cunningham highlighted the improved clarity within the legislation and the positive way that the bill strengthens the autonomy and the independence of the State Archivist and better enables the Archivist to monitor and report on record-keeping maturity across Queensland public authorities.

This ability will support public authorities to strengthen their record keeping practices and will improve the protection and preservation of permanent public records for current and future generations. This will be further strengthened through the new ability for the State Archivist to issue mandatory standards. As noted by QLeave in their submission to the committee, the State Archivist will provide assistance and training to public authorities to assist them in meeting their requirements under this new legislation. I also note the Local Government Association of Queensland provided a submission acknowledging the amendments to the Public Records Act support integrity and accountability and ensure appropriate maintenance and access to Queensland's documented history.

Turning to the recommendations of the Community Support and Services Committee, I thank the committee for its first recommendation: that the bill be passed. The second recommendation from the committee noted the further work needed towards establishing Indigenous data sovereignty. It recommended the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts inform the committee of any progress. The government acknowledges further work is required to consider the establishment of Indigenous data sovereignty and commits to updating the committee on the progress of this matter.

Public records serve as the cornerstone for elevating the efficiency and effectiveness of community services, forming the core for well-informed decision-making and supporting economic growth, innovation and research endeavours. This bill underscores the critical role of ensuring accessibility to our public records for both present and future generations within our community.

Before I close, I also wish to inform the House that I intend to move amendments during consideration in detail of the bill to address some very minor technical corrections. I once again thank the committee for its consideration of the bill, the independent panel members and those who were involved in the consultation process. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.01 pm): It is my pleasure to rise as one of the shadow ministers responsible for this area, along with the acting shadow attorney, the member for Nanango. My contribution will be mainly on the Public Records Bill 2023. As the minister has, and as most of us usually do, I thank the committee, the Community Support and Services Committee, chaired by the member for Mansfield, Corrine McMillan; the acting chair on one day, the member for Bancroft; the deputy chair, Stephen Burnett, the member for Burnett; as well as the members for Maiwar, Cook, Nicklin and Oodgeroo. I thank them for their report No. 38 on this significant bill which, as we have heard from the minister, is about modernising the public records framework. I do not think anyone has an issue with that given the incidents that have caused this bill to be brought to the House. We note that it is going to replace the Public Records Act 2002 and implement public record keeping legislation more suited to contemporary technology, community expectations and cultural attitudes.

I note the numerous policy objectives of the bill are to: adopt a new purpose and principles for administering a new Public Records Act; clarify representation issues for the Public Records Review Committee, the PRRC; clarify definitions, which the minister just mentioned; protect permanent public records; enable the State Archivist to audit, monitor, investigate and report on compliance with the act, which I will return to soon; clarify the functions of the State Archivist; increase the time limit for prosecution of a contravention for unlawful disposal from one year to three years; enhance the general powers of authorised officers to obtain copies of a public authority's public records, systems and records management procedures; empower the State Archivist to issue records management standards that public authorities must comply with; adopt a pro-disclosure approach, which is something that I know will be welcomed and to which I will turn to later, for access to reports in the custody of State Archives; specify that the State Archivist is generally subject to the direction of the minister, which again I will refer to in my speech later; require any direction by the minister about the State Archivist's performance of a function or the exercise of a power under the act be in writing, consistent with the act and included in the State Archivist's annual report; clarify access to records of ministers and assistant ministers will continue under the Right to Information Act 2009—pointing out that that is a separate way that people try to get access to public records; empower the State Archivist, as the responsible public authority, to

extend restricted access periods for ministerial records in the custody of the State Archives; dispose of temporary ministerial records in the custody of the State Archives with the advice of the PRRC; simplify the process for establishing a public authority to take control of the records of another public authority that ceases to exist and where no other public authority will take over its functions; and make other amendments to align with the RTI Act and the Information Privacy Act 2009, including adopting the definition of personal information rather than referring to personal affairs and incorporating sensitive information within the restricted access period provisions.

I note we have already heard from ministers about a review led by retired Supreme Court judge the Hon. John Byrne AO RFD. This was a review promised when the government first came to power. It has taken some years for it to happen. There were 27 recommendations, 25 of which related to legislative reform. We have also heard today that the key matters included First Nations people's public records, digital technology advances and impacts, community expectations for accountability and transparency of government and the diversity of public authorities under the 2002 act. Twenty recommendations relating to legislative reform are addressed. The committee report states—

The Bill proposes to address 20 recommendations relating to legislative reform. The explanatory notes state that the recommendations not progressed in the Bill are:

- Recommendation 2b—further evaluation of the concepts of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Indigenous Data Governance and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, which is continuing in a separate review
- Recommendation 19—access to Ministerial records to continue through the RTI Act rather than by decision of the State Archivist
- Recommendations 21 to 23—to include local government councillors within the definition of a public authority and the creation of a new definition for councillor records—these recommendations will not be progressed at this time ...

As we have heard, a panel of experts assisted the Hon. John Byrne AO RFD and it marked a significant step towards modernising our approach to public records with the aim of benefiting both present and future generations. In her contribution the Minister for Treaty and Minister for the Arts told us that this review was more to do with Indigenous records and the right of First Nations people to be represented—and that is not something that we disagree with. What the House and Queenslanders would be more interested to hear about is why this review actually came about. We must not forget that this review came about from the saga involving Minister Bailey, the transport minister, who then held the portfolios of minister for main roads, road safety and ports and minister for energy, biofuels and water supply. Members will recall that in 2017 the minister was accused of using his private email, *mangocube6 @ yahoo.co.uk*, for official business and in breach of the Public Records Act.

This bill has its roots in the meticulous investigation conducted by the Crime and Corruption Commission, the CCC. The CCC's investigation unearthed a breach of the Ministerial Handbook when it was discovered that Minister Bailey had been using a private email account for official business—a clear violation of established protocols. What further compounded this breach was the deletion of work related emails containing public records—a deed executed without proper legal authority. Among those deleted records were communications from union officials, including the boss of the Electrical Trades Union.

In summary, we have a government minister deleting a staggering 1,200 items, recognised as public records, without the proper authorisation—69 with permanent value, requiring indefinite retention; another 335 designated for a seven-year preservation period; and an additional 660 records disposed of without any authorisation. Despite the condemnation by the corruption watchdog for the ill-advised deletion of a private email account, Minister Bailey was reinstated to cabinet. The CCC's chairman at the time, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, labelled the minister's actions as 'very foolish', but noted that, due to a legal gap at the time, no punitive actions or measures could be taken.

In an independent report later that same month, then state archivist Mike Summerall expressed concerns about Minister Bailey's management of public records through his private email account. The breaches were identified across multiple sections of the Public Records Act 2002, specifically pertaining to the making, custody, preservation and disposal of public records. The State Archivist recommended that the CCC consider criminal prosecution for these breaches. Of particular significance were breaches of sections 7 and 8 which could have implicated Minister Bailey under section 204 of the Criminal Code. These breaches could have set a precedent affecting other ministers and ministerial staff who might inadvertently breach these sections by using private email accounts without the necessary processes for managing and archiving public records.



The State Archivist's role emerged as pivotal during this period, even though there was a time when the government did not accord the Archivist due regard. I draw attention to the Queensland parliament's estimates hearing of 25 July 2017, when attempts to have the State Archivist appear were blocked by the government. This occurred precisely when the State Archivist was investigating whether the then stood-aside Minister Bailey had violated the Public Records Act 2002 by deleting his private email account.

In a troubling turn of events, the former state archivist, Mr Summerell, did not resign but had his contract not extended, despite Minister Enoch's—

**Ms ENOCH:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like your ruling on relevance in terms of—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Order! Members, I will hear the point of order in silence.

**Ms ENOCH:**—the bill that is before the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I was just taking advice on that. I will finish taking that advice. Member, it is right that you can refer to the motivations leading up to a review. However, that needs to be in context of a much broader debate. I urge you to move forward in your contribution.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I think it is pretty clear that I am referring to the incidents that have led to this review being conducted. Therefore, I would respectfully submit that they are completely relevant. It is the background to why this bill is in the House. I take your guidance and I will continue. I would have thought it was completely relevant that the former state archivist, who was expressing concerns about potential departmental or ministerial interference in his role, has led to us now bringing a bill to the House to try to make sure that those issues either do not happen again—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have given a ruling on it. I feel that you are starting to err into debating with me now. I encourage you to come back to the bill.

**Mr POWELL:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The bill concerns the independence of the State Archivist. The member for Surfers Paradise—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am going to interrupt you there. I have made a decision. You can write to the Speaker if you do not agree, but that is the decision I have come to. He can continue his contribution but it needs to be in context of the broader bill being debated.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I was saying that the state archivist did not resign but had his contract not extended, despite Minister Enoch's claims that he wished to return to New Zealand. Mr Summerell staunchly believes that his unwavering commitment to matters of integrity and the independence of the office were the primary factors in the decision.

This situation paints a distressing picture of a government seemingly indifferent to matters of integrity. Yet that is something they proclaim throughout this bill and at the conclusion of the second reading speech. Mr Summerell recommended the position be a statutory position so as not to have the future State Archivist suffer as he did. I note that is not part of this bill. Currently, the State Archivist operates under ministerial direction, lacking the same independence as the Ombudsman or the Auditor-General.

I refer to an article in the *Courier-Mail* dated 29 July 2023 titled 'Calls for royal commission into Mangocube saga'. I table a copy.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, dated 29 July 2023, titled 'Calls for royal commission into Mangocube saga' [2008].

I refer to my colleague the member for Burleigh, who pointed out that the review of the Public Records Act promised eight years ago still had not been completed at that time and called for a royal commission to put an end to the 'rotten culture' that continued to deliver poor services to Queenslanders. The article goes on, with former state archivist Mike Summerell accusing the government of setting up a 'black ops dirt unit' to blacken his reputation and also highlighted in a social media post saying 'scumbags' were 'looking for dirt and seeking to muddy me'.

I refer to a statement made by Mr Summerell referring to the resignation of the Integrity Commissioner and the chair of the CCC—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, there was some unparliamentary language there. I ask that you withdraw.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker. I quote—

I have never made a public statement over my departure or my time as State Archivist. However I feel that the impending departure of these integrity figureheads warrants such a statement.

...

I have seen calls for public inquiries into integrity in Queensland and I feel that such an inquiry is well overdue. My time as State Archivist post 2017 was greatly hindered by what I considered potentially inappropriate interference in my statutory role and, in a similar manner to the Integrity Commissioner, related to the deprivation of key support and advice.

I table a copy of his statement.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Statement from former State Archivist, Mike Summerell' [2009].

For over three years his ability to undertake his statutory role—

**Ms Grace:** It was proved to be baseless.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I am continuing to quote from the former state archivist about whose treatment and assessment by a minister of this government was the cause of the bill that we have before us.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Order! I remind all members to listen and to respect the order of the House. Member for Surfers Paradise, I have taken further advice. I ask you to come back to the principles of the bill being debated.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I point out that many of these things are in the statement of reservation that is associated with the committee report. In light of all of these events, the bill before us seeks to address the gaps and ambiguities that allowed such breaches to occur unchecked. It underscores the importance of maintaining the integrity of our public records, a responsibility that transcends individual actions and holds implications for the broader functioning of our government. I note the concerns of those opposite who do not want to hear about it—from one of their own ministerial colleagues whom they have been prepared to stand behind through all the actions that have led to this very bill being presented here.

The proposed amendments to the bill are designed to provide a robust framework for creating, managing and granting access to public records, aiming to minimise ambiguity surrounding the definition of a public record. The bill also seeks to address concerns related to improper management and emphasises the importance of public records for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Furthermore, the bill aims to reduce the risk of permanent loss of public records, balance the risks of unlawful disposal and enhance monitoring of public authority records management performance.

The establishment of committees such as the Public Records Review Committee—which I know is part of this, where there will be an Aboriginal representative and a Torres Strait Islander representative—and the First Nations advisory group aim to enhance consultation and decision-making. We will wait to see about their effectiveness and the reasoning behind their formation.

I note in the committee's report the contribution from Mick Gooda, Co-Chair of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body. He stated in their submission that the bill 'appears to offer a solid platform to build and support First Nations recognition and involvement in Queensland government public record keeping practices'. It is interesting to note that, when the truth-telling inquiry begins next year, it will be the Queensland Museum—another section under the minister's responsibilities—that will be one of the first institutions to be questioned, because of the concerns about the records that they keep. I am talking about the bodies of Indigenous people, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pacific nations. I will return to that later.

As shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, the establishment of a separate advisory group to consult with the State Archivist concerning records held by Queensland State Archives is encouraging. Whilst the minister is establishing this new committee to deal with matters that may cause offence to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as I have just referred, the Queensland Museum is not repatriating bodies of South Sea islanders or Aboriginal people. This is offensive to those people. It has now taken a letter from me to the minister to get action on this matter. I want to table two articles by Josh Bavas, titled 'Hundreds of stolen remains yet to be repatriated by Queensland Museum' and 'Queensland Museum under pressure to return remains to the Solomons'.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Brisbane Times*, dated 22 September 2023, titled 'Hundreds of stolen remains yet to be repatriated by Queensland Museum' [2011].

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Brisbane Times*, dated 23 October 2023, titled 'Queensland Museum under pressure to return remains to the Solomons' [2010].

The first article outlines—

... the Queensland Museum still holds the remains of 883 First Nations individuals as well as 65 South Sea islanders.

The remains sit in storage boxes and shelves at the South Brisbane site.

A further 445 'secret and sacred objects' are also kept at the museum, despite being earmarked as requiring repatriation.

The article highlights that six months after questions were asked about the repatriation backlog the museum was awarded \$4.5 million to employ staff to the program, but the agency responsible for informing Australia's Pacific island neighbours remains unclear. My point is that these are practical matters involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—not just words where we say we are going to put people on committees to consider their concerns and to make sure that records are maintained. We have had no clarity from a government which has had years to do this. I put it to this House that the representatives of South Sea islanders are very important, and I know that the member for Mirani has been making that point in his time here. It is important that we do the things we say we are going to do—not just talk about setting up committees and then walking away or not getting the job done.

Stakeholder views, including submissions from Records and Information Management Practitioners Global—RIMPA—the Office of the Information Commissioner, the Crime and Corruption Commission and whistleblower Kevin Lindeberg, provided recommendations ranging from inclusivity in records provisions to maintaining the independence of the State Archivist and ensuring proper review processes for denied access to information.

I note that at page 10 of the committee report the proposed legislation provides guidelines for making public records accessible to the public. It states that the State Archivist must allow access to open, unrestricted records upon request and that individuals can apply for access to restricted records in the custody of the State Archivist. The State Archivist noted that prior to the bill individuals did not have an opportunity to challenge a refusal of access to a restricted public record. The bill would require that public authorities explain their decisions to refuse access to public records and provides an escalation process by which disputes are resolved by the PRRC. As I mentioned earlier, I note that the bill does not provide for access requests to ministerial public records and that people would need to apply under the Right to Information Act. I note that was one of the recommendations that is not part of this bill.

The Public Records Bill represents a significant step forward in the realm of public records management. While addressing critical issues and incorporating valuable recommendations, it is crucial that we continue to scrutinise and refine this legislation to ensure the highest standards of accountability, integrity and transparency. The lessons learned from past incidents such as the mangocube scandal underscore the importance of a truly independent State Archivist and a legislative framework that safeguards the integrity of our public records.


I want to briefly move to address the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I know that the member for Nanango will be dealing with this in more detail. This bill aims to make significance changes to Queensland's information privacy framework, addressing the protection of personal information, responses to data breaches and the misuse of data by government agencies. Additionally, the bill seeks to clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right to information frameworks. The policy objectives include: the enhancement of Queensland's information privacy framework; the clarification of right to information frameworks; and support for the proactive release of cabinet documents as recommended by various reports such as the review of the Right to Information Act 2009, Information Privacy Act 2009, Operation Impala and, of course, the Coaldrake report, which was about letting the sunshine in.

It should be noted that the implementation of many provisions in this bill will be delayed to allow local governments and agencies sufficient time to prepare for the impending changes. The intended commencement date for the amendments is 1 July 2025, with a specific provision delaying the mandatory data breach notification scheme for local governments by 12 months.

Key provisions of the bill include a proactive release scheme for cabinet documents, an updated definition of personal information to align with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988, and the introduction of a mandatory data breach notification—MDBN—scheme. The MDBN scheme will require agencies to keep a register of eligible data breaches and notify affected individuals and the Information Commissioner in the event of a serious breach. Furthermore, the bill grants enhanced powers to the Information Commissioner, allowing the investigation of potential breaches of privacy principles and new regulatory powers related to MDBN compliance. The legislation also proposes the adoption of a

single set of privacy principles based on the Australian privacy principles. Despite its intent the bill has faced scrutiny, primarily concerning the alignment with Commonwealth legislation, the definition of personal information and the potential financial burden on agencies, particularly local governments.

As I have mentioned already, the LNP will not oppose the bill as it represents a comprehensive effort to modernise Queensland's information privacy framework. Whilst it addresses longstanding recommendations, stakeholders have raised valid concerns about the potential challenges and costs associated with the proposed changes.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (3.25 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Information Privacy Amendment Bill 2023. I note that this is a cognate bill with the Public Records Bill, which my colleague the shadow minister and member for Surfers Paradise just reflected upon. If time allows, I may get to that section of the cognate debate today.

The policy objectives that have been outlined for the information privacy amendment bill are to: strengthen Queensland's information policy framework to better protect personal information; clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right to information frameworks; and—interestingly—to provide for the proactive release of cabinet documents. At the outset, I note that the opposition will not be opposing this bill; however, as the committee has highlighted, we will be noting some concerns and the reasons behind them.

Over the last few years Queenslanders—and other Australians—have experienced large-scale data breaches which have changed the way we think about privacy. For many, it has increased awareness of the danger of data breaches and the importance of securing our personal information. In September and October last year some 10 million Optus and Medibank customers heard they may have been subject to a data breach. Months later QUT experienced their own data breach, with over 11,000 current and former students affected. The topic of privacy is on the agenda and the minds of everyday Australians who in the past would not have found this important. We have seen long lines at customer service centres and thousands seeking new drivers' licences in fear of what may come.

The Australian Office of the Information Commissioner's Australian Community Attitudes to Privacy Survey 2023 unsurprisingly found increased concern about privacy. In fact, it found that 62 per cent of Australians see the protection of their personal information as a major concern in their life. Only 32 per cent feel in control of their data privacy, and 74 per cent feel that data breaches are one of the biggest privacy risks they face today. This has increased by 13 per cent since 2020. Almost 47 per cent said they had been informed by an organisation that their personal information was involved in a data breach in the 12 months prior to completing the survey. Of those, 76 said they had experienced harm as a direct result. Whilst this issue has grown in significance, it has not been an unexpected outcome of our growing dependence on online accessibility and presence in the last two decades. This was a predictable pressure we were always going to face.

Interestingly, the information privacy amendment bill responds to several reviews and reports, including: the review report; the Crime and Corruption Commission report titled *Operation Impala: report on misuse of confidential information within the Queensland public sector*; another Crime and Corruption Commission report titled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into the Ipswich City Council (Operation Windage)*; the strategic review report; and the Coaldrake report, which was notably titled *Let the sunshine in: review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector*. The final report was dated 28 June 2022.

Once again, we have those opposite, the go-slow government, who seem to have no priority for the action that Queenslanders need, particularly when it comes to integrity and accountability. The Attorney-General stated—

The efficient and effective operation of the Right to Information Act 2009 (RTI Act) and the Information Privacy Act 2009 (IP Act) is critical to ensuring this commitment is met and are important components of Queensland's integrity framework.

It sounds like the right outlook, you may say, but this statement came from the foreword in the report on the review of those two acts, known as the review report, which was released over six years ago. The fact that many of the recommendations are only just now getting implemented is a demonstration that, if the Attorney genuinely believes these acts are important components of Queensland's integrity framework, then the government has no commitment to integrity.

As well as the bill bringing amendments in line with recommendations from the review report published in 2017, it also implements recommendations from Operation Impala and other reports. For it to take over six years for some of these recommendations to be brought forward is simply

unacceptable and makes it clear that this is anything but a priority for the government. The government and public authorities can hold enormous amounts of data and the Queensland public has a right to know if this information will be protected adequately and whether they will be informed if anything is breached. I think it would be helpful for the Attorney to share a bit of how this information is stored and the protections in place at present to give us that reassurance.

The bill amends the definition of 'personal information' in the IP Act to be consistent with the Commonwealth definition. This is in line with recommendation 14 of the review report and recommendation 16 of the Impala report. Unfortunately, given that recommendation was made over six years ago and then re-recommended three years later, the impact of changing it now means we will likely only have alignment for possibly a year. Given the Privacy Act review at the federal level, which the government recently responded to, the definition of 'personal information' is likely to change again to be more relevant to the issues faced today. This is what happens when you drag your feet. We are now looking at having to change this definition again once the federal bill goes through, which could be, like I stated, within a year.

