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Phone (07) 3553 6344

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 1 May 2024

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WEDNESDAY, 1 MAY 2024

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Respect to the Chair



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to remind all honourable members of the respect that all members owe to the chair. This includes respect to all of the Deputy Speakers who, when in the chair, should be treated with the same respect owed to the Speaker. I have asked all Deputy Speakers to action disrespect to the chair. I warn all members that I will not tolerate disrespect to the chair regardless of who is occupying the chair and will, in the most serious instances, immediately refer the matter to the Ethics Committee.

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Rochedale State School in the electorate of Mansfield, Montville State School in the electorate of Glass House and Helensvale State School in the electorate of Theodore.

YMCA Youth Parliament



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we have in the gallery today the youth member for Greenslopes, Claire Jukes. The YMCA Youth Parliament is more than just a mock sitting of parliament, it is a year-long commitment to draft legislation through a process of consultation and debate with fellow youth members. It is vital that all young people involved take in all aspects of the parliamentary democracy. I take this opportunity to wish all youth members representing seats, including the youth member for Mulgrave, Priya Toor, the very best for their participation in the program.

PETITIONS

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

Calliope State School, Parking

Mr Head, from 507 petitioners, requesting the House to improve the Calliope State School drop-off and pick-up area for vehicles and pedestrians including more parking or set down spaces.

Petition received.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Report



Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (9.33 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No.6 of the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 November 2023 and 13 February 2024*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee: Report No. 6, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 November 2023 and 13 February 2024.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Path to Treaty



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (9.33 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House:

1. notes that nearly 70 per cent of Queenslanders voted 'no' in the federal 'Voice' referendum—the highest 'no' vote of any state or territory in the country.
2. notes that the government currently has no mandate for negotiating or entering into binding treaties with groups appointed to represent Queensland's tribal peoples.
3. calls on the government to repeal its 'Path to Treaty Act, with all moneys held in the \$300 million dollar 'Path to Treaty' Fund, diverted towards helping vulnerable Queensland households, families and workers, faced with one of the worst cost-of-living crises in the state's history.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members to my right. The time for debate of that motion is later, not now.

Miles Labor Government, Travel Expenses



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (9.34 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House calls on the Premier to detail to the House by 22 May 2024 the total cost of using the two luxury jets by the Premier and the Minister for Police and Community Safety between, and inclusive of, Monday 22 April 2024 and Friday 26 April 2024 by (i) individual aircraft and (ii) individual sectors as Queenslanders struggle with the cost-of-living crisis.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.35 am): Today is the first day of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. We are in the midst of a national crisis. According to Counting Dead Women Australia, already this year we have lost 28 women to gender-based violence in Australia, but we know this number is higher and we know there are many who are not counted: those who take their lives because they cannot deal with the pain or the trauma.

Every time I turn on the news we are hearing of another loss of life and we wait to hear is it gender-based violence again—one woman every four days. I would like to read the names of the five Queensland women who have been violently killed this year, allegedly at the hands of a loved one: Amarjit Kaur Sardar, Alana Martin, Natasha Nibizi, Keira Marshall and a 66-year-old unnamed woman whose son has been charged with her murder. On behalf of the parliament I send my heartfelt condolences to the families of those women. Tonight the Premier and I will attend a candlelight vigil hosted by Micah Projects Brisbane domestic violence service to remember all the women we have lost.

The Miles Labor government has always supported and believed victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and we acknowledge and support our most vulnerable communities. We back this support with funding, legislation and reform. We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability and members of the LGBTIQ+ community are all at even greater risk of being victims of domestic and family violence and less likely to come forward. That is why we have targeted funding, with the Commonwealth government, for these vulnerable groups. I acknowledge that men are also victims of domestic and family violence, however, this is predominantly a gender-based crime with women being the primary victims.


Girls and women have rallied for generations. We have called for change, we have called for equality and we have called for respect. What we did not ask for is to be controlled: emotionally, psychologically or financially. We never asked to be abused physically or sexually. We did not ask for men to take our lives. What we want is to be heard and to be believed. Helping us in this campaign are the amazing domestic and family violence organisations and victim-survivors. As part of the Community Safety Plan we announced a 20 per cent increase in funding to government supported domestic, family and sexual violence services. This is part of our \$1.75 billion of funding for domestic and family violence since 2015.

In order for women to stop being harmed and murdered at the hands of men—not just the lives we count that have been lost, but let us remember all of those others who live with trauma every single day and pass it onto their children who have also seen that trauma and it becomes intergenerational—it is time for men to stand up and join us in the fight and no longer be silent bystanders. There are a lot of great men out there who do stand beside us in this challenge. So much of our focus is still educating our daughters from the moment they are born that because of their gender they are more likely to be a target of violence. Let us stop talking about how we keep ourselves safe as targets in the community and let us start talking about those who target us.

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This Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, I call on all the men in this House and across the state to think about how they can support the prevention of domestic and family violence in their communities—whether it is by organising a rally, a forum, education session or by simply having a conversation with a mate about what domestic and family violence and coercive control looks like. Without men actively participating in the prevention of gender-based violence, we will never be able to stop the scourge. Through education, prevention and early intervention we can save lives. I look forward to seeing the efforts of all members and the entire Queensland community this month and every month to prevent domestic and family violence and all gender-based violence.

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.40 am): Today, 1 May, marks the beginning of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. Every year it is an opportunity for all of us to reflect upon the lives that have been lost to domestic and family violence and to reassert that violence in our communities cannot and will not be tolerated. This government has made progress, although we know there is still much more to do. We have criminalised coercive control. We are improving police responses to domestic and family violence. We are investing \$1.75 billion to tackle the issue. But, more than ever, this 1 May seems to be more poignant and frustrating than it has ever been because, as we sit here today, almost twice as many women have been murdered by men as this time last year—so many of them killed by men known to them. We know that violence against women is inextricably linked to gender inequality, and the sad fact is we still have a long way to go to break down gender inequality, to change community attitudes and to instil respect.

In recent years, the Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety surveyed 1,700 young Australians aged 16 to 24. They found that almost a quarter of young men think women find it flattering to be persistently pursued even when they say they are not interested. More than one in five young men think that men should take control of relationships and be the head of a household. Over two in five young Australians supported the statement: 'I think it is natural for a man to want to appear in control of his partner in front of his male friends.' When we identify disrespect and gender inequality as the foundation of men's violence, these attitudes from young men in this country are exactly what we are talking about. Until men recognise that these views should not be normal or acceptable, May unfortunately will most likely remain as Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month for years to come.

This is why our government has made unprecedented investments into perpetrator intervention and men's behavioural change programs. Last May we delivered them a 30 per cent increase in funding, and now we have just delivered all of our DV services, including those that work with our perpetrators, a 20 per cent increase in funding. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce said that perpetrator programs need to work as part of an integrated system so that her voice and her safety is at the heart of any intervention. In that vein, our government has taken steps to trial a range of specialist programs including youth perpetrator programs and culturally safe programs for First Nations young people. In an Australian first, we are developing a domestic and family violence perpetrator strategy. This is crucial work, but we all have a role to play in addressing cultural attitudes and ending violence at its source.

Once again, I implore every member of this House to ensure they are taking the lead in their communities, because every woman and girl deserves to live in a community where she is respected, celebrated, feels safe and is safe because together—and only together—we can end men's violence against women.

Community Safety Plan

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.43 am): Today I will introduce into the parliament a comprehensive set of new community safety laws. It is part of our

comprehensive plan—a plan built on a considered and effective approach to enhancing community safety. The Community Safety Plan for Queensland delivers more police, more resources, more interventions, more preventions, more victim supports and more new and strong laws. It is a plan backed by the evidence. It is a plan focused on five key pillars: supporting victims; delivering for our front line; detaining offenders to protect the community; intervening early; and preventing crime before it occurs. This plan unlocks \$1.28 billion in additional investment from the government. It builds on the successful measures that the Queensland Police Service says has seen some offending types reduce in the first quarter of this year, but there is always more work to be done.

The Miles government continues to build on its record investments in police. We are supporting those record investments in personnel with record investments in police infrastructure. Following strong advocacy from the member for Thuringowa and his colleagues the members for Townsville and Mundingburra, \$100 million in funding has been locked in for the new Townsville Police Academy. The new academy will be constructed at the new community safety precinct currently underway at the site of the old 1300SMILES Rugby League stadium. This is important infrastructure for the growth of the Queensland Police Service, in investment in regional policing and in investment in regional community safety.

The government has already made the biggest investment in police personnel in more than 30 years with funding for more than 2,000 extra personnel. Now we are building on that historic investment. There will be a further investment to fund an extra 900 police personnel over three years. This builds on the government's existing 2025 commitment, bringing the total investment to nearly 3,000 extra positions. We can do this because Queensland is leading the nation when it comes to police recruitment. We have record numbers in our police academies and record numbers in our recruiting pipeline. There are nearly 700 recruits undergoing training in our academies right now and over 2,100 applicants in the recruit pipeline.

We are giving police the laws and powers they need to support the community. The proposed expansion of Jack's Law will see it used in additional locations such as shopping centres, licensed premises, sporting and entertainment venues and high-risk outlets like late-night dining, convenience stores and service stations. This builds on its current application in safe night precincts and public transport hubs. It was disappointing to hear this morning that a senior LNP spokesperson does not support Jack's Law. One of the LNP's most senior figures, Senator Matt Canavan, said this morning on breakfast TV—I'm deeply uncomfortable in giving powers to the police, powers to randomly just spot check people without any suspicion.


Unlike LNP Senator Matt Canavan, the Miles government supports Jack's Law. We introduced it and we now are expanding it. Jack's Law saves lives, and that is why it is part of our Community Safety Plan for Queensland.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier and Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your interjections.

Mr RYAN: Jack's Law saves lives, and that is why it is part of our Community Safety Plan for Queensland—a comprehensive, evidence-based plan and not slick slogans.

Community Safety Plan

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.48 am): Keeping Queenslanders safe is the first priority of the Miles government—whether that is at home, on our roads, on public transport or while enjoying all of the opportunities that Queensland has to offer. The Community Safety Plan for Queenslanders outlines a comprehensive, detailed and holistic plan to address crime and serious antisocial behaviour in our communities and to address the tragic stories we heard from victims of crime yesterday. We all have a part to play in community safety, and the Miles government is doing everything it can. The Community Safety Plan for Queenslanders outlines extended powers for the use of wandering—Jack's Law. We know that this is working to keep our community safe. Every weapon taken off our streets thanks to Jack's Law stops future potential offences or harm being caused to our community.

I would like to update the House on the success we are already seeing with Jack's Law operating on our trains, trams and buses. Authorised transport officers, including our senior network officers and rail squad, work alongside Queensland police to ensure safety across the network. I am advised that TransLink and Queensland police meet weekly to discuss intel and trends to determine operational locations and authorised officers attend joint agency operations multiple times a week.


They work collectively through Operation Victor Course to conduct high-visibility passenger safety operations across the public transport network including wandering for knives and edged weapons under the provisions of Jack's Law. To date there have been over 700 Victor Course operations on the bus network in South-East Queensland—including Brisbane, Logan, Gold Coast and Moreton districts—resulting in almost 2,000 wandering searches, almost 100 knives located, more than 450 notices to appear and more than 460 arrests.

Along with Victor Course operations on the bus network, there have been 318 rail operations conducted in South-East Queensland resulting in over 2,700 wandering searches, over 100 knives located, well over 600 notices to appear in court and 400 arrests. As a result of our safety initiatives, serious crime on the rail network remains low. On top of deploying more teams to the network, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and QPS are also sharing intelligence and data to improve safety right across the network. These are highly visible operations on our public transport networks to deter, detect, investigate and charge offenders for criminal and antisocial behaviour.

Queenslanders deserve to get where they need to go safely and reliably. That is why we are investing in our public transport network and investing in community safety with strategies and actions like Jack's Law that work to keep Queenslanders safe.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next minister, I would like to wish the member for Algester a happy birthday.

Education, Alternative Learning Programs

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (9.50 am): It is a foundational principle of the Miles Labor government that no matter who they are or where they are in Queensland every child deserves the same access to a high-quality education. Regardless of your ability, regardless of where you are in our vast and decentralised state, our commitment to education means you are given the best start in life because that is what education is. For some children that means we need to provide an alternative to mainstream education.

For a number of young people, mainstream education simply does not work. That is why late last year we announced our \$288 million package aimed at students who are disengaged with education and at the teachers who support them. It includes a doubling of campuses of the Queensland Pathways State College from six to 12; increasing engagement programs targeting First Nations young people; appointment of intensive education case managers to work with students excluded or suspended from state schools; appointment of court liaison and youth transition officers; specialised alternative learning programs, working with students involved with youth justice; and 50 new FlexiSpaces.

Today I am very pleased to announce the first 34 of those additional new FlexiSpaces in high-needs schools including for the first time at primary schools—for instance, at Trinity Bay State High School in the electorate of Cairns, at Hervey Bay State High School in the electorate of Hervey Bay; at Tagai State College in the electorate of Cook, at Victoria Point State High School in the electorate of Redlands; at Nambour State College in the electorate of Nicklin; at Townsville State High School in the electorate of Townsville, at Coombabah State High School in the electorate of Bonney; at Mackay Northern Beaches State High School in the electorate of Whitsunday; at Murgon State High School in the electorate of Nanango; and at Tully State High School in the electorate of Hill.

FlexiSpaces are an inclusive, high-quality built environment with high-impact teaching and learning. They are about giving students and teachers the help and resources they need when they most need them. They are a place in a school where students who are facing challenges in the mainstream classroom can continue to be supported to stay engaged while still being able to stay at school with their friends, with the aim of eventually getting them back into their mainstream class. This program is about giving students and teachers the help and resources they need in a way that is most suited to their learning style. FlexiSpaces, I must stress, are not only about supporting those students. They are a recognition that those students can often be quite challenging for teachers. Taking them out of the mainstream classroom allows teachers to cater to all students more effectively.


Not all students who are disengaged from school are in the youth justice system, but every child in the youth justice system is disengaged from school. In fact, we know that the single greatest predictor that a child will end up in the youth justice system is if they are disengaged from education by the time they are seven years old. That is why our Youth Engagement Education Reform package is a critical element of the Community Safety Plan for Queensland we released yesterday.

Our commitment to the early years of a child's life is critical. From Free Kindy to this significant investment in keeping kids engaged in education from the beginning, to our early years strategy—

Putting Queensland Kids First—which we will soon announce, we are determined to create positive life trajectories for all Queensland children.

I cannot talk about this key education initiative without referring to our outstanding teachers and education staff who work tirelessly and with such care for their students to make sure they lead good and fruitful lives. I send a huge thank you to them all.

Youth Development Partnership Fund

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (9.55 am): I am a strong believer in the power of sport and its ability to shape young lives. Intervention and engagement are vitally important in addressing youth crime and keeping Queenslanders safe. It can also play a crucial role to divert at-risk youth from reoffending. We are seeing the benefits of this through our \$4 million Youth Development Partnership Fund. It is a statewide joint initiative between the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport and the Queensland Police Service.

The aim of the fund is to utilise the power of sport to help deliver an avenue for personal growth and development for young people. This is so vitally important. The fund is already having great success. I have seen it firsthand through programs in Cairns such as Cairns Safer Streets and Moonlight Hoops. The effect that it has had on changing young people's lives in my town is why I am championing this program to go statewide.


Logan's R.E.A.P the Rewards program teaches touch football skills to young people who are disengaged from education and unfortunately involved in repeat offender behaviour. We know that they start to enjoy it. They start to understand the skills of teamwork and respect for one another. In 2023 the successful R.E.A.P the Rewards program helped 93 per cent of those participating in the program to stop or decrease their offending. More than half stopped offending completely in the months following. One has since secured employment, while another has joined the NRL RISE Program. The Youth Development Partnership Fund supported this positive program to continue and expanded it to Dalby.

Meanwhile in Townsville at the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, the Rugby League Helping the Community Program focuses on teaching disengaged 12- to 16-year-olds and high-risk juvenile offenders. This program is yielding positive results, with training sessions regularly supported by former NRL and Queensland Rugby League stars. This sets an absolutely fantastic model for those kids who are attending these programs.

The Youth in Touch—One Step at a Time, run by the Bundaberg Touch Football Association, fosters positive relationships between youth and the Queensland Police Service. The young people receive comprehensive touch football training, building up to finals day when they play alongside police officers. This builds a strong rapport and a greater understanding between those two important groups. This also helps to shape their perception of those officers both as police but more importantly as team-mates.

These are but three examples of the great work being done. Today I can announce that, in collaboration with the Queensland Police Service, we have now approved another six programs to be delivered—new initiatives across several locations including Caboolture, South Burnett, Toowoomba and Brisbane. It is an almost \$600,000 commitment to helping young people find a better way and to build a better future through sporting activities.

Public Sector Support

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.58 am): When it comes to our hardworking public sector workers, there is no bigger supporter than the Miles government. We value the contribution of these workers, especially those on the front line such as our police officers, and back them with decent wages and conditions and with nation-leading work health and safety and workers compensation laws. This is in Labor's DNA. We are further backing our frontline police officers with an uplift of 900 police personnel over three years as part of our Community Safety Plan. This is part of our commitment to the front line by giving them the resources they need to keep our community safe and to ensure Queenslanders feel safe.


When it comes to ensuring Queensland's public sector workers receive wages and conditions that reflect their unique contributions, I could not be prouder of this government's record. We have delivered wage increases that are among some of the most generous of all Australian jurisdictions when

it comes to the public sector. In addition, we included a cost-of-living adjustment payment in agreements in recognition of high inflationary conditions that peaked at 7.4 per cent in the 2023 March quarter. This resulted in public sector workers receiving an additional three per cent payment over the past year, including our police, nurses and midwives, teachers, doctors and firefighters. We have also made sure public sector workers will be set for a better retirement by enhancing superannuation entitlements.

With this week's focus on community safety it is worth acknowledging that through bargaining we have delivered for our police by: approving a late-night operational shift allowance; providing extra leave for officers who take on higher levels of weekend or public holiday shifts; providing rural and remote incentives to get more officers into the regions; and giving the right of non-commissioned officers to disconnect when they are not at work. Equally, we have delivered for workers in child safety, youth justice and youth detention centres, increasing operational allowances, training allowances, retention allowances and improvements in classification for entry-level positions. Our police, fire, ambulance, child safety officers, correctional officers, workers in youth detention centres and other key frontline workers often encounter situations most of us could never imagine, so we have made it easier for these first responders who develop post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, by streamlining access to support and care under the state's presumptive workers compensation laws. On this side of the House we have a long and unsurpassed history of backing our hardworking public sector workers. They deserve nothing less.

I inform the House that the National Cabinet is currently meeting and the Premier is attending this meeting with all national leaders. National Cabinet is an important meeting to discuss issues of national significance, including a focus on the issue of domestic and family violence, as everyone in our community deserves to be safe and feel safe in their community and home.