The adoption of a single set of privacy principles will simplify the current framework which requires health agencies to follow the national privacy principles and all other agencies to be under the information privacy principles. This, however, is also impacted by the Privacy Act review. The QPPs will apply to all Queensland agencies, other than Australian privacy principle entities. The Australian privacy principle scheme is also subject to the Privacy Act review process, including considering extended protections for de-identified information. Stakeholders are generally supportive of the intent of those changes. However, as this has been delayed for so long, it is now complicated by the Privacy Act review and this must be taken into account.

One of the major changes in this bill is the introduction of the mandatory data breach notification scheme for public agencies. In fact it was in November last year when the Palaszczuk government Treasurer, Treasurer Dick, was embroiled in the issue of his department's major privacy breach that saw more than 10,000 Queenslanders sent other people's fines along with private information such as their names, addresses and rego numbers. This is the private information of other Queenslanders. This bill is an attempt to hold those to account by being up-front and honest with those Queenslanders by needing to notify us—all those Queenslanders—of the breach rather than hiding it. We had the famous line by Treasurer Dick after this breach was discovered. People were eating their cornflakes and saw the front page of the paper and they said, 'Hang on a minute. Am I one of those people whose private information has been breached by the Palaszczuk government?' Treasurer Dick stated in response to this that famous line: 'I did not lick the stamps on 2.4 million letters', in a dismissive fashion made for the upper class he flowed with. This is incredible: 'I did not lick the stamps.' It gets worse. He went on and said—

**Ms Grace:** Whingeing and whining. It's never-ending.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Order, member for McConnel.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It sounds like the member for McConnel is whingeing and whining over there about the Treasurer saying that he did not lick 2.4 million stamps, but it actually gets worse than that. Minister Dick said—

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for McConnel, if it continues I will start issuing warnings.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It gets worse. What did the Treasurer say after he said he does not lick that number of stamps? He actually said, 'We get someone else to do it.' What arrogance, from someone who is so out of touch with everyday Queenslanders. It is unbelievable. It is a disgrace that Palaszczuk government ministers genuinely believe it is okay to say to Queenslanders, 'Don't worry about your privacy breach. It's someone else's fault.' There is no accountability under this Palaszczuk government: 'We get someone else to do our dirty work.' That is exactly what Cameron Dick said. Rather than boasting that he is above the work of a postie, the Treasurer would be better off admitting the problem and giving Queenslanders an apology.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** This kind of breach, member for McConnel, is exactly why we need mandatory notification. Imagine if you were one of the people who had to suffer through that breach while the Treasurer of Queensland just dismissed it away. In fact the Treasurer of Queensland was never even going to tell Queenslanders about it. It came out in the wash.

This private information is sacred. Another question needs to be where the Queensland government information is held. Where is it actually held? The ministers obviously believe it is someone else's job to worry about that. In relation to the mandatory data disclosure, the briefing note from the department provided—

Currently Queensland government agencies are not subject to any legislative requirements in the IP Act requiring them to notify data breaches concerning individuals' personal information but are subject to a voluntary notification scheme under the Office of the Information Commissioner's (OIC's) Privacy Breach Management and Notification Guideline.

...

... the proposed Queensland scheme would require agencies to assess data breaches and notify the OIC and individuals whose personal information has been accessed, disclosed or lost of an 'eligible data breach'.

The scheme applies to agencies as defined under the act, including a minister—such as the Treasurer, who has been there—department, local government and public authority. Australian government agencies and organisations with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million are already covered under the Commonwealth Privacy Act mandatory data breach notification scheme, as has been noted by the Attorney-General. This will bring Queensland government agencies and public authorities under a similar scheme and it will operate in a similar way.

Where an agency knows or reasonably suspects that a data breach has occurred, it will be required to make all reasonable steps to contain that data breach, assess whether the data breach is an eligible data breach, mitigate harm caused by that breach, and, if applicable, give written notice to any other agency affected by that breach. An eligible data breach is defined as an unauthorised access to, or unauthorised disclosure of, private information which is likely to result in serious harm to an individual to whom the information relates, or loss of information where unauthorised access to, or disclosure of, information is likely to occur and would be likely to result in serious harm to an individual to whom the information relates. If the agency reasonably believes there has been an eligible data breach, it must prepare and give a statement to the Information Commissioner, including a description of that personal information. I submit that that is exactly what Queenslanders have a right to expect when a government holds so much of our private information.

One of the biggest concerns that came from the mandatory data breach reporting was around the impact upon local governments. It is really important to note that the opposition members of the committee, the member for Theodore and the member for Southern Downs, in relation to this committee report on the bill—and I do thank them—noted in their statement of reservation, whilst very short, in relation to this section of the bill, the concerns of the LGAQ but also many local governments that are very concerned about the impost of this section of the bill on those local councils. I do note that the Attorney did address that in her contribution to the bill by noting that the impost would not be there because the Information Commissioner—and I do not want to paraphrase—will be resourced adequately to provide training sessions. Then the Attorney went on to say that this section of the bill will not impact upon local councils until 2026, to give them time to prepare for that change in this legislation.

While I note that and take that on board, I want to reflect that the concerns came through the statement of reservation, where we said that we shared the concerns of the LGAQ about the ability for local governments, especially in the smaller regional, remote and First Nations councils, to properly fulfil their obligations outlined in the legislation. One thing that we will be looking forward to are reassurances from the Attorney that that will be continuing. It is important that those concerns are taken on board. I know that the LGAQ was deeply concerned about that, but, as I say, do note that the Attorney-General did acknowledge those concerns in her contribution.

I also note that, whilst extra funding and extra staffing was to go to the Information Commissioner, there were changes to the powers of the Information Commissioner flowing from those amendments, particularly in relation to the investigative powers. I would like to note the LNP's concerns that they should be closely monitored to ensure that this an appropriate place for those investigations to be initiated and carried out and, as I noted, that the Information Commissioner be resourced adequately to carry out the training for the local councils.

I now move onto the section of the bill which goes to the proactive release of cabinet documents. The Coaldrake report was handed down in June 2022. When the report was released the Premier said—

I don't just welcome it—I embrace it.

...

We will accept all of his recommendations and we will implement them lock, stock and barrel.

...

They are bold, they are comprehensive and they are visionary ...

That energy and excitement has quickly evaporated. We heard nothing for months and months after that about any of those proposed reforms. I look forward to the contribution of my colleague the shadow minister for integrity, the member for Maroochydore, who I am quite sure will be talking at length about that. Once again, it was all announcement and no follow-through.

On the complaints clearing house, it was in, then it was not technically viable and then, after consideration and media pressure, it was back in once again.

**Mr Minnikin:** 'Survey says'.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** 'Survey says'; I take that interjection. One of the recommendations was for cabinet submissions and their attachments, agendas and decision papers to be proactively released and published online within 30 business days of the decisions. There was no urgency given to the change required. This was not a case of complex legislation needing to be drafted. The explanatory notes, in fact—and I will point to the Attorney-General—stated clearly—

While legislation is not required to enable the scheme, a small number of amendments are included in the Bill to support the simple operation of the proactive release scheme.

It is in the explanatory notes. I would like the Attorney-General to confirm when the Cabinet Handbook will be changed and when the first release of these cabinet documents—

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection. I look forward to hearing in the summing-up when the first release of documents will occur.

Queenslanders want a government that they can trust, but it is clear that they do not have one. We only need to see the reports which have led to us being here today. I will get to the 'mangocube bill' that we are about to talk about. We have a Premier who has often talked about and often quoted the fact that she was elected on openness, transparency and accountability. We are here discussing two bills that have come about because of review after review into the accountability, the transparency and the lack of integrity from this government. I mean, let the sun shine in. We only need to look at the information privacy amendment bill 2023 which is based on a review report called *Let the sunshine in: review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector*. Like I said, the Premier said 'lock, stock and barrel'. We have seen anything but.

The LNP will not be opposing the bill in relation to the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I will just briefly move on because I note we do not have all day to debate this bill, but I do just want to put on record in relation to the Public Records Act that again it is a bill that is before the House because of an issue that has arisen from a cabinet minister of the Palaszczuk government.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.


**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take the interjection because that minister—it is on public record—was called foolish. We are here today because we have a Public Records Act that needs to be changed because, as has been found, a minister of the Palaszczuk government used his own private email. Not only that, he went further and deleted the public records that were contained therein. Therefore, we are here today discussing the changes to the Public Record Bill 2023 because of the lack of accountability, integrity, openness and transparency of the Palaszczuk government. We are talking about right back to 2017 when those allegations were made against Minister Bailey, and we saw some 1,200 items identified as public records deleted. We note that a minister of the Palaszczuk government had no authority to delete or dispose of those records.

**Mr Minnikin:** Rookie error.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. I believe it is more serious than rookie error, because if you have the privilege to be a cabinet minister in this state, you should take your responsibility seriously. What we have seen here is a minister who has continually, time and time again, dismissed the actions of a proper upstanding, accountable minister of the Crown and now we are standing before the House actually moving and talking about the Public Record Bill 2023, the so-called 'mangocube bill'. That is why we are here today. The government can wash it up any way they like, but we know that the former state archivist said on a number of occasions that an inquiry into the integrity of the Queensland government was simply necessary. Actually, he did not say 'simply'; he said it was necessary. He did not belittle it in any way. He also went on to state that the legislation was completely inadequate to ensure the integrity of the Public Records Act which stems completely from the fact that the Palaszczuk government has a minister who does not understand the importance of the Public Records Act. Certainly it is important that we make sure that this bill—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is it is actually quite incredible. I will take that interjection. It is quite incredible that we actually have to pass this bill because Queenslanders can no longer trust that a minister will be upstanding in relation to public records and the importance of the public record. With that contribution, I once again note that the opposition will not be opposing this bill.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Records Bill and the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. These are two very important pieces of legislation that will modernise the way we keep records. The original act was in 2002 and I think things have changed a fair bit in the last 20-odd years when it comes to records and digital technology. Smartphones were not a thing when the legislation was written, nor were iPads. Facebook was not around until 2004, YouTube 2005, Twitter 2006, Instagram 2010, Snapchat 2011 and TikTok 2016, so there has been a fair bit to try to catch up on.

The Education, Employment and Training Committee conducted the inquiry into the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Before I move onto the details of the bill, I want to respond to a few points raised by the member for Nanango. During the public hearing the Queensland Information Commissioner noted that the Commonwealth is looking into it but it is still a while off and that it is important we get these protections in place now for all Queenslanders. It is important to note that, although the Commonwealth is on the path, we have been able to get there quicker and will be able to provide Queenslanders with more protection.

With regard to the elements around the transparency, it has to be noted that when the LNP were in government they did not sign up to a proactive release of cabinet documentation. That was not on their trajectory. I was not a member of this place at this time, but I believe that they banned the media from this chamber. Their track record does not speak to transparency and openness at all.

The LGAQ was raised in the statement of reservation. I appreciate that Queensland is a very decentralised state with a lot of small councils but, at the same time, they represent Queenslanders. It should not matter where you live; your data should be protected. Local governments should now have in place risk mitigations around the cyber protection of the data they hold. The data local governments hold on individuals is substantial. I do not think it should be a huge task to provide notification if data breaches occur. You would like to think that all local governments are looking after their community and citizens and protecting their data.

The policy objectives of the bill are to strengthen Queensland's information privacy framework to better protect personal information and improve responses and remedies for data breaches and data misuse; clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right-to-information frameworks; and provide for the proactive release of cabinet documents.

The Australian government's Office of Australian Information Commissioner has just released its report on notifiable data breaches for January to June 2023. It is interesting that in that six-month reporting period there were 288 notifiable attacks that were from malicious or criminal attack, 107 from human error—I think everybody has had an occasion where they have sent an email to the wrong person—and 14 from system faults. I do not think those numbers necessarily reflect the number of people impacted, because large-scale data breaches, the likes of which we have seen with Medibank and Optus, have affected in some cases 10 million or more people. It is really important that we get this legislation in place to provide our communities with more protection.




The most common kinds of personal information involved in those breaches have been contact details, identity details and financial information. It is also noted that an individual's name, home address, phone numbers, email addresses, health data, passport data, date of birth and driver's licence details have formed many parts of those breaches, which have the potential to create a financial impact. I think this is very important.

In examining the bill, we looked at defining personal information, the adoption of a single set of Queensland Privacy Principles, the Queensland Privacy Principles codes, the mandatory data breach notification scheme—I note that local councils are getting a 12-month extension in terms of when the scheme becomes active—misuse of restricted computers, the proactive release of cabinet documents, waivers of obligations, corporations legislation displacement, and the exclusion of letters patent entities from 'public authority' definition. Our whole committee learned a little bit about how organisations are established under a letter of patent.

The report made three recommendations. Recommendation 1 was that the bill be passed. Recommendation 2 was that proposed new section 49 in clause 33 be amended to require that any extension of time must be only for an amount of time reasonably required for the assessment to be conducted. It is important that people have surety that action is being taken as quickly as possible. Recommendation 3 was that the Attorney-General clarify those matters around the letters of patent. I am really pleased to see that being picked up in the foreshadowed amendments.

I take this opportunity to thank the committee for their work. I thank all of the submitters, the witnesses and our secretariat. It was a very interesting and informative process. I certainly learned a lot about the protections the Palaszczuk government provides for Queenslanders.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.57 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate on two pieces of legislation that have some similarities, although they are primarily different pieces of legislation. One is the Public Records Bill 2023 and the other is the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. When you raise the issue of what the Public Records Act does, a lot of people may never have heard of it, but it goes to a very important principle—that is, government records belong to the people. They have a certain definition and they are supposed to be protected. This underpins how decisions are made, how government is done and the right of people to know that there is integrity in the way those records are held. Then we have this other piece of legislation around information and privacy. It interacts with the right-to-information legislation.

The Public Records Act is important because it is about the capture and protection of the public record, and the Right to Information Act is about how information is released. Then there are the principles of privacy that interact with that and people's protections. You cannot have a right to information act unless you also have a protection of the public records.

Let's turn to why the Public Records Bill is before the parliament. It is before the parliament not just because in the passage of time the government thought, 'Gee, this is a good idea'; it is before the parliament because of a scandal. This scandal was not just about somebody making a mistake; it was about the cover-up. There is a saying that if the original sin is not what gets you, it will be the cover-up—or to err is human but to cover up is often the greater crime. That is what happened with the mangocube scandal—'mangocube' being part of an email address belonging to the now transport minister in a previous portfolio position he held.

What was the scandal? It became apparent that the minister was conducting government business via private email. Why does that matter? Those private email addresses are still a public record under the definition of the law. It was found that he breached the law but because he deleted his account and they were able to retrieve the account after a long, involved and difficult process—it was like pulling hen's teeth because there was not an open and transparent approach to say, 'Whoops, we made a mistake. This is what happened.' There had to be a prolonged inquiry. The CCC had to get involved to find out what had happened. They called the minister foolish for the way he behaved because he simply did not come clean up-front.

There was a deletion of the minister's email account. We can presume it was because he did not want people to see what was in that email account because there were transactions with a certain union official and government business was being done via backdoor methods. This is all incredibly valid to the bill before the House because the minister ended up being investigated and the truth finally came out. He was not charged and did not incur a penalty for having deleted his emails because they were able to retrieve his emails.

This bill seeks to address and tighten up some of the aspects around the investigation and the position of the State Archivist. The former state archivist was the poor person who, as an independent officer, as a public servant, found themselves in conflict with the government, a senior ministerial staffer and senior public servants. It was that public servant himself as an independent officer, Mike Summerell, the former state archivist, who was hung out to dry and given a hell of a time. This bill seeks to strengthen some of the aspects of the State Archivist's role but it does not go far enough. I want to quote from the former state archivist, Mike Summerell, who was put through hell for daring to stand up to the bullying that went on under this state Labor government. He said—

Between 2017 and 2021 I sought the advice of the Integrity Commissioner in matters relating to potential inappropriate interference in my statutory role on multiple occasions.

In 2021, prior to my departure, I outlined my concerns in regard to potential inappropriate interference in my statutory role to the CCC in great detail.

He went on to say—

For me personally, I feel my attempts to put the public interest in matters of integrity above career cost me my role as State Archivist.

In contrast to the Integrity Commissioner and the Chair of the CCC, I did not actually resign, I was simply told my contract would not be extended.

My own opinion is that my stance on matters of integrity and the independence of the office of the State Archivist were primary factors in that decision.

The Public Records Act has bounced between a couple of ministers. It is interesting that when ministers are in trouble they tend to move certain responsibilities around, and that is certainly what happened in terms of the machinery of government around this act and who was responsible. It has now come back to Minister Enoch again. I would say this: what happened to the former state archivist goes to the heart of some of the damning findings of the Coaldrake review. Professor Coaldrake talked about ministerial staffers parading around like little generals and he talked about this culture of bullying. He also talked about people who gave the ministers essentially what they wanted.


This bill before the House does make it so that any direction from a minister to a state archivist has to be published. However, there is nothing in here about senior public servants such as a director-general directing a state archivist. I recall there were concerns about whether some of the reports of the former state archivist, Mike Summerell, had been altered or interfered with before they were published. These questions were asked and I remember one of the senior public servants—a director-general at the time—said something like, 'We were there to offer help if needed around these annual reports.' We will take that on face value but I make this point. The State Archivist can still be directed by other senior public servants, those who are more senior to that person and that office, and that does not have to be published. A ministerial directive does, but that does not.

The legislation before the House also facilitates some of the administrative arrangements around the release of cabinet documents. I note that this is essentially an administrative practice that the government is saying they are going to fulfil Coaldrake's recommendation some 500 days after that recommendation was made. There is an opportunity for the government to start being more transparent now. They do not need this legislation to do that and they are still blocking the release of a lot of information. They need to start doing it differently. The sunshine has not come in. We have certainly seen that in regard to the release of documents that are still sucked into cabinet and blocked when we go to RTI them. We still see it with this government when ministers are in trouble. They do not just come out and say they made a mistake and fess up. They double down, they deny there was a problem and often we find a great deal more pain has to be borne by some of the statutory and senior public servants who have a heart for integrity who find themselves in conflict with the bullying culture of this government.

It is a matter of fact that what we have seen has been an appalling abuse of some truly independent and fine, upstanding public servants who have had the temerity to stand up to the bullying culture of this Labor government, which denies there is a problem and then covers it up. We still have not seen the culture of cover-up by this government addressed. We still have not seen the culture of bullying of those who dared to have a different opinion addressed. Until we see something different, we know it is time for this government to go. They have no respect for true independence or transparency.

*(Time expired)*


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): I remind all members that the cross-chamber quarrelling will not continue. I will start to name members. If members on their feet are not taking interjections, that is a sign they do not want to engage in that debate.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the Public Records Bill 2023. The Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill aims to strengthen Queensland's information privacy network to better protect personal information and improve responses and remedies for data breaches and data misuse; clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right to information frameworks; and provide for a proactive release of cabinet documents. Most of the amendments proposed in the bill relate to the Information Privacy Act and the Right to Information Act.

As the minister stated in her first reading, the government has undertaken significant consultation in developing these reforms, including several rounds of consultation with the public and key stakeholders. In 2022 the government released a public consultation paper seeking feedback on proposed reforms including the introduction of new privacy principles for Queensland and the mandatory data breach notification scheme. The government also conducted extensive consultation with departments, statutory bodies, local councils, universities and other entities that are currently subject to Queensland's right to information and information privacy frameworks. More recently, the government has also conducted targeted consultation on a draft bill. Feedback from this consultation has been instrumental in developing a practical and workable improved framework appropriate for Queensland.

The Education, Employment and Training Committee was tasked to consider the policy to be achieved by the legislation and the application of fundamental legislative principles—that is, to consider whether the bill has sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and to the institution of parliament. The committee also examined the bill for compatibility with human rights in accordance with the Human Rights Act. The committee held public briefings in Brisbane. The first was where the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet attended to provide a public briefing in relation to the bill. The committee held a second public hearing which was attended by the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Office of the Information Commissioner, Information Integrity Solutions Partners and the Queensland Human Rights Commission. There were three recommendations made for consideration.

With regard to the Public Records Bill, the previous act was originally implemented in 2002. When we consider the advancements in technology, especially around how we communicate with each other, so much has changed. We have iPhones, the World Wide Web and social media, just to name a few. That is why the Palaszczuk government initiated an independent review of the Public Records Act 2002 to seek to modernise the legislative framework governing the record keeping of some 500 public authorities across Queensland. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (4.10 pm): I rise as the deputy chair of the Community Support and Services Committee in support of the Public Records Bill—and I will confine my comments to that particular bill—but I do have some reservations. It is fair to say that at the outset of this inquiry I was somewhat ignorant about the importance of this legislation in the way we are governed according to the rule of law which underpins what we should be able to call a civil society. It is important that we acknowledge that unless public records are handled carefully, professionally and lawfully throughout their entire life span over whatever period that that may place many issues essential to peace, order and good government in jeopardy. Consequently, unless this parliament, acting on behalf of our electorates, can enact safe legislation concerning the proper protection of public records then we will have failed in our sworn responsibilities as elected members to act in the public interest.

From the evidence given to the committee, we heard that the Public Records Act 2002 remains central to maintaining public records and is fundamental to transparency, accountability and the preservation of our cultural legacy. The act also safeguards the rich cultural and historical narratives of Queensland for the benefit of generations to come. The Queensland State Archives holds more than 3.5 million records, reflecting our state's history since the first records were kept in 1823. There have been many issues plaguing the government in relation to transparency and accountability, particularly the community expectation that we can do better in governance. We need integrity of government through enabling the capture of transparent and accountable actions and decisions in the form of public records.

The integrity of the public record is a vital part of our democracy. Those acting on behalf of the public should be fully transparent and accountable to the public that they serve. Legislation needs to ensure that that is the case and those seeking to ensure integrity in government should be supported and protected. I believe that this cannot be stated often enough about creating, receiving and lawfully administering the whole life of public records, because issues surrounding access and non-access and disposal and retention—as they are either defined under clause 9 of the bill or when falling within the

area of clause 8's definition regarding what is a public authority—are involved. In this bill it is also about reinforcing public confidence in the lawful functionality of government regarding how it handles its public records. This is because public records—given their relevance in the fair operation of democratic principles, for example, like open, transparent and accountable government—sustain individual human rights for all our citizens, including First Nations peoples, and the right to justice regarding the accessibility of public records as evidence in the administration of justice.

This is unquestionably more important than most public interest legislation. As I said before, it was a real eye-opener to work out just how important this particular piece of legislation is. Common sense and good governance demand that we as legislators set the legal concrete terms providing the ability and duty of a truly independent State Archivist to operate as a trustworthy steward to protect the public interest against the influence and intimidation of any government at any time. While I appreciate the issues surrounding the independence and ministerial directives as mentioned at clause 43 under the heading 'Control of archives and repository', I am not fully convinced that they are adequate or fit for purpose and hence I have real reservations. For example, if and when differences of opinion arise—as they invariably will—between, say, the government's cabinet and agencies, corporations, First Nations entities or individuals regarding an application of access or non-access, retention or non-retention concerning certain relevant public records whose contents could be politically explosive or embarrassing, let alone potentially point in the direction of suspected illegal activity, I believe that the legislation will not be strong enough to see that the public interest prevails. It is important to remind the House of the recent treatment of the former state archivist, Mr Mike Summerell, involving an attack on his so-called independence under the Public Records Act 2002 which he judged to be sufficiently grave and unacceptable to cause him to leave his position over inappropriate alleged tampering of his annual reports to parliament and what they should say. In other words, what the former state archivist did and did not do remains unresolved and, consequently, it must be said that not all of the lessons from the errors made have been learnt from.


With regard to the role of the State Archivist—namely, to protect the integrity of public records from the abuse of disposal like shredding and to ensure their legal, administrative, data and historical right and obligation to exist or not to be deliberately instructed to omit information from annual reports to parliament—more is needed in legislation to entrench the State Archivist's independence. Apart from supporting the general context of this bill, there is a need for further reform which I believe can only be fixed in respect of entrenching the independence of the State Archivist by following the examples of the Auditor-General and the ombudsman. Like submitters to the committee such as RIMPA and Heiner affair whistleblower Kevin Lindeberg, I am persuaded that a complementary State Archivist bill like the Auditor-General Act should be enacted. Without such a bill, a missing link in Queensland government accountability shall exist and leaving it unconsidered means that an otherwise avoidable weak link is being ignored with possible serious consequences. The State Archivist firstly being legally awarded the status of an officer of the parliament and secondly as head of a newly created 'Independent Office of the State Archivist' will better secure the essential protection of the State Archivist from intimidation by the executive while administering this enacted bill—that is, the Public Records Bill.

At some point this parliament will have to complete the vital post-Fitzgerald task regarding the vital area of accountability legislation with the implementation of the Public Records Act and a 'State Archivist of Queensland Act'. Each piece of legislation would support the other in legal and administrative harmony and give, in the most public way possible, the archives profession its long overdue status and rightful place as a key player in holding the government to account for its actions, upholding human rights for all and ensuring that governments always conduct themselves by preserving public records for pending, impending and realistically possible future judicial proceedings so intrinsic to our most fundamental and precious democratic right—namely, equality for all under the law.

The committee received some valuable information with regard to technological advancements which have not been addressed in the bill. What we have in the bill before us is not up to date with the principles of capturing, managing, protecting and disposing of digital data. All records started from the same conception of managing paper but then digital records emerged as an output of business and government activities such as the creation of documents in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, email, websites et cetera. Submissions to the committee highlighted the difficulties of managing digital data, and hence one of the committee's recommendations is the sovereignty of a First Nations person's information, and the dilemmas stemming from a rapidly advancing technological environment. It is argued that the rapid evolution of technology will make some storage formats obsolete and data will not be accessible for the generations that follow. There is merit in acknowledging the information in the committee submission

from RIMPA Global and in acting on the growing rise of disinformation, misinformation and malinformation and their impacts. How do we identify what is real information and what is false information, especially when it comes to archiving and preserving information for future generations?

In conclusion, meeting the new State Archivist and knowing her passion for the role going forward means that we are in a good place in Queensland. We look forward to many years of good service to ensure that this important area of public records continues for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (4.18 pm): I rise to contribute to this cognate debate in support of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the Public Records Bill 2023. As a proud member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee, I will direct most of my contribution towards the information privacy elements of this debate as the bill was sent to our committee for investigation.

An important objective of this bill is to align Queensland's privacy legislation with Commonwealth legislation as far as possible. A key part of this aligning is the definition of personal information in the Information Privacy Act 2009, the IP Act, with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1998, the Commonwealth Privacy Act. This recommendation came from Operation Impala. Currently the IP Act defines personal information as 'information or an opinion, including information or an opinion forming part of a database, whether true or not, and whether accorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion'. This bill will insert a new definition, more consistent with the Commonwealth Privacy Act in relation to personal information, namely—

information or an opinion about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable from the information or opinion—

- (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and
- (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

It goes to the concept of identifiability, which is designed to capture a broader range of information beyond just specifics in a database, and whether the details can draw you to the identity of any individual. The reforms in the bill provide a stepping stone for further reform which can work in parallel, I believe, with the Commonwealth.

One of the issues I raised with witnesses in the hearing was the question of whether privacy issues included in these reforms could be misconstrued or used by departments of our state or other public entities as an excuse not to work together. I think sometimes in the past that has been the case across different levels of government—where privacy was not actually the objective, it was actually an excuse for people not to share information and provide those wraparound services. I was pleased by departmental staff briefings and evidence given by the Information Commissioner as well as stakeholders who put forward that they think that this bill finds a good balance between the natural tension, as they described it, that exists between the need for government officers to provide wraparound services against the personal rights of privacy of individuals, which is why I support these bills in their form today. I also want to note the Attorney-General's contribution in recognising the recommendations of the committee. I thank her for her consideration and the clarifying amendments that she outlined. I think they are technical in nature but very useful so I thank her for that.


Before I touch on the Public Records Act, I want to talk about the hypocrisy that I have heard in some of the debate today from those opposite about public data and public records. I remember when an application for an RTI was put to the office of the first law officer of this state, at the time the member for Kawana, and it was denied because, in the words of the RTI officer, they were informed that the then attorney's office routinely deleted emails so that documents were therefore declared as non-existent. The first law officer of this state was routinely deleting emails so that RTI applications would be considered non-existent.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** They are not my words, that is in the words of those opposite. Those opposite who are laughing at that can think about the significance of the first law officer of this state deleting emails so they would be non-existent. The member for Nanango can laugh all she likes; there is a reason that she is on that side of the chamber.

In terms of the technical changes, can I briefly associate myself with Minister Enoch and her contribution, particularly in relation to the importance of public records when it comes to truth-telling and treaty and the First Nations advisory group. I think that will be a really important development. As I said, I will confine my contribution to the issues that came before the committee, but I do want to support Minister Enoch's contribution. I am sure she can take that for granted.

I thank our secretariat for their professionalism. This is a policy area that is not normally before our committee. They did a great job. Thank you to the submitters and the public servants who developed the bills and supported us throughout the committee process. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.24 pm): I rise to make a contribution in the cognate debate on the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill. Like the member for Stafford, I will confine my contribution to matters pertaining to the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill because that was what came before the committee that I am a member of. I also acknowledge my fellow committee members: the chair, the member for Redlands; the member for Stafford; the member for Rockhampton; the member for Theodore; and the member for Hinchinbrook. We have a pretty good committee. We have a good time. This was an interesting bill for us. As the member for Stafford said, it is one that would routinely come to us. It came to us because the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee is rather busy at the moment. I would believe that having been on that committee myself.

I will confine my contributions primarily to the implications that this bill has for local governments. Local government to me, being most close to me, are small councils like the Goondiwindi Regional Council and the Southern Downs Regional Council, and there are many councils smaller than that. As the Local Government Association of Queensland made clear in their quite comprehensive submission and in their appearance before us, councils take very seriously their responsibility to look after the data of their ratepayers and the people they do business with. It is important. The member for Nanango mentioned the data spills we have seen from the likes of Optus and others which have been quite traumatic events for many people. We do not want to see that. I would say, however, speaking generally here, that the state government is behind in its own implementation of cybersecurity and the protection of the vital information of people and information that needs to be kept confidential by the state.

The Auditor-General, in his most recent report, highlighted again that many agencies are not progressing as they should in implementing the necessary measures. I do not say that is because of a lack of will. This is a complex area. When we talk about local government we are talking about agencies that are very small and do not have the critical mass that large government departments have. If they are struggling to adapt, if they cannot help themselves, how can they help the local government. The Attorney-General in her second reading speech tried to put in context that there will be extra resourcing for the Office of the Information Commissioner in terms of beefing up their own abilities and ostensibly being able to assist local government in complying and coming up to speed with their obligations under this act. I understand that the OIC will have a budget of \$11.5 million over four years and \$2.6 million per annum ongoing.

The Local Government Association of Queensland in its submission said—

A basic Security Operations Centre and Security Information and Event Management solution in local government costs up to \$300,000 per annum, not including internal organisational resources and training. In addition to the financial commitment, finding cyber security professionals and attracting them to local government is considerably challenging. It is well documented that regional, rural, remote and First Nations councils face workforce challenges. Attracting staff with the necessary skills to comply with a mandatory DBN scheme would be difficult.

The mandatory data breach notification scheme is at the core of what I am talking about here. The LGAQ and the councils with whom I have spoken are fully seized of the intent here and they do not disagree with it. They have a voluntarily system at the moment which the Local Government Association of Queensland argued in its submission they should be able to stay with. Be that as it may, I think it is optimistic to think that, even with the additional resourcing the Office of the Information Commissioner will be given, small councils will be able to adopt and comply with the new arrangements without undue cost to themselves.


To give an example, some of the councils we are talking about are very small indeed. I often joke with the CEO of the Southern Downs Regional Council, whose previous role was CEO at the Quilpie Shire Council, that every second Wednesday it is his turn to drive the grader because the council is so small. The difficulties announced by the Local Government Association in their submission, in terms of attracting the right kind of people and, indeed, funding that, are a major concern for those small councils. Going forward, I urge the government to be accommodating with local governments and to take note of the genuine concerns that the Local Government Association of Queensland has expressed on behalf of its members about the costs of implementing and managing this scheme.

I stress that it is not the intention of councils to evade responsibility or evade a requirement to look after the data of people; it is just that they have legitimate concerns. As the mayor of Southern Downs has said to me on a number of occasions, local government attracts three per cent of the revenue—

**Mr Stevens:** Four per cent.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Mermaid Beach and former mayor of the Gold Coast. Did I have to remind you of that? Had you forgotten that you were mayor at one stage? They attract four per cent of the funding but about 30 per cent of services have to be rendered. Councils are skint. They run on very tight margins. The possibility of having to put up rates for their landholders or increase charges and fees for their communities is something that they really do not want to have to do for these kinds of purposes.

I will briefly touch on the other aspect of the cognate debate, the Public Records Bill. I associate myself with the contribution made earlier by the member for Surfers Paradise. He outlined, in vivid detail, some of the lamentable aspects of Queensland history concerning the mangocube account and how these changes have come forward because of that. We should remember that the emails in question, which were deleted but retrieved, contained evidence of improper influence by trade unions on the minister. Just today we were all handed a booklet outlining the code of practice for members of parliament. It explicitly states that we should not be influenced by those who hold power or money over us. In my view, that is the definition of the trade unions that control this government. I look forward to seeing them shown the door in '24.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (4.31 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Public Records Bill 2023. The current Public Records Act 2002 is not fit for purpose in 2023. A lot has changed in the last 20-plus years, especially in relation to data and information sharing in the digital age. That is why the Palaszczuk government initiated an independent review of the Public Records Act. The review, conducted by retired Supreme Court Justice John Byrne, made 27 recommendations to help modernise Queensland's record management framework. Twenty of the 25 legislative recommendations are addressed within this bill.

An estimated 500 public authorities across Queensland, including government departments, local governments, government owned corporations and other statutory bodies, have responsibilities under the current act. The proposed reforms contained within this bill will provide clearer requirements to those authorities as well as aligning their practices with the ever-evolving digital recordkeeping landscape. Importantly, the bill puts the responsibility for recordkeeping at the door of the CEO, the chairperson or the person responsible for the day-to-day management of the public authority. The bill is clear that a public authority must ensure its public records are made in a way that accurately shows the actions or decisions of the authority, and the matters then inform or contextualise the actions or decisions of that public authority. The new definition of a 'public record' in clause 9 reflects the increasingly digital environment in which public records are created and helps to clarify requirements. The definition covers a digital ecosystem while still accommodating existing and future physical records.

Public authorities are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing accessibility of public records. They need to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the public record maintains its integrity and can be accessed and used. The bill also requires public authorities to comply with any relevant standards made by the State Archivist. They must also have regard to any relevant policies made by the State Archivist and may have regard to any guidelines made. Public authorities are responsible for setting the restricted access periods for the public records they transfer to the archives in alignment with the time periods set in the bill. They must make decisions about access to restricted records and can apply conditions when granting access.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. There is way too much background noise. Tone it down a bit or maybe take it outside.


**Ms McMILLAN:** It is like being in a classroom again, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr Kelly:** Year 9 maths.

**Ms McMILLAN:** That is right: year 9 boys on a Friday afternoon. The bill includes the requirement that decisions about access and any conditions applied must be made within 35 days after receiving a request, with a period longer having to be agreed by the State Archivist. There is also a new requirement within the bill that will require a public authority to advise the State Archivist of why an access request to a restricted public record has been denied.

The independent review also recommended that the State Archivist have the power to take custody of public records from public authorities to protect records from loss or damage. The bill will implement that recommendation and establish an ability, in clause 26, for the State Archivist to take custody of public records from a public authority where the public records are over 25 years old or of permanent value, at risk of loss or damage and no longer in active use by the public authority.

I acknowledge the work of the committee and the deputy chair as well as all committee members. I thank the committee secretariat. I have focused my contribution on the Public Records Bill as that is the bill that came before my committee. I acknowledge both the Attorney-General for her work and also the minister for her work on the Public Records Act. The aspect of the act that deals with data sovereignty and First Nations history is going to be a really important step for us as Queenslanders in determining the true history of Queensland. There will be many truths uncovered during the process of the truth-telling inquiry which will be supported by the Public Records Act. I commend the minister for her work and for capturing that very important history in Queensland. We look forward to very much improved and significant relationships with our First Nations peoples over the coming years. I commend both bills to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.37 pm): I am going to make a brief contribution on both the Public Records Bill and the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, but as a member of the committee that conducted the inquiry I will focus most of my comments on the Public Records Bill. At the outset, I take a moment to offer my sincere thanks to the committee secretariat. They work tirelessly as I know all the secretariats do. I also thank the rest of the committee members for the time spent on this bill. I will avoid repeating a lot of what others have said.

Obviously, this is an important bill to update, modernise and harmonise processes for the management of public records in Queensland and, specifically, those around the management of the work of the State Archivist. From the inquiry I certainly have a better understanding of how the State Archives work and the function of the State Archivist. There is a lot more to it than probably most of us would appreciate. It was an interesting bit of work that we did. We had an invitation from the State Archivist to visit the State Archives at some point. No doubt, at this stage that will be in the new year. I am very much looking forward to that. Heaven only knows what you might find digging around in the State Archives. We will see what comes up.

The proposed creation of a First Nations advisory group is a really important feature of this bill. It is important, not just in the bill but more generally in our work here, that we acknowledge the importance of, and the very real complexity around, the preservation and management of sometimes very culturally sensitive First Nations archival material. It was very interesting to hear from the State Archivist about how that is done already and to hear directly from Dr Rose Barrowcliffe, who is already in a role as the First Nations archives adviser to the State Archivist. I think Dr Barrowcliffe brings a really nuanced and deep understanding to these issues. It was great to have her share her insights with us.

It was also great to catch up with members of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the ITTB. Specifically, Mick Gooda and Katie Kiss came and shared some evidence with the committee. The role of the State Archivist in the truth-telling inquiry will be absolutely pivotal. I will be excited to see the terms of reference for the truth-telling inquiry at whatever point they come about. I am sure the ITTB is eagerly awaiting their publication so that, once the bill is proclaimed, we can get the truth-telling inquiry underway. I am certainly looking forward to seeing some progress on that front.

As others have mentioned, it is worth noting just how disappointing it is to have seen the opposition's response to the previous bipartisanship around truth-telling and treaty following the referendum result. I think it speaks to a real lack of leadership and a real lack of interest in actually driving change that the state needs to see. It is encouraging to hear some reaffirmation from the Premier about the importance of truth-telling, but I have to say that I would like to see firmer leadership from the Premier around treaty and around continuing to actually lead a program towards treaty in this state.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Maiwar, I am listening closely and you are starting to drift away from the bill. Can you stick with the bill, please.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Certainly. Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. Obviously the work of the State Archivist will be fundamental to the work of not just the truth-telling inquiry but also the processes of treaty negotiation that the ITTB is currently working on. That work is a feature of the committee's hearings on this inquiry. I will not labour the point other than to simply say: to refer to the need for bipartisanship on this one issue when the government knows it is empowered to make progress on any given issue is something of a cop-out, and I would encourage the Premier to pursue it with a little more fervour than she has in recent times.

Some submissions argued for greater independence for the State Archivist. Broadly speaking, that is a proposal we agree with. More independence for important public officers like the State Archivist is, as a general proposition, better, but I can also agree with each and every one of those submitters who broadly agreed that this bill does represent genuine progress. It is a real improvement on the status quo.



I do not think you can speak to this bill without at least saying the word 'mangocube', but I leave it at that. As far as the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill goes, we did have some concerns about the exclusion in the bill—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr BERKMAN:** Two words: that is all it takes to get everyone really excited. It is the last week of school—breakup week. Everyone is ready to go.

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

**Mr BERKMAN:** I had some concern about the exclusion of entities established by letters patent from the definition of public authority. I welcome the Attorney-General's indication that that will be dealt with in amendments. I will leave my contribution there.



**Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (4.44 pm): I rise to speak to the Public Records Bill 2023 and Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I would like to speak specifically to the amendments to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999. My No. 1 priority as the Minister for Resources is worker safety. We all have a responsibility when it comes to this. There are a large number of stakeholders within the industry, including workers themselves—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr STEWART:** It is an amendment. Resource companies as well as worker representative groups have a long and strong history when it comes to advocating for mine safety. My office and I regularly meet with multiple unions which represent numerous workers across our industry. Although minor, the amendments are still important. Mine workers have a long and proud history of unionism and solidarity in Queensland. From December 1, the mining division of the CFMMEU will be known as the Mining & Energy Union QLD District Branch. Ensuring that this is reflected in the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 is important because it removes any ambiguity when it comes to the act and ensures industrial safety and health representatives are able to access sites. Industrial safety and health representatives are the backbone of the important work the Mining and Energy Union does for workers' wellbeing. They are often the first on the scene alongside the inspectorate when major incidents occur and do a tremendous amount of work and travel to ensure they are doing the best by workers on sites. It is critical that we support them in this role.

It is important our legislation continues to be proactive, modern and reflective of the current state and practices of industry. Our government is committed to maintaining effective mining health and safety legislation to ensure every worker in the Queensland resources industry goes home safely. I commend the bills to the House.



**Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.46 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the cognate debate on the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill. As a member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee, it was a pleasure to have the opportunity to run the ruler over this bill before deciding it should be passed. I will speak today to the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the bill that our committee had the task of scrutinising. We get to do some pretty exciting and important work as members of parliament and as members of parliamentary committees. The consideration of this legislation was definitely the second of those.