Small Business, Cybersecurity

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.02 am): With an increasingly digital economy, cybersecurity threats represent a critical and formidable danger to our community. Like many Queenslanders, it is our small businesses that can be particularly vulnerable to cybersecurity crime, theft and disruption. They are rightly focused on their operations, their employees and their growth. Their reliance on third-party digital and cloud software, coupled with the perception of being less secure targets, makes them prime targets for cybercriminals seeking easy entry points. We have listened to the community and the industry. We have heard that the average cost per cybercrime to our small businesses is \$46,000. With that figure rising annually, we are taking strong action.

Today I can announce that the Miles Labor government is going to market with our \$5 million planned commitment to prepare and implement cybersecurity support initiatives for Queensland's small and medium-sized enterprises. In the coming weeks my department will engage with sector professionals to take action on providing small and medium enterprises with the help they need to address their cyber safety. Partnering with experts, we can deliver comprehensive and tailored solutions that could include one-on-one access to cyber experts, a concierge service to connect, and delivering staff training, including in cybersecurity.

When I talk about the risk to small businesses I am not only talking about mum and pop shops. This is a \$117 billion sector that employs nearly half of all employees in the private sector. This is a sector that is also feeling the effects of national cost-of-living pressures. In this Small Business Month of May—and I want to acknowledge all of our hardworking Queensland small businesses—the new Miles Labor government is also delivering small business cost relief. I am pleased to announce that applications are open today for the latest round of our Business Growth Fund. Whether you are a butcher, baker, bookkeeper, barista, builder or biotechnician looking at getting involved in our Big Build, I would encourage you to apply for a Business Growth Fund grant. At a time when they need it most, these grants of up to \$75,000 can provide a big boost for our businesses to reach another level. The security and safety of our community and delivering real cost-of-living relief—that is the new Miles government's commitment to all Queenslanders.

Quantum Computing

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.05 am): I am proud to inform the House that Queensland is set to become the home to what could be the world's most powerful computer. Yesterday I was pleased to join the Prime Minister and Premier to announce that ideas born in Queensland will come home to Queensland. With the support of the federal and state governments PsiQuantum, led by two of the University of Queensland's

finest graduates, Professor Jeremy O'Brien and Professor Terry Rudolph, will build the world's first large-scale, fault tolerant quantum computer in Queensland.

The importance of quantum computing cannot be overstated, and the presence of the United States ambassador Caroline Kennedy at the announcement yesterday underscored this. Quantum computing has the potential to revolutionise medicine and manufacturing, finance and commerce, climate management, defence and national security, in particular cybersecurity. Think of creating new materials that will accelerate the decarbonisation of our economy. Think of speeding up the process of getting new lifesaving pharmaceuticals to market years faster.

The construction and operation of a quantum computer in Queensland will revolutionise the future of information technology. Moments like this come once in a generation. When Queensland saw our moment we grabbed hold and have not let go. Yesterday's announcement was the culmination of years of hard work by officials of Queensland Treasury and the Australian government, and I congratulate them on that work. Bringing PsiQuantum home to Queensland ensures Queensland's place at the top table in global quantum computing.

Our investment through loans, equity and some grants ensures that ideas born in Queensland will return home to Queensland. The structure we put in place for our investment in PsiQuantum is very similar to the structure we put in place for our investment in Virgin Australia. That investment kept Virgin in Queensland and is on track to return all of the taxpayer investment plus a seven per cent return. Our investment in Virgin was criticised by many. They said it was a vanity project. They claimed it was the wrong priority. They said they would have pulled the money out of Virgin, which would have resulted in Virgin planes being pulled out of the sky. Well, they were wrong then and they are wrong now. PsiQuantum is our moonshot moment. That is exactly what this project is for Queensland. It will radically transform how we use information in the future, and Queensland will be central to that international development. For those seeking to understand quantum computing, understand this—

Mr Crisafulli: Based in America.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the member opposite. The Leader of the Opposition is narrow-minded and has no ambition for Queensland. Our government has vaulting ambitions for Queensland and its people, and we will deliver for our people. For those seeking to understand quantum computing, understand this: quantum computing has the power to change the world, and now Queensland will be at the forefront of that change.

QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.08 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Childrens Court Act 1992, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Criminal Code, the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012—

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Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, you will cease your interjections.

Mr RYAN:—the Explosives Act 1999, the Judicial Review Act 1991, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, the Weapons Act 1990, the Youth Justice Act 1992 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. I nominate the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024.

Tabled paper: Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, I have made it clear the minister is presenting a bill. There is nothing controversial in what I can hear him saying in presenting the bill. I ask that you cease your interjections.

Mr RYAN: I also table the government's response to the recommendations of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee. The response accepts, in principle, all 60 recommendations.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Queensland Government Response to the Interim Report: Inquiry into ongoing reform to the youth justice system and support for victims of crime, Report No. 1, 57th Parliament—Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, April 2024'.

The Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024 supports the Miles Labor government's commitment to supporting victims, delivering for our front line, detaining offenders, intervening early and preventing crime before it happens. It is a key part of our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It is a plan based on facts. It is a plan based on evidence. It is a plan based on the feedback from Queenslanders, backed in by the advice and insights of experts. It is a plan built on solid foundations. It is a plan that enhances and expands on what works. It is a plan that we know will make a difference. It is a comprehensive plan built on considered and effective actions, programs and legislative change—more police, more resources, more intervention, more preventions, more victim supports and stronger laws in this bill. This plan unlocks \$1.28 billion of additional investment from this government. It builds on the successful measures that we have seen reduce offending—as the Queensland Police Service has indicated has happened for some crimes—in the first quarter of this year, with new investment and expanded initiatives.

Despite the tough measures introduced in the Strengthening Community Safety Act 2023, some offenders persist in publishing material on social media, showing themselves and others committing offences. The glorification and glamorisation of their offending is offensive and further traumatises victims and the community. These types of posts not only make the community feel unsafe but also encourage other offenders to commit offences.

That is why our government is taking the strong and decisive stance to require the provider of an online service to remove material that depicts criminal offending by someone in Queensland. Particular Queensland Police Service employees, approved by the Commissioner of Police, will be empowered to give a notice to an online social network requiring it to remove the material within 24 hours. To ensure that providers comply with these requirements, there will be strong penalties. The Queensland Police Service will be able to apply to the Supreme Court for a civil penalty up to \$1.5 million for failure to comply with a removal notice.

The bill also creates a new offence in the Summary Offences Act 2005 for sharing material online to advertise the act or omission that constitutes a prescribed offence. The offence captures select property offences, stealing offences, violent offences, offences involving a vehicle and weapons offences. The bill also inserts a new circumstance of aggravation for certain offences in the Criminal Code mirroring the circumstance of aggravation for the unlawful use of a motor vehicle offence that was introduced last year. The advertising of these offending behaviours online to incite fear within the community and promote their continuation or more serious offending will not be tolerated.

The government recognises the importance of community members and journalists sharing images and videos in relation to offences within the community, and the bill makes it very clear that this conduct is not to be captured by the offence. These offences are intended to address the use of social media by offenders and their associates to glorify and glamorise the offender's criminal behaviour, which, in turn, is further traumatising for victims and impacts on community safety.

The bill addresses the dangerous driving behaviour by some offenders that places the lives of members of the community and frontline emergency workers in danger and impacts critical frontline service delivery. The Queensland Police Service continues to see police vehicles rammed by offenders who are evading police or who want to damage the vehicles. Serious driving behaviour that puts other road users, the community and emergency workers at risk is unacceptable.

The bill cracks down on offenders who harm, or seek to harm, emergency workers and emergency vehicles, offenders who commit dangerous driving offences and offenders who publish material in relation to offences on social media platforms. Damaging emergency vehicles has significant financial and service delivery impacts, particularly on the Queensland Police Service. To address this behaviour and send a clear message that the Queensland government does not tolerate the ramming of emergency vehicles, the bill amends the Criminal Code to create a new standalone offence for causing damage to an emergency vehicle while operating a motor vehicle.

The offence applies where the person knew, or ought reasonably to have known, the damaged vehicle was an emergency vehicle and the person intended to damage the vehicle or endanger the safety of an emergency worker. During their duties, police officers frequently work on the roadside or other places where people drive motor vehicles. It is their duty to attend volatile and dangerous situations and remain until they are resolved. While there, they can be exposed to an increased risk of violence. This is particularly so where the driver operates a vehicle in a way that deliberately puts the

police officer's safety at risk, such as deliberately swerving in a vehicle towards a police officer and deliberately driving at and chasing police vehicles while attempting to ram the vehicle.

To ensure the occupational vulnerability of police officers is recognised in the Criminal Code, the bill introduces a new offence for injuring or endangering the safety of a police officer while operating a motor vehicle. These new offences intend to reflect the seriousness of this type of offending and ensure that violent behaviour targeted at emergency workers and its impact on the community is appropriately addressed. We want to send a strong message to those criminals that, if you are going to target our police and emergency services personnel, then you should expect severe consequences, including jail.

The bill provides for further protection of emergency vehicles by inserting a new special case for wilful damage where the damage is caused to an emergency vehicle. This damage, although lesser in culpability and severity than ramming, still has a significant impact on the community as it renders a vehicle inoperable whilst awaiting repairs, impacting frontline duties. The bill also amends Criminal Code section 408A—the unlawful use of a motor vehicle—and section 427—the unlawful entry of a vehicle—to insert a new circumstance of aggravation where the vehicle in question is an emergency vehicle, ensuring that offenders who actively target emergency vehicles to commit an indictable offence are held accountable for their behaviour.

To send the clearest message that dangerous driving in Queensland is unacceptable, the bill increases the maximum penalties for dangerous operation causing death or grievous bodily harm to 14 years and, where a circumstance of aggravation applies, 20 years. It also inserts a new circumstance of aggravation where the person was evading police at the time of committing the offence, with a maximum penalty of 20 years. This law is inspired by the advocacy of Claudine Snow, and this law will be known by Claudine and her family as Susan's Law in honour of her mother and family who died in tragic circumstances. The increase in penalties aligns with other similar violent offences and community expectations where the degree of harm inflicted through this behaviour causes the greatest harm to another person and the community.

The possession of knives in public places poses a significant and escalating risk to community safety, with the potential for incidents to quickly escalate to the weapon being used to commit serious and violent crimes. The Miles government remains committed to reducing unlawful possession of knives in public places to minimise the risks of harm associated with knife related crime.

To further facilitate greater operation of the current Jack's Law, the bill amends the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to increase the scope of prescribed public places in which police officers can conduct handheld scanning to detect unlawfully possessed knives and combat increasing knife related crime. These amendments have, once again, been inspired by the tireless efforts of Brett and Belinda Beasley from the Jack Beasley Foundation, whose campaign has contributed to enhance community safety.

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The bill extends the existing Jack's Law framework to additional venues, namely: shopping centres and retail premises; sporting and entertainment venues; licensed premises; and Queensland Rail train lines, including the Gold Coast Light Rail. These places are generally characterised by elevated pedestrian density and greater risk of an offence occurring. These amendments will increase public safety in key areas and seek to reduce the risk of knife-related offences occurring in these areas by knives from the wrong hands. The trial will also be extended to 30 October 2026 to allow the expanded framework to be independently and robustly evaluated.

The expansion of Jack's Law to capture additional premises and locations, with appropriate safeguards, is a necessary response to knife-related incidents we continue to see in our community. The existing penalty for the offence of possessing a knife in a public place or a school in section 51 of the Weapons Act 1990 is 40 penalty units or one year in prison. As was previously announced only a few months ago and to complement the expansion of Jack's Law, the bill amends the Weapons Act 1990 to increase the maximum penalty for this offence to 50 penalty units or 18 months in prison for a first offence and 100 penalty units or two years in prison for a second offence.

In the wake of the Bondi Junction attack, on top of other devastating events in our own community, government action is now, more than ever, crucial. The Miles government is committed to bolstering our comprehensive strategy to disrupt and deter violent offences that involve knives and support community safety. The government has funded a community education campaign that will roll out this year in respect of that.

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission estimates there are at least 200,000 firearms in the Australian illicit firearm market. As part of this industry, there is also an increasing trend where organised crime gang groups, including outlaw motorcycle gangs, engage in the trafficking of illicit

firearms. This bill seeks to address the increased risk of firearm related offences by introducing a firearm prohibition order scheme in Queensland. A firearm prohibition order prohibits an individual who is subject to the order from possessing, using or acquiring a firearm or firearm related item and empowers police officers to conduct searches of the individual, their vehicle or residence to ensure compliance with the order.

Under this scheme, a firearm prohibition order can be issued against high-risk individuals if the decision-maker is satisfied it is in the public interest to make the order. For example, a firearm prohibition order may be issued against a person with a significant history of violence, propensity to misuse firearms and/or is involved in a criminal or terrorist organisation. We know these are significant powers, and that is why we have ensured a number of safeguards have been included. The model proposed will provide effective protection for the Queensland community against the illicit movement, trafficking and use of illicit firearms in Australia.

The bill also includes a number of amendments relevant to the Weapons Act 1990 and the Explosives Act 1999 to provide greater focus on public safety. Namely, the bill will expand the mandatory exclusion period for individuals who have committed prescribed offences, such as murder and armed robbery, to make them unsuitable to possess a firearm for 10 years and ensure that any licence or authority required to lawfully purchase ammunition is sighted and verified at the point of sale when ammunition is being purchased using an available online verification checking system.

As part of the Miles government's Community Safety Plan for Queensland, we will deliver an additional 900 police personnel over three years. This means our record investment in policing is delivering more than 3,000 extra police personnel across Queensland. To further uplift the capacity of our frontline police to support community safety, it is essential that we support service delivery efficiencies to reduce the operational workload and administrative burden on the front line. This bill will increase options available for roadside policing to enable broader access to digitisation methods for document service in certain cases and utilise existing service-system functions to serve documents on prisoners in custody.

Hooning remains a significant issue for police, with hooning events organised regularly where there can be up to 200 vehicles in attendance. Even with police officers attending these events, they are simply outnumbered compared to the number of offenders either spectating or committing hooning behaviour. The bill amends the existing hooning offence under section 19C of the Summary Offences Act 2005 to clarify that it is an offence to view a group activity where a hooning offence is being committed. This ensures that the scope of the offence clearly includes both passengers participating in and persons spectating, without a reasonable excuse, hooning behaviour. To ensure that the offence does not capture involuntary viewers who are passers-by, 'spectate' is defined as remaining at a location where hooning activity is occurring to watch the activity. Examples have also been included in the provision to clarify the types of circumstances that may amount to a reasonable excuse for someone to spectate a hooning event, such as a journalist or person gathering information for a police or news report.

This bill expands the eligibility criteria for the current electronic monitoring trial to increase the sample size to properly determine whether electronic monitoring reduces reoffending among serious repeat offenders and whether it is an effective alternative to detention. The expansions add a number of new prescribed indictable offences involving violence or threats of violence and include children who have been charged with a prescribed indictable offence within the preceding 12 months. The inclusion of children who have been charged in the preceding 12 months, even if they have not been found guilty, is to ensure 'rapid onset' serious repeat offenders are not excluded from electronic monitoring.

The opposition like to reinvent history when it comes to community safety in Queensland. It is very clear that breach of bail was never an offence for young people under the LNP. They wasted millions of dollars on a failed boot camp experiment to breed fitter, faster criminals, leading to more recidivism—that was not secure.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Pause the clock. Members, we will have order in the House.

Mr RYAN: They cut support for victims, including almost \$323,000 from Victim Assist Queensland and \$259 million from community sector organisations, many of which supported victims of crime. They abolished the Murri Court and the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council. They cut over \$170 million from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and \$10 million from the department of youth justice. The LNP failed to back police with the resources they needed to fight crime. They cut police

personnel, including 110 senior officers. They took police away from frontline roles to work in complicated and inefficient bureaucracies they created. They have a history of introducing laws that do not work. The LNP's sex offender laws were declared invalid by the Court of Appeal. What's more, as a result of the LNP's laws, the monitoring of 1,700 sex offenders ceased.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are longstanding orders and conventions. The introduction of a bill by the minister is to explain the bill to the House. Standing order 130(1) prevents debate on a bill and prevents other members of the parliament debating the bill. The minister is attacking his opponents without the opposition having the right of reply. I ask that you bring the minister back to explaining the bill and not debating the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have heard your point of order. I will seek some advice.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will get some advice in silence, please. Thank you, member for Kawana, for your point of order. Minister, in order for you to continue with your explanatory speech, I would ask that you explain the bill. There is some latitude to give context to the bill that you are introducing. However, I would ask that you please adhere to standing order 130(1) and explain the contents of the bill to the House.

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Mr RYAN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Our laws are workable, our laws are strong, unlike those opposite. The bill replaces the wording in principle 18 of schedule 1 of the Youth Justice Act which is the charter of youth justice principles with—

A child should be detained in custody, where necessary, including to ensure community safety, where other non-custodial measures of prevention and intervention would not be sufficient, and for no longer than necessary to meet the purpose of detention.

We are proposing to make it plain that the intention has always been that a child may be detained where necessary, including for legitimate and existing sentencing reasons such as community safety purposes.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, I cannot hear what the minister is saying.

Mr RYAN: This principle has been misrepresented to suggest that the courts are unable to impose detention—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, if I am to rule on points of order, I need to hear what the minister is saying. Members on my left, you are preventing me from doing that at this point.

Mr RYAN: This principle has been misrepresented to suggest that the courts are unable to impose detention if other penalties are available to the court. This is not correct. The extent of the misrepresentation is affecting public confidence in the youth justice system. We are seeking to address these misrepresentations and make the operation and intent of the principle clearer. We believe that this wording, along with the extrinsic materials provided with the bill, will provide the judiciary with the information required so that the intent of the legislation is clear. We have, of course, obtained specialist legal advice to inform our approach, which reinforces what we have always said—that is, the courts have all the tools in their toolbox to make decisions in the interests of community safety. We are confident that our proposed rewording meets our policy intent—that is, to make it plain that a child may be detained where necessary for community safety. Queenslanders expect to be safe and feel safe, and we will continue to deliver measures to support our police and agencies to achieve this.

The Youth Justice Reform Select Committee heard evidence that transparency in the youth justice system, including its accessibility to victims, has a significant impact on the community's confidence in the system and success in the reforms. Currently, criminal proceedings against children are open to the public when they are heard by a Childrens Court judge on indictment or by a Supreme Court judge. Where criminal proceedings are not heard on indictment, such as when heard in the Magistrates Court, access to proceedings can be limited by the court.

The Miles government has heard victims and the media calling for greater access to Childrens Court criminal proceedings. The bill will amend section 20 of the Childrens Court Act 1992 to ensure a victim or a relative of a deceased victim can be present during Childrens Court proceedings. Special provisions will apply where a Childrens Court magistrate is considering dismissing or adjourning a hearing of a similar offence due to the child defendant's unsoundness of mind or unfitness for trial.

The amendments will also allow a victim's representative and accredited media entities to be present during these criminal proceedings unless the court considers it necessary to exclude them to prevent prejudice to the proper administration of justice or to protect the safety of any person. Otherwise, Childrens Court criminal proceedings not heard on indictment will remain closed to the general public. Offences regarding the prohibition of the publication of certain information, such as a child defendant's identifying information, will continue to operate.

The comprehensive package of legislative reform contained in this bill would not be possible without the dedication of the brilliant and talented public servants who work for the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Youth Justice, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. On behalf of all of us, I want to particularly thank them for their contribution to this bill which will make Queensland a safer place.

In addition, I would like to thank the mighty drafters at the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel for their expert work. Many Queenslanders—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my left.

Mr RYAN: They still hate public servants, Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, minister!

Mr RYAN: They cannot—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, your interjections are not being taken. Minister, can you continue your introductory speech, please.

Mr RYAN: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. They cannot even listen in silence when I am thanking a public service. Outrageous! Once again, I would like to thank the mighty drafters at the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel for their expertise and dedication to the people of Queensland.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr RYAN: Again, they cannot even listen to thanks for public servants. Many Queenslanders would not know—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, your interjections are disorderly—cease.

Mr RYAN: Many Queenslanders would not know, but these fine public servants are some of our state's unsung heroes when it comes to legislation. They take the government's policies and turn them into laws. On behalf of the Miles government, we thank them for their support in this and all legislation.

This bill is a key part of our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It is a plan for the community, from the community. Each element of this plan connects to the others, reinforcing, enhancing and strengthening their impact. Crime is complex, but we do know what works. More police, more boots on the ground, more prevention and more intervention, breaking the cycle of crime, supporting victims and detaining those who cause harm. We are not doing just one thing, we are doing all of these things, doing them all in a comprehensive and coordinated way to suppress, disrupt, reduce and prevent crime. The Miles government will always do all within its powers to make Queenslanders safe and for them to feel safe. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.

First Reading

Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (10.36 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 Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

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

PRIVILEGE

Order of Business

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.36 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday afternoon I was approached by the Leader of the House on the basis that this morning National Cabinet would be meeting here in Queensland and the Premier was required to attend. The changes to this morning's order of business were on the basis of the Premier attending National Cabinet. As we have just discovered, it has been used as an opportunity for those opposite to instead introduce legislation which, in effect, gags members of the opposition and the crossbench from further discussion of this important matter—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am sure you understand that the member has not referred to any standing order. I ask you to ask the member to articulate—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is seeking to make a matter of privilege. Member for Glass House, before I get back to you, I want to take some advice from the Clerk. Member for Glass House, you have risen on a matter of privilege and I ask you to get to the matter of privilege quickly. Then there is a process for making a complaint about a matter of privilege in terms of writing to the Speaker, and that will be the process. Please state it quickly and then we will resume proceedings.

Mr POWELL: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I was saying, it goes to gagging members of the opposition and crossbench on questioning detention as a last resort. I foreshadow that I will be moving a suspension of standing order 231 to allow members of the opposition and crossbench to ask questions on this important aspect of community safety.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, that is not a matter of privilege. Please resume your seat. Member for Glass House, are you seeking to move a motion without notice now?

Mr POWELL: I foreshadow that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no matter of privilege arising from that.

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL


MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from 30 April (see p. 1349) on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (10.39 am): I rise to support the cognate bills. I will particularly focus on the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023. I was intending to start by thanking the public servants who work in my area, but I do not want to come under attack from those opposite for thanking public servants for the hard work that they do. What a disgraceful display we saw today that the police minister could not even thank the drafters of the bills for the extraordinary work that they do without being attacked by those opposite. The member for Kawana, of all people, claimed that people were being political in their speeches.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I draw attention to the fact that the member is not speaking to the bill before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Stafford, I agree with the point of order and I ask you to return to the bill before the House.

Mr SULLIVAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank the member for the 'integrity'. I will focus my remarks on the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill. It provides for better coordination between the SES, the police and Marine Rescue Queensland. I want to particularly thank my local

public servants—those at the Emergency Services Complex in Kedron; an icon on the north side that many people will know. They are unsung heroes when it comes to the frontline services of our state disaster management.


In my previous job I saw the extraordinary work they do in disaster management. As the local MP, I have been there many times representing ministers. I want to thank the SES at Newmarket. They did an extraordinary job fighting the floods in 2022. I also give a shout-out to the northside SES that operate out of the old quarry in Stafford. I think it is technically Stafford and Kedron because it touches Turner Road. People will know what I am talking about—just off Stafford Road. The two entities work very well together. I have been to the activities and training sessions that they run and what has struck me is not only the diversity of backgrounds that people bring to their volunteer roles but also their singular dedication and commitment to community. I thank them for that. I think this bill provides better coordination across our various service providers.

I give particular thanks to the staff at the Kedron centre. I have been there for staff awards. Many people are very loyal to the service and have been there for many years. I always enjoy going to their awards in recognition of particular service, long service or whatever it may be. They are fantastic public servants and I thank them for their loyalty and dedication. They deserve our thanks.

The cadet program that they run is another example of the coordination that already exists across our services—a cadet program that was cut by those opposite but which we reinstated. It is an intensive program that under the umbrella of PCYC brings together cadets from QFES, QPS, from marine safety, from rural firefighters and even from Surf Life Saving Queensland. They engage in intensive training. There are quite an array of activities and I want to thank all of those services. I give a shout-out to marine safety in Bribie Island that runs that intensive training. To see the growth in those young people and the recruits in that program is phenomenal. I commend Connor, a local student from Kedron, who graduated from that program last year. He was one of the younger cohort. I saw his growth and the pride in his parents' faces when he graduated that intensive program. It is an example of the better coordination across our SES, rural firefighters and other volunteer organisations that are now under the umbrella of the Queensland Police Service. This bill goes a long way towards providing better logistics and better structures for those organisations.

These organisations are community minded. For example, the centre at Kedron, co-located with Kedron State High School, run a water safety program. Kedron high has a large proportion of international students whose second language is English. QFES and the SES run a program focused on water safety for those students. It is an example of these organisations working together and how community minded they are. As a sidenote, I am reminded by the northside historian, the member for Sandgate, that the co-located sites of the Kedron centre and Kedron high were actually the former Kedron Park racecourse, which was owned by John Wren back in the day. I think we have come a long way in terms of a commitment to the north side, in terms of what that site now provides. Thankfully, we still have the Kedron Park Hotel opposite still serving our community. Jokes aside, this bill is an important step forward towards better managing our wonderful volunteers and public servants and acknowledging the important work that they do.

I want to acknowledge the work that the people from Kedron do—not just for our local community when it comes to floods but across the state—because we all know that it is the engine room when it comes to facing the worst times in disasters. I thank the police minister, Minister Boyd and the others who have contributed to this bill and who know, better than I do, the work of our wonderful public servants that goes on behind the scenes as they deliver for this state. I back them every day of the week.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (10.47 am): I start by thanking all of those who work in the Redlands Coast area as police and in the various emergency services, either as frontline professionals or in support roles as employees or volunteers. Our SES, VMR, other rescue elements, our fires and our police serve in difficult circumstances at times and at risk to themselves. When an emergency occurs, you want to know that police and emergency services will be there to respond.

When you have a fire break out in the proximity of your household, for example—as occurred in our family home—you want to know that the QFES and Rural Fire Services are there and available. When you have a cyclone bearing down on you in Central Queensland or North Queensland, as we have had happen, you want to know that you will be safe. When you are in a boat at sea and it breaks down, as I have had happen, you want to know that you have the VMR and Water Police there.

I want to thank all of those who participated in the process of this bill: the committee members of parliament, the staff, all of the submitters, the witnesses and the stakeholders. I thank the Water Police and the other police who are doing it tough in a youth crime crisis and during the freak weather events that we have been through in recent times. I want to thank the local VMR rescue that keeps us safe on the water at their own risk. They respond to boats that are overturned and they have wonderfully rescued so many people.

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Sadly, however, some have lost their lives in our local area, in the southern part of Moreton Bay and in Moreton Bay more widely. I want to thank the Raby Bay VMR and the Dunwich VMR for the work they do. I think of the many times on the south bar, the southern passage between North Stradbroke Island and Moreton Island, when, sadly, boats have experienced difficulty and come to grief. The VMR respond quickly as do our Water Police. They have done so at their own risk at times. During my time here I have known of the case of one VMR boat that came into trouble when rescuing someone off that bar. The VMR boat flipped over and our VMR volunteers were thrown into the ocean. I am very grateful that they came to no great harm. Those who were rescuing needed also to be rescued. It is very risky work; we note that and we are very grateful for that.

I want to thank the Redland SES that is always winning all kinds of prizes for outstanding work across the state at the annual awards. They are an exemplary group.

Ms Richards: Best in the state.

Dr ROBINSON: I take that interjection. They continue to be at the top in terms of their performance.

I want to thank the QFES and RFS for keeping the fire risk down. There is much I could say if we had more time to speak on the bill. However, we have the truncated situation of dealing with all of these bills in cognate. I would have liked to have spoken separately about the great work of our fireies in the Redland area, including the volunteers who work there, and some of the incidents they have responded to. However, there is not really scope in this debate to take a lot of time to do that.

I want to particularly put on the record my thanks for the Capalaba fire station and the Rural Fire Services that had to respond from the Gold Coast and saved many homes in Sheldon during a fire outbreak several years ago. They were wonderful. In fact, they saved our family home and so we are incredibly grateful. When that has happened to you personally, when you have a fire coming down on your family home, it is not a great feeling. You do the right thing: you respond, you get out and you do what you can to help if you can. I want to thank those who, at risk to their own lives, work to keep us all safe.

I want to spend my remaining time talking about Marine Rescue Queensland and again thank the Water Police for their work in the waters of Moreton Bay around North Stradbroke Island and the Southern Moreton Bay Islands. I also thank them for their work in coordinating with VMRs in the area when incidents occur at sea. This cooperative relationship is really important. The general thrust of the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill is to better coordinate the emergency response at sea and that is universally supported. Having said that, the process of merging VMR and the coastguard has been a drawn-out one and has failed to produce agreement across the board with all of the bases, and that is a sad fact. Further, many VMRs have expressed privately that they have felt really mucked around throughout this process. Some feel they were not listened to, some feel they have not had their concerns addressed and some have not agreed to the changes. The Blue Water Review, which aimed to merge VMR and coastguard entities, was a drawn-out, frustrating and costly process that failed to convince all chapters to come on board.

The committee heard that not all VMR groups will move across and migrate in July. The process whereby the volunteer organisations will be brought on board will be a staged process, so come 1 July not everyone will be on board. Some VMRs have accepted the changes and some have rejected the government's new structure. How this will work in practice is not super clear and I do not believe the minister has satisfactorily addressed that problem. We certainly do not want to see different systems cause risk at a time of emergency response. I flag that there is more work that needs to be done there.

Some of the reasons for rejecting the government's direction include the assets, bank accounts, local ownership and sense of organisational culture going forward. In her submission, one particular senior volunteer expressed concerns about the Blue Water Review and the transition of MRQ to the QPS. She said—


In terms of communication with the state government, it has been extremely difficult to achieve transparent, accountable communication with the state government and QFES. We have dealt with a frequently changing cohort of public servants who

appear to have been inadequately briefed on the process and who appear to be withholding information from us. The state government refers to this process as a transition. It is not a transition; it is a takeover. To be honest, we have been patronised and kept in the dark. We ask questions and receive no answers. We get very little communication, and the verbal communication we do get is scant and peremptory.

This is disappointing. This does not build confidence and I would call on the government to be more careful in how they handle the remainder of the VMRs that have not yet agreed to come on board. The submitter went on to address other issues like the assets and the savings. She said—

We have been told by the state government that all of our assets will be compulsorily transferred to the state government as part of the transition. We are told that our cash reserves will be held by the state government in a fenced account. Should we wish to spend money on, for example, our community education program, we can apply to the state government for those funds, and if the public servant who decides such matters agrees with our process, then we will be given some of our own money to spend. We do not understand how this process is going to work. We currently have some \$740,000 in the bank. We have worked very hard for that money. Of that money, \$120,000 has been raised through sausage sizzles and donations. ... We have been told by the state government that we will be required to continue to fundraise and those funds will be transferred to them to manage. We really do not understand how this is going to work. We are on the cusp of a piece of legislation being passed that we do not think is fit for purpose.

There may be some misunderstandings or miscommunications, but that is how some of our senior VMR volunteers, who have faithfully served the state and their local area, feel about this process. I would call on the government, the minister and others involved to be clear and to answer the questions that have been raised. They are very real concerns raised by a number of VMR bases. It is absolutely critical that they all be on board and are using the same emergency response process so there is no confusion out at sea and no additional risk created by having a two-tiered system. The government has had a lot of time to get this right and they obviously have more work to do.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (10.57 am): I rise to speak on this cognate debate of the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the bill that deals with fires and the rural fires. I would like to start by congratulating both ministers: the former minister, Minister Ryan, and also the new minister, Minister Boyd. They have done a marvellous job on this. There is a complete difference. We will talk about my coastguard first of all. They are very happy with what is happening because now they will not have to pay for their own uniforms. Now they will not have to sell sausages at the shopping centre in front of that well-known hardware store. Now they know that their boats are going to be put on a list to be replaced, like the rural fires' trucks. Now they know they will have more time for training and to be out looking after people on the water.

My coastguard are very happy with the transition. In fact, my coastguard are going to put up a statue of Minister Ryan because they are getting a brand new rescue boat out of this. I would like to thank the minister for talking to my coastguard volunteers. We know what a big part they play in marine rescue in the sandy straits. We cannot do without them. I often talk to my Boonooroo coastguard. They are very happy. In fact, they were the first coastguard to get on board with this because they saw the benefits that the Labor government was giving them. Who can imagine being a volunteer and having to pay for your own uniform? Now the uniforms will be supplied. Who can imagine having to pay for their own training? That is all taken care of now. It was very good to talk to the department and the minister's office about the new boat.

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I also want to talk about the great work that the SES does in my area, and the SES will now come under the auspices of the police. After talking to volunteers in the Maryborough electorate, they are keen to go back under the QPS regime and work with the QPS. They are very pleased with that because, originally, that is how it used to be—that is, the SES came under the police. There are many great benefits happening, and this is all being done by a Labor government—a government that respects and values volunteers in our community. That is what we do: we value and we respect our volunteers. All we have heard from those opposite about these bills is whingeing and whining that they do not have enough time to do a bit of self-promotion—do a bit of dancing around for themselves—instead of talking about the great things that are happening in these bills and the benefits for the volunteers in my electorate.

I now want to talk about my favourite subject—that is, rural fires. The rural fires in my area do a magnificent job. There will be a big announcement in the Maryborough electorate shortly thanks to Minister Ryan and Minister Boyd with regard to the rural fires in the Maryborough electorate. This is going to be a first for Queensland, and it could only be achieved under a Labor government because it looks after our volunteers. There are a lot of rumours and stories going around. Yesterday we heard from the member for Burnett that the world was going to collapse in terms of the rural fires and everything was going to go wrong and pear-shaped. That is totally different to what I am hearing,

because I have been talking to my rural fireies and they are very happy. Which government brought in legislation to help our rural fireies so that they got their fuel, their insurances, their vehicles—

Mr Skelton: Maintenance.

Mr SAUNDERS:—as well as maintenance on those vehicles? I take that interjection from the member for Nicklin because he knows. He talks to his rural fireies. He is out on the ground, not like the other candidate in Nicklin who just walks around and does nothing all day. This member is out there all day and is a former firefighter, so he knows exactly what is going on, and that is why he is a good member for Nicklin. When we talk to the rural fireies in our electorates, they tell us how great it is under a Labor government because they do not have to go out there on the weekends and rattle the can for people to give a dollar because they get what they need—

Mr Whiting interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection. They get what they need from the Labor government. This government has facilitated world-class rural fireies. When there were floods in Maryborough, the rural fireies were outstanding. They hosed out all of the businesses that had flooded. When you are on the road a lot, the rural fireies are sometimes the first responders. They are there, especially in regional communities on rural roads. I have to make a disclaimer: I am very well associated with the Aldershot Rural Fire Brigade. I want to give a shout-out to its first officer Craig Smith, Jay and the crew. I work very well with them.

Mr Ryan: Hear, hear! Good bloke.

Mr SAUNDERS: The former minister, Minister Ryan, just interjected and, yes, Craig is a tremendous man and one of the best rural fireies you will ever come across. We are trying to dispel the myths. Dare I say it, but we are trying to put the fires out that members of the LNP are going around starting.

Government members interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: This bill does not change incidental arrangements. A yellow truck does not have to wait for a red truck to respond to operations first, so that is another myth by the LNP debunked by this side of the House. Those opposite were going around saying, 'The red trucks have to turn up and we're second rate.' That is absolute rubbish that has been circulating around the rural fireies.

One of the good things coming out of this legislation is the advisory committee with strong—and I repeat, strong—volunteer representation. This advisory committee will be advising the minister on rural fireies, and that is what a great Labor government does—we listen to the volunteers, we respect them and we fund them. There is something that we give the volunteers that the other side never gave them: we give them the equipment to do their jobs, and we literally give it to them.

Besides trains, I do have another passion, and it is the fire station in Maryborough. It is absolutely brilliant. It is the first timber fire station in the history of Queensland. Not only does the Labor side of the House look after volunteers; we look after our frontline services. We always do, and we saw that earlier today with the minister's bill introduction. We are always looking after frontline services and community safety. One thing about which I will always be proud as the local member is the brand new fire station in Maryborough. This fire station—

Mr Ryan: Hear, hear!


Mr SAUNDERS: Thank you, Minister. The minister could not be there to open it—

Mr Ryan: I was there virtually, though.

Mr SAUNDERS: He was there virtually. It was a great day. This timber fire station is the first in Queensland. The big thing about this fire station is that it is built for many years to come given how modern it is. It was built out of timber that was grown in the Maryborough electorate, processed in the Maryborough electorate and built by workers from the Maryborough electorate.

Government members interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: Not only is Minister Furner the farmer's friend; he is also the timberman's friend, too. That station is fantastic. I support these bills. As I said earlier, I want to thank both ministers because both ministers have worked really hard on this legislation. There was consultation from the rural fireies in Maryborough on Monday night at one of the hotels. A lot of rural fireies turned up to get the facts about this bill, not the myths and the rubbish and the misinformation that has been spread around about these bills. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (11.05 am): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate of the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Our volunteers are the heart and soul of our community and are the bond that keeps us altogether. The Christmas Eve storm which hit the northern Gold Coast, the Logan City area and the Scenic Rim caused extensive devastation for many residents, local homes and local businesses and caused many roads to become impassable. It was these volunteers—neighbours, locals—who sprang into action. They cleared driveways and roadways, and these efforts were enabled due to coordination between the rural fire brigades and the SES, of which I used to be a member for quite a long time. Therefore, when it comes to these organisations, they certainly deserve our respect.

What I find completely unacceptable in terms of what transpired with this legislation is that these individuals and organisations, especially the rural fire brigades with the disaster management bill, only had one week to make a submission to the committee's inquiry into the legislation. However, I do thank the chair of the committee, the member for Toohey, for allowing late submissions to be submitted. Such a short time frame shows the complete disdain that the Labor Party has for our rural fire brigades. During the committee's hearings individuals from these brigades spoke time and time again about the issues they have with training and the lack of training availability. According to the chair of the Dayboro and District Rural Fire Brigade, Mr O'Sullivan, these training courses are few and far between. This was backed up by Mr Kemp, the group officer of Maroochy South Rural Fire Brigades Group, who said—

The minimum skills are what you can get when you first join ... That generally takes two to three months. Then you have to wait two years before you can go to your FAS ...

that is, firefighter advanced skills. He continued—

Then, correct me if I am wrong, it is another two years before you can do crew leader. Then you can step out and become officers. At the moment, we are looking at six years for a volunteer to be able to get that training.