The purpose of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to address several issues. By way of background, on 12 October 2023 the bill was introduced by the Hon. Leeanne Enoch, the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts, on behalf of the Attorney-General. The bill aims to strengthen Queensland's information privacy framework, better protect personal information, and improve responsiveness and readiness for data breaches and data misuse. It also clarifies and improves the operation of Queensland information privacy and right to information frameworks. The bill also seeks to provide for the proactive release of cabinet documents.


We all live in an age where information is being gathered and stored in the cloud or somewhere else. Data breaches have become something that we deal with on a daily, weekly and nightly basis. It is important to have legislation that moves with the times to help those who have been the victim of data breaches. As a result of the questions asked during the committee process, we found that this bill does not address or strengthen cybersecurity and related issues but sits at the back end of some of the important work being done by different departments and organisations.

Most of the amendments proposed in the bill relate to the Information Privacy Act 2009 and the Right to Information Act 2009. The major changes proposed are: aligning the definition of 'personal information' in the IP Act; adopting a single set of privacy principles for the Queensland privacy principles based on the equivalent federal principles; establishing a mandatory data breach notification scheme for public agencies; enhancing the powers and functions of the Information Commissioner; improving the process of making and dealing with an RTI application; and clarifying the definition of 'public authority'.

Many of the changes made by the bill are in response to recommendations made by the recent review report, the Coaldrake report and the Impala report. Most of these recommendations would be adopted in full if this bill were to pass. The changes will affect a number of statutory bodies and organisations, departments, including ministerial officers, local government—I will speak to that in a second—and public authorities.

Some negatives about the legislation before us have been raised by the LGAQ. Some of our smaller regional councils have been in contact with the LGAQ to lobby on their behalf. There seem to be a lot of onerous requirements put back onto local councils. It is hard enough to find people who want to go to regional Queensland to fill some of these local government jobs. The new data breach notification scheme and the requirements of local governments in that regard will be quite onerous. We would hope that the state government takes this into consideration during the implementation phase. Committee members asked these questions during the committee process. It is good to see that it has been thought about already. We would hope that as the scheme is implemented the state government supports those councils—in particular, those smaller regional councils. It is hard enough, as I said, to attract people to engineering jobs and even some of the more hands-on work. It will be hard to recruit people who are up to date with the IP world and the data collating and collection world to those remote areas.

I will not take up too much more time of the House. The bill seems to have the support of both sides of the House. It certainly had the support of both sides of the House in the committee process. Once again, I thank the member for Southern Downs, the deputy chair, as well as the chair of the committee, the member for Redlands. I also thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat. They did a fantastic job working on this bill. It was very informative. We had all the information we needed to scrutinise the bill to the fullest extent. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.51 pm): I rise today to speak on the inquiry into the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the Public Records Bill 2023. These are two very important bills brought before the House relating to the way information is protected and maintained in this state.


We live in a day and age where we have access to a wide range of information every day and, if anything, there is no escaping information. Information is part of everything we do. It is there to guide and help navigate us through life. There is a clear distinction between both of these bills in how we protect and preserve information. It is equally important that we have the right mechanisms in place that would ultimately increase public confidence and trust.

I will first turn my attention to the inquiry into the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The primary objectives of the bill are to: strengthen Queensland's information privacy framework to better protect personal information and improve responses and remedies for data breaches and data misuse; clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right to information frameworks; and provide for the proactive release of cabinet documents. Most of the amendments proposed in the bill relate to the Information Privacy Act 2009 and the Right to Information Act 2009.

The major changes the bill proposes include the following seven parts: aligning the definition of 'personal information' in the IP Act with the equivalent federal act; adopting a single set of privacy principles—the Queensland privacy principles—based on the equivalent federal principles; establishing a mandatory data breach notification scheme for government agencies; enhancing the powers and functions of the Information Commissioner; improving the process for making and dealing with RTI applications under the RTI Act and the process for making privacy complaints under the IP Act; clarifying the definition of 'public authority' and thus the scope of the IP and RTI acts; and facilitating the introduction of a proactive release scheme for cabinet documents by ensuring that certain information and documents will remain exempt from the scheme and, therefore, public release; providing ministers with protection from civil liability; and protecting public interest immunity. The bill also proposes amendments to section 408E of the Criminal Code to remove the reference to 'hacking' in the offence title to clarify the type of conduct captured by the offence.

In relation to the Public Records Bill 2023, the bill would replace the Public Records Act 2002 and implement public record-keeping legislation more suited to contemporary technology, community expectations and cultural attitudes. To achieve this, the bill proposes requirements for making, maintaining and storing public records. The bill also proposes to recognise the importance of First Nations peoples' knowledge and history and the sensitive nature of their public records. If passed, the bill would provide principles for public records relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, establish a First Nations Advisory Group to work with State Archives and ensure membership of the Public Records Review Committee includes at least one Aboriginal person and one Torres Strait Islander person. The bill also proposes to increase the independence of the State Archivist, enable the State Archivist to issue standards by regulation, investigate compliance and extend restricted access periods for public records.

As a member of the Community Support and Services Committee, I want to acknowledge and thank all those who sent through their submissions on the Public Records Bill, all the witnesses who gave up their valuable time to make a contribution to this legislative reform, as well as briefing materials from the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts, and the State Archivist. I want to acknowledge and thank the Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, and the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts, Leeanne Enoch. I also want to acknowledge the work of and thank the Education, Employment and Training Committee and the Community Support and Services Committee who took carriage in the examination of both bills, both committee chairs, members of the committees, the committee secretariats and Hansard for their work. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (4.56 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate but specifically on the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 as a member of the committee that looked into the bill. Firstly, I want to say thanks to my fellow committee members for the work we did on this bill. It was quite interesting to learn how the federal Privacy Act worked and its ramifications for the state and other entities.


The primary functions of the legislation we are talking about here today are: to strengthen Queensland's information privacy framework to better protect personal information and improve responses and remedies for data breaches and data misuse; to clarify and improve the operation of Queensland's information privacy and right to information frameworks; and to provide for the proactive release of cabinet documents.

There were three recommendations made. I want to focus on some of the concerns that the Local Government Association Queensland expressed during the committee hearings. I understand where they are coming from, especially when you look at smaller regional, remote and First Nations councils. It is very difficult to attract necessary IT professionals to work in those remote areas. That is one concern that the Local Government Association expressed, and there is also the cost of it.

We all want data protected. We all want data to be kept safe. We want to make sure that these hacking incidents are kept to a minimum. During the committee hearings the department stated that a lot of the data breaches are caused by human error—that is, the accidental sending of emails to the wrong individuals which, as you can understand, is a breach of privacy. These issues are normally caused by human error. When it comes to the hacking of computer systems, it will always be a major issue between the hackers and the internet security and IT professionals trying to deal with it. It will always be a long cat-and-mouse game.

When it comes to local councils, I do agree with the Local Government Association of Queensland. We do need to give them some type of support—whether it is monetary or, even better, technical—to help them implement these systems, because a small council with a very small ratepayer base will find it extremely difficult to fund this. The Local Government Association stated that they are looking at costs upwards of \$300,000 per annum. If you are looking at a very small council with a very small rate base, it is a massive impost on those councils. That is something that the government does need to look into to support these councils.

Cybersecurity is everyone's responsibility. It is a very important matter for all levels of government. I want to thank committee members for their work on this matter and all of the submitters who took the time to address the concerns of the committee. I found it interesting to learn how the Privacy Act works federally and how we line it up with state bodies, local governments and their agencies. With those comments, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.01 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023—otherwise known as the privacy amendment bill—and the Public Records Bill 2023. I support both bills and any amendments proposed by the minister.

The privacy amendment bill was introduced to the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 12 October 2023. As the Office of the Information Commissioner noted in its submission, ‘We welcome this bill and in general terms support it.’ The bill addresses recommendations and proposals made over a number of years. If passed, it will modernise the information privacy protection framework in the Queensland public sector and implement a range of measures intended to streamline and simplify the right to information access process. We also note that the bill seeks to address some of the recommendations made in the Coaldrake report on culture and accountability in the Public Service sector.


As has been pointed out by some commentators, a key provision of the privacy amendment bill is to introduce a mandatory data breach notification scheme to Queensland government departments and agencies. Hidden amongst the amendments is a subtle change to section 33 of the Information Privacy Act, which regulates the transfer of personal information to entities outside Australia. This is relevant if personal information is stored on computer networks and servers outside Australia; for example, in cloud-based service providers located overseas. The privacy amendment bill will replace the word ‘transfer’ in section 33 with the word ‘disclose’. This is helpful in many ways, but it also changes the way departments and agencies must manage the disclosure of personal information overseas.

The Public Records Bill 2023 was also introduced in the Legislative Assembly by the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts on 12 October 2023. Prior to the bill’s introduction in May 2022 the Queensland government announced an independent review of the Public Records Office Act 2002. On 31 August 2022 Justice Byrne AO, RFD provided the *Report of review of the Public Records Act 2002* to the Queensland government. Rather than amending the act, a new bill has been developed to provide greater flexibility for drafting changes and improving overall outcomes for modernisation, clarity and consistency. As detailed in the explanatory notes, the report by Justice Byrne AO RFD and the Queensland government’s response to the *Report of review of the Public Records Act 2002* were released on 16 February 2023 along with a consultation regulatory impact statement for public feedback.

An analysis of the consultation outcomes found that modernised legislation would be the most effective approach to support public authorities and the community. The Public Records Bill has been developed in response and implements a majority of the 25 recommendations for legislative change that are detailed in the report. As the minister pointed out in her first reading speech, this bill will replace the Public Records Act 2002 with a modernised record-keeping legislative framework. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that the storage, maintenance, preservation and accessibility of public records reflects the changing nature of record keeping. There are currently at the Queensland State Archives over 3.5 million records that tell many stories of the state’s history spanning 200 years. The Queensland State Archives plays a pivotal role in preserving our collective memory, offering a window into our history as well as a comprehensive record of past events, policies and decisions, providing a deep understanding of how our society has evolved over time. As pointed out by the Queensland Human Rights Commission—

While the regime for the management of public records established by the *Public Records Act 2002* appears to include records created and received by entities established by letters patent<sup>5</sup>, and requires custody and preservation of certain records, it does not give rights of access to documents unless and until those documents come into the possession of the Queensland State Archives.

In closing, I would like to thank the Education, Employment and Training Committee, committee secretariat, submitters and Hansard. I commend the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the Public Records Bill 2023 as well as any amendments proposed by the minister to the Legislative Assembly.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.06 pm): As a member of the Community Support and Services Committee, it was interesting to scrutinise the Public Records Bill which is being debated today in cognate with the information privacy bill. I will focus my brief contribution this afternoon on the former. I first want to acknowledge committee members and the good work of the committee in scrutinising the legislation, the secretariat and committee staff who worked on the bill.

The Public Records Bill is important, as it responds to recent work done that recommends changes to the Public Records Act. The main policy objectives of the bill as stated in the explanatory notes are to—

- provide a framework for making, managing and allowing access to public records in a way that benefits present and future generations
- minimise public authorities' ambiguity regarding the meaning of a public record under the *Public Records Act* (the Act)
- minimise the chance for relevant public records to be inappropriately managed
- recognise the importance of public records for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples—


to ensure that consultation and the necessary inputs occur with Indigenous peoples in those cultural regards, and to reduce the risk of loss or alteration of public records, amongst a range of other objectives that have been well and truly covered by other speakers today.

While I will not be opposing this bill, I am concerned about several issues that have been raised during the work of the committee by stakeholders and submitters, chiefly relating to issues concerning integrity and integrity in government. Labor's 2017 mangocube affair involved allegations against the member for Miller in relation to the unauthorised disposal of public records through the deletion of his private email account. It was reported that 1,200 deleted items were identified as public records and were not authorised for deletion or disposal. Some of these items should have been retained permanently and others should have been retained for seven years.

While the CCC did not charge the minister due to what has been described by others as technical definitional grounds, the State Archivist recommended further strong action be taken and called for a wider inquiry. It has been concerning that the government has been very slow to act upon the calls for urgent change made by the then state archivist in 2017. I do not intend to go into a lot more detail on that. I note that shadow ministers and other speakers have done that and I would refer interested parties to those speeches.

Further, the bill does not give the State Archivist the same independence as other integrity officers, such as the Auditor-General, the Integrity Commissioner or the Queensland Ombudsman. As such, the bill does not fully address the independence issue around the State Archivist as they are still answerable to the minister. Ministerial interference with the State Archivist's investigation into the mangocube affair shows why this independence is required.

There are other matters of concern that are outlined in the statement of reservation of the committee, and I would encourage others to read that in more detail. I do not intend to go into that in any further depth. People can look to that statement of reservation for more detail. I conclude by saying that I will not be opposing the bill but that a new government is needed to fix Labor's integrity crisis. It is the only way forward. Queenslanders will need to show Labor the door in '24.


 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.10 pm): I rise in support of the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Public Records Bill. These bills make critical reforms to the way that we collect, use, access, store and disclose information recorded by Queensland public sector agencies and those businesses and people who work with our public sector agencies.

Protecting privacy is paramount. It is essential and key to ensuring our basic dignity, safety and self-determination. We know that when data falls into the wrong hands it can harm people, businesses and other organisations. Identity theft, identity fraud, financial loss, physical harm, reputational harm, emotional harm such as embarrassment or distress, and discrimination are all examples of the types of significant injuries that can occur due to the misuse of information.

I do not think anyone would take issue with the statement that technology has become increasingly powerful and at a rate that is extremely hard to keep up with. Information technology develops at an extremely rapid rate. Information is connected and available to others and in the public domain and it is used in ways that we never anticipated. It is great to see these laws before this place are taking real steps to keep pace and remain contemporary when it comes to the legislative framework that applies. We also need to recognise the needs of preserving our history, including recognition of the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These bills together strengthen Queensland's approach to information management in the interests of the Queensland public.

I turn specifically to the Public Records Bill. This supports the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by requiring that public authorities accurately record the details of their decision. The bill also increases the time limit for prosecution of a contravention for unlawful disposal in relation to records from one year to three years, including a new section around attempted disposal. Under both bills, there will be new penalties for those who seek to undermine the transparency and accountability that the Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to maintaining and strengthening.

In addition, the Public Records Bill has an additional significant purpose, and that is to recognise the importance of public records as they relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Indigenous data sovereignty, Indigenous data governance and Indigenous cultural and intellectual property are a key focus of information management at the State Archives. Through an advisory group to the Queensland State Archives, First Nations people will have ownership over data that is and has been collected about them. I want to recognise the contributions of Dr Rose Barrowcliffe, the state's First Nations Archives Adviser, who played a crucial role in conveying the feedback from communities across Queensland. Her work highlighted the need to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in decision-making processes for records management. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.15 pm): I rise to address the cognate debate in relation to the Information Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the Public Records Bill 2023—or what might otherwise be described as a collection of provisions that are a response to: the foolish failures of Minister Mark Bailey in the mangocube affair; the sidelining of the former state archivist, Mike Summerell, who was a casualty of the Palaszczuk Labor government's aversion to the truth; or the litany of failures of leadership, failures to hold incompetent, dodgy, foolish ministers to account and failures to govern in the interests of all Queenslanders.

It has been 17 long months since Professor Coaldrake recommended the release of cabinet documents in his report into culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector, yet somehow we are sitting here in the last sitting week of 2023 still debating whether the state government should inform the people whom they have been elected to serve. I should note that we are only addressing some of the provisions contained within the Coaldrake report.

It comes down to common sense, but more than that it comes down to trust. Queenslanders deserve to trust those who represent them and who spend their hard-earned tax dollars. The crux of this debate is whether the state government can be open and transparent with Queenslanders. If something is not measured, it cannot be fixed—we have said that many times—and we only need to look at the Queensland Health crisis and the out-of-date hospital data for proof.

Queenslanders would be shocked to know that this bill is responding to recommendations made in reviews up to six years ago. There is no good reason for this to have taken so long. The only logical conclusion for the delays is that the Premier has been hoping that, with the passage of time, the level of public interest in relation to the failures of openness and transparency of this government will ease.

Getting information from this state government is like pulling hen's teeth. It is my view—and it is a view that journalists and members of the public have also indicated they hold—that the state government has a deliberate position to make the provision of information as difficult as possible. It is a policy that results in people giving up looking altogether. It is evident in the government's approach to the publishing of open data and it is evident in the government's approach to right to information and transparency in government.

I know firsthand, after spending the better part of two years on a right to information application after whistleblowers came to me and sought help to address bullying at the top of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service. I put in a right to information request and it took years to get that information. The information that I sought was deliberately withheld because it was politically inconvenient. I was blocked at every single opportunity. Documents disappeared and then they magically reappeared after I made it clear that I knew they already existed. That process alone took years of appeals and long written submissions to the Information Commissioner arguing, among other points, why information about a state government entity with an annual budget of more than \$1.3 billion and which employs more than 6,000 staff was in the public interest. That information was always in the public interest. It had a direct impact on the provision of health care on the Sunshine Coast and on the welfare of doctors, nurses and other health professionals. To suggest for a second that the information was not in the public interest was only ever an attempt to delay the release of that information.

I spent weeks of my time responding to nebulous arguments and bureaucratic RTI processes that were deliberately designed to make it harder to hold the state government to account. Imagine other Queenslanders who want this same information; they are not in a position to invest that time and that effort. I frequently have constituents ask for help because they cannot get the information they need from government departments. Common complaints are about websites which are too confusing or they do not know where to start. They cannot get through to anyone on the phone or, if they do, the person on the other end of the line cannot help them. It is frustrating for people who are trying to do the right thing and help themselves, only to be obstructed by processes of bureaucracy. The Queensland

government's Open Data Portal is not kept up to date, and the information on there is often inconsistent, difficult to find and hard to read. I would suggest it is a deliberate policy position of this government to disaggregate data to make it such that you cannot compare across different time periods.

Let's look at Queensland Health's quality and safety information site. It was a website designed to keep patients and GPs informed and it is not even kept up to date. It would be laughable if it were not such a serious issue. It is just the latest in a long list that shows the government is not committed to openness and transparency. There is most certainly a need to improve the provision of data to those Queenslanders we are here to serve, and these bills do take some steps to address those shortfalls, but there is considerably more work to be done.

Queenslanders have a right to see how the government is delivering the services they depend on. It is simple: Queenslanders should be told when the state government makes a decision that affects them. Reports and reviews should be shared for anyone interested in reading them, which is why this bill includes provisions that enable the proactive release of cabinet documents. Note the word 'proactive' instead of 'reactive' which, I would have to say, during my time in this House, every single instance where the government has released information has been on a reactive basis. If we look at non-cabinet documents, that has been the track record. It is hard to see that changing, based on their track record to date.

Let's have a look at the budget blowouts which are prime examples of information that should have been shared with taxpayers—the multibillion dollar blowouts on Cross River Rail, the multibillion dollar blowouts on Gold Coast faster rail and train blowouts. What is the consequence of those blowouts? When the information has been dragged out of the government, we finally get that information about the budget blowouts under this government, but I want to look at what the consequence is of that information not being released in a proactive manner. The consequence is that critical projects get cut—critical projects like the Mooloolah River Interchange or the Sugar Road-Mooloolaba Road intersection upgrade, both of which have been cut under this government. It is funny how promises get publicly announced, but broken promises get swept under the mat.

I move on to the provisions that relate to mandatory data breach notifications. Under those provisions, ministers, departments, local governments and most public authorities will be required to keep a register of data breaches which include specified information, and they will be required to prepare and publish a data breach policy—that is important. Importantly, if an eligible data breach and serious harm is likely to occur, then a notification will be required. That is an important provision to provide confidence to Queenslanders, but it will also have an impact on entities like local government, many of whom are already under budget pressure. That is also true in relation to the adoption of consistent privacy principles. While those provisions in these bills are largely reflective of the requirements placed on private sector entities, there will be costs associated with implementing such provisions, the impact of which was borne out in the LGAQ's submission. It is important that councils are resourced to meet their requirements under the privacy principles because if they are not, it will impact their ability to deliver the services our communities expect.

I want to use a real-world example. Like many regions across Queensland, my community on the Sunshine Coast would like to see more CCTV as one of the ways that they can keep our community safe, and indeed I would like to see more CCTV in public areas like parks so that those who do the wrong thing can be held to account. However, one of the barriers to the adoption of more CCTV on the Sunshine Coast are the requirements to fall on the Sunshine Coast Council to manage and safeguard the personal information in the form of CCTV footage. It is an issue that was detailed in a previous Audit Office report. While public officials and entities obviously need to safeguard private information, so too must we resource entities like the Sunshine Coast Council to ensure we do not get a perverse outcome where councils do not want to install things like CCTV cameras in public spaces because of the second-order issues associated with the management of information such as the CCTV footage. We need to support councils in the implementation of these important measures. I note that the minister has indicated that additional funding will be provided to the Information Commissioner to help facilitate an education program on some of these things, but we need to support councils through this process. As the Coaldrake report stated—


It is a commonsense proposition that citizens are likely to have more trust in their governments if they know that decisions that use taxpayers' funds, and that may affect their lives quite directly, are made in the open, and are subject to scrutiny.