When we look at the structure of the courses set up under AIMS, one of the concerns that these rural fire brigade members have is the slowness with which courses are available to them. If there is no availability for courses for these individuals, it becomes a disincentive for those individuals to stay in those brigades. Whatever the government may spruik in this House today, it is incredibly important that these courses are made available to ensure that these individuals stay incentivised to be in those brigades, because at the moment those courses, as they said—and it is not just these individuals saying it but other brigades also—are few and far between.

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I ask the minister how many level 2 incident controller courses in the last month were made available to the volunteer brigades? I am not talking about paid staff but volunteer brigades and I am not talking about level 2 officer courses but incident controller courses. We have some fantastic incident controllers who are volunteers, such as Jim Besgrove near Townsville. When Cyclone Jasper came across the coast in Townsville, he was the incident controller taking control of the situation. He is a volunteer. We need to ensure that these individuals get access to the same courses that are made available to the paid staff. This bill does nothing to alleviate their fears in relation to that issue. During the committee hearings the commissioner informed the committee that currently there are nine individuals being trained as level 3 incident controllers. My question to the minister is: how many of those level 3 controllers are volunteers? It would be very interesting to hear that number.

Another concern that we put forward was in relation to clause 83. Brigades are concerned about what clause 83 would mean in areas where they do not have paid fire brigade staff members. There are rural areas in Queensland that rely on those rural fire brigades. Clause 83 states there are two types of incident controllers, a rural fire brigade one and a person with incident control expertise. What does that mean for rural fire brigade areas that do not have paid staff to cover them? Queensland is a very large state. What will happen in those situations?


Another issue that regularly came up in the committee process was what happens when an officer in charge of operations, normally the first officer, is unavailable. It could have been clearly written in this legislation that if the first officer is not available that the next officer should take charge—the second officer, third officer, et cetera. That could have easily alleviated their concerns.

Another issue of concern in this legislation is what is going to happen to the brigade's money. It is going to be transferred under delegation to the department to look after. Our brigades currently use their own financial institutions and they have the ability to put funds into term deposits or interest bearing accounts so they can accrue some interest on those funds which they can then use to buy anything they need for their brigade. It makes it easier when they need to move money back and forth. It must

be remembered that these funds come from sausage sizzles and other events set up by the brigade. Many rural fire brigades have family open days. Funds used for those family open days are from fundraisers the brigades have conducted. They are concerned about what will happen if government decides to rescind the delegation of those funds because it is not in the legislation. They want protection for the hard work they have done in their community.

Finally, I would like to talk about smoke alarms in caravans. The legislation states that at the point of sale caravans are required to have smoke alarms. However, caravans on sites all over Queensland that are not sold will not be required to have them. That is a complete oversight. That needs to be corrected for the safety of the people living in those caravans. The government needs to correct that.

The LNP will be voting against a clause within the legislation. This legislation does not give rural fire brigade members the honour that they deserve. Giving the different brigades one week to look over and understand this legislation, along with the confusion that was created in the community, is completely unacceptable for hardworking volunteers who put their lives on the line protecting our houses, protecting our farms and protecting our communities.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (11.15 am): Our Miles government will always support our emergency frontline personnel. I am very blessed in my electorate of the Redlands to have the mainland and the islands. Volunteer Marine Rescue Victoria Point—Dave, Nev and the whole team—provide an incredible on-water service to our community, keeping Redlanders safe. I am extraordinarily proud to be the patron of the Redland Bay coastguard. They work closely with Volunteer Marine Rescue and do a fantastic job. This bill brings those groups together to provide even more safety for Queenslanders.

As members heard the member for Oodgeroo say, our SES are best in class here in the state of Queensland. Alex Johnson is very well awarded and regarded for his work in the SES. Our entire SES team, both in Redland Bay and the Southern Moreton Bay Island SES group, do a fantastic job. I have five rural fire brigades in my patch. I have the Coochiemudlo Island Rural Fire Brigade, the Karragarra Island Rural Fire Brigade, the Lamb Island Rural Fire Brigade, the Macleay Island Rural Fire Brigade and the Russell Island Rural Fire Brigade. The first officers of those teams are absolutely incredible. I only need to reflect back to last year when we had the house fire on Russell Island. They were the first to attend the site. They arrived in a faster time than you would have had a mainland urban fire team arrive. They were there right the way through. The work that Larry, Kev and that entire team did on that day was nothing short of miraculous. I thank Minister Boyd for coming out with me last month to personally thank, congratulate and award each and every one of those rural fire officers. They do an absolutely fantastic job.

In our electorate we also have the Redlands Coast champions who do a fantastic job in providing support to our rural fire brigades, ambulance officers and police officers when there are emergencies. I do not think we have ever seen the number of natural disasters that occurred in the lead-up to Christmas across this state. The work of our Volunteer Marine Rescue groups, our coastguards, our SES members and our rural fires, whether as a result of Tropical Cyclone Jasper, the severe storms down on the Gold Coast, the flooding events or the sandbagging requirements, is absolutely fantastic. I could not be more proud or privileged to represent that group of people. Our community is extraordinarily blessed to have such incredible emergency response personnel across all of those organisations.

I want to address some of the comments of the opposition members that have occurred throughout this debate. It speaks to the cherrypicking that continually goes on by the opposition. I had the opportunity to be the acting chair for the committee hearing into the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. What I saw firsthand was the level of misinformation that had been spread and used in contributions today and yesterday. It is really disappointing when that is done, particularly to our rural fires. In that hearing I had the opportunity to reiterate every member in this chamber's deepest respect for what our rural fires do for our communities. Nobody in this chamber would disagree with the fact that they do an amazing job.

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It was extraordinarily disappointing to see that misinformation circulated. In his opening statement at the hearing, the General Manager of the Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland, Justin Choveaux, stated that there had been no consultation. In my very humble opinion that was simply misleading because that was certainly not the case. As members just heard, he repeated the claim when questioned by the member for Theodore and stated that there was no consultation whatsoever. Then, under questioning from both the member for Caloundra and me that day, he admitted that there

was consultation. I note the document tabled by the minister last night outlined the deep consultation that had occurred.

An honourable member: He would have known that.

Ms RICHARDS: Absolutely. He would have been fully aware of the consultation because he was part of it. I am happy to table this document again.


Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Reform Implementation Taskforce—Legislation and Reform Program: Stakeholder consult RFBAQ'.

Members only need refer to it to see the level of consultation that occurred. It is extraordinarily disappointing that that information was put out by Mr Choveaux. The consultation included in-person meetings, phone calls, team meetings, emails and letters. As the member for Maryborough stated, they were up in his patch for consultation. Everybody across the state of Queensland will have been part of that consultation. I do not understand why Mr Choveaux said there was no consultation when it is very clear that there absolutely was consultation. How did the association engage with their volunteers? They are the peak body and it is their job to provide accurate information. I wonder if the misinformation provided to what we know are over 1,400 brigade members circulated deliberately or was it just the result of incompetence. We really have to ask the question because, as we just heard in the member for Theodore's contribution, what he cherry-picked from those contributors was based on the misinformation from the RFBAQ. As the minister said last night, one brigade has labelled the RFBAQ's comments unhelpful. The minister quoted correspondence as follows—

Comments and opinions expressed by the RFBAQ seem to have no basis in data or evidence, leaving many confused and concerned.

It is not right to do that to our rural fires; it is quite shameful, actually. I echo the minister's calls last night in that advocating to your members and providing them with information is extraordinarily important. That advocacy with peak bodies is extraordinarily important and it should be based on fact not fiction. I would ask opposition members to base their contributions on fact and not on the misinformation that was spread because it is unfair to do that to our amazing rural fires who absolutely deserve better.

In conclusion, I support these bills. They will bring organisations together and provide better structures and training opportunities. We heard the member for Maryborough talk about the provision of his new boat. I know that in a rural fire sense our teams are very pleased with their appliances. Our coast guard has done an amazing job in securing a brand new vessel that it launched last year, which is fantastic. I know that giving surety around maintenance application, whether that be vessels or fire appliances, and providing that support to our hardworking and dedicated emergency personnel is important. On that note, I thank each and every one of them for their contribution to Queensland and for keeping our community safer. I commend these bills to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.23 am): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. With all respect to the member for Redlands, there was an issue with consultation. I refer to my question on notice yesterday concerning the Clairview Fire Brigade. It expressed a lot of concern to me and the entire brigade is looking to resign in the near future. It leaves a huge hole in their catchment. They are not the only ones.

We have about 54 volunteers in the very large area of my electorate. They want to work with the government fairly and respectfully. They do not feel that that is happening at the moment. In fact, one person said to me—and this is not politics—'I am not voting Labor again because of this.' They were his words. It was nothing to do with me. It is sad that we have to get this point and that we do not do the right thing in terms of consultation. They go out there and risk their lives. I have seen them. During the big fires in my electorate in 2018, I was driving around with these people who were risking their lives. They were not at home for days and days and had no sleep. We cannot underestimate the power of resentment. The volunteers are worth more than anything. They are there because they are passionate. They are there because they look after their communities. They are community-based people who know the terrain and work in that area. That is why they save the infrastructure, the native animals, their livestock and their neighbours. It is very important because over 90 per cent of Queensland relies on these people.

The four bills represent stage 1 of the Miles government's radical overhaul of Queensland's emergency services and its fire and disaster management arrangements. I thank the minister for the

meeting yesterday and reaching out to these people because we cannot lose any of them. It is so important. The overhaul reflects a growing trend in Queensland towards the greater centralisation of power and control in the state government and away from the decentralised groups with their own independent, community-based, decision-making processes.

Queensland has a long history of natural disasters ranging from cyclones and storms to mass flooding and raging bushfires. Don't we know it! It has always been this way. Given the state's greatly decentralised population, Queenslanders know that when disaster strikes the help they need will most likely come from a friend, a neighbour or their local volunteer groups. Trev Pullen, Dave Soper, Andy Hooley and all the boys out there work together to make it right for people in my electorate. This is why it was concerning to read in the HopgoodGanim Lawyers submission that there are significant gaps in legal protections for good Samaritan volunteers responding to disasters in Queensland. These 'spontaneous volunteers' are often first on the scene in an emergency and motivated by a strong desire to help others in their time of need. These volunteers save lives. It is important that they are recognised.

During Cyclone Jasper we saw good Samaritans undertaking rescues in boats, kayaks and helicopters and volunteering for the Cairns mud army. The Cairns mud army volunteers rescued 100 people near Holloway's Beach, including a mother and her seven-day-old baby. As the Prime Minister said—

These are the stories of which every Australian can be proud of, where the very essence of the Australian character shines through.

This is why I urge the government to make the recommended changes in the Civil Liberty Regulation 2014 to include good Samaritan protections in the legislation, consistent with other state and territory jurisdictions.

Our local emergency service volunteers do more than a sterling job when it comes to advancing the specific needs of their communities and ensuring local knowledge is front and centre of any local disaster management response. All four bills express support for these organisations but reveal the disturbing desire for increased management and top-down control of the services and their membership. Under the ESRA Bill, a number of consequential amendments are included to align the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland under the Queensland Police Service. The Queensland Police Commissioner has no accountability to volunteers over whom the commissioner will hold authoritarian control.

The bill's provisions even give the commissioner the power to suspend a volunteer. As Volunteering Queensland's submission points out, 'Part of volunteer recognition is ensuring a positive day-to-day volunteer experience', because they are not paid. They are there because they are passionate about what they do. The submission stated—

This includes ensuring volunteers' rights are respected and that the voluntary work, though given freely, is appropriately valued by the state.

That cannot be understated. In this respect, the bills do not sufficiently protect volunteers' rights. There is no reference to how a volunteer would be able to defend themselves or to what process would be followed to ensure a fair and reasonable outcome for the volunteer. Suspensions—and the issues behind them—can have a significant impact on the morale of volunteers as well as the organisation and the community to which they belong. The people in those communities trust them, live with them and understand that they have been doing it for years—generations.

I wish to comment on the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. Clause 23 grants marine rescue volunteers with the power to forcibly enter a place without a warrant or the consent of the owner or occupier of the place. As one submitter commented—

Why the emphasis on 'place', which is defined as premises, vacant land, vehicle, a place in Queensland waters, a place held under two titles et cetera?

MRQ is a water-based organisation. Its representatives should not need to enter a premise, a vehicle or any other property on land. The clause should refer just to the word 'vessel' and delete under the power of entry clause all other references to 'premises', 'buildings', 'vacant land', 'vehicles', 'aircraft' and 'helicopters'.

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MRQ members should not be engaging in law enforcement which, as numerous submitters noted, is a conflict of interest for a rescue service. One marine rescue volunteer's submission said—

A marine rescue service should be able to freely rescue people and vessels without any law enforcement obligations. Whether a person is a law abiding citizen or Black Beard the Pirate, they or their vessel should be able to be rescued with no questions asked. This greatly reduces the risk of marine rescue personnel being assaulted by someone who needs to be rescued.

People may also be reluctant to call for rescue services for fear they may be accused of wrongdoing and charged with something. This is what they are saying: quasi-law enforcement structures are inappropriate for a rescue service. All such provisions should be removed from the bill.


Finally, I would like to express my concerns with the disaster management bill, which has provoked so much outrage in my electorate and in other electorates across the state. As mentioned in the House yesterday, at least one Rural Fire Service in my area has said they will consider resigning if this bill is enacted. This is a very sad indictment of the pressure we are going to put on these people.

The bill clearly does not have the support of its most important stakeholders—the Queensland Rural Fire Service—or the local communities they serve. It goes against every principle of good governance, in my book, for the government to be strong-arming this controversial legislation through in the face of widespread disagreement, even anger, over the bill's changes—changes that will have a substantial impact on RFS management, funding and operational independence. They are concerned. They do not understand what is coming and how it is going to be delivered.

Consultation was minimal. Not only has the bill utterly failed in obtaining broad stakeholder support; its consultation process was rushed, with the RFS given just seven days to respond to the exposure draft it was presented with by the department. The brigades have asked that the bill be withdrawn to allow for full and frank consultation to occur with the RFBAQ and their communities on the establishment of a standalone rural fire authority. I support this request and share the brigades' concerns with the way the bill has been introduced.

There has been no structured consultation with brigades and brigade members on the contents of this bill and its implications for volunteer rural firefighters in this state. They are very concerned about the statutory requirements when this bill goes through and the push from the government on all different aspects, even the blue card.

The RFBAQ was provided with access to the bill and given seven days to review it and give feedback. The brigades' membership only had access to the bill once it was tabled in parliament last month. They did not have any say on it. I am concerned. We need to do more as far as reaching out to people is concerned, especially the rural fire brigades. They keep this state safe. They have our backs. We should have theirs. This is a very important part of what I do in my electorate. My electorate is huge—over 70,000 square kilometres—and there are areas that only the rural fire brigade keeps safe, locks down and makes sure that everyone is safe.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (11.32 am): I rise to contribute to this cognate debate. I wish to flag that I am going to restrain my contribution to focus on the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. I do so because of the very important institution in the electorate of Sandgate of VMR Brisbane. Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane has, in its various forms, been a great contributor to the community and particularly to safety on Moreton Bay for many generations in my local area. I should acknowledge and declare before the House that I have had the honour of being one of the patrons of VMR Brisbane over the last nine years.

It is a not-for-profit volunteer organisation whose primary purpose has been around providing marine search and rescue services to the boating public in Moreton Bay and surrounding waterways. They have delivered this service from their base—I will come to the historic nature of their base in a moment—on Allpass Parade at Shorncliffe on Cabbage Tree Creek. It is strategically located with easy access to supporting the Brisbane Airport and the Port of Brisbane and to working closely with a range of other service organisations including the Queensland Water Police, the Queensland Ambulance Service, the SES and, indeed, the other VMR and coastguard squadrons with whom at the moment they have been able to interact.

I welcome the work these reforms will deliver and the opportunity they have to provide a greater level of coordination to the vital and important services that are represented by the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and, indeed, the way in which this will provide clear support for the vital infrastructure that is required, keeping it maintained, updated and responsive to needs with support from state resources so that rather than, as we heard earlier from the member for Maryborough in his vibrant contribution, volunteers spending their time focused on sausage sizzles outside well-known hardware stores they will be focused on delivering the services that they are so passionate about.

I want to acknowledge that there is a particular history around VMR Brisbane. While VMR Brisbane has existed in its current form as an entity since 1996—and has done so in a very similar form to many other similar organisations across the state—VMR Brisbane's history is a little longer than that. It can be traced to the foundation of the Sandgate Yacht Club in 1912. In 1912 the Sandgate Yacht Club was formed by locals who were keen to enjoy organised activities around the recreation of yachting, getting out and messing about in boats.

They quickly identified that in doing so it was very important to be able to have some capability to support those people who find themselves in trouble out on the open water—in particular, on Moreton Bay. It fell upon the members of the Sandgate Yacht Club to determine that they should have the capability and a roster, as it were, of locals who were ready to take their capability and their own vessels out to help vessels that were in distress out on the bay. They took up the mantle as volunteers, as I say, for more than 112 years to step up and support those people on vessels in distress out on the bay. They were not only in pursuit of recreational vessels but also, very importantly in that part of the world, supporting trawlers that got into distress and other professional fishing vessels that got into distress. It was an important institution over a long period of time.

Currently they own three rescue vessels—*Energex Sandgate 1*, *Sandgate Rescue 2* and *Sandgate 2*. The extent to how far they could go and do the work that they do was notable when in the 2011 floods they went as far as Ipswich on the Brisbane River undertaking operations to help support people. They supported people in Sandgate too. It got to the point where they were using GPS to navigate along streets to find their way around the place. This operation was different to normal.

The rescue squadron's approximately 85 active crew members who train to perform their duties in case of emergency are an amazing example of community activism and community contribution. I want to acknowledge the executive—the committee that provide great leadership to the group and who have been actively engaged in conversations with government and with their other representative organisations around these reforms. They look forward to the further engagement that has been committed to by the minister, including in his second reading speech yesterday where he referred to the committee's recommendations around education and engagement on the reforms. The minister noted the extensive visits and engagement that has gone on with marine rescue volunteers already but highlighted that there would be more targeted engagement and public awareness engagements and campaigns to be undertaken.

I thank the minister for committing to a further meeting with Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane leadership on 28 May. I thank Minister Ryan, in particular, for committing to that and for making sure that further details that are relevant to VMR Brisbane will be taken into account in the implementation of further reforms. I highlight that VMR Brisbane is a bit different to a number of activities because of their unique history. Having emerged from being a community recreational organisation, they have the legal auspices to act for a number of community recreational activities, not just marine safety and rescue operations.

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Clubs affiliated with them include: the Sandgate Yacht Club, that historic club I made mention of; the Sandgate Canoe Club or, as it is sometimes now known, the Sandgate Paddling Club; and the Polynesian Va'a-Alo Outrigger Canoe Club. At different points in history there have also been organisations such as All About Paddling and the Xian Dragon Boat Club that have operated using the facilities, assistance and legal entity of VMR Brisbane. VMR Brisbane is very keen to understand how those activities will continue under the new arrangements with the creation of Marine Rescue Queensland.

I can assure you that the leadership group—president Thomas Grice, senior vice-president Marcus Edgar, junior vice-president Matthew Bugler, treasurer Richard Jones, secretary David Massam and members' representatives Les Pascoe and Cameron Pegler—are all very supportive of the transition. They all want to get it right and will work very closely with the QPS to see that happen. We look forward with confidence that that will happen.

In conclusion, I want to commend all of the bills before us in this cognate debate, in particular the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. It provides a coordinated opportunity for a very vital service to be an even better service and to provide even better opportunities not only for providing safe experiences out on our waterways but also providing the right environment to support volunteers, their training and their commitment to what they seek to do.

I will leave with one final little warning, and that is to highlight part of the feedback I received during my extensive conversations over a long period of time with Thomas Grice, the president. The

SES model is not a perfect fit with the Marine Rescue Queensland model. They are quite different in that Marine Rescue Queensland in particular is more proactive and preventative in their role. The fact that their search and rescue activities represent less than three per cent of what they do is a salutary reminder that they need to be supported in doing those proactive and preventative activities and engaging with boaties who are out and about well before any boatie gets into trouble. I commend all bills to the House and I thank the ministers for their proactive engagement with the community.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (11.42 am): During my contribution I will confine my comments to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill as it relates to fire services. I declare, as I have in the committee process, that I am a member of a rural fire brigade—my volunteer ID is 195990—but I do not think it impacts my ability to contribute to this debate.

Mr Stevens: It enhances it.

Mr KRAUSE: I will take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. The fact is that this bill, as it relates to rural fires, at best shows a lack of respect for volunteers and at worst is a full-on attack on volunteers. As the shadow minister said yesterday, that is why the LNP is opposing clause 31 of the bill, which is about the creation of two separate entities. We will be voting against it in consideration in detail because the basis on which that is done is not good for volunteers, it is not good for rural fires and it is not good for rural and regional Queensland, where they rely on rural firefighters protecting upwards of some 90 per cent of the land in Queensland.

I want to acknowledge the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman—who was the deputy chair of the committee—for his work in consulting with rural fires throughout this process. He did a lot of work in that respect and brought a lot of knowledge to the committee process. I know that in his contribution he said he was a former SES member—a class 3 chainsaw operator, I understand. That shows the difference between members on this side of the House and members on that side of the House. We go out and get our hands dirty as volunteers in these organisations and build links in those communities to represent them in this place and express their concerns about this bill.

One of the issues that has come up is concerns about who will control rural bushfires, and the member for Theodore spoke about that. There is confusion in the bill about who will do that, especially where the first officer is not available. What we need to remember, and what is not reflected in this bill, as I understand it, is that to the maximum extent possible there should always be local control when it comes to rural bushfires. The electorate I represent have been through some horrific bushfire events in the past few years, especially in 2019. I know for a fact that local knowledge was key to combating those fires, especially the ones we saw at Canungra, Sarabah, Tarome, Maroon, Carney's Creek, Rathdowney and Mount Barney. There were significant fire issues, and there is no possibility that people who do not live in that community truly understand the lay of the land when it comes to bushfires. That is why local control is so important, but that does not seem to be reinforced by the provisions of this bill.

After those disasters in 2019 I spoke with a lot of local volunteers. I heard their voices and the frustration they felt when people from head office in Kedron, people who are in the employ of QFES, overrode their local knowledge in the management of those bushfires to the detriment of the overall management of those fires. A lot of people think those fires ran for a lot longer and did a lot more damage than they should have because local knowledge was not heeded. This bill does not do anything to improve that situation. One of the reasons we are opposing clause 31 is because it is informed on the wrong basis altogether.

The other point which has been highlighted by many people is the lack of consultation. The seven-day submission period during the committee process was far too short for people to put together a formal submission. We know there has been talk about changes to the structure of QFES over the last several years, but none of that was conducted on the basis of what is in this bill. It was conducted on a different basis altogether, and that is why people feel cheated. Volunteers feel cheated. They feel like they have been given the cold shoulder by the government in terms of what has come into this bill because it has not been properly consulted on across all Rural Fire Service volunteers in Queensland.

Brigade finances are another hot button issue for local rural fire brigades not only in my electorate but across the state. There is one question people want answered: after 30 June will brigade money become state money?

Mr Last: Hear, hear!

Mr KRAUSE: I will take that interjection. During the committee hearing I asked this question of departmental officials who were there, and they gave a not very clear answer at all. The minister should give a clear answer. They said that brigades will have access to their money, but under a delegation. A delegation from whom? A delegation from the commissioner? A delegation from the minister? A delegation from someone in the state? That means that after 30 June brigade money is state money, and that is an absolutely disgraceful state of affairs because a lot of that money has been fundraised by communities.

A lot of fundraising activity will continue after 1 July because people are community spirited when it comes to rural fire services. The people I represent are proud to be self-reliant, to look after their own communities and to take care of their own country. Why should communities fundraise after 1 July when those funds are going to become state money and available only under a delegation from the commissioner, the minister or another person within the bureaucracy? That is not right, because delegations can be taken away at the stroke of a pen. This will disempower communities, volunteers and the people who fundraise for them.

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We all have examples of this in our local communities. Every second Friday night, or thereabouts, at the local pub in Boonah, people sell raffle tickets for meat trays to raise money for the brigade I am a part of. It is hard work for communities. What incentive will they have to do that when brigade money becomes state money? These questions need to be answered.

The other issue that arose was about the loss of the current status of brigades as independent bodies and whether that will affect the donations that people make to them. Also, how will government regulations impact rural fire stations and the standards that they need to adhere to given the bureaucracy and regulations that come with becoming a government body. There are questions about that, how much it will cost and who will pay for it, and the impact it will have on the brigades that, until this point, have been proud, independent, community-based organisations. Their independence certainly seems to be under threat from this bill because they are becoming part of the state apparatus both financially and operationally.

The member for Theodore spoke about the lack of training for level 2 and level 3 incident controllers and whether training opportunities will be available for volunteers within rural fire brigades. That is where the bar has been raised to in terms of having control over events. There are very few level 3 incident controllers around the state at the moment. If more are not trained and put into volunteer organisations, when we have another bushfire like we saw in the Scenic Rim in 2019 when the fire blazed for weeks, the event will be controlled by people from outside the community. That is not right. Those sitting in Kedron, in Brisbane or outside of the country areas do not have enough local knowledge to control such fires. This bill does not recognise that fact. At the very least, there should be a requirement for a dual operating status so that, if there is to be input from Kedron or from Brisbane, then a local volunteer is in place as well to help direct the management of that fire. As we all know, especially members in this House who represent rural and regional Queensland, no-one knows the backblocks in the Main Range or south of Rathdowney like the people who live and work there every day, who run their cattle there, who get up in the corners of their properties and know where to put in firebreaks to control fires.

A great story came out of Canungra in 2019. The spread of the fire was prevented only by the knowledge of a local person who managed to get a dozer down a very steep embankment to put in a firebreak, which prevented the fire getting any closer to the town. We were very lucky in Canungra in 2019, but that came down to local knowledge and input. I have grave fears about the impact of this bill on that process.

(Time expired)

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (11.52 am): I rise to make my contribution to the cognate bills, and I will focus my contribution on the State Emergency Service Bill. I will take this opportunity to acknowledge the Minister for Police and Community Safety, the Hon. Mark Ryan, and the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services, the Hon. Nikki Boyd.


In December last year, FNQ was severely impacted by the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Jasper. This was a unique situation because, whilst tropical cyclones are not new to Far North Queensland, the severe flooding was something extraordinary. Tropical Cyclone Jasper is now recorded as the wettest tropical cyclone in Australian history. It led to severe flooding, causing large-scale isolation throughout the greater Far North Queensland region. Jasper certainly brought out stories of incredible strength and resilience, and as I saw complete strangers stepping in to help and support each other.

Multiple communities in my electorate were severely impacted. Those communities included Rossville, Ayton, Wujal Wujal, Degarra, Cape Tribulation, Daintree, Newell Beach, Wonga Beach, Mossman and Port Douglas. Those 10 communities were completely cut off from essential services, which heightened the risk for residents in those parts. Jasper highlighted the complex nature of the Cook electorate and the challenges attached to providing a strong response across multiple communities over a vast region. I acknowledge that FNQ was not the only region impacted by that natural disaster event. Other regions across Queensland were impacted and, for that reason, we must work smarter.

Debate, on motion of Ms Lui, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (11.54 am): Today is the start of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. It is a time to raise awareness and send a message that violence of any kind towards a domestic partner, women or children is not tolerated—not now, not ever. Domestic violence is a scourge on society and it is everyone's responsibility to turn things around. Already this year, five Queensland women have died in an act of gender-based violence. That is five too many. We need to educate and empower women, their friends, families and colleagues to notice the red flags and to have the courage to report bad behaviour before it escalates. That is why we are improving reporting and accessibility of support services. And we need to educate boys and men to respect women.

Earlier this week, we announced a 20 per cent increase to domestic, family and sexual violence support service funding. This represents a \$36 million boost in funding for the next financial year, in recognition of increased demand, taking our government's commitment to domestic, family and sexual violence services to nearly \$214 million between 2024 and 2025. This builds on our \$1.75 billion investment in the sector, which has supported reforms recommended by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reports.

Since I became Premier, we have also passed laws to make coercive control a standalone criminal offence. Criminalising this insidious behaviour will be the legacy of Hannah Clarke and her children, who lost their lives in 2020. Whilst this investment and our targeted reforms are largely about saving lives, it is also about protecting young Queenslanders from further harm. As I said yesterday, 54 per cent of young offenders have experienced domestic and family violence in their lives. Instead of turning to a life of crime, we want young people to get the care they need to recover and rebuild.

This morning, I met with the Prime Minister, premiers and chief ministers at the National Cabinet meeting centred on domestic, family and sexual violence prevention. We also heard from the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, Micaela Cronin. It is clear this issue has been and continues to be of national significance and requires a national focus. Today, National Cabinet has agreed to rapidly undertake a review of best-practice domestic and family violence responses in each state and explore opportunities for national consistency. The Albanese government will implement an expansion of the \$5,000 leaving violence payment for those escaping violent relationships to help get them to safety and recover. They will also deliver new measures to tackle violence against women, including violent pornography and misogynistic content targeting young people. That will include new legislation to ban deepfake pornography and extra funding for the eSafety Commission to pilot age-assurance technologies.

The premiers and chief ministers have also agreed to develop options to improve police responses to high-risk and serial perpetrators and information sharing across jurisdictions. My government will continue to implement the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and monitor the reviews planned in New South Wales following the awful murder of Molly Ticehurst. My thoughts are with Molly's family and friends and with every family who has lost a family member to gender-based violence.

Tonight, we will take a moment of silence in honour of those women, children and men who have been lost to domestic and family violence and, this month, we will focus on the education, prevention and early intervention tools that can save lives. Any evidence-based improvements that could be applied in Queensland will be considered. That is my personal commitment to Queenslanders because we can and must do better. Together, we are stronger. Together, we can put a stop to the violence.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (11.59 am): I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

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AYES, 37:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 47:

ALP, 47—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the negative.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Crossbench Member's Notice of Motion



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, the crossbench notice of motion for this evening at paragraph 3 provides in part that the House 'calls on the government to repeal its Path to Treaty Act, with all moneys held in the \$300 million dollar Path to Treaty Fund' be diverted. Standing order 87(1) provides that, unless the standing orders otherwise provide, a question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative. I note that there is precedent that the rule applies equally to bills and motions and motions and bills as long as they are technically the same in substance—that goes to Speaker McCormack, *Votes and Proceedings* of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, 1918, page 247, and others. This House has passed the Path to Treaty Act and passed votes providing for the Path to Treaty Fund. This paragraph of the crossbench notice of motion seeks to put questions already decided back to the House although as a motion, not as a bill, and is out of order. I will, however, allow the member to modify paragraph 3 of the motion.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Members, question time will conclude today at 1.05 pm. I am using discretion to continue to sit past 1 pm.

Youth Crime



Mr CRISAFULLI (12.05 pm): My question is to the Premier. Is the third-term Labor government running from its record on youth crime?

Mr MILES: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Can I be very, very clear here. We are in fact outlining our plan for community safety. That is what I have been doing these last two weeks. Yesterday here in the House we released the plan. Today the police minister has tabled the legislative amendments that go with that plan. It is a detailed and comprehensive plan—one that is evidence-based and one that expands upon the initiatives that we already have in place and are seeing working.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I just remind you that the bill is before the House. You are able to speak to elements of decision-making processes and other things, but not the bill and its content.

Mr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will speak to the Community Safety Plan that I publicly released yesterday. That is the result of extensive consultation throughout the state. It has at its heart a plan to back our frontline police with 900 additional police personnel and new equipment for them that we will pay for—not equipment that we will make them pay for, as those opposite did. We will employ

more police and support staff so that our front line has the resources they need to keep the community safe. We will also embed support for victims in our Community Safety Plan. I was pleased yesterday to be able to attend the Voice for Victims rally and meet with a delegation of those victims and speak with them about our plan and how our plan is in part informed by what they have been telling us.

On this side of the House, we have a comprehensive plan backed by more than \$1.2 billion of additional funding, and that is a lot more than anyone can say for the LNP. When the LNP comes in here with a flimsy little sheet of paper, three slogans and 13 words and says they have a plan, that is not a plan. We have a comprehensive plan that addresses all of the important elements—that supports victims, that backs our front line, that resources detention where that is necessary to keep the community safe, while also intervening early and preventing crime before it occurs. That is our plan.

Premier, Performance

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier admit he will do and say anything to stay in power?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr MILES: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. What I can say is that I have spent, and will spend, every single day listening to Queenslanders and delivering for them—because for me this is not about me, this is about them. This is about Queenslanders. The Leader of the Opposition thinks it is all about him or me, but for me it is not about that. The Leader of the Opposition is only about his fragile ego. He is only about his ambition. He is only about achieving that dream of not having to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you will use members' correct titles or you will leave the chamber. The level of interjection is too high, members. I need to hear, as does Hansard. Premier, you have two minutes and 14 seconds remaining.

Mr MILES: For the Leader of the Opposition, this is all about not calling himself the Premier-elect anymore but finally achieving all of his hopes and dreams. For me, this is about delivering for Queenslanders and on this side of the House that is what we are motivated by. We are motivated by listening to them, delivering for them and governing for them every single day.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

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

Mr MILES: The Leader of the Opposition talks about doing or saying anything to win office. His strategy is to do or say nothing to win office. He is doing his very best not to be on the record with a single plan, a single idea or a single commitment. He is lying to Queenslanders about his intentions. He says he has a plan for debt reduction, but do we know what he will cut to implement that plan? No, we do not. He says he has a plan to achieve 75 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions, but do we know what is in that plan? No, we do not know what is in that plan. What we on this side have is a comprehensive plan on the issues that are concerning Queenslanders.

Homes for Queenslanders: more than \$3 billion to invest in interventions into the housing system to deliver more social and affordable housing. The Community Safety Plan: more than \$1.2 billion responding to the safety concerns of Queenslanders, including putting more police on the beat. The renewable Energy and Jobs Plan is an actual plan to achieve our emissions reduction target. We welcome the support of the Leader of the Opposition for our emissions reduction target, but he has to outline how he is going to get there because he has said he does not support our plan. We need to know what his plan is.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Services

Ms KING: My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier outline how our Miles Labor government is listening and delivering for Queenslanders, including providing more funding for domestic, family and sexual violence services, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Pumicestone for her question. As we all know, too many Queensland women have already lost their lives as a result of domestic, family or sexual violence. One Queenslanders is too many; five is far too many. No-one should ever live in fear that someone they love could hurt or kill them. Any violent death is incomprehensible, but to lose a life at the hands of someone you love is absolutely abhorrent. That is why our government is taking strong action and why this morning we advocated for the National Cabinet to take strong national action.

We agreed at National Cabinet, with the Prime Minister and the leaders of the other states and territories, to rapidly review all of the approaches, in all of the states and territories, to determine best practice on every front. The Albanese government committed to expand the Escaping Violence Payment, a \$5,000 payment to support people escaping violent households and violent relationships. That funding builds on the funding we announced here in Queensland for domestic and sexual violence support services, increasing their funding by 20 per cent, taking our investment next financial year into those services and their important work to \$214 million.

On the weekend, I was pleased to join a big crowd of Queenslanders calling for an end to domestic and sexual violence. I acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Whitsunday who were there, alongside the health minister and the Attorney. The Attorney gave a very passionate speech that I know moved many in the crowd.

For too long, it is the women in our society who have shouldered the load of this advocacy work in support of women experiencing violence. It is time for more men to step up, to support those advocates and to say to young boys and young men that violence against women is not acceptable. We have seen a massive surge in demand for our services. Many of them are now experiencing a doubling in demand. That is why we delivered extra funding. It is also why we need a national approach and why the leadership of the National Cabinet has been so important.

Youth Crime

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier admit the third-term Labor government has only changed the words, not changed the law to remove detention as a last resort?

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, that speaks directly to a passage of the bill, as I hear it.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. On 15 February when a question was asked about a bill before the House—and I note that the bill was introduced today—you made a ruling about a reasonable time in the Speaker's discretion. I would submit to you, Mr Speaker, and the House, that six weeks—

Mr SPEAKER: I will ask you to cease—

Mr BLEIJIE: If I can finish my point of order, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: No, because I know the answer to the question that you are going to ask.

Mr BLEIJIE: I think there is plenty of reasonable time and we should be debating. This is a significant issue in Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: No. This is not an opportunity to debate this, member for Kawana.

Mr Bleijie: I cannot even say a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: The ruling is actually related to the fact that it was a private member's bill which can take up to nine months to come through as a passage, and the reason is—

Mr Bleijie: And I was asking if six weeks is a reasonable time.

Mr SPEAKER: No, it is not, member. I am trying to be as clear as I can for you.

A government member: Give him the boot.

Mr Sullivan: Stop reflecting.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members, we need no assistance. I call the member for Redlands.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Services

Ms RICHARDS: My question is of the Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General outline what support the Miles

Labor government is providing domestic, family and sexual violence services, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Redlands for her question. I know that this Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month she will be out in her community talking about the importance of everybody speaking up, lifting awareness, educating the community and making sure we are not being silent bystanders to the violence and gender violence in our community.

It is a timely question, being 1 May. As I outlined in my ministerial statement this morning, the Miles Labor government is steadfastly committed to ending the scourge of domestic and family violence in this state. Since 2015 we have invested \$1.75 billion in our domestic and family violence reforms. We have passed legislation to criminalise coercive control and establish an affirmative consent model. We have established specialist domestic and family violence courts. We have established an additional high-risk team in Townsville and boosted funding to the existing eight sites. We have delivered \$7.7 million per annum to support 25 services delivering children's DV counselling services. We have delivered \$16 million for a five-year plan for primary prevention of violence against women. Just this week, we announced a 20 per cent funding boost for our currently funded domestic and family violence NGOs. However, the contrast with those opposite could not be more stark.