It is common sense. That is one of the reasons why in our the Right Priorities for Queensland's Future document we have specifically addressed these issues. We have said that an LNP government will reform the right to information processes, and I have spoken about the importance of doing that. We have said that we will strengthen the independence of the Integrity Commissioner—that is an

important measure as well—and the importance of the Auditor-General. We will ensure that we bring a culture of frank and fearless advice into the Public Service, and we will appoint a minister for open data and a minister for integrity in government because they are both sadly lacking in this current government.

Queenslanders deserve a government that is open and transparent. All Queenslanders want for Christmas this year is an open and transparent government in which they can trust. Just today we have seen the government's commitment to openness and transparency when the Minister for Transport and Main Roads was dragged out kicking and screaming to a press conference to admit that he had hidden a \$3.1 billion overrun—\$3.1 billion! It is time to show Labor the door in '24.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I remind all members that you need to be in your own seats if you want to participate in the debate.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.25 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate. I will be focusing my contribution on the Public Records Bill. I thought I would start with a short personal anecdote. I recently took out a subscription to ancestry.com looking for great exciting things in my past. Unfortunately, I have not uncovered too much, but what I have uncovered is the story of a great-great-aunt of mine. Some of the early records that I could see on her indicated that she had died from blood poisoning, which is fine. I later found articles about her that stated she had actually been injured earlier from an accidental gunshot. She had survived that, but that was the link to the blood poisoning. She had died as a result of blood poisoning as a result of the accidental gunshot. I then found another article which confirmed that it was her husband who was the one who accidentally shot her. While I am not finished looking at her story, already I am seeing flags that suggest what possibly could be domestic and family violence and that she had died through an act of domestic violence rather than blood poisoning.

I know it is a very sombre story, but I use it to highlight a couple of things. The first thing I want to highlight is that we like to think of our history as this really static and set thing, but it is not. It is actually quite dynamic and able to be reframed as we learn more about the history that we have lived through.


The second thing is that we as humans are hardwired to be curious and we want to know who we are, where we have come from, and the experiences that have shaped us and our families and our environment. For these reasons, our ability to identify, secure, manage and recall Queensland's records, including our public records, is critically important. This bill intends to establish a framework for making, managing and accessing public records in a way that benefits current and future governments for generations. In the introductory speech, the minister outlined the rationale behind this, including the changing expectations of community, but, principally, this bill is about justice and the recognition that comes when stories are uncovered, told or retold in a fuller way. It is also about truth. I am proud to be a member of a government that is committed to truth-telling here in Queensland, that we are brave enough as a government and brave enough as people to embark on a path that is going to at times be deeply uncomfortable and unforgettable, but one that will make a substantial contribution towards First Nations justice and one that will help all Queenslanders reframe the relationship we have with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters.

Clauses 1 to 4 of the bill introduces public records principles relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enhance recognition of First Nations' rights through rules and administration, including the creation, management and keeping of these records. These principles include the knowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gain from being the custodians of the land, sea, water, air and resources.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bush, adjourned.

## FISHERIES LEGISLATION (SPANISH MACKEREL AND BAR ROCKCOD) AMENDMENT DECLARATION

### Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.30 pm): I move—

That the Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel and Bar Rockcod) Amendment Declaration 2023, subordinate legislation No. 80 of 2023, tabled in the House on 22 August 2023, be disallowed.

In particular, I take issue with the following elements of the regulation: reducing the total quota entitlement take of Spanish mackerel for commercial fishers from 578 tonnes to 165 tonnes; reducing the recreational possession limit to one fish per person, or to two fish per boat; removing the previous



additional possession allowances for extended charter trips; and adding a further regulated period for the northern Spanish mackerel waters for 2023-2025. I table the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2017 stock assessment report that places the Spanish mackerel fishery sustainable biomass at 40 per cent.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: Report titled 'Stock assessment of Australian east coast Spanish mackerel: Predictions of stock status and reference points', 2018 [\[2012\]](#).

I table the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2021 stock assessment report that, just three years later, places the fishery's sustainable biomass at 17 per cent.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: Report titled 'Stock assessment of Australian east coast Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus commerson*) 2021' [\[2013\]](#).

I table the peer review by Neil Klaer, commissioned by the government, into the fishery's 2021 stock assessment report.

*Tabled paper:* Report by Mr Neil Klaer, dated 2021, titled 'Independent review of the stock assessment of east coast Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus commerson*) in Queensland, Australia' [\[2014\]](#).

I table the independent review of the 2021 assessment by Dr Simon Hoyle, an expert tuna fish family stock assessment scientist, which was commissioned by the Queensland Seafood Industry Association.

*Tabled paper:* Report by Mr Simon Hoyle and Mr Alistair Dunn, Hoyle Consulting & Ocean Environmental, dated 30 June 2023, titled 'Review of the 2021 stock assessment for Australian east coast Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus commerson*)' [\[2015\]](#).

The stock assessment done by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in 2017 placed the mackerel fishery at 40 per cent. The same department's 2021 stock assessment report, just three years later, placed the fishery's sustainable biomass at 17 per cent—a dramatic decline in a very short period. The east coast Spanish mackerel fish is an iconic fish in North Queensland, with the species often being the fish of choice for many, including me. It is always my first choice when I go to the fish and chip shop. I love my mackerel.

The fishery also provides recreational fishers with an opportunity to connect with our sea country and is heavily relied upon as a source of food. In 2018-19, the fisheries commercial sector contributed \$6.7 million, including flow-on effects to the economy, for the mackerel fishery. In 2018-19, the fisheries commercial sector contributed 66 full-time-equivalent jobs. A lot of people might think that is not many jobs, but in a small community like Lucinda it is a hell of a lot of jobs. That is a really big number. All too often, we sit in this place and look at numbers and say, 'It is only 100 or 50 jobs. We'll just take some more money out and create some more Public Service jobs. We have replaced jobs, so no-one has lost any jobs.' But these jobs are created from using a renewable resource from the ocean. We did not have to take taxpayers' money away from something to create something here. A sustainable business is run off a renewable resource that has been there forever, and you are taking that ability away from us. Whilst it may not seem like a large number of jobs, they are very important to the communities that rely on access to the fishery.

During 2018-19, the total value of commercially landed catch was estimated to be \$3.4 million. Approximately 90 per cent was sold in Queensland, with the reminder sold interstate. You had better find another activity that will create some economic activity in that same place and of commensurate value, because we keep closing these sorts of industries in Queensland. I do not see anything magically replacing it that is not directly funded, like the construction of infrastructure, by the taxpayer.

Prior to this year, which will see Spanish mackerel catch quotas reduced to just 165 tonnes, around 300 to 350 tonnes of Spanish mackerel was harvested annually by commercial fishers in Queensland—about 240 licences—while about 170 tonnes are taken by the recreational sector. The total allowable catch for the commercial sector has been 578 tonnes. For quite some time now, they have been catching up to 600 tonnes as the quota amount. The Queensland government, through the fisheries department, has been saying, 'You're allowed to have 600 tonnes,' and they have been saying, 'We've only been taking out 300 to 350 tonnes of that.' They have been taking half of what they have been allowed for many years. Now Fisheries has come to government with a new stock assessment model: 'Hey presto, you are at 17 per cent now. You have smashed the fishery and you've been taking too much.' I think you could reasonably respond by saying, 'It sounds like you have done a pretty bad job of managing the fishery then.' Otherwise, you have invented this new stock assessment model which conveniently works to the ideology of the government, which is to shut down these industries, particularly the ones that offend people who watch David Attenborough and *Finding Nemo* on the TV. They say, 'We don't want to catch any fish in the sea. That's terrible business. Any activity that involves the killing of an animal has to be removed out of the Queensland economy.' That is what is happening. I challenge anyone to deny that.

Look at what we are dealing with in the gulf and east coast with net fishing at the moment. There is absolutely no science behind it, but the government want to pursue this. They did have a crack at the science on the Spanish mackerel, so it will be interesting to see what some of the responses will be here.

In 2021 Fisheries claimed for the first time that Spanish mackerel stocks were depleted. This was despite the stocks being put at 40 per cent a few years prior. Once it goes below 20 per cent, you have a problem and you need to start cutting back the industry drastically. They base this on two things: calculations of fish stock using data going back to 1912; and data on the fish catch to set their baseline—how many boats were operating—with a computer model that calculates how many mackerel are in the reef now. Much of this is based on taking the logbooks and catch inventory from the boats that are out there. An interesting part of that process was that the people who were contributing the data would say, 'We're not happy with the results you are getting from this. We can't see how this has all played out. Can you give us the data so we can apply it through the modelling that we have to try and replicate these results, because we just don't know where you are coming up with this.' They could not once find where this 17 per cent figure came from.

It is hard to conceive of any other scenario than one which would be entirely consistent with the theme from this government, which is, 'Let's just find an industry to sacrifice at the altar of the environmentalists to wave our credentials down in Brisbane—something to shut down and sacrifice.' Again, it might not seem much to members here, but those 66 jobs meant something to us in North Queensland. They really did. Members can think flippantly that it might win them some votes in the election, but there is a real cost to this. There is also a real cost for people around Queensland who are trying to buy mackerel for their table.

There are immediate and widespread concerns about the new stock assessment model that was used to arrive at the currently available biomass. It was said that this stock synthesis model, this new model that was being used, could have some flaws. At the time of the release Fisheries Queensland claimed this work had been peer reviewed. As we mentioned before, a report was commissioned. Then Neil Klaer, the peer reviewer, stated very explicitly that he had considerable disagreement with the main conclusion of the original report. He states in the last sentence of the summary—

I am unable to support the conclusions regarding future harvest levels for the east coast Spanish mackerel stock ...

Then Peter Ridd made commentary on this saying that a peer reviewer's disagreement was hidden. He said, damning as it is, that is not the concern. He said the concern is that when the fisheries department was talking about this they said, 'We have come up with this model and it has been peer reviewed.' However, they did not go on to say, 'The peer reviewer actually disagreed with what we said.' They just said to the unwitting public, who are assumed to be ignorant on this subject—and they are preying on that—'It's been peer reviewed so that is it.' That was highly deceptive conduct. They should have been saying, 'It has been peer reviewed but he disagreed with us.' It was highly misleading of the government and the fisheries department to do that.

Following the release of the report, the Queensland seafood industry—fish and seafood shops—immediately rallied and expressed their concerns overnight. The government told them the industry was in crisis and the only way to address this was a ban on Spanish mackerel fishing. The industry reps were asking, 'How can we have any trust in Queensland fisheries' ability to manage anything when they have been the one managing this fishery for years. We have caught half the quota and now you are telling us it is under stress and we have to pay the price.'

I expect the minister and the government tonight to say there was a consultation process, but from our perspective this has been tokenistic. It was designed to provide a mandate to push this through. I can assure honourable members there is a hell of a lot of participants in the industry who are very dissatisfied with this outcome. Obviously shutting down the industry is not the outcome they would ever be happy with. The motivations behind the policy are for the government to explain. This is much more an argument about environmental protections and winning environmentalist votes than it is about real science and proper management of the fisheries.


The commercial fishing sector strongly and universally disagrees with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' claims that the Spanish mackerel fishery has declined to an unsustainable biomass. This has been supported by multiple independent scientific reviews, namely those I have tabled. Anyone worth a grain of salt who has a foot on the ground would know that it has been a bumper mackerel season. Honourable members can take it on face value but all we have heard out there is you can walk across them in the water. People who have been out on the water for 40 years or more have said, 'We have never seen more Spanish mackerel in the water.'

It is not surprising that when the same fisheries mob came up to the gulf they said, 'There's only five per cent king threadfin salmon up there.' Everyone said, 'Are you joking?' I was sitting on a plane next to a bloke who said, 'Have a look at this video,' and it showed the king salmon boiling in the water at Karumba. Five per cent of the fishery means no-one has seen anything; one person occasionally has caught one this year. Five per cent does not mean half of Mount Isa is going up to Karumba and catching them off the beach. That is a 50 per cent fishery. We cannot reconcile the things that people on the ground are saying with what is being said here.

Let's throw a bone to the fisheries department and say, 'Look, guys. You had a good crack at this stock assessment model. It did not work. We're not going to blame you too much.' However, they cannot take what they are saying and then say, 'We better shut this fishery down because they said it could be 70 per cent,' and the precautionary principle in this place means we shut down everything. Precautionary things are never consistent. Take jobs, welfare, preserving a town or keeping an industry alive as an example. However, it is precautionary for the environment because that suits the politics of the day, and that is where we are at.

We are not arguing because the fisheries department came up with this. We are arguing this because every 12 months we have to make some sacrifices at the altar of environmentalism in this place. There needs to be some strength and some backbone in government for them to say, 'We know what you feel out there, but we have to be adults about this and work off the science.' This is not working off the science; it is fake science. It drives people crazy because it does not reconcile with what is happening on the ground, and it drives uncertainty and distrust of government moving forward. When they do bring some real science back that is important, how can we ever trust it? If they keep doctoring these things and saying, 'It is peer reviewed, but they do not say, 'The peer reviewer disagreed with us,' how can we trust anything in this place?

Maybe mackerel is not the biggest issue of the day, but the whole suite of issues around the fisheries is and there needs to be leadership shown on this.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.44 pm): Before I make my contribution on this disallowance motion I want to congratulate the Brisbane Blaze women's and men's sides who both won the JDH Hockey One League over the weekend. All of Queensland should be proud of their performances. Once again, we have an Olympic sport where the centre of gravity has shifted to Queensland.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** I am available. At the outset, I say that we will be opposing this motion of disallowance. It is a matter on which the State Development and Regional Industries Committee has spent quite a lot of time and consideration. I believe we have been briefed three times on this matter and we have done two reports on the subordinate legislation regarding Spanish mackerel, including report No. 50. What I have learnt from this body of work by the committee is that science says we should be taking action to protect this fishery. Let's look at the steps demonstrating how we have followed the science on this matter.

The first step was the 2021 assessment of the Spanish mackerel stock and this assessment found the biomass to be between 14 and 27 per cent of unfished levels and most probably about 17 per cent. A biomass of less than 20 per cent is the national trigger to take action to rebuild stocks to a sustainable level. This stock assessment recommended a biological catch of zero tonnes or a full closure of this fishery.

Following this assessment, the next step in following the science was an independent review of the assessment by Dr Neil Klaer, a former CSIRO fisheries scientist prior to any decisions being taken. It was agreed that the data was used appropriately in the 2021 assessment and the assessment model itself was suitable. The reviewer questioned the model setting for the ability for Spanish mackerel as a species to bounce back from fishing pressures. Dr Klaer was unable to support model predictions and future harvest recommendations until this certainty was resolved. In a nutshell, the review points to more work needing to be done.

The reaction of the minister and the department to this assessment and the review was measured and careful. He did all the right things. The minister requested a balanced approach and did not recommend a closure of the fisheries. On 14 September 2022 the following management arrangements were announced to rebuild the Spanish mackerel fishery: two northern seasonal closures of three weeks in October and November each year to protect those sporting aggregations and two southern seasonal closures of three weeks in February and March each year to protect those migrating aggregations; reducing the recreational possession limit from three to one fish per person; a boat limit of two fish per boat carrying two or more recreational fishers; and reducing the total allowable

commercial catch from 578 tonnes to 165 tonnes. As we have already heard, they usually catch about 270 tonnes a year. What we have seen is a balanced reaction, but it shows we are listening carefully to the science.

The next step in how we followed the science is a review of that 2021 assessment by the seafood industry itself. In June 2023 the Queensland Seafood Industry Association published an industry funded review of the stock assessment by Dr Simon Hoyle and Mr Alistair Dunn. These stock assessments are highly complex. They involved inherent uncertainties. Different stock assessment scientists will favour different approaches in accounting for such uncertainties. The department has examined this industry funded review.

The steps swing back to the government following the next steps in that. This information from the industry as well as the original 2021 stock assessment, Dr Klaer's review and the departmental response were presented to a body called the independent Sustainable Fisheries Expert Panel. This independent panel commented that while Dr Klaer's findings were justified, the department's response was defensible.

Given this, the independent panel considered that the most responsible way forward is to accept the stock assessment as the most credible scenario and make management decisions accordingly. Let me repeat that: the independent panel considered that the most responsible way forward is to accept the stock assessment as the most credible scenario and make those decisions accordingly. The east coast Spanish mackerel harvest strategy identifies that the next full stock assessment will be undertaken in 2026-27, but the government and the department will bring forward the next stock assessment to early 2025 and by then the Spanish mackerel fishery will have benefited from those five seasonal closures which will aid in rebuilding the stock.

The future steps in following the science show that the government will keep taking careful and considered actions. This next full stock assessment in 2025 will be able to incorporate interim outputs from a new important study—the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, FRDC, research project which is currently underway. This is a four-year project with a total cost of more than \$1 million focusing on four key areas of research for east coast Spanish mackerel. I want to talk about one part of that research—that is, investigate a cutting-edge genetic technique called close-kin mark-recapture, or CKMR, to obtain a fishery independent estimate of population abundance. That technique estimates the absolute abundance of a population based on the number of parent offspring pairs or half-sibling pairs found in those sample individuals. This technique has been used successfully for several species, including southern bluefin tuna and school shark, and is being led in conjunction with the CSIRO.

Once again members can see another step with a careful and considered approach by this government and this minister. That is the careful process of following the science and it is clear to me that there has been thorough consultation on this matter. There is no way to get around that. The committee noted in a report that in 2022 public consultation took place in two stages. The first round sought to determine stakeholder preferences on possible management measures to rebuild the stock back to a sustainable biomass level. Port visits with dedicated commercial Spanish mackerel fishers were held in Cairns, Townsville and Mooloolaba. The second round of consultation sought to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to have their say on rebuilding options and a draft harvest strategy which was developed using feedback from the first round of consultation. This year's parliamentary estimates also covered Spanish mackerel, as did the 2022 estimates process. Again, this House and its members have had a lot of opportunity to examine this matter and to have their say on this matter.

In conclusion, to put it simply, there is a fisheries stock that through a stock assessment process is estimated to be below the 20 per cent target. The government takes action but not until after a diligent review and public consultation and engagement. A decision is reached that allows the fisheries to remain open while allowing the stock to build. I thoroughly believe that this is an example of good policy processes in action with enough evidence to show that the government has enough facts to justify its decisions. With regard to this disallowance motion and after all of the information that has been presented to date and the raft of documents that are publicly available on this matter, I have no hesitation in opposing this motion. While I have been talking I have heard the interjections from down the back. I say to those members that you cannot use politics to resolve a scientific problem. When science presents you uncomfortable facts, you cannot wipe them away with a political bludgeon. I say this to the member for Traeger: it is not ideology or appeasements that drive this process; it is science and it is a concern for the sustainability of these fisheries into the future for not only this generation but the countless generations that are to come after us. I need to point out what happened to the cod fisheries off Newfoundland to show what happens when we get it wrong. As I said, I have no hesitation in opposing this motion.



**Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.54 pm): I rise to support the member for Traeger's disallowance motion against the Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel and Bar Rockcod) Amendment Declaration 2023 and specifically subordinate legislation No. 80's introduction of additional Spanish mackerel fishing restrictions. This includes reducing the total annual quota entitlement take for commercial fishers from 578 tonnes to 165 tonnes; reducing the recreational possession limit to one fish per person or two fish per boat; removing the previous additional possession allowances for extended charter trips; and adding a further regulation period for the northern Spanish mackerel waters from 2023 to 2025.

I totally believe that this is an absolute stitch-up. It has nothing to do with science or what is good for the industry. It is all about the state government pandering to overseas agencies like UNESCO which it believes is a god-like agency which sees everything and knows everything that is happening on the other side of the world. I really believe that a good, strong government would say that we are here to represent our small businesses and fishers, not representing what is in the best interests of an overseas agency. This is gutless and pandering to an overseas interest that is destroying families' generational commercial fishing outlets and attacking recreational fishers. Every Queenslanders will suffer because of a significant rise in the cost of wild caught local seafood—and that is if they are lucky enough to find locally caught seafood on our shelves because most of the seafood in Woolworths and Coles is from overseas.