Mrs Frecklington: Rubbish! The majority that you have just announced was what our policy was.

Mr Bleijie: *Not Now, Not Ever.*

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango. Member for Kawana.

Mrs Frecklington: Well, it was our policy.

Mr SPEAKER: You have the call, Attorney.

Mrs D'ATH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take that interjection. I remember being in opposition—

Mrs Frecklington: *Not Now, Not Ever*

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

Mrs D'ATH: I thought at the time it was bipartisan, but—

Mrs Frecklington: Correct.

Mrs D'ATH:—apparently not so much now because they love to weaponise things for elections.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Mrs D'ATH: What I am highlighting is fact.

Ms Camm: DNA lab—fact—failure!

Mrs D'ATH: \$259 million cut by the LNP for community sector organisations, including Foster Care Queensland, DVConnect, Bravehearts—

Ms Camm interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH:—Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre, Sunshine Cooloola Services Against Sexual Violence, Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence and Wide Bay Sexual Assault Services. \$13,000 was cut to the state's only service providing sexual assault support for women with a disability and funding was cut from Ipswich Womens Centre Against Domestic Violence. More than \$230,000 was cut from domestic and family violence shelters—emergency accommodation. More than \$50,000 was cut from DVAC. Cairns Regional DV Service also suffered funding cuts. That is their legacy.

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Police Service, Recruitment

Mr PURDIE: My question is to the Premier. The most recent government workforce data shows that there are 1,500 fewer police now than the Labor government promised at the last election. If Labor cannot deliver on the police numbers that were promised at the election, how can Queenslanders believe the Premier when he promises the third-term Labor government can deliver another 900?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Ninderry for his question. It is an important question. We do need to ensure we are recruiting at a significant rate to both address attrition and to meet our targets for additional police. I am advised by the Police Commissioner and the police minister that, after a

difficult period, the recruitment pipeline is now back on track to meet the police recruitment targets we set at the last election. Indeed, I am assured by the commissioner and the minister that these new additional funded positions will be met. Of course, that is reliant on initiatives like the new police academy in Townsville, which is part of our Community Safety Plan.

The one thing I know is that there are more police in Queensland thanks to this government than there would have been otherwise because those opposite went to the last election promising fewer police than we did—1,000 fewer police. If you think about how many additional positions we have committed to—900—the figure is almost as much as the figure for ‘fewer police’ they wanted to have at the last election. They do not like answering for their record in government of cutting police support staff, cutting safety equipment on police helicopters and telling police they had to pay for their body worn cameras out of their own pocket. They do not like answering for that record—and we saw that on display yesterday—but they should at least answer for their policy at the last election which was 1,000 fewer police for Queensland. That is 1,000 fewer police to keep Queensland safe.

On this side of the House, we went to the election promising more police. We are delivering those police and now we have committed to even more police on top of that difference in numbers between Labor and LNP. There was already a difference of 1,000, now there is a difference well above 1,000 due to this additional commitment to fund even more police in Queensland as well as new equipment for them and the tools that they need. It will be funded by the government and not by them. There will be additional helicopters. On this side of the House, our Community Safety Plan involves backing our police.

CFMEU

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Premier. Workers wanting to do their job at the Cross River Rail site at the Gabba were being physically assaulted by the CFMEU this morning. What has the Premier done to ensure workers wanting to do their job can do so without being assaulted by the CFMEU?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Chatsworth for his question. As always, if the member is aware of illegal behaviour, then I would urge him to report that to the appropriate authorities. I am advised that industrial relations matters at that particular site are a matter for the employer, which is not the Queensland government, and also that they—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Mermaid Beach is warned under the standing orders.

Mr MILES:—are engaged under the industrial relations practices of the Australian government—the Fair Work Act—and they are the appropriate vehicles through which to keep those workplaces safe. In general terms, intimidation, violence and bullying should never be tolerated.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mr MILES: Bullying, violence and intimidation should never be tolerated in any workplace, whether it is union related or not. I say that and support that in the strongest possible terms.

Police Service, Resourcing

Ms NIGHTINGALE: My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety Minister. Can the minister update the House on the Miles Labor government’s investment in police infrastructure and police resources, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: Mr Speaker, I have been thinking about how I might do this; I am sure you have been wondering. I acknowledge the member for Inala. She is off to a fine start and she has the potential to be the best member for Inala that this House has ever seen. Thank you, member for Inala, not only for your outstanding question but also for your outstanding advocacy for the Queensland Police Service. The member for Inala has some of the most impressive police facilities in our state in her electorate. She has the Bob Atkinson Operational Capabilities Centre at Wacol, which is world-class. People come from around Australia to use that facility. We also have the police academy at Oxley, which celebrated 50 years of operation a couple of years ago, delivering the highest calibre of police officer you will find in this nation. It is because we have good people there, good facilities, good resources and a strong commitment from their government to back them in what they do.

Of course, we are looking to improve the academy facilities in Townsville as well. This is a significant investment in the training and resourcing of the Queensland Police Service for regional Queensland. Of course, it follows the strong advocacy from the member for Thuringowa, the member for Townsville and the member for Mundingburra for these facilities to be improved. It all started about four years ago when we made an election commitment for a new police station at Kirwan—a commitment that those opposite did not match. They were asked about it and could not bring themselves to back it. Only one side of politics was able to make a commitment at the last election to deliver a new police station for Kirwan.

Then because of our hard work and our commitment to the police, we were able to then make an announcement to deliver a new academy for Townsville. Just last week we confirmed \$100 million in funding for that facility—a huge investment in training. Again, those opposite were asked to back it in and they could not bring themselves to specifically say that they would deliver it and that they support the project. This is what our government does—we back the police, we put the money on the table and we deliver projects for the police. Those opposite cannot even bring themselves to match those commitments. They cannot even utter the words.

We need these facilities because we have record recruitment underway—almost 700 recruits at the academy and over 2,100 in the applicant pipeline. We are the state which is delivering police recruits—other states are struggling—because of our commitment to our police. Those opposite just cut.

CFMEU

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Premier. Former premier Palaszczuk and transport minister Bailey would not meet with the CFMEU following the storming of a government building in August 2022. Why did this Premier meet with CFMEU when the previous premier did not?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Maroochydore for her question. I appreciate the lengths she has gone to in order to study my publicly disclosed ministerial diaries. What she will discover in studying those diaries is that I meet with a lot of people and I meet with a lot of organisations. I do not always agree with everything they say or do, but I am always happy to meet with them. That is why—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you will direct your comments through the chair.

Mr MILES:—I am always happy to meet with organisations that represent Queenslanders. Indeed, I will continue to do so. Unions are appropriate organisations representing the workers. They have a legitimate role in our society and I will not apologise for meeting with their representatives. I will continue to do so.

Renewable Energy

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the Miles Labor government's 75 by '35 plan is delivering publicly owned renewable energy generation and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risky alternatives?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. As the member for Greenslopes knows, our government is delivering the most comprehensive renewable energy transition plan in the country and that plan is backed by landmark laws that this House passed in the last sitting week. Under Labor public ownership lies at the heart of our energy system in Queensland and under Labor public ownership will remain at the heart of our energy system in Queensland and, of course, our renewable energy revolution.

I have been asked by the member for Greenslopes about risky alternatives because last week the LNP laid the privatisation cards on the table. Everyone in this House and everyone in Queensland saw them. Under this LNP leader, there will be no more public investment in renewable energy generation. They made that clear to every Queenslander. If we do not have ownership of public energy generation, we can forget about national-leading energy bill rebates. Under the LNP leader there will not be any more energy bill rebates because the LNP would not have any other policy levers to pull and push. Right now Queensland has the cheapest electricity in the National Electricity Market, but the LNP's privatisation plans would send power bills up and cost Queenslanders more.

It is hard to believe, but there is one thing I find myself agreeing with the LNP leader on and that is the LNP leader's support for our nation-leading vegetation management laws. With the support of the LNP leader, our government's ambition to reduce emissions by 75 per cent by 2035 is now enshrined

in the law of Queensland and the LNP leader supported that. However, that target cannot be achieved without vegetation management laws. It is simply impossible to achieve 75 by '35 without those laws. I thank him; he once called them a culture war and I thank him for his change of heart.

The member for Callide was an organiser of the Green Shirts and now he supports our vegetation management laws because we cannot get to 75 by '35 without them. The members for Nanango, Gregory, Burnett—all of those regional MPs—now support our vegetation management laws because we cannot get to 75 by '35 without them. I would be happy to go to those electorates and explain to all of the stakeholders exactly what those members now support. Finally, I want to acknowledge the member for Bonney who got that emissions target through the shadow cabinet and through the party room. I know that every member of the LNP in Queensland and all of his colleagues will remember that forever.

CFMEU

Mr POWELL: I have a question of the Premier. Video footage shows the CFMEU assaulting workers who just want to do their job. Will the Premier stop meeting with, and prohibit ministers from meeting with, the CFMEU?

Mr MILES: As I have been very clear, I condemn any violence, intimidation or bullying in a workplace, whether that is union condoned or not.

Public Sector Support

Mr SULLIVAN: My question is of the Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the minister please update the House on how the Miles Labor government is supporting public sector workers, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Stafford. I know that he has in his DNA the protection of workers, making sure workers are looked after and that they have good, secure, well-paid jobs. That is exactly what we want for our Public Service. I know when I speak to him about these issues he is very clear about his indication to get that happening.

When it comes to supporting our hardworking public sector workers, there is a long list of achievements on this side of the House. We know that having a secure, well-paid job is paramount for working families. This government has delivered jobs in spades in Queensland, leading the nation with one of the lowest unemployment rates because, particularly for our public sector workers and their families, having secure, well-paid jobs is absolutely crucial.

We have provided some of Australia's most generous wage increases in our wages policy and a cost-of-living adjustment. When we were bargaining it was post COVID. I do not know what rock others in this House are living under, but we have had many atypical years in Australia and in Queensland. Post COVID has delivered for us economic, social and other issues that we have never seen before, at least not in my lifetime as an adult. We are addressing those issues as a government. One issue was the high inflationary era we were in. Coming to an agreement in a high inflationary era is very difficult because we have to lock in an amount but we do not want our hardworking public servants to go backwards. What we locked in was a cost-of-living adjustment. When the inflation rate came in at 7.4 per cent in March of last year, they got an additional three per cent as part of that agreement. That is how Labor does its bargaining.

We can contrast that with those opposite. When they were in government they were incapable of making one agreement with the public sector workers. Not one was made. Many of those who sat around their cabinet table are now sitting opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition and the then industrial relations minister, the member for Kawana. What did they give public sector workers? A 16-month wage freeze; that is what they gave them. If I was the member for Southport I would be upset about that, too, because that is what they delivered—

Mr Langbroek: I'm not Southport.

Ms GRACE: I am very sorry, member for Surfers Paradise. It was the member for Southport who did the emissions trading thing.

An opposition member: Get it right. Catch up.

Ms GRACE: They are all the same to me, so it is fine. We have employment security. It does work well. After hearing the member for Glass House calling all unions thugs, I do not think much for public sector workers going forward.

Mr Powell: I did not.

Ms GRACE: Yes, you did.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you will direct your comments through the chair.

Renewable Energy, Targets

Mr KATTER: My question is of the Minister for Energy and Clean Energy Jobs. With both major parties signing on to emissions targets last week, will the minister come clean with the Queensland people and tell the House how many hardworking Queenslanders will lose their existing jobs as a result of these targets?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Traeger for the question. If there is one thing we can expect from the member for Traeger—and, in fact, all of the Katter party—it is some honesty. At least we know where they stand when it comes to their genuine opposition to emissions reduction and their genuine opposition to renewable energy transition. We know that last week the Katter party voted against emissions reduction targets and they voted against renewable energy targets. We know where the Katter's Australian Party stands on the issue of CopperString, the most significant project in North Queensland to support the creation of literally tens of thousands of new jobs and support existing jobs in the resources industry in the North West Minerals Province. I have heard some people describe it as a lifeline to industry in Mount Isa.

The member for Traeger is correct: in the last sitting week, we put into law mechanisms to protect existing jobs in Queensland and create new jobs to deliver energy reliability and economic prosperity at the same time. We put into law a commitment to renewable energy and emissions reduction. I acknowledge that the member for Traeger and the Katter's Australian Party did not support those provisions. They had concerns about the economic security of Outback Queensland. I want to give this commitment to the member for Traeger and every member of this House that the laws that were put into place last sitting week will deliver that economic security as part of the transition.

As the Deputy Premier just said, we saw the LNP attempt to deceive Queenslanders in its position on this. We saw the member for Bonney lead support for emissions reduction targets, but every Queenslanders knows that, given that the burning of fossil fuels is the most significant contributor to emissions—

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego.

Mr de BRENNI:—you cannot reduce emissions without renewable energy. The Leader of the Opposition did not participate in the debate one iota. One would think that this would be an important position for the Leader of the Opposition to have a say on. He voted no eventually to public ownership and renewable energy targets. The member for Kawana voted no to public ownership—a key lever for us ensuring the economic prosperity of regional Queensland—as did the member for Clayfield. The member for Bonney even ended up voting no to public ownership and renewable energy. It is time for the Leader of the Opposition to stop hiding. It is time he was honest with Queenslanders.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order, and I apologise for the delay in rising on this. At the end of her answer the Minister for Industrial Relations made some comments that I find personally offensive and I ask that she withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: It is delayed, but sometimes I do appreciate, particularly in question time, that it is difficult to hear when comments are made because of that. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms GRACE: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister.

Miles Labor Government, Support for Doctors

Ms PEASE: My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister please advise how the Miles Labor government is supporting Queensland's frontline doctors as they manage unprecedented levels of patient demand, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Lytton for her question. She, like every member on this side of the House, absolutely supports our hardworking frontline doctors. They do an amazing job caring

for Queenslanders and I am so proud to be part of a government that backs them in every day. We know that our hospitals are experiencing huge pressures. As the President of the AMAQ, Maria Boulton, recently said in the AMA report card on public hospitals, a large part of that is due to the decade of underinvestment from the former LNP federal government. We know that our GPs are facing huge challenges, and that is driving more people to our hospital departments. That is not me saying that; that is the AMAQ saying that. We are stepping up to help our hardworking doctors with better overtime entitlements. We have commenced a fatigue review and we are trialling a single employer model so that trainee doctors receive good wages while working in private regional clinics. We have promised to hire more than 1,500 doctors, and we have now hired more than 1,660. That is our track record. That is why I was so pleased to see the Premier announce over the weekend that our Labor candidate for Moggill will be Dr Eric Richman. He has an impressive CV—an emergency department doctor, a former paramedic and a medical officer in the Australian Army who served in Afghanistan. He is a doctor who stood side by side with other doctors when they protested the LNP government forcing them on to individual contracts and forcing them on to worse wages without any fatigue provisions.

Who could forget that huge fight that the LNP had with doctors? The headlines were ‘Newman v the doctors: a political fight that is poisoning the LNP’ and ‘State government MP Chris Davis slams LNP over doctor contract plan’.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, are you tabling any of those?

Ms FENTIMAN: I will table these.

Tabled paper: Bundle of newspaper headlines regarding doctor contracts.

Then there was ‘Doctors say they’ve been handed the rough end of the pineapple in pay deal with the state government’.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member, I appreciate that you need to read off the piece of paper, but you do not need to demonstrate it to the House.

Ms FENTIMAN: Then there was ‘Hospitals to plan for exodus of specialists quitting over LNP doctor contracts scheme’. That is the record of those opposite with doctors. That is their track record with doctors.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego.

Ms FENTIMAN: The Leader of the Opposition says that he wants to put doctors back in charge, but doctors absolutely remember when those opposite were in charge and how they absolutely did not back doctors. Where was the member for Moggill, who was president of the AMA at the time? There is one more headline—he did not stand up with his colleagues—‘AMAQ boss Christian Rowan sidelined after backing Newman government doctor contracts’. The people of Moggill have a choice: do they want an emergency department doctor who will back his colleagues or do they want the—

(Time expired)

Queensland Teachers’ Union, Industrial Action

Dr MacMAHON: My question is for the Minister for Education. In response to teacher shortages and unmanageable workloads, Queensland Teachers’ Union members voted to engage in industrial action this week. However, the Department of Education has told teachers that they will risk retaliatory action for engaging in industrial action. Why is this government not supporting teachers?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for her question. As always with a question from the Greens, it is never quite factual. Yesterday the QIRC ruled that the action taken by the QTU was unprotected and unlawful. As the minister I do not comment on—

Ms Leahy interjected.

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

Ms FARMER:—those industrial issues. That is a matter between the union and the Industrial Relations Commission. However, the Miles government’s regard for teachers cannot be disputed.

Dr MacMahon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, you have asked the question and I would like to hear the answer.

Ms FARMER: We went to the last election promising 6,100 teachers and over 2,000 teacher aides. We have already surpassed our commitments to employ those teachers and those teacher aides.

Dr Rowan interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: We have already surpassed our targets for employing more teachers right across Queensland. We all know that every single sector and every single region in Queensland, in Australia and in the world is experiencing workforce shortages. We are not just talking about addressing that; we are putting practical measures in place. Our Early Childhood Workforce Strategy is lauded across Australia for the initiatives we have put in place to make sure we are addressing early childhood teaching needs. We are paying for prac. We are supporting early childhood teachers to undertake scholarships and there is payment and support for doing extra study.

We have put in place innovative activities like Turn to Teaching and Trade to Teach where we are encouraging people from other professions to enter the education workforce. They are people with skills that we need—people in STEM, people in trades, people from all over regional Queensland. We are also working locally to address some of the real needs that are experienced by communities such as Aurukun and Doomadgee where these issues are very hard, but we are supporting teachers in those areas with measures such as extra payments, housing and accommodation. We continue to work on these issues. In fact, I am meeting with the QTU tomorrow because it acknowledges that these are very real and difficult issues. We will work together to ensure that we are supporting Queensland teachers in the best way possible.

Education, Alternative Learning Programs

Mr HINCHLIFFE: My question is for the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice. Can the minister advise how the Miles Labor government is supporting young Queenslanders to engage in education, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question and I know how excited the member for Sandgate is to see Bracken Ridge State High School be in the list of announcements for FlexiSpaces that we made this morning. That is a fantastic announcement out of our \$288 million package to address students who are disengaged in education. It includes doubling the numbers of pathways and colleges, employing more intensive case management officers, alternative learning options and a whole range of things. We know that for a lot of kids mainstream education is literally not an option and we want to ensure that those kids have the same access to education as any other child in Queensland. We know that not every child who is disengaged from education ends up in youth justice, but it is the strongest indicator given that children in the youth justice system are all disengaged with education. We want to give all kids a good start in life for that very reason. That is why we have free kindy and will be announcing our Putting Queensland Kids First policy very soon—a really important policy.