The majority closure of the Spanish mackerel fishery has been felt far and wide, particularly in North Queensland. The writing was on the wall back in 2021 after a report from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries regarding the closure of the Spanish mackerel fishery. This report revealed flaws in the management of the fishery by the state government or the changed model used for the assessment of stock levels in the fishery. In the report the commercial harvest of Spanish mackerel since 2004—and this is very important—averaged 300 tonnes annually, almost half the allowable limit. Even if we added in 170 tonnes annually from recreational fishers, it was still well below the commercial annual quota limit. According to DAF's stock assessment of Australian east coast Spanish mackerel in 2018, it clearly stated that the annual harvest of around 550 tonnes across all sectors would build the biomass or stock levels towards 60 per cent. I want to say that again: according to DAF's stock assessment of Australian east coast Spanish mackerel in 2018, if 550 tonnes of Spanish mackerel are harvested annually, stock levels should be maintained at 60 per cent. That is in its report. However, three years later fishers were being told that the stock levels were now at 17 per cent despite never reaching the 550 tonne annual limit.

How is it possible that the Spanish mackerel stock levels fell to 17 per cent if, according to fisheries, total fishing has been well below the annual commercial quota since 2004? The take has been well below quota. It was saying that if it continues at 550 tonnes every year it will be at 60 per cent and all of a sudden it is saying that it is down to 17 per cent and it is an absolute disaster. Either Fisheries Queensland poorly managed the fisheries for 17 years and should be held accountable or the process used to measure the correct stock status is seriously flawed. There is no other explanation except one that came to light recently which confirmed that both the federal and state governments had traded the closure of the Spanish mackerel fishery in return for UNESCO giving the Great Barrier Reef a free pass.

Both recreational and commercial fishers say that in the last 12 months they have never seen more Spanish mackerel. Some of them are saying they are almost jumping into the boat. Last week we finally saw the federal government introduce country of origin labelling laws for seafood sold in hospitality venues so that Australians can identify what is local and what is overseas caught seafood when purchasing. Country of origin labelling means they can walk into a venue and know that the barramundi is caught in Normanton or the Spanish mackerel is caught on the east coast. I believe that is a good thing.

The member for Traeger introduced the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill into the Queensland parliament two years ago, yet the state Labor government and the LNP both voted against it. This is the final insult to the east coast fisheries. The Labor federal government pats itself on the back for finally recognising that it is a great thing for customers to identify what is locally caught seafood—which is what the KAP has been advocating for for years and introduced a private member's bill to do—yet the same federal government and the state government then do everything possible to destroy the very industry they say they are supporting by bowing to international agencies to close the Spanish mackerel fisheries and further ban all gillnet fishing and also target recreational fishers.

Over the years the Labor government has targeted fishers. If members cast their minds back to 1993, the Goss government pushed for the banning of fishing in national parks. They received retribution for that. There was a lot of anger about it. Eventually it ended up costing the Goss

government in 1996. Yellow zones were implemented by the Labor government around 2007. We have seen bag limits come in. Small business has been a target. Beekeepers were kicked out of national parks. Vegetation management laws and reef run-off laws continually target Australian owned small businesses, farmers and fishers. It does not stop.

In closing, it is disappointing to see government constantly targeting and hurting local farmers, fishers and beekeepers. I support this disallowance motion and I am calling on the government to undertake a review of the science behind the reduced 2023-24 quota and catch limits, with regard to be given to the independent assessment undertaken by Simon Hoyle and Alistair Dunn from Hoyle Consulting and Ocean Environmental and restore the Spanish mackerel total allowable commercial catch and bag/boat limits for recreational anglers to 50 per cent of the 2022-23 values while reviewing the science behind the reduced 2023-24 quota and catch limits, effective immediately and to continue until the review is complete. I wholeheartedly support this disallowance motion moved by the member for Traeger.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Hill, before you take a seat, during your contribution you did use some unparliamentary language. Can I get you to withdraw that.

**Mr KNUTH:** I withdraw.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (6.04 pm): I rise to speak against this disallowance motion. I will make a short contribution on this matter and highlight the importance of ensuring we have a long-term, sustainable fishing industry. There is no disagreement from anyone on this side of the House about the importance of Spanish mackerel and the fishing industry in general. When I made my maiden speech in this House in 2018 I highlighted that across and within my electorate fishing provides significant employment, and tourism has enormous potential.

When it comes to the disallowance motion that has been moved by the member for Traeger, it is not a motion that will in the long run help my community as we need to ensure that there is a viable and sustainable fisheries sector in Far North Queensland as well as the rest of the state. Many of my constituents, as well as tourists, flock to Far North Queensland every year—to my electorate of Cook—to take advantage of everything that Far North Queensland has to offer, including the great fishing. It is important for the long-term fisheries and tourism sectors that there is trust in fisheries management in Queensland. We need to ensure that there will be fishing and tourism opportunities in the north for many years to come.


This motion seeks to disprove the work that Fisheries Queensland has done on Spanish mackerel and its management. I am no expert on fisheries management, and I doubt there are many in this House who are, but when it comes to the Spanish mackerel stock assessment there has been a lot of work done, a lot of reviews and, thanks to the minister for fisheries, a lot of consultation. I would like to ensure that those listening to the debate are aware of the facts. When it comes to Spanish mackerel the publicly available stock assessment was showing the biomass to be between 14 per cent and 27 per cent of unfished levels, and most probably at around 17 per cent. I am advised that a biomass of less than 20 per cent is the national trigger to take action to rebuild stocks to a sustainable level.

First and foremost, there is a report that highlights the fishery has sustainability concerns. No-one wants to hear that the fish that they love to eat—I love mackerel—and that they want to catch has concerns, but wishing for things does not change the findings in the report. There was a review of that report—and I know that there has been a lot of talk about that review and it is worth highlighting that this is a topic that has been talked about for many months—but that review did show some uncertainty. At this point I would like to acknowledge again the consultation that the minister undertook. I am told that there were over 2,000 submissions from interested parties and a decision was made. The Spanish mackerel fishery has remained open to both recreational and commercial fishers. Yes, there has been a reduction in the bag limit and the commercial catch, but the fishery remains open. There are not a lot of options for government to take when the scientific advice is that there are not enough fish to support current fishing practices.

Fishers that I speak to know that they have a duty of care for the environment, and to make sure that there will be fish there for another day. The decision regarding this disallowance will determine where we go when it comes to listening to fisheries and sustainability concerns. Either we listen to the experts or we do not. I think that it is far better to have an open Spanish mackerel fishery that has an ability to recover and provide many more fish into the future than a fishery at risk of collapse. We in this place have a duty to ensure that we make the right decisions for future generations. We need to listen

to the experts. We need to ensure that if there is a risk of over fishing we mitigate it. We need to ensure that the fishers and tourists of tomorrow have a sustainable fisheries sector. We need to do the right thing when it comes to our environment.

I have always been proud to stand up for the people of Cook. This disallowance motion needs to be opposed as in the long term we need a strong Spanish mackerel fishery. We have the facts before us. We must act. I oppose this disallowance motion.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.09 pm): I agree that we do need a strong Spanish mackerel fishery—and we have one. The Spanish mackerel fishery in Queensland is an industry that feeds the domestic market here in Queensland. It supplies our fish and chip shops and our fishmongers and it puts the food on our plates at our restaurants. In 2021 data showed that there were 180 fishing licences held with the Spanish mackerel symbol in Queensland. Not all those who had a licence were using that fishing licence: about 66 were and the other licence holders opted to sell their quota.

Most of the Spanish mackerel fishery effort happens on latitude 19, and I will talk about why that is so important to me later. Members have to understand why these regulations were brought in. In 2021, a stock assessment was done of the east coast Spanish mackerel fishery and the biomass came in at 17 per cent, which is completely ludicrous because just three or so years earlier it sat at around 41 per cent. Nothing changed to suggest that things were falling off a cliff. The only thing that changed was the modelling used to assess the stock. The data was the same and it was collated by the same people who input the data for most of the fisheries inspectorates right now. That does not come from very many people. It comes through a couple of recreational boat ramp surveys. Guess who the main ones are who input the data? It is the people who catch the fish that goes on our plates and on the plates of tourists. The government talks about the people who want to come to Queensland to enjoy our fresh, locally caught seafood. The fishers give us the data and you are about to get rid of them.

What is the impact on the industry of bringing in a total allowable take? The industry was able to take just short of 600 tonne a year from the Spanish mackerel fishery. They were taking only about 300 tonne, so not even half, and it was reduced to almost half of that. This is why I am wound up: most of that effort came out of latitude 19, which is straight off the coast at Lucinda, smack bang in the Hinchinbrook electorate. That is my home. It is the place where I grew up. It is where I have caught Spanish mackerel. It affects the people I have grown up with. They are the people I sat with at the Lucinda jetty. They are the people I sat with at the pub as a teenager—an 18-year-old teenager, I might add—learning about the industry that this government has destroyed by driving out families.

I must acknowledge the people who have fought hard during this pushback—people such as Richard Gilmore from near Cairns. He was a wealth of knowledge when we undertook our consultation. I table this document, which I think the state government and the minister should look at. This is the consultation that was done through our office. It is good work that was done by talking to fishers who understand the industry. We did not just talk with people who do desktop assessments, and I will come to that in second.

*Tabled paper:* Report by the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Nick Dametto MP, undated, titled 'Industry feedback report: A collection of feedback obtained from stakeholders, including commercial fishers, recreational fishers, small businesses and consumers within the electorate of Hinchinbrook' [2016].

I acknowledge Trevor Perkins, who has spent his whole life on the water. Every year he fishes with the idea of making sure that there is plenty of Spanish mackerel to go around. I remind everyone that half the effort was caught off Lucinda so I should know about this and so should those fishers who tell me that there is still plenty of mackerel out there. I have spoken with the Putzka family. Mr Putzka was dying of cancer when he was told he had to find a new way to earn an income for his family. He has a vessel that was specifically built for catching Spanish mackerel. It cannot be turned into a tourist boat. It is ludicrous that that was even suggested. It is an absolute disgrace. Michelle Jensen from Cardwell is also a very big advocate in this space and needs to be acknowledged.

Why did the government feel that this needed to be brought in? They want to see the biomass back up at 40 per cent, which could take seven to 14 years according to the report. Most of those businesses will be closed by then. Those people will not be around. Do you know who will be enjoying Spanish mackerel in the future? Rich people! The Labor movement was built on looking after the working class, but this Labor government is driving away the working class. If you go to a fish and chip store in North Queensland you will find one of two scenarios. First, the crumbs on your Spanish mackerel will be nearly as thick as the piece of fish. Second, as happened to me the other day, you go in and order four pieces of fish, six calamari rings and half a scoop of chips and it comes in at \$85. What struggling Queensland family wanting to enjoy fresh, locally caught seafood can afford to pay \$85 for lunch? Shame!



The government has closed down the Spanish mackerel fishery and reduced the total allowable take. By the time you take in closures around the moon phases and spawning, people's ability to catch has been reduced by about 20 per cent compared to what it was 12 months ago. I encourage people to get on Google and look at the number of fishing boats in Indonesian fishing waters. The GPS dots and coordinate locations of those fishing vessels are so thick that you can hardly see the water on the map.

**Mr Katter** interjected.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I take the interjection from the member for Traeger. The fact is that we will be eating more imported Spanish mackerel. Each year we import into Brisbane hundreds of tonnes of Spanish mackerel. Can members guess where it will be coming from? It will not be coming from Queensland anymore. We will not be eating Queensland caught Spanish mackerel. It comes from Indonesian fishing waters. This is a fast-growing pelagic fish that grows about 40 centimetres in a year. They bounce back quickly, even if there has been a blip. Right now, most of the fish are being caught by Chinese invested Indonesian fishing boats sitting up in the north of the electorate of the member for Cook, and they will quite happily import that fish straight into Brisbane. Congratulations!

Do members know what the most fantastic thing is? This week the federal government said that they will support Australian seafood. How fantastic is that? We could not support it in this House when the member for Traeger introduced the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill but the federal government will do it. The federal environment minister is signing our lives away to UNESCO through deals to keep the Great Barrier Reef pristine, but we have to trade off the commercial fishing industry. Surprise, surprise! I am sure that is welcomed by WWF and ex-WWF employees who now work in department roles within the state Labor government. That is a shame. We have been infiltrated by green ideology. They have sold us out. Who is losing out? Queenslanders are losing out!

**Mr Katter:** That is the real objective.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I take the interjection of the member for Traeger. A stock assessment has been done of our fisheries based on what the industry can only describe as absolutely shoddy science. I table this review of that stock assessment.


*Tabled paper:* Report by Mr Simon Hoyle and Mr Alistair Dunn, Hoyle Consulting & Ocean Environmental, dated 30 June 2023, titled 'Review of the 2021 stock assessment for Australian east coast Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus commerson*)' [2017].

The fact is that when the stock assessment was done the input data did not change but the modelling changed. I say this for the benefit of any layperson who may take the opportunity to watch the video of this debate later. You can go on Google and search how to convert something. A lot of people cannot figure out the maths in their heads so they will input digits into a table and the computer will spit out a figure. That is essentially how modelling works. If you input data but the output data does not align with your objective as a department, I am sure that there are ways to play with the modelling. Neil Klaer undertook the peer review, and I take the point made earlier by the member for Traeger. While it is great to see a peer review, not everyone believes that that is the best way to review something. In this case, the peer reviewer said that this was a problem and identified the steepest modelling.

We need to protect the Spanish mackerel fishery and we need to protect the Spanish mackerel fishers who will continue to look after the fishery. It should not be shut down completely. Those people will not be able to hold out for seven to 14 years. Who will catch Spanish mackerel to put on our plates? Don't worry about country-of-origin labelling because in Australia 70 per cent of the seafood that ends up on our plates is imported. By the time the state and federal governments have finished, it will be 100 per cent.

I close by imploring this parliament to support the disallowance motion. I ask members to think for a second about how we need to protect the jobs of the 66 people who put Spanish mackerel on our plates. Those jobs are worth something. The men and women who sit out there in their fishing boats catching Spanish mackerel deserve to be looked after by this parliament and not flushed down the drain, as we have seen through the introduction of this regulation.

(Time expired)

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.18 pm): Back in the early days, when I was about 20 years old, which is not so long ago, in the Mackay area there were 58 boats, and about five of those boats specialised in fishing for Spanish mackerel. I find it very difficult to understand the stock assessment that has been done. Most of those boats were never on the logbook system. As we went further forward, the fishing industry turned to trout and live fisheries and most of that live fishery did not include Spanish mackerel. The people who were catching trout and other fish were not interested in Spanish mackerel



because they were not worth as much as the other fish that the boats were set up to catch. The stock assessment really concerns me. It goes back to 1912. I do not even know if there was a 4225-D made by Mustad back then or even a freezer on a boat to be able to understand what bringing in Spanish mackerel in 1912 looked like. It makes it very difficult to understand.

Another issue is that Spanish mackerel are not easy to catch. It is a specialist area in the fishing game. People need to know what they are doing and understand when and where they going to be. They move from the outer reef to the inner reef to the islands. When they are smaller in size, they go around the islands. They are a different fish when it comes to them going through their life. I find it unreal that we can do a stock assessment on a fish that we know little about. I know that there have been times that they have said, 'Yes, all the VMS data that comes in shows that there are not a lot of Spanish mackerel coming through.' There is not because no-one is catching them. No-one wants to catch them. They are all catching the fish that everyone wants to eat and are worth money to them—that is, trout, red emperor, nannygai, reef fish and red throat. People like Kevvie Milkins, Eddie Clark and Robbie Hughlands who fished from their boats *Born Free* and *Wayward Wind* fished on their own. They did not take a lot of Spanish mackerel because they could not handle them. They did not fish with other people because other people actually scared the fish away. They knew how to handle this breed of fish. They had small little skiffs with two-cylinder diesel engines that operated quietly. They pulled X amount of fish a day—probably no more than 50—and went home and processed them with love and care. They went back with some of the best eating fish you would ever find.

The stock assessments cannot be right because there is no information over the 58 boats and the small percentage of catch of Spanish mackerel that the government's quota is based on. It is totally sustainable. Last year, it took Wally Fisler and Chris McNamara four weeks to catch what it usually takes them six months to catch. The actual number of fish out there is way more than the government realises. The next thing we will see is a black market being driven by other people who seek to go out and catch this fish and see a hole in the system. We have not yet seen that. It is about to come. Is it happening at the moment?

The second part of this is that we are virtually saying, 'Oh yeah, we are going to stop catching them, but we will let other countries which do not manage their fishing industry, which use unsustainable practices and which even use slave labour to catch fish import this fish back into our country.' We do not know how this fish has been handled or taken. No-one understands any of it. There are no closures or anything. How can that be a sustainable fishery and how can we say that we have done assessments?

The recreational fishers do not even catch Spanish mackerel. They are not silly. These fish are hard to catch. One out of 20 boats would bring home a Spanish mackerel. Most boats do not even hold an esky big enough to put a Spanish mackerel in let alone catch one. People do not realise that this is the norm. I am a recreational and professional fisher. I still hold a professional licence. When people catch a Spanish mackerel, they will take one to feed most of the village or most of the family for that night. They do not take a lot.

The Spanish mackerel fishery was never in danger. The modelling programs are another interesting factor. We know that modelling programs have a certain allowance for error built into them. I have spoken to people in Cardno who have said that some of these modelling programs are up to 48 per cent in error, and that compounds. Instead of the odds being like tossing a coin and being 50-50, they are actually 95-5 when it comes to errors with this kind of modelling. The government is using a program to model a fish that no-one is actually catching. There are a small number of professionals who take these fish and the government is saying, 'Given the VMS data across the whole fleet we know they are not taking any of this fish.' Of course they are not taking any fish. They do not take those fish because they are not worth what the other finfish are. If they do not take Spanish mackerel, then there will be a black market for them. We will see that.

It is a shame that the government does not understand this outcome. That is the way it will be given the modelling process. I cannot get over it. I have spoken to so many professional fishermen who are dedicated to Spanish mackerel. Find out how many fish they catch because they are the ones who know exactly what the situation is. They actually look after them. They try not to go to the places where they are like Rib and Keeper off Townsville and where the spawning process happens. They do not want to take them because they want it to be better for themselves.

Why would we say no to an industry that has done so much for us? The fishing industry took us through the war. It ensures we are not dependent on other countries and it also keeps us away—

**Mr Molhoek:** Food security.

**Mr ANDREW:** Yes, it gives us food security that we should always have. I thought the UN said that we should never back away from food security or create a situation where we lack food security. I spoke in estimates about the situation with the mackerel fishery and what is happening with the reef. Are we trading the Spanish mackerel fishing industry so we can keep tourism going in this country? If we are, that is blackmail. We should never back down. These people are not destroying an industry that they protected for all those years. The industry has been minimised. We hardly have anyone catching Spanish mackerel. I cannot see how it is overfished and I cannot see the recreational sector taking them as well.

The information I have here shows that using the value suggested by the peer review there could easily be three times as many mackerel as Queensland fisheries are stating, meaning the fishery is actually not in any trouble. The Queensland fishing industry body, QSA, commissioned its own peer review of Spanish mackerel stock assessment. The reviewer discovered huge discrepancies in the government's assessment on which the new rules are based. The report concludes—


We find that the model shows signs of misspecification, with residual trends in the decadal CPUE time series, age structure and length composition data, bias apparent in the estimated growth curve, and instability in model fits and the likelihood profiles.

It is on the basis of these faulty models that—

... Fisheries Queensland is cutting the total allowable catch for professional fishers ... from 578 tonne this year to just 165 tonnes in the 2023-24 financial year.

Guesstimates and unverified assumptions are not how our fisheries resources should be managed. People's livelihoods should not be ruined. These families go back a long way. I know that when I first started catching fish a lot of the fishermen would not even talk about how to catch Spanish mackerel. A lot of the specialist Spanish mackerel fishermen would talk to the people doing deep-sea fishing and say, 'You can take all the marks we have for the deep-sea fishing—no problems—because we do not fish for Spanish. You can go and catch all the Spanish you want.' That is what the professional deep-sea fishermen used to say to the Spanish mackerel fishermen. I was standing on the wharf with Jimmy Edwards when we were giving the marks over. I was yelling out the coordinates.

It goes to show that that whole fishing fraternity shared the industry and did not destroy it. One was fishing the bottom and one was fishing the pelagic mid-water fish as the Spanish mackerel are, and today there is just about no-one left. What is left is being destroyed by faulty science. We are bowing down to unelected governments from overseas that have no right to speculate on something that does not exist. I do not believe it exists. I have skin in the game. I have caught more in a day than there are members in this House. I still have scars on my fingers from the day we changed the quota from six to one, because I went out and caught the first six in the first half day on my own. There is no shortage of Spanish mackerel; there is a shortage of science. That is the issue we have in this place.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (6.28 pm): I rise to speak in support of the disallowance motion regarding additional restrictions on the Spanish mackerel and bar rock cod fisheries. The government wants to reduce the total quota entitlement for commercial fishers from 578 tonnes to 165 tonnes. That represents a reduction of 71.42 per cent or 413 tonnes. It also wants to reduce the recreational possession limit to one fish per person or two per boat; remove additional possession allowances for extended charter trips; and add a further regulated period for the northern Spanish mackerel waters from 2023 to 2025.