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There is a very real chance that the LNP could be in government after October. It does make you worry about what they are going to do. As I do with youth justice, I went to the LNP's little book to see what they are going to do about education, behaviour and early education. As with every policy area, there are three or four motherhood statements and it is hard to work out what they are doing. I always go back to that phrase from the member for Toowoomba South—it is so handy, thank you so much—how past behaviour is a good predictor of future behaviour.

They closed six schools. They were planning another 50 closures. We heard not a peep out of any of those members opposite about schools closing in their areas. Is there an early childhood policy? They do not even mention early childhood or kindy. Going to the matter of behaviour, kids who are disengaged often have behavioural problems. We know that those opposite cut funding to the Pyjama Foundation and the Triple P program. But they did have one initiative that I noticed. Do members know what they were going to do to kids who behave badly? Tasers! They had a policy that they would use tasers on kids who behave badly. In the absence of knowing anything else, I guess that is No. 1 in their policy for dealing with kids who are disengaged with education because that is the only one that we know about.

Fire Ants

Mr WEIR: My question is to the Premier. I refer to another fire ant infestation, this time in Oakey. How far have fire ants now spread and why has the community been left in the dark when it comes to any public information and updates?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Condamine for his question. I am advised that the eradication team is making solid progress in identifying and treating fire ants following that detection in Oakey on 16 April. The teams have been on-site to determine the extent of the infestation. They have surveyed 137 hectares to look for fire ants. They have also treated a further 195 hectares as a precautionary measure. Eighty nests that were close to each other were detected. All have now been treated. Eradication activities will continue to occur up to five kilometres out from the detection site to protect the area and ensure no fire ants are remaining. It is highly likely, I am advised, that the ants arrived in the area from a turf farm within the South-East Queensland infestation zone. Compliance and tracing investigations are continuing.

I note that the member for Condamine, in the second part of his question, implied a lack of communication with residents. If that is the case, I will ask the minister to ensure that additional communication is provided to make sure that those locals can rest easy knowing that the fire ant eradication team is doing everything that it can to eradicate those fire ants. I again thank the member for Condamine for his question.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next questioner, I believe that the member for Kawana needed clarification that his question was indeed ruled out of order. If it was not clear at the time, member, it was out of order. Also, members, the member for Mirani has provided a change to paragraph 3 to the motion and that has now been circulated to members.

Community Safety, Housing

Ms LUI: My question is to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is taking action on community safety to intervene early through housing, skills and training and is the minister aware of any other risky alternative approaches?

Ms SCANLON: I thank the member for Cook for the question. I know that she, alongside everyone on this side of the House, is committed to community safety. We know one of the best ways we can do that is by supporting early intervention programs that are critical in breaking the cycle. That is why our Community Safety Plan takes a whole-of-government approach: health, education, housing, community services, all working together to tackle the complex underlying factors. It is pretty hard to hold down a job or study if you are a young person and do not have a safe place to call home. We know for some young people it is more than just a roof and four walls; it is also about having a stable influence. That is why we are funding more youth foyers as part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan—eight new youth foyers—and we will get started with Cairns, Moreton Bay and Hervey Bay. We already have facilities in Logan, on the Gold Coast and nearly completed in Townsville.

I am also really pleased to say that we are creating a new one-stop shop for young people with the Brisbane Youth Service to get critical mental health, alcohol, drug and domestic and family violence and sexual violence support. In addition to that, we are also providing really important direct financial support for young people exiting state care or young people who are at risk of homelessness to get the basic essentials so that they can live independently. We are providing more rental support and more affordable housing.

On this side of the House we have an actual plan for housing and we have an actual plan for community safety, not just slick slogans. When we talk about intervention we actually back it up with policies and funding, unlike the LNP who gutted housing when they were last in government. They cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which funds organisations like Esuarve that work with young, high-risk offenders to get a certificate I in construction and turn their lives around. I know the member for Broadwater and other members on that side like getting happy snaps with organisations that get funding from this government but that was cut by the LNP. They, of course, also closed the Barrett Centre. They gagged community organisations.

Ms D'Ath interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General. They cut \$259 million from community organisations that provided early intervention support. It is only this side of the House that has a comprehensive plan that is backed by evidence. Meanwhile, the Leader of the Opposition thinks he is the premier elect. If he thinks that then he needs to articulate more than slick slogans that we know mean nothing more than cuts.

Resources Industries, Cost of Living Relief

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals. Can the minister please advise how the resources industries are helping to provide cost-of-living relief to all Queenslanders and is the minister aware of any alternate approaches?

Mr STEWART: I thank the member for Mackay. We know she is a great supporter of the resources industries, particularly in the booming town of Mackay that is supportive of a great sector that supports this great state. I had the opportunity to meet with members of the mighty Broadbeach Cats AFL team, who I think are still upstairs in the gallery, along with the school leaders who are with us today. It is our royalties that give us the ability to build schools and facilities that we know are so appreciated in our communities. It is also about jobs. In fact, our resources industries are among the most important parts of Queensland's economy, generating billions of dollars in royalties and supporting more than 70,000 direct jobs. They provide countless economic opportunities for businesses and communities, particularly in regional Queensland. That is why the Miles government is pleased to support this industry now and certainly well into the future.

Since 2015 we have helped facilitate \$21 billion worth of investment into the resources industries which, in turn, has created more than 8,000 jobs. In fact, during the last two weeks I had the great pleasure of officially opening the \$1 billion Olive Downs mine near Moranbah. We know projects like this not only provide good, high-paying jobs but also benefit all of Queensland. The resources in the ground belong to all of us and companies pay a royalty for the right to extract them. Our progressive coal royalties mean the government can help support cost-of-living relief and infrastructure projects right around our great state. It means we can offer discounts to people on their power bills. It means that we can employ more teachers, police officers, nurses and doctors.

All of this is at risk because of the LNP. The Leader of the Opposition was asked a pretty simple question on ABC Radio last week: will you keep progressive coal royalties? That is a pretty simple yes or no question. Did he answer it clearly? Absolutely not. He ducked and weaved. The LNP cannot be trusted to keep our progressive coal royalties, which help support cost-of-living expenses and our Big Build program right throughout Queensland. It means CopperString—that \$5 billion project—would be gone under the LNP. We know the LNP do not support progressive coal royalties. They simply cannot bring themselves to say it, which means they do not back regional Queensland. This puts more pressure on people's hip pockets which means cuts to services. It means the sacking of essential workers like our nurses, doctors and police. As a government we continue to support all of Queensland.

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Forensic DNA Testing

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Premier. The Leader of the House stated that he would not say how long the DNA backlog would take to be dealt with, saying he was not getting into the hypothetical mathematical equations. Does the government believe victims of serious crime are simply numbers as part of an equation?

Mr MILES: No, we do not believe that.

Manufacturing

Mr SMITH: My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Can the minister please advise the House how the Miles Labor government is supporting manufacturing in Bundaberg and regional Queensland, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr BUTCHER: I thank the member for the question. I know that the member gets manufacturing in Queensland, particularly in regional Queensland, because he has a strong manufacturing sector in the Bundaberg region which employs a lot of people. We are a government that is delivering manufacturing in Queensland. The proof is certainly in the pudding. Our manufacturing hubs, our industry programs and our grants all play a part in how we are growing Queensland manufacturing. Our track record is clear: we investing over \$207 million in manufacturing, supporting over 7,000 Queenslanders into jobs. I was at Australian Manufacturing Week in Sydney recently. Our manufacturers are upbeat. They are expanding, exporting and employing more Queenslanders every day.

In Bundaberg I am proud to see a manufacturing energy efficiency grant go to Jabiru Aircraft in the member's electorate. This grant is helping this business upgrade their equipment and reduce their energy use. We have also supported a great business in Bundaberg, Aletek, which I have been to a few times, with a Made in Queensland grant. This is helping them to upskill workers and upgrade their technology.

There are also jobs and supplier opportunities on the horizon because we are making our trains in Queensland. Making those trains is not just good news for the Wide Bay; it is good news for the state of Queensland. I look forward to seeing our manufacturing sector continue to grow. Trains, buses, boxers, batteries, boats—we are making them all here in Queensland. I am proud to be the manufacturing minister in Queensland supporting all of these fantastic opportunities.

I know that the LNP love whiteboards. It is how their federal colleagues divvied up their grants when they were last in government. If we were to sit down and do a SWOT analysis, as members opposite do, on the Queensland manufacturing sector, I would stick three letters up on the board in the risk column—that is, L-N-P. They are the largest risk in Queensland to our manufacturing sector. We know that they will cut and gut. Their obsession with privatisation and their cuts know no boundaries in Queensland. I refer to trains overseas and to how they dared Holden manufacturers to leave the country, which they did. Manufacturing jobs in Queensland and Australia were gone.

The LNP are so shifty that it is as much about what they do not say as what they do say. Last week when they were in Maryborough there was not one word about train manufacturing or about how great it is bringing jobs back to Maryborough—supporting the Labor government to support workers in the Maryborough region. There was not one word on that. No slogans came out. They are all duds.

(Time expired)

Forensic DNA Testing

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, questions will be heard in silence.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: He is asking if I have had a question already today and I have not.

Mr SPEAKER: The answer is no.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: He will catch up soon! Some 193 cases related to the DNA lab have been retested and the new DNA profiles found or reinterpreted. How many of the 193 victims in these cases have been contacted?

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have one minute to respond.

Mr MILES: I thank the member for her question. I am advised that the team at FSQ are working tirelessly through those samples dating back to 2007. In the past 12 months they have reported results for almost 9,500 cases. Active cases before the courts all take time to retest and process. Those cases take longer than reviewing historical cases. That means that the rate at which the 41,000 cases are processed will increase as FSQ finalises the active court cases. I also want to stress that only a fraction of new DNA statements are likely to have an impact on an outcome of the courts. Already, almost 85 per cent per cent of the Sofronoff inquiry recommendations have been implemented.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was specifically: how many have been contacted. If the Premier does not have that answer, perhaps he could provide it on notice.

Mr SPEAKER: There was some other preamble in the question. Premier, in your remaining four seconds, you can try to answer.

Mr MILES: I understand that in the case of active cases police—

(Time expired)

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I am trying to address the House and let everyone know what is happening next and you continued to talk. Members, the period for question time has expired.

023


Sitting suspended from 1.06 pm to 2.00 pm.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 17 April (see p. 1079), on motion of Mr Harper—

That the House take note of the Health and Environment Committee Report No. 38, 57th Parliament, *Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland*, tabled on 31 August 2023.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.00 pm), continuing: I will pick up where I left off. I was talking about the wonderful work of Elanora State High School with their program that has pretty much turned around the number of students who are vaping in their high school.

Following the implementation of the program in 2023, there were no suspensions for vaping recorded and 16 students were involved in the intensive educational program preventing vaping in their high school. So far this year there has only been one recorded suspension for vaping and no students have been required to divert to the intensive educational program thanks to the work that the principal Rochelle Lewis and the dedicated teachers at Elanora State High School have been doing to educate children on the harms of vaping and to ensure that they are not vaping in their school community.

The lowered prevalence of vaping and the measured approach has resulted in not only minimising the harm vaping does to children within Elanora State High School but also a reduction in damage to school facilities. The lowered maintenance costs have allowed the school to use funding to better support the children with their education and their futures.

It is evident that this model is working and that Elanora State High School is leading the way when it comes to preventing vaping within our schools. They are turning young lives around. They are turning young lives away from vaping. They are a prime example of the positive outcomes that can be achieved when schools are allowed to come up with innovative ways of dealing with issues in their own school community. I am so proud to be able to support Elanora State High School with their vaping program and to be able to support the principal, Rochelle Lewis, and all of the fantastic teachers who are so dedicated to their students' health, wellbeing and education.


(Time expired)

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.02 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly Report No. 36, 57th Parliament, *Report on the 2023 budget estimates process*, tabled on 11 October 2023.

This report is always an exciting report. I find it exciting because I like numbers. I am the Chief Government Whip. I like numbers. Numbers really interest me—and this report is full of numbers—because numbers do not lie. When we come to the estimates process—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Capalaba, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr BROWN: I withdraw. The numbers tell a story. The story is that the budget process is alive and well in Queensland. The committee chairs for the budget process are doing a fantastic job for the opposition and for the crossbench. I might even note that some chairs, as the figures have shown, make sure that government members do not get their fair share of time. If we go through these numbers, we will see for ourselves how the chairs are chairing in the best interests of not only the opposition but also the crossbench.

The first one is the Economics and Governance Committee, chaired well by the member for Logan. The committee time was 618 minutes, or 10.30 hours. The time for government questioning was only 4.11 hours—

Mr Power: Quality hours.

Mr BROWN: I take that interjection—compared to the opposition and non-government members who got 5.07 hours.

I move to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. Again, the committee time was 8.49 hours. The time for government questioning was only 2.46 hours, compared to non-government time which was 5.18 hours.

A government member: That's double.

Mr BROWN: I take that interjection. It is more than double at 5.18 hours. Government members only got a third of the time compared to the opposition and crossbench members. That means that not only did the opposition get a fair amount of time but the crossbench did as well. It is a similar story for the Education, Employment and Training Committee. The committee time was 7.49 hours. The time for government questioning was only 2.34 hours, whereas non-government members got 4.47 hours.

The Health and Environment Committee, chaired by the member for Thuringowa, also went well under, giving only about a third of the time to government questions. The committee time was 6.46 hours in total, only giving two hours to government members and four hours to non-government members. I will let the House go through the rest of those numbers.

It is a similar story for the number of questions as well, with the number of non-government questions being normally two to three times more than the number of government questions over the estimates period. I note that in the last couple of years there has been less and less reporting into how estimates hearings are being chaired. The numbers are telling the story. Our committee chairs during this process are giving more than a fair amount of time to the opposition and to the crossbench. We are seeing that bear out in the figures that are produced in the budget estimates report that is provided by the CLA and tabled in parliament. I endorse this report wholeheartedly.

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (2.06 pm): As a member of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, I too rise to speak to the *Report on the 2023 budget estimates process*. It is a little known fact that the CLA has a responsibility to monitor and review the business of the Legislative Assembly with the aim of the effective and efficient discharge of business and to monitor and review the operations of committees. Each year we produce this highly informative, to use the words of the member for Capalaba, report that basically is a compilation of tables and graphs that include things such as the length of the estimates hearings, the length of government questioning, the length of non-government questioning, the total number of government and non-government questions and to whom those questions were directed. If you want to, you can compare the figures all the way back to 2013. I was told when I studied statistics at university that you can basically get them to say whatever you want.

Mr Tantari: You're pretty good at that.

Mr POWELL: Labor are very good at that. I was also told that statistics can tell one story. They can tell you a quantitative story but they cannot tell you a qualitative story. This report in no way describes what happened throughout each of the estimates committee hearings. Anyone who looks at this report might think, 'Wow, the non-government members and the crossbench got a great allocation of time.' What is not in the report is the protection racket that occurred by just about each and every one of the Labor committee chairs.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): The member for Logan will cease his interjections.

Mr POWELL: A lot of the time that is supposedly allocated to non-government members was actually taken up with arguments between the Labor committee chair and a member of the crossbench or the opposition who asked the question on the validity of the question and whether it was in order or whether it could be ruled out of order. This report does not talk about the number of questions that were ruled out of order.

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It certainly does not address the quality of the answers from ministers or departmental officials if they were lucky enough to get a question put to them without too much fuss or interference from the Labor members of the committees. It is well and good for members like the member for Capalaba—I suspect the member for Logan is going to say something very similar—to stand up and say, 'Gee, what a great estimates process. It's working brilliantly. Non-government members are getting a fantastic proportion of time.' I can tell honourable members that that is not how each of those estimates hearings was reported in the media at the time or more broadly in the community because everyone saw them for what they were: a protection racket.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Glass House, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.


Mr POWELL: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: And the instance from before as well.

Mr POWELL: I withdraw that too. There was obfuscation, filibustering and just simply not answering direct questions. The LNP opposition believes that the system is so broken and there is such a politicisation of the chairs of those committees that we have given a commitment: should we be

fortunate to be elected in October, it will be the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker who will chair each of those estimates hearings to ensure far greater fairness, far greater application of the standing orders when it comes to questions being put, and far greater accuracy in ensuring that ministers and departmental officials stay relevant to the question put to them so that the people of Queensland can find out the answers they deserve to have.

The whole intent of the estimates process is to conduct a forensic analysis of how the government is spending their taxpayers' dollars. It should be open, transparent and fair to ensure that Queenslanders can find out where their dollars are going and how efficiently and effectively the departments are being operated by the ministers, directors-general and statutory authorities. The LNP has taken a very reasonable policy position to ensure that moving forward we do not get reports that are all just numbers and tables but actually talk to the fact that it is a meaningful exchange of questions and answers through the estimates process for the benefit of every Queenslander.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.11 pm): I did note there was some guidance from the chair about reflecting on speakers and chairs. I do note there was a bit of reflection there and I think it was entirely unwarranted. As the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee, now the Cost of Living and Economics Committee, I sincerely apologise to the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Macalister because I gave so much time to the opposition.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (M Hart): Through the chair, member for Logan.


Mr POWER: I apologise through the chair to those two members, because I gave so much time to the opposition that the member Hervey Bay and the member for Macalister were not able to put important questions about the structure of our budget, our Big Build projects and the financing of those projects. Although the member for Glass House says we should not rely on the quantity of questions, I do want to address that because it shows how much time I did not give to the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Macalister. It is on me that I gave them over an hour extra.

I thought, 'Surely the other chairs wouldn't be this bad. They wouldn't have hurt their fellow members of parliament in the same way I did.' Then I looked at it, and some of them really need to apologise to their government members too because they just did not give them the time to really examine the important road building projects we are doing or the important things we are doing in state development like the new housing and new schools we are building. Was there a question from government members—this would have been a question on everyone's lips—about the new South Rock State School that was being built at Yarrabilba? They did not get the chance because we gave too much time to the opposition. The government would have wanted to ask questions about South Rock State School, but I know the opposition is never going to ask about that because they are not interested in the new building program we have in education.

There was 140 minutes of government questioning and they had 268. We had a debate about quality and quantity. We know about their quantity arguments, but you cannot tell me that the opposition's quality was so bad that they needed twice as much time. It seems they did, because even though they had twice as much time, the opposition's quality was so bad that they are now saying they want even more time because their quality was so poor. I hate to get back to quantitative things, because this is what has been criticised, but we need to interpret it through the eyes of the Leader of the Opposition. We need to interpret through his eyes and how he feels. How many questions did I rule out of order? The answer is pretty easy to count to. Even the member for Everton could do it. The answer is zero. All of the questions were put to the ministers. A lot of them were highly irregular. I have to admit that the deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach, always has good questions. If only some of his team could take leadership from the member for Mermaid Beach. He would not be talking about this spurious qualitative/quantitative thing. I will talk about another quantitative thing. Back when they were in government how many days did the estimates process go over?

Mr King: Two days.

Mr POWER: It was constrained to two days so they could hide it as much as possible. During that period did they give more time to the then Palaszczuk opposition or less time than the government? The answer is clear: they gave them less time. We have fair chairs who put all of the questions to the ministers. I think all of the chairs were fair. We also gave them much more time, but nothing can make up for the lack of quality in the opposition.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.16 pm): In speaking as a member of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to speak to report No. 36, 57th Parliament, *Report on the 2023 budget estimates process*. I wish to thank all members of the committee and all of the other committees for the work they


do throughout the year. The Committee of the Legislative Assembly plays an important role in supporting governance and addressing issues facing the operations of parliament.