The government claims drastic action is needed because a stock assessment of the Spanish mackerel fishery biomass shows it has reduced to 17 per cent, yet three years ago we were told that Spanish mackerel was a sustainable fishery. How did it decline so dramatically when the department is responsible for setting the fishing quotas? The government provides no explanation on how the levels have deteriorated under its management. The minister refuses to be open and transparent with the data used to justify these decisions. To have a situation deteriorate so quickly means that the minister and the government have massively botched the management of Spanish mackerel fisheries. The minister is culpable.

DAF says that following management changes for Spanish mackerel 'a new education and awareness program will be introduced ... for recreational fishers'. If Spanish mackerel stocks were so threatened, why were recreational fishers excluded? Why are they only being educated now? When I asked DAF's director-general during estimates this year, he said—

On this particular matter we have to be committed to our own learning as we go as well. We do not always get it right, I suppose, but we are committed to learning from previous reports, other technical experts and taking stakeholders like industry people and the public on that journey with us.

I agree that they do not always get it right, but the rest were weasel words. The government is not committed to learning from previous reports. It is committed to covering up its mismanagement.

The minister refuses to consider concerns about the data used to defend his decision. The government changed the methodology to assess stock assessments to then find that stocks were threatened. Since then it has readily dismissed an independent peer review which said the government's assumptions were flawed. Dr Neil Klaer, a former CSIRO scientist, said that he is 'unable to support the conclusions regarding future harvest levels for the east coast Spanish mackerel stock'. Last year in response to a question on notice, the minister said—

... Dr Klaer's review were presented to the Sustainable Fisheries independent Expert Panel. The Panel commented that while Dr Klaer's comments were justified, the department's response was considered appropriate.

In effect, the minister said Dr Klaer's findings were validated but the minister would continue using the questionable data. The minister has never explained how the department's response was 'appropriate'.

In 2019 a Queensland coroner was scathing about Fisheries Queensland's bureaucratic obstruction. This year another expert assessment by Dr Simon Hoyle and Alistair Dunn was also dismissed. During estimates the minister said—

The department examined the QSIA funded review ... and does not consider the matters raised to be significant enough to rescind or reconsider the recent changes ...

Concerns about stock assessments and methodologies are widespread. The March 2022 communique of the East Coast Spanish Mackerel Working Group said—

Recreational and commercial members expressed frustration with the level of communication from Fisheries Queensland since the last meeting regarding questions on the stock assessment inputs and methodology.

Under Minister Furner's management, commercial Spanish mackerel fishers have seen the minister change the methodology. The findings from the new methodology transformed the Spanish mackerel from being a sustainable fishery to one that is claimed to be under grave threat. Concerns raised by experts that the new data was flawed are summarily dismissed even after acknowledging they had some validity. This is the management style under the minister. The fishers, their families, the businesses and communities which rely on them deserve to know that decisions are reasonable, justifiable, fair and sound. They do not deserve decisions being manipulated or massaged to suit other political agendas. There needs to be full openness and transparency around data.

Compounding this is the minister's refusal to assess the full ramifications of the measure and provide reasonable support to those impacted. The government has not completed or published an economic or social impact statement on the effects of reduced catches. During estimates this year I asked about compensation for financial losses. The minister's response was totally dismissive. He said—

The simple answer to that is no ... Section 44 says that compensation is not payable for decisions made to protect fish.

The minister has a history of refusing to conduct a regulatory impact statement. Rather than conducting an RIS into the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, DAF provided the Queensland Productivity Commission with its own in-house assessment. The government does not even know how many commercial Spanish mackerel fishers will be impacted.

Last year the minister told estimates that the sector contributed \$6.7 million to the Queensland economy and supported 66 good FTE jobs. This year the deputy director-general of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries said—

... the Spanish mackerel fishery in 2020-21 contributed about 100 FTE jobs and \$8.5 million ...

That is almost another \$2 million and 34 jobs—an increase of 27 per cent in financial value and 51 per cent in jobs between one estimates and the next. I am concerned that they are making it up. They have no idea.

These people are blue-collar workers. The government's changes will significantly impact the livelihoods of fishers, their families and the communities where they live. It will impact downstream industries and jobs including restaurants, ice manufacturers, retailers, net makers, wholesalers, fish and chip shops, cold storage, transport, tourism and hospitality-based businesses. Whenever I have asked about economic modelling on the impact of reduced catches, the minister has no answer. The only responses are ludicrous attempts to bamboozle. The minister uses hypotheticals that the situation would be worse if he does nothing, yet he deliberately refuses to consider the impact of the actual decision. They are weasel words. It is spin. It is contemptuous. It is callous.

For several years the LNP has raised serious concerns about the government's treatment of the commercial fishing industry and the small and often multigenerational family businesses that rely on it. Its mismanagement is becoming systemic and it is gambling with the future of fishers. The minister's claim that compensation is not needed because it is a management decision and not a regulatory change are hollow words. In June, the minister said—


... protecting good jobs in the fishing industry is crucial for the livelihoods of thousands of Queenslanders who depend on the state's seafood supply chain.

Which 'good jobs' in the seafood industry is the minister protecting? How is reducing the ability for blue-collar workers to operate their businesses protecting them?

The government promotes its commitment to mental health, yet Minister Furner ignores considering the mental health implications of his decisions. The Productivity Commission heard that commercial fishers 'experienced significantly high levels of high and very high psychological distress than the Australian population' with 'the perpetual uncertainty generated by Fisheries management strategies as the key contributor'. It heard that mental health issues are a direct by-product of legislative or regulatory change as there was no RIS and 'mental health didn't even feature in what was going to happen'. Two years ago during estimates I asked the minister three times about the mental health impact of the reform process. The minister avoided considering it. The director-general said that it was not their role. Just whose role is it to consider the full impact of the government's decisions?

For several years the minister has undermined the fishing industry with drastic decisions which lack transparency on stock assessment processes, supporting evidence on scientific decisions and biomass assessment; lack fair compensation packages; refused to conduct RIS; refused to investigate cultural issues of cover-ups and obstruction; and refused to address ongoing issues with the vessel monitoring system.

I support reasonable measures to protect fish species, but it is clear the government cannot manage fisheries. The minister remains true to form. The obstinate refusal to consider concerns about data used to justify decisions, to support those impacted, to conduct an RIS and to learn how widespread the impact of this decision is is seriously concerning. The conclusion is that either the management of the Spanish mackerel fisheries has been seriously botched or the minister is sacrificing the sector to another agenda.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (6.38 pm): I rise to speak against the motion to disallow the Fisheries Legislation (Spanish Mackerel and Bar Rockcod) Amendment Declaration 2023 as moved by the member for Traeger on 15 November 2023. The interest of the member for Traeger, as well as the other members of the Katter party, in this declaration is understandable, and I respect them for their approaches on this matter. However, I must make it clear that as a government we need to listen to the experts and the science when it comes to fisheries management. That is the approach that I took when it came to coming to conclusions and making the difficult decisions that the government had to make. Notwithstanding that, you need to be mindful of the reason we have a Sustainable Fisheries Strategy. I will address some of the points previous speakers have with regard to why we have a Sustainable Fisheries Strategy.

We may not always like what we hear, but there are real risks and concerns that fisheries will become depleted and unsustainable if we do not manage them well. I want to see a fisheries sector that is here for the next generation and the generation thereafter. The motion seeks to disallow the declaration which came into effect on 1 July 2023, which introduced new measures to ensure the future sustainability of Spanish mackerel and bar rock cod. To allow Spanish mackerel stocks to rebuild, a number of new management measures were introduced for the commercial, recreational and charter fisher sectors. For bar rock cod, a new commercial quota limit was introduced in accordance with the pre-defined management trigger in the coral reef finfish fishery harvest strategy. All of these measures were critical to ensure the future sustainability of our fisheries resources.

As the fisheries minister, I have always been a firm advocate for sustainable fisheries management, urging careful consideration of the long-term health of our marine resources and the communities that depend on them. As most members of parliament would be aware, Spanish mackerel is a culinary delight and cultural icon that makes a significant economic contribution to our coastal communities. I want to thank the member for Cook in particular for her contribution with regard to her interest in not only this species but also the importance of the communities of the Torres Strait to the Spanish mackerel and other fisheries sectors in that region.

Spanish mackerel is a truly iconic species and the one that I order when I visit the local fish and chip shop when I travel to Townsville—particularly Tobin Fish Tales in Townsville. I want to commend the members for Townsville for supporting that particular fishery and others in their home town. When I travel there I always make sure I order Spanish mackerel. That mackerel—

**Mr Head:** You won't be able to order it now!

**Mr FURNER:** You wouldn't know—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Direct your comments through the chair, please, Minister. Order, members!

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** The member for Callide is clueless, like the member for Buderim. Talking about fisheries—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, the level of interjection is getting out of control. I would ask you all to refrain.

**Mr FURNER:** When I travel to Townsville, I love—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** Listen to the dopes from the other side. It has nothing to do with this debate—

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are warned. Member for Callide, you are also warned.

**Mr FURNER:** Once again I will reiterate: I love a feed of Spanish mackerel when I go to Townsville, particularly at Tobin's. In fact, when I was there last I was fortunate to have two meals of Spanish mackerel when we had cabinet up in Townsville. It was an enjoyable occasion.

In the financial year 2020-21 the commercial sector alone contributed 110 full-time-equivalent jobs and \$8.5 million to our gross state product, while recreational enthusiasts throughout Queensland poured an estimated \$6.8 million into the economy in 2019-20 with Spanish mackerel fishing trips. However, the fisheries landscape is not without challenges.

The 2021 stock assessment revealed a biomass teetering between 14 per cent and 27 per cent of unfished levels—but most likely at 17 per cent—meaning that urgent action was required. Most people who have some idea about fisheries understand the importance of reaching that trigger of 20 per cent where action is required.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, cease your interjections.

**Mr FURNER:** I know there will be some who believe that because of the uncertainty of biomass—including that it may be above 20 per cent—action should not be taken. Biomass is a range, but I reiterate it is likely at 17 per cent, which is below the 20 per cent trigger to make sure action is taken. It is vital to recognise that a biomass less than 20 per cent is an internationally recognised trigger. Best practice fisheries management compels intervention that will allow stocks to rebuild back to a sustainable level. That is usually around 40 to 60 per cent unfished biomass. Those in the House who have some idea about fisheries have seen the rebuilding of many stocks where our sustainable—

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member for Whitsunday, your interjections are disorderly. You are warned.

**Mr FURNER:** I was indicating some examples where, as a result of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, we have seen the rebuilding of many species to 40 to 60 unfished biomass. Spanish mackerel stock health is of particular concern in Queensland. It should be noted that much of the Spanish mackerel caught comes from our very own Great Barrier Reef World Heritage listed property. In addition, there was also other evidence that suggested stocks of Spanish mackerel were not healthy.

Historical analyses suggested a substantial contraction of the known spawning aggregations of Spanish mackerel in North Queensland. There were reports of known spawning aggregations off Cairns disappearing in the 1990s. Previously stock assessments showed a trend of declining fish numbers

over the last 20 or so years. This historical, sustained decline, combined with recent low biomass estimates, raised uncertainty and concern over the continued viability and sustainability of Spanish mackerel and suggested that significant management changes were warranted. Doing nothing was not an option. By disallowing this declaration we would effectively be doing nothing.

In response to this stock assessment result the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries commissioned an independent review by Dr Neil Klaer, a former CSIRO fisheries scientist. Where a stock assessment such as this one may lead to management changes, it is not unusual that an independent third-party peer review the stock assessment methodology and result ahead of any decisions being made. While Dr Klaer did affirm this stock assessment model and data at the time, he did raise questions about some aspects of the model. For this reason, I do not support closing the fishery entirely—which was a decision that was open to me to take—which is what best practice fisheries management would recommend for stocks below 40 per cent unfished biomass.

Following two rounds of public consultation where more than 2,200 submissions were received and considered, and after quite fulsome and detailed consideration, I adopted a balanced approach and opted against a complete fisheries closure. I table those two discussion papers.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: Discussion paper titled 'Queensland east coast Spanish mackerel fishery: Consultation on management action' [2018].

*Tabled paper:* Department of Agriculture and Fisheries: Discussion paper titled 'Queensland east coast Spanish mackerel fishery: Final consultation on proposed management action, July 2022' [2019].

Despite what we have heard today from some speakers claiming that the fishery is closed, that is contrary to what is happening out there. Instead of a complete fishery closure, on 14 September 2022 I announced a series of strategy management arrangements to rebuild the Spanish mackerel fishery. These consisted of: two northern seasonal closures of three weeks in October and November; two southern seasonal closures of three weeks each in February and March; recreational possession limits reduced from three fish per person to one; a new boat limit of two fish per boat carrying two or more recreational fishers; removal of the extended charter trip limit; and total allowable commercial catch reduced from 578 tonnes to 165 tonnes, noting actual landings for commercial fisheries averaged 270 tonnes each year. I think that is a reasonable and balanced approach when you consider what was caught—not quite halving the amount to 165 tonnes.

I would like to reinforce that these decisions were not taken lightly. I understood that the measures, the approach and this decision would weigh heavy on those people who enjoy Spanish mackerel and the areas in which they fish and who are concerned about the economic contribution this makes to the communities in those areas in North Queensland. In light of the peer reviewed Spanish mackerel stock assessment result at the time, decisions were made with the overarching goal of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Spanish mackerel population. The measures have been progressively introduced, with the first seasonal closures commencing in October 2022 and the reduced total allowable commercial catch and recreational limits taking effect on 1 July this year.

On 30 June 2023, the Queensland Seafood Industry Association published a review by Dr Simon Hoyle and Mr Alistair Dunn. This endeavour was a positive and proactive step by the QSIA, and I would like to extend my appreciation to Mr David Bobbermen, the chief executive officer of QSIA, for his positive engagement on this complex issue. There has been some comment that the department ignored this report, and nothing could be further from the truth. I would like to point out that stock assessments are intricate mathematical processes with several uncertainties, and different scientific opinions are not uncommon.

The department's feedback on the draft report, despite some noted technical issues, was considered by Dr Klaer. The department acknowledges the concerns raised in both the QSIA funded review and the department's own funded review by Dr Klaer. However, without a new stock assessment result, Fisheries Queensland must remain steadfast in its commitment to the quota changes made to the east coast Spanish mackerel fishery that is represented by this quota amendment declaration.

Since the debate around the confidence of the Spanish mackerel stock assessment surfaced, I think it would be worth highlighting some of the complex stock assessment mathematical terms. Misspecification, a nuanced term in the world of fisheries science, refers to situations where model assumptions may not fully capture the true dynamics of the fish population being assessed. The QSIA funded review suggests signs of misspecification without explicitly stating it. Steepness is another critical parameter, and this reflects how resilient a fish stock is. The higher the steepness value, the more resilient the stock. The QSIA funded review recommends a broader range of steepness values be considered but without proposing a clear alternative to that used by Fisheries Queensland scientists.

In response to both these issues, the department intends to bring forward the next full stock assessment to early 2025 and will work with industry to incorporate the feedback from QSIA's review. In addition, the department is co-investing in a Fisheries Research and Development Corporation project, which is currently underway and is already examining these issues very closely.

Fisheries output controls such as quotas are a vital tool of fisheries management and ensure the sustainable use of our marine resources. Setting sustainable quotas has been a large focus since the start of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027, and we now have 17 harvest strategies in place that set many sustainable catch limits across Queensland's fisheries. These are underpinned by a significant investment in our assessment and monitoring activities, which cannot be done without the support from our recreational and commercial fishers right across Queensland. I thank them for their support in this important information and data-gathering exercise.

The economic impacts to the commercial fishery cannot be dismissed, and I acknowledge the concerns of affected commercial fishers. However, it is essential to consider the broader implications of inaction. The decision to reduce the commercial quota to 165 tonnes, down from 578 tonnes, is a measured response based on historical catch data, and there is currently no defensible alternative available based on robust scientific assessment, especially as the commercial harvest has previously remained stable at about 300 tonnes per year of TACC.

The department has taken steps to mitigate the financial impact on commercial fishers, waiving Spanish mackerel fishery fees from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. This fee waiver totalled \$147,495 and included quota unit, licence transfer, quota transfer, tender movement and symbol movement fees. It is a strategic move to support fishing businesses manage cash flow and maintain jobs during this transition period.

Research is the bedrock of informed decision-making and has become a focal point in addressing the challenges posed by the 2021 stock assessment. The FRDC funded project, with a total cost exceeding \$1 million, is looking into various aspects: close-kin mark-recapture—a genetic technique for fishery-independent estimates of population abundance, partnering with CSIRO; shark depredation and post-release survival—investigating impacts on the stock assessment model through onboard observer coverage and satellite-based survival tags; catch per unit effort refinement—utilising high-resolution vessel-tracking data to enhance the precision of fishing effort measurement; and environmental influences—conducting a comprehensive investigation of environmental factors affecting Spanish mackerel abundance and recruitment. This strategic research investment underscores our commitment to understanding and addressing the complexities of the Spanish mackerel fishery comprehensively.

In conclusion, the decisions made regarding the east coast Spanish mackerel fishery are rooted in a deep commitment to sustainability, informed by scientific assessments, public consultation and a dedication to long-term stewardship. Fisheries management sometimes means making the hard decisions now to ensure that we have fisheries into the future. These decisions may not always be popular, but they are backed by science and it is for the good of the entire fisheries sector. We listened to the science, we consulted, we took action that has allowed the fishery to remain open, and we have engaged with the peer review and industry reviews. My department recognises the challenges and uncertainties and is actively engaged in ongoing research and collaboration with industry stakeholders as we take on board all new information and research outcomes to ensure the sustainability of our Spanish mackerel stocks for future generations to come. As I said earlier, Spanish mackerel is an iconic species and we need to ensure we preserve the stock for future generations. Doing nothing is not an option.

In my closing couple of minutes, I want to reflect on some of the comments made by previous speakers. We heard that this was in some way linked to the UNESCO decision that has been made about the removal of gillnets in the Great Barrier Reef. Far from it. There was no reference in terms of the consultation, in terms of the engagement with Queensland fisheries, to anything to do with UNESCO. It raises concerns of why people are talking about this particular matter and linking it to this debate here today.

Other speakers spoke about the importation of fish from overseas. I recognise that. It is an area that this government has been working on not only with our recreational fishers but by building on the aquaculture opportunities for Queensland. That is why we have seen growth in the aquaculture industry of \$224 million. Other speakers from the Katter party spoke about the industry being shut down. That is far from the truth. Many of those who made a contribution today spoke about the quota management for commercial fishermen and also the quota and catch limits for recreational fishers.

Last week I was in Tokyo, at the Toyosu seafood market. They are envious of what we have in Queensland in terms of our Sustainable Fisheries Strategy. They would love to have that in their government to make sure they have fisheries for future generations.

*(Time expired)*

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

**AYES, 37:**

**LNP, 33**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**KAP, 3**—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

**NOES, 51:**

**ALP, 49**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**Grn, 2**—Berkman, MacMahon.

Pair: Skelton, Nicholls.

Resolved in the negative.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities; Buderim Electorate



**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (7.04 pm): What we have just seen from the minister for agriculture in guillotining debate on an issue of critical importance to coastal communities right across Queensland is nothing short of a disgrace. Guillotining debate when members like the member for Whitsunday and the member for Burdekin—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Members leaving the chamber will do so quietly. Any members who interject whilst not in their seat will be warned under the standing orders.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** The minister guillotined the debate when members like the member for Whitsunday and the member for Burdekin had not had an opportunity to place on the record the concerns of their community about this critical issue—a critical issue which, I might add, has resulted in individuals in the Whitsunday electorate attempting to take their own life. That that debate would be guillotined because the minister for agriculture is being so thin-skinned that he does not want to debate this issue is a disgrace.

Let's have a look at Furner's 'greatest hits'. He is a minister who does not know the difference between a feedlot and a food lot, whatever that is. He shut down the live-export industry when he was in the Senate—proud to shut down the live-export industry—bringing the Queensland beef industry to its knees with his mate Joe Ludwig. 'Furner, the fire ants' friend'. Fire ants are rampaging across Queensland and are now into New South Wales under this minister's watch. To top it all off, what about proudly locking the gates at Longreach Pastoral College—proudly locking up an important institution that delivers for the entire west and central west.

This minister is not fit to be a minister of the Crown, and Queenslanders are looking forward to the day when they get to pass judgement, and I am looking forward to the day when the minister for agriculture, the member for Ferny Grove, is not here in this House. Let's show Labor the door in '24.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock! Member for Pine Rivers and member for Gregory, you will both cease your quarrelling across the chamber. It is incredibly distracting.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Buderim was just reflecting on the absence of a member in the chamber. I ask that he withdraw because they are not to do that and he should know that.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. To be clear, Mr Deputy Speaker, I was reflecting on his future absence, when he is no longer elected, but I withdraw unreservedly and I will move on.