I feel like a broken record, as every year I speak about the same issues involving the estimates process and nothing changes. I am raising this now because budget week is coming up and the estimates process needs to be reformed. Budget estimates needs a complete overhaul and limited solely to the opposition and crossbench to hold the government to account. Queenslanders are not interested in hearing government members congratulate their own government and departments at estimates hearings. I remember the former member for Callide, who was a minister in the Newman government, said that after estimates he would come out sweating because the process was strong. There was a large number of true questions at that time, but somehow it has been watered down. The opposition and crossbench want to hear the government and departments answering tough questions about the budget.

I have previously raised a number of issues that can be tidied up to ensure better transparency, efficiency and equity for all members of the House. These include: allowing only opposition and crossbench members the exclusive right to ask questions of the government and hold them to account; allowing questions from non-committee members to be submitted prior to the hearing so that the hearing can be dedicated to follow-up questions; transforming the process to allow free flowing questions to ministers and senior bureaucrats without severe time allocations that reduce the ability of non-government members to continue a line of questioning; and removing up-front ministerial statements, as ministers already get the chance to tell the committee how good the government is when answering questions at estimates.

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These changes would ensure better transparency and accountability. At the moment, the estimates process heavily favours the government and is just another tool used to control the narrative, with questions and scrutiny continually shut down by government members. It is difficult when members from rural and regional Queensland fly from their electorates to the estimates hearings and get only a few minutes to put their questions. It is a complete waste of time for all members from the north to go to the estimates hearings to try to scrutinise the government when all we get to hear is how good the government is. This is an important issue that I am raising. It needs to be addressed and I bring it to the attention of the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.20 pm): As a member of the CLA, one of the august parliamentary committees overseen by the Speaker of the House and one that takes a totally bipartisan approach in terms of our decision-making and reporting, it is a pleasure to speak to the report by the CLA on the estimates process. A big part of the estimates process is the review of the Office of the Speaker, which is very important particularly given the large-scale expenditures happening around the precinct, the timings et cetera.

I have to concur with some of the comments of the member for Hill in relation to the questioning. As referred to by the chair, I was particularly involved in the Economics and Governance Committee, as it was then known. Yes, we probably did have double the amount of time, as the chair of that committee referred to. That was probably because all of the questions that we asked were repeated by the chair, just to make up a bit more time. They were also interpreted by the chair, just to take up a little bit more time. We thank the chair for chewing up half of our time, which meant we ended up with about the same time as government members.

The member for Hill raises a very good point about the questioning from government members. The use of dorothy dixers, basically to promote the ministers involved, was the order of the day. While we all want to find out how wonderful the school in Logan is going, surely the member can ask about that in another forum rather than through hard questioning at estimates. Rather than having a lot of media gotcha moments—I did not hear any media gotchas from the government's side—it is important that all the financial aspects of the budget be examined, which will be particularly important as we move into a harder cost-of-living era in the years ahead. We can see the dark clouds forming now.

The review of last year's estimates hearings highlighted the fact that a lot of questioning really was about peripheral issues in the budget. The member for Hill raised a very important matter: similar to question time here in the parliament, the questioning should be about holding the government to account. A previous minister, Rob Swarten, has said, 'I loved the estimates because I was all over my brief and I'd find out through the questioning about things that were going on within the department that I didn't know and then we could address those matters.' He was a good minister. These days, the Labor side is lacking the type of minister who is right across their brief, takes a lot of advice from their minders et cetera. A good estimates committee is basically good for the government as well. It is not

just about bringing down the government; it is about the government finding out about its own shortfalls so it can address them on behalf of the Queensland community. We see those shortfalls more and more.

In relation to statistics—and I think it was mentioned earlier—there are untruths, untruths and statistics. Another word was used originally but that old adage was penned many years ago. You can do anything you want with statistics, but the reality is that the estimates hearings could and should be a better process. As the Manager of Opposition Business mentioned, hopefully it will be a better process for the 2025 estimates. We are not quite sure where we are going in 2024, but it will be an interesting time ahead. Hopefully, we can improve upon our efforts in the 2023 estimates process.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CLEAN ECONOMY JOB, RESOURCES AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr KING (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.26 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 45, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into scrap metal theft*, tabled on 24 November 2023.

This report relates to an inquiry into scrap metal theft. The Transport and Resources Committee, as it then was, was asked to look into scrap metal theft following ongoing concerns about the impacts of copper and other metals being stolen from locations across Queensland. Generally, the copper wire was being stripped and it was believed that the stolen metal was either resold to the local scrap metal market or exported. Thieves have targeted critical infrastructure assets from electricity, water and telecommunications providers. Other targets for those types of thefts are private businesses, sporting and community organisations, road projects, major transport infrastructure and the agriculture and mining industries. In addition, certain vehicle parts have increasingly been targeted due to their valuable metal contents.

In my area of Moreton Bay, sporting grounds have had to install aluminium conductors for their lighting to negate this theft. An aluminium conductor has less scrap value but the bend radius is larger and the cross-sectional area is larger, so sporting fields need to replace all of their conduits as well the conductor, which is expensive and extremely disruptive to sporting. We heard from many submitters and learned not only of the disruptive nature but also of the electrical hazards that can be created by this theft. Other states have banned the sale of scrap for cash but through the process we heard that this is not the silver bullet that some submitters thought it would be.


The committee made seven recommendations, the first two of which relate to improving the legislative framework for the sale and purchase of scrap by updating several acts. We also recommended that an additional offence be created where scrap theft can endanger others when live electrical conductors are left exposed, which is, in effect, illegal electrical work. We heard stories of school kids walking along footpaths where street lighting had been targeted and live conductors were sticking out of the ground. It is a real hazard and a serious issue.

We recommended that police have real-time tracking and reporting of stolen scrap metal so it is more difficult to dispose of. We further recommended that the police minister discuss a national approach with interstate colleagues as some of this scrap metal is sent overseas and attempts need to be made to curb this, if possible. We recommended that the government urgently commit to investigating claims of unlicensed operators in the scrap metal and car-wrecking industries. Those illegal operators need to be charged and stopped. From what we saw, the legitimate businesses seem to be doing the right thing; it is the illegal and unlicensed operators that appear to be causing the harm. They appear to be purchasing stolen scrap and using other methods of payment. Getting rid of cash would not matter to them; they are using cryptocurrency and other payment methods. We recommend that be made illegal as well.

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Our final recommendation was around educating Queenslanders about scrap metal theft, including strategies for how businesses, community groups and other potential targets can better protect their assets, and noting how individuals have a role to play in reporting these suspicious activities that may be related to metal theft.

I would like to thank the members of the former Transport and Resources Committee for all of their work on this inquiry, as well as the fantastic secretariat staff who helped us with it—Jodhi, Margaret, Zac and Amanda. Their work was always appreciated. I really hope there can be changes made to curb this activity, as it is very costly to our communities. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.29 pm): I would also like to make a contribution on the inquiry into scrap metal theft. This is going to be a very hard issue to solve across Queensland and across the nation. We are starting to see more and more of these incidents happening right throughout Queensland. Whether it is in agriculture areas, industrial areas or areas where we get our electricity from, it is a really concerning issue at the moment.

One of the consequences of the cost-of-living crisis is that people are moving into this sort of trade to try to get by. One of the recommendations in this inquiry involved having more enforcement to try to control it, but that is an issue at the moment when we have a crime crisis right across Queensland. The resources of the police and others who do a fantastic job in enforcing this are limited. We have a cost-of-living crisis and a lack of police numbers and we are trying to solve this.

This issue has been going on for quite some time. Through this inquiry, we also learnt about the sneakiness of the thefts and the way they go about it—to the point where they go into shopping centre car parks, jack up cars and take car parts from underneath the cars.

Mr King: The cat converters.

Mr MILLAR: Yes, the cat converters. They do it in such a brazen way, by actually dressing up in a mechanic's uniform with high-vis on, placing witch's hats out, jacking up the car and taking out the part which is valuable to their trade. The owner then comes back from shopping, jumps in the car and says, 'What the hell has happened to my car?'

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Sorry, member for Gregory, will you withdraw that unparliamentary language?


Mr MILLAR: I withdraw. It is a major issue for us to solve. I thank the committee and I certainly thank the former chair of the committee, Shane King, for his guidance and his contribution to his committee. The previous debate was about estimates. All I can say is that Shane was very generous to us—so thank you, member for Kurwongbah.

This is a very important issue. We have to make sure we have the resources. There has to be a clear national approach to this as well because one of the frightening things we found out is that they do not just end up in scrap metal businesses here in Australia; a lot of it gets put in shipping containers and sent overseas to places like China. This is certainly an ongoing problem that we are facing here in Queensland. I hope we can find a way to bring these perpetrators into line and make sure this does not continue. As the chair mentioned before, they do not just use cash; they are getting into cryptocurrency and that is going to be harder and harder to track.

Finally, I was driving along Gympie Road the other day and I looked at this old house which had a corflute sign out the front. It was not a political corflute sign but perhaps a real estate sign that was turned around the other way, and written on it in nikko was 'buy scrap metal' and a phone number. You could easily tell what it was; I was very suspicious of this place. I think we were going onto the Energex site that day and I just pointed out that they would go into the Energex site, strip the scrap metal away, visit this person's place and get the cryptocurrency, and that is how it continues.

Mr Perrett: And copper.

Mr MILLAR: And copper as well. I recommend this committee report to the House. I thank everyone who was on the committee.


 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.33 pm): I rise as a member of the former Transport and Resources Committee to speak to the report as a result of the committee's inquiry into scrap metal theft in Queensland. This inquiry was necessary to help understand scrap metal theft in Queensland and the impact it has on our economy. I was approached by some sporting clubs in my electorate as well as some Energex operators who were concerned about the rate of theft that was going on, the impact it has on communities and the cost to the community.

As a committee, we examined the types of metal at risk of being stolen, how the scrap metal market operates, the prevalence and impact of scrap metal theft, the risks to workers and the environment, and the effectiveness of Queensland laws and regulations. One of the things that was particularly highlighted was that it would appear there is a lot of organised crime involved in this theft and that people are regularly putting not only themselves but also the community at risk by stripping

the copper from electrical fittings in the streets and leaving them exposed. They are doing the same at sporting clubs by stripping air-conditioning units, power poles and lighting of the copper and then reselling it.

It has been discussed that there are some scrap metal dealers that are less than legal, but there are also a lot of legal operators who do a great job. I want to acknowledge Sims who had us around and gave us a good tour to see the impact and the types of copper wire and other scrap metal that was being sold to them. I want to commend them. I also want to take a moment to thank everyone who made a submission and everyone who appeared before the committee. It was really enlightening to hear about the costs incurred by large operators like Powerlink, Energex and all of those farming communities that have to install more security to try to prevent this theft.

I am pleased to see that we made some significant recommendations in the report. Hopefully, at some point in the future we will look at what we can do to ensure that people's lives are not put at risk because they are being forced or coerced into performing these thefts to pay off a debt or whatever it is. That is certainly what it seems to be and that was the information we were given during our inquiry—that there are a lot of organised criminal gangs involved in this theft. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.36 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the inquiry into scrap metal theft. As we have heard, this affects everybody—whether it is your streetlights or your local sporting club. This criminal activity is growing. It seems to be organised. It is difficult to enforce. There were a couple of recommendations relating to the police, and I will just go to one of those, which was that there be a review of the—

... Stolen Property Investigation and Recovery System (SPIRS) to determine if it is fit for purpose, including consideration of options for an improved system of tracking stolen second hand goods.

We need to empower the police here. It is difficult. With the crime crisis we have, we know there are not enough police to do general duties but this is really quite dangerous.


The member for Kurwongbah was a great chair. He was always very fair and balanced, and I would like to thank him for that. I did not understand some of the requirements of the electrical system and some of the earthing and everything else that goes on, and he was at pains trying to explain what that meant. I did not get it, apart from the fact that, if someone takes this particular cabling away, everybody who goes near it, including the people who have to repair it or stabilise that part of the grid, may well be in danger.

Powerlink noted that metal thieves were largely targeting earthing conductors of their operational, energised network. This is the network that we rely on—all small businesses, all households, everybody. This is how we are distributing power around the state. To have organised crime targeting metal that is used in making sure that is safe for everybody, including the workers who have to go and work in that environment, is critically important and should carry some serious penalties. One of the recommendations was that we add not just the fact that it is criminal to steal the metal and to take the copper and other metals, but also create an additional offence that equates to recklessly engaging in conduct that places or may place another person in danger of injury or death due to exposure to live electricity infrastructure.

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There was also a recommendation that the police establish a system where stolen metals are reported and notified. The idea is to try and get it as close as possible to real time. Once those materials are melted down or processed in any way, they become very difficult to track and trace. It is important that we get in early while the material is in the form that it was stolen in. Having a system that allows for some real-time reporting might help.

There are no silver bullets in this. We need to do all we can to stop people who are willing to risk their lives and the lives of others for profitable gain in a criminal activity. One critical part of that, I think, is recommendation 7, which is about an educational program so that people are on the lookout a little bit more and there is an awareness in the community of not only how dangerous this is but also how prevalent it is becoming. With the cost-of-living crisis and the crime crisis, we do not have the resources that we might like to have from a policing perspective. People are under financial pressure which makes these assets more tempting for them. It is important that we educate the general public and other users so that they are aware of what might be done and can report any activity that they see that falls into this category. My time is very short. Banning cash for scrap was not seen to be working as well interstate as we might have thought.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.41 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 45 of the 57th Parliament, tabled in November 2023. Firstly, I would like to thank

the committee secretariat who supported the then Transport and Resources Committee for their excellent work, detailed planning and information support. I also thank my fellow committee members who served the committee during that time: Mr Shane King, the chair and member for Kurwongbah; Mr Lachlan Millar, the deputy chair and member for Gregory; Mr Bryson Head, the member for Callide; Ms Joan Pease, the member for Lytton; and Mr Trevor Watts, the member for Toowoomba North.

This matter is of very serious concern and impacts our broader community. The theft of copper wiring from vacant warehouses and lighting systems in parks is a problem, but theft from streetlighting on highways is a very serious issue as it compromises traffic safety on major high-density traffic networks in the state of Queensland.


The committee made seven recommendations, which are all very good, and a lot of points have been made about them. What is of really serious concern is that wiring taken from warehouses can weigh a couple of hundred kilos and be worth about \$12,000 a kilo. The most expensive factor, however, is that the property owners and the government have to replace and reinstall the wiring. Some sporting clubs are now using aluminium cabling in their wiring networks, which has a lower scrap value. The problem is that that is done after the event in most cases and is a very expensive exercise. The other matter is safety. Often the wiring is removed by amateurs in electrical work. They leave exposed live contacts, open pits and switchboards that have been tampered with. In some cases, in vacant or derelict buildings, people could come across those dangers, resulting in serious injury if not death.

There are four very good recommendations. As the former chair mentioned, there are some interesting points here. Recommendation No. 1 states—

To improve the legislative framework for the sale and purchase of scrap metals in Queensland, the committee recommends the Queensland Government:

- a) amend the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003 so it includes a definition of scrap metal, and
- b) amend the Motor Dealers and Chattel Auctioneers Act 2014 so it also includes a definition of scrap metal and parts.

As was mentioned earlier, the removal of a catalytic converter—of major concern as offenders are now targeting those—makes a vehicle quite dangerous with fumes going straight into the atmosphere and the vehicle becomes quite noisy. In addition, it is very expensive for the victim to replace. I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise to speak on the committee report into its inquiry into scrap metal theft. This was certainly a very interesting inquiry and I learnt a bit along the way when attending site visits and the hearings that we conducted. I note that this report was tabled in November 2023. The interim response from the Attorney-General said that the final government response to the recommendations in the report would be provided within six months of the original tabling of the report. Six months is nearly up and still we have not seen that response. I am looking forward to all of the details of that response coming forward.

We certainly support the intent of the inquiry recommendations and any genuine effort to reduce crime and make Queensland a safer place to live and work. We know that under the Miles Labor government crime rates have soared and I know that across Callide police numbers have been cut. Ultimately, this inquiry provides another in a long list of examples where the government's actions are too little, too late for many victims of crime. It must be called out that, despite another inquiry, years of inaction have left the community vulnerable to this type of crime. Scrap metal theft has become increasingly prevalent in recent years and costs government, businesses and organisations thousands, if not millions, of dollars. We certainly heard that in some of the hearings and in some of the submissions.

Correspondence from GrainCorp highlights some of the costs and the challenges posed to business. When GrainCorp depots are down, it creates significant burden on primary producers as they must then cart their grain to other depots further afield. When this is due to targeted copper theft, communities are left even more frustrated because of the crime crisis that continues to grip Queensland. I am sure the grain producers that use one particular GrainCorp depot on the Darling Downs, which had been targeted previously, are now also very concerned about not only scrap metal theft but also the fire ants that are at their back door, such are the failures of this Labor government.

Of course, copper theft comes with severe danger to not only the offenders committing the offence but also the personnel in the area at the time or those who next attend the site. Substantial risks could result in a fatality through live wires being left exposed and grounding cables being cut off and removed. Acts of copper theft make it incredibly difficult, and in some situations impossible, for businesses to provide a safe workplace for their employees.

The incidence of theft of catalytic converters have also grown substantially. Offenders have taken to incredibly brazen tactics, including cutting converters out of vehicles in public and in broad daylight. That is what is happening here in Queensland under a Labor government. That sort of behaviour highlights key government failures. The government is taking too long to crack down on scrap metal theft activities and crime in general. It shows a society where offenders have more rights than victims.


It is important that the government response in the form of any legislative or regulatory change following this inquiry involves a whole-of-government approach with relevant agencies and government departments all doing their bit to reduce the burden of an already stretched Police Service. We know that police numbers have fallen. I prepared this speech some time ago. It takes a while because the government does not give us as elected representatives enough time to debate issues in this House and things keep getting pushed out. Ultimately, police numbers have fallen—

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Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. I cannot hear the member for Callide. He has a strong voice and I cannot hear him from up here. Keep the noise down, please.

Mr HEAD: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Ultimately, the government cannot put more pressure on these officers without giving them the necessary support and resources to tackle this problem. We must ensure any changes that are made do not add to the regulatory burden for law-abiding businesses, which is a critical thing. There is so much red tape in this state. Businesses are strangled by it; they are held up by it. The red tape they have to deal with slows up the economy. If members talk to any small business owner they will give them multiple examples of the disgusting red tape that they have to face in this state. Any changes to fix this problem must not add to their burden and make it harder for them to make a crust.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.50 pm): Whilst I was not on the committee at the time it did this inquiry, I have written to police ministers and attorneys on this issue over a period of time. In regional Queensland, as the member for Gregory said, we are not immune to this issue. We have talked to landowners who are having their sheds stripped completely bare of copper wire. One landowner I was talking to said that he was harvesting until 11 o'clock one night and he had to be back at five o'clock