**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. You have to withdraw unreservedly.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** A change of pace: the Palmview State Primary School has joined a prestigious cohort, becoming an Apple Distinguished School—just one of 13 in Queensland. There are fewer than 900 schools in the world that are delivering the Apple program, so it is a major coup for the Palmview community and the Palmview learning community, and it all thanks to the hardworking staff at the Palmview State Primary School. Their commitment to innovation and excellence in delivering technology teaching to their students is exceptional. There is a special presentation happening at the school this Thursday morning, but unfortunately I will be unable to attend as I will be here. However, I know that students and staff will be celebrating, as they rightly should. I take this opportunity to congratulate them. They have helped cement a culture of leadership and innovation which will benefit the community for many years to come in the short time that the Palmview State Primary School has existed.

I also want to congratulate the owners of Amaze World, Robyn and Adam. Amaze World was recently named Sunshine Coast Business of the Year for 2023. It has been growing in leaps and bounds over recent years as they expand their outdoor attraction with different activities for the whole family, all while maintaining their sustainable practices. There is lots to do for the kids—mazes and playgrounds, an augmented reality feature with dinosaurs, and all sorts of things. Last school holidays I had the opportunity to go there with my son Alex; now all my kids want to go there these next Christmas holidays. Not only did Amaze World take home the top gong but also they won the Large Experiences category for the second year in a row. Well done to all the great Buderim businesses that were recognised at the Sunshine Coast Business Awards this year.

### Redcliffe Electorate

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (7.08 pm): As we move towards the end of 2023, the Redcliffe community is buzzing with Christmas cheer and generosity. The Redcliffe Community Care Network are in the process of organising their annual Community Christmas Appeal. The network is collecting non-perishable food, Christmas items and toys, which they will then pack into hampers on 15 December to distribute to those in need on 18 and 19 December. I encourage my community to get involved if they can. We know the cost-of-living pressures that households are currently under, and Christmas is a perfect opportunity to give back to those most in need. Donations are being collected at the Breakfast Club and the Salvation Army. Financial donations are also being collected directly by the Breakfast Club. My community of Redcliffe have such high rates of volunteerism that I know many people will be happy to lend a hand.

This has been a big year for my community. In June we opened 12 additional paediatric treatment spaces at the Redcliffe Hospital emergency department. This \$10 million upgrade has improved emergency department length of stay of less than four hours to 85 per cent, a 27.8 percentage point improvement from the same quarter last year. In addition, the number of emergency department patients seen in time has improved by 12.1 per cent on the same quarter last year, to 74.1 per cent for this paediatric age cohort.

It would be remiss of me to not also mention the \$1.06 billion major expansion of the Redcliffe Hospital that will boost the hospital's bed base by around 204 beds, expanding health service capacity and ensuring locals can continue accessing world-class health services into the future. This project will also create around 2,573 jobs during the construction.

We also opened 18 community housing units in Portwood Street, Redcliffe with the housing minister. They have been specifically designed for seniors and people with a disability. They also feature energy-efficient systems including rooftop solar panels to each unit, a Queensland first for community housing here in Queensland. This is not the only social housing build underway in Redcliffe that is targeted towards seniors, with works underway at an 82-unit project down the road supported by our Housing Investment Fund.

Of course, we had the Dolphins' inaugural NRL season in 2023. We certainly finished the season with our 'phins up', which I am sure the Acting Deputy Speaker is thrilled about.

2023 has certainly been a big year for Redcliffe. I want to acknowledge all the amazing community organisations, volunteers and businesses. It has been another tough year, but I am very grateful for the great work across our community. It is an absolute pleasure to represent the people of Redcliffe and I look forward to delivering more for my community in 2024.

### Toowoomba North Electorate, Crime



**Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.11 pm): I rise to talk about some of the crime that is going on in Toowoomba. Unfortunately small business, which is the lifeblood of our community, is coming under extreme pressure. Betros Bros, an independent supermarket that has been operating for 85 years in Toowoomba, is an absolute institution in Toowoomba. They are absolutely fed up with criminals coming in trying to steal things. When challenged by the staff, they put their hoods up so they could not get their picture taken and then physically attacked the staff. On the way out the door, they physically attacked customers. The police did a fantastic job of chasing them down the street and arresting them. That case has gone through the court. They were charged and found guilty and are back out stealing again. Just recently they were back out stealing again, in the same shop. This is a problem.

Our small businesses in Toowoomba need the Labor government to bring strong legislation forward. In the last 12 months to October, there have been 1,376 cars stolen in the Darling Downs. At my main shopping centre, the security guards are now wearing stab vests because of incidents that have been happening in Toowoomba with machetes and axes. This is not the society that we want to have in Toowoomba, but this is what has been created by the Labor government's inaction on youth crime over nearly a decade. Worse than that is how it is impacting the people of Toowoomba.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** They do not like it, because they know it is true. Insurance is up 17.1 per cent. That is over \$300 a year for many people—car and house insurance. Rents are up 8.9 per cent, with a vacancy rate of just 0.6 per cent in Toowoomba. Electricity is up 25 per cent. Health costs are up 6.7 per cent. What we see after nine years is a complete failure by this Labor government to manage Queensland. We have a crime crisis; we have a health crisis; we have a housing crisis. The people of Toowoomba have had enough of this government's failure. I want some assurances from this government that the police will not be rostered short over Christmas, because this is a time when people are feeling most vulnerable in their homes.

One of the things that came out of my recent survey was the need for mental health support in Toowoomba. We need it now because people are suffering, particularly victims of crime. What I would say overall is that it is time to show Labor the door in '24 because they are a failed government.

*(Time expired)*

### Pine Rivers Electorate, Infrastructure



**Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (7.14 pm): Samford Road is a critical connection to Samford and surrounds, and it is exciting to update the House on the progress of the safety improvements along this road. The last time I spoke about the project in this chamber, I reminded the House of the 300-plus community members who wrote to me to express an opinion on the initial upgrade. That 2021 version proposed the removal of the 750-metre westbound overtaking lane. Some 250 of those 300-plus people who wrote to me opposed the removal of the overtaking lane approved. Consequently, I advocated that TMR go back to the drawing board and design a plan that was acceptable to my community. I am very pleased that with some strong advocacy and the support of the minister, who I acknowledge in the chamber this evening, we secured more money to deliver the safety upgrades while still keeping that critical overtaking lane.

The upgrade will deliver safety improvements along a 1.5-kilometre section from Ferny Hills to Camp Mountain and will also see an upgrade to the Camp Mountain Road intersection. I appreciate that this work has taken longer than anticipated to complete. I place on record my appreciation to our community, who have been so vocal and active on this issue. I particularly single out Jason McGarry, who has been in continuous contact with me about this project and the need for the road to be safer. It is a dicey road in our community, especially in the wet, so I know how important it is to deliver this safety upgrade. The tender has now been awarded, and those works will start in early 2024. I look forward to updating the community on the project as it progresses.

The project is also a recipient of our green infrastructure protections. An additional project, to be completed this month, will protect Four Mile crossing on Gympie Road at Lawnton. Of course, our massive Eatons Crossing road safety upgrade will be home to wildlife protections. Delivering on our Big Build means that these road projects and many other things are happening in our electorate. This includes housing, investment in health, emergency services and education, and community infrastructure upgrades.

One of the really exciting projects that 2023 will deliver is the Kallangur Satellite Hospital. That facility will be open to patients from 11 December. Importantly, the offering there will alleviate pressure on our local emergency departments and major hospitals. It will mean accessible, free health care that is closer to home. I have had the opportunity to visit the site multiple times and I know that it will be a perfect location for locals to have their non-acute health concerns addressed. I know how excited our community is about this amazing asset, and I am confident that our agenda of investing in the front line and the infrastructure our community needs will continue to deliver a better, strong Pine region into the future.

### McGrath, Mr BGX



**Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.17 pm): I rise to advise the House of the passing of Barry Francis Xavier McGrath at the age of 85 years young, a local of Ormeau for some 35 years. Ormeau is in the heart of the northern Gold Coast, and Barry's heart was in Ormeau. Born in Victoria on 12 May 1938, Barry passed away at home surrounded by family on 9 October 2023. Barry finished his schooling at Christian Brothers College before his first job as an apprentice mechanic, later moving to the other end of the motor industry and excelling in his career in car sales.

A friend of Barry's introduced Barry to his sister Mary. With love flourishing and Barry and Mary marrying on 24 June 1961, they celebrated 62 years of marriage this year. Having moved to the Gold Coast in 1986, an opportunity arose to market land in Old Ormeau Town. The family relocated to Ormeau, living in the same home until the present day and eventually opening their own real estate office in Ormeau. Barry and his friend Brien Harris were instrumental in establishing the Ormeau Lions Club, which chartered in 1991. Barry and Mary remained active members up until the present day. Barry and Mary were a driving force for events like the Lions' Ormeau fair and many other initiatives, including the establishment of the Ormeau Driver Reviver. Both Barry and Mary were awarded Lions International's highest honour, the Melvin Jones award, for their commitment to Lions in recent years.

Barry was diagnosed with prostate cancer, which spread to his lungs, and with other health issues he entered hospital and was given just days to live. A real fighter until the end, Barry survived another three months and continued to be as active as he could. In saying that, I was so pleased that I was able to be in attendance at Barry and Mary's home for what was Barry's last Ormeau Lions meeting just weeks before his passing. He was still talking about the future for Lions activities. Barry's life was celebrated at St Patrick's Catholic Church in Beenleigh on 30 October.

In the time I knew Barry, I found him to be a man who was obviously committed to the love of his life, Mary, his family, the Lions Club of Ormeau and the wider Ormeau community. He treated everyone with absolute respect, but on occasion he felt the need to say, 'I object.' I can imagine him saying that about what I am now going to say—with a wry smile on his face, of course. The poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson epitomises the life of Barry McGrath. I quote—

To laugh often and much: To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded.

Rest in peace, Barry. You will be greatly missed by all who knew you.

### Jordan Electorate



**Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.20 pm): The last sitting of the year is an opportunity to reflect and, as always for the Jordan electorate, it has been a massive 2023 when it comes to our government's Big Build. It is hard to fit everything into three minutes, so this is really just the highlights reel.

We began the year with the opening of our brand new \$80 million primary school in Augustine Heights, Woogaroo Creek State School. It is an absolute credit to Principal Kendall Secombe and her team in what has been a wonderful first year for our newest school. Education is an absolute priority for our community and our government is delivering. We have new classrooms and updated facilities on their way at Flagstone State School, Spring Mountain State School, Greenbank State School, Camira State School, Springfield Central State High School and Woodcrest State College. Thank you, Minister Grace. We are also supporting some of our independent schools with funding support for St Peters Lutheran College and the Springfield Anglican College.

In health, our government is delivering a record investment in ensuring we are providing more health services closer to home. This year, we officially broke ground on the brand new Mater Springfield public hospital, a partnership between the Queensland government and Mater Health Services.


Construction is now fully underway with two massive cranes in the Springfield skies building our new hospital that will deliver 174 new public beds, a much needed emergency department, intensive care, more operating theatres and maternity services through the much loved Mater Mother's.

In Flagstone, we have also expanded our child health clinic and brought a perinatal health service to this growing part of the Jordan electorate. Twelve minutes from Springfield, we now have the brand new Ripley Satellite Hospital, which is a fantastic new health facility and is beginning to take pressure off the busy Ipswich Hospital emergency department. I am also looking forward to the imminent opening of the new acute mental health unit in Ipswich, such an important health facility that will provide 50 beds for our region, and only last week the Minister for Health announced a brand new \$7 million eating disorder service for Ipswich. Thank you, Minister Fentiman.

It has also been a big year for road infrastructure in Jordan. We completed the \$15 million Centenary Motorway and Logan Motorway interchange, an important commitment that I made. It has been an absolute game changer for the morning commute into the city for our community. We are also halfway through our \$6.5 million upgrade of the Centenary Motorway exit 32 project, which will increase from two lanes to four lanes. Our government has also supported Ipswich City Council's massive upgrade of the Springfield Parkway and Springfield Greenbank Arterial Project with \$3.8 million in funding. Thank you, Minister Bailey. In Flagstone, work has begun on the extension of Teviot Road. Our government has committed \$11 million towards that project through our Catalyst Infrastructure Fund and we continue to support the developer Peet in the extension of New Beith Road with funding of \$20 million.

It has been a massive year. There is plenty more to come in 2024 and it is only made possible through our Labor government's Big Build.

### Toowong Central

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.23 pm): Right in the heart of Toowong in my electorate there is a giant empty concrete pit, right next to the Toowong Village shopping centre. It used to be a Woolworths grocery store, but it closed almost seven years ago. Since then, the block of land known as Toowong Central has sat derelict and disused.

Two development proposals have fallen over at the Toowong Central site including the Stockland plan for three towers that never eventuated and the Aviary proposal from SDC, who announced a few months ago that that had fallen over too. Despite some shiny PR work from the new owners who say they are teaming up with SDC and the developers next door to create an even bigger up-market development, there is still no DA.

The combined block is 1.3 hectares of land in a prime location in the heart of Toowong. It is right next to the shopping centre, the train station, buses and countless other services. It has the potential to reshape the entire suburb. Yet the major parties are happy for it to be left empty and derelict by developers so they can one day make huge profits from their up-market apartments that no locals can afford. I read today that the *Macquarie Dictionary* word of the year is 'cozzie livs'. For those who do not know the term, it is shorthand for the cost-of-living crisis and the *Macquarie Dictionary* describes it as a humorous play on the term. I suppose if you do not laugh, you cry.


Housing is driving the cost-of-living crisis because the major parties refuse to ban unlimited rent increases, refuse to prioritise public housing over private profiteering and refuse to intervene in crippling interest rate rises. The government has just released its social housing waitlist data and, despite their claims that applications have stabilised, a closer look shows an increase of about 1,500 people on the register between June and September. There are more families desperate for affordable housing because the private market has failed them and because Labor has failed them by allowing unlimited rent hikes.

I wrote to the housing minister, the Treasurer and the Premier asking them to consider acquiring this land in Toowong to build public housing. I have also written to Brisbane City Council asking them to deliver a new park and community services on the land. There is more than enough space on this property for both levels of government to work together and make something useful happen.

I received a remarkably brief response from the housing minister last week informing me ever so helpfully that the site is owned by a developer. Indeed, it is. Thank you kindly for the information. Has she considered buying it or at the very least even requiring just some of the new homes to be public or genuine affordable housing? Instead, the government continues to outsource its responsibility for

housing provision to the private market. This is their legacy: the concrete pit at the heart of Toowong, the sold-off community housing, the people sleeping in tents across Queensland, the Queensland Labor legacy delivered in collaboration with their land-banking, profit-hungry developer mates.

### Bundaberg Electorate


 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.26 pm): I would like to start my contribution by welcoming three state school teachers to the parliament tonight, Ash Charlesworth, Beau Pratt and Alex Keech. They are proud state school teachers and proud teacher alumni of the mighty Kepnock State High School where we are delivering a more than \$20 million new industrial design and technology building, making sure we are generating good Queensland jobs for good, young Queenslanders into the future and into regional Queensland. We know it is about building a future for good jobs in Queensland. That is why we are also backing in schools right across the Bundaberg region, whether it is in school halls or classrooms or the new \$10 million STEM building at Bundaberg State High School.

I know the minister is very proud of representing the wonderful state school teachers in this state. Also we know we are backing in TAFE. It is not just schools in terms of education but also our TAFEs. How excellent is it to know that in this calendar year alone over 1,300 Bundy locals have accessed Fee-Free TAFE, whether it is a course or an apprenticeship, because that is what good Labor governments do. We invest in the regions, we invest in jobs and we make sure we have good jobs in regional Queensland.

What do we know about the LNP's record when it comes to jobs in Queensland? A total of 14,000 public servants marched out the doors. That is what we know about the LNP. We know their track record when it comes to TAFE. When it comes to state schools they never want to talk about it. They never want to talk about the fact that the FTEs for teachers went down, meaning that students had to go into larger classrooms which made it more difficult for teachers and more difficult for students. In fact, I have good word from a principal at the time that they were so desperate to cut they refused to even allow the principal to buy biscuits with cream in the middle of them. That is how desperate the LNP are. That is how shocking they are.

What do we know when it comes to Christmas time and giving a little bit of joy? We know that locally in the Bundaberg region the LNP are openly calling to cut the minimum wage. That means the wages of our hospitality workers, our retail workers, our factory workers, our pickers and our packers. That is the Christmas present that the LNP want to give to workers in Bundaberg, regional Queensland and all across our state; they want to cut the minimum wage. How about this? The LNP locally in Bundaberg are saying that penalty rates for overtime is a disincentive to employers. They actually want to cut penalty rates for workers who have to work overtime during Christmas. Those working families are trying to save every single dollar so they can share a great Christmas with their family and the LNP are on the cut, sack and sell train. They have working family in the gun. They are going to cut, they are going to sack and they are going to sell.

### Oodgeroo Electorate

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.29 pm): Under Labor, 2023 has been a terrible year for Redlanders because this government has the wrong priorities. It was wrong to promise an ICU in the 2020 election to be built by 2022 and then not deliver it. 2022 came and went and the ICU was not built. It was then kicked back into 2024 and now the ICU itself is on life support, kicked back into 2025 at the earliest. So instead of an ICU, the hospital was deprioritised. It was wrong to cut the ICU from this term, especially during the COVID epidemic. Redlanders are suffering through Labor's health cuts, chaos and crisis. They are angry about no ICU in '22. It was wrong to promise a car park and then charge nurses a fortune for parking, so nurses are parking out on the main road hundreds of metres away. It is a busy major road and they even have to reverse park at times along that road and their cars protrude onto the road which needs to be kept clear because ambulances are passing quickly and accidents have been occurring. It is chaos.


In terms of cost of living, we see an increase in power prices, rent is up and home interest rates are going up. Redlanders are struggling to make ends meet. In terms of youth crime, the community wants safety. They did not need the weaker laws and the fewer police that are resulting in more crime. I will save my comments about victims of crime for the victims of crime bill, but there has been a significant increase in the number of victims in the Redlands.

In terms of North Stradbroke Island, the net fishing ban being imposed by the minister is wrong. It is wrong to remove all of the net fishing licences, as seems to be his plan. This will result in the sacking of more workers on North Stradbroke Island. Some of those licences are owned by

Quandamooka people. That is not the commitment that this government made to the island and to the Quandamooka people—that is, that those who own fishing licences will have to sack people. Local businesses and tourism operators will suffer. Tonight I call on the minister to suspend his plan for this pain in terms of the net fishing ban on North Stradbroke Island.

Then there are the medivacs on North Stradbroke Island, and there is a question on notice to the health minister. Basically, the helicopters need to continue to be able to land for medivacs right next to the Marie Rose Centre, not six kilometres away at the airport. I am very concerned about the risks and the potential for some kind of major incident occurring and somebody suffering greatly, even loss of life. I call on the health minister to sort that problem out and sort it out immediately. Then there have been delays to marine infrastructure such as the Harold Walker Jetty and Dunwich harbour. We need to show Labor the door in '24.

### Rookwood Weir

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.32 pm): Construction of Australia's largest major water infrastructure asset is now complete—Rookwood Weir. It is the largest weir completed in Australia since World War II. It is also the largest piece of new water infrastructure delivered in Australia since the Queensland government completed Wyaralong Dam in 2011—also built by a Labor government. The \$568 million Rookwood Weir west of Rockhampton will yield 86,000 megalitres each year to boost economic growth, agricultural production and industry in Central Queensland. There were those in the LNP who said that it would never be built or who said that we were building a bathtub. I can tell members that it is a very big bathtub equivalent to 34,400 Olympic swimming pools—and it is finished. Since construction began in late 2020, the project has injected more than \$270 million into the Central Queensland economy and provided 350 jobs, with more than half the positions filled by Central Queenslanders. Importantly, more than 30 apprentices and trainees have worked on the project, creating more workers for the significant pipeline of water projects coming to Queensland.

The weir will deliver significant benefits to Central Queensland by shoring up the region's water security and driving economic growth and job creation for generations to come. More than 36,000 megalitres of water from the weir has already been allocated to agricultural use, with a mix of small businesses and large enterprises from the region now able to expand or diversify their operations. The first water from the weir is expected to be available in 2024. More than 2.1 million hours have been spent building the weir and several supporting projects including the \$2.2 million upgrade of the Capricorn Highway intersection, \$7.5 million upgrade for the widening of Thirsty Creek Road, \$12.5 million for the construction of the 260-metre-long Riverslea Bridge, \$2.2 million for the upgrade of Hanrahan Crossing, \$17 million for the construction of the new Foleyvale bridge, and \$7 million for the installation of a new fishway for the Fitzroy River Barrage. There were those who were critical that this project would never be delivered and they are also the same people who are critical and saying that the Rocky ring-road will not happen. It has already started.

The House adjourned at 7.35 pm.

### ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczyk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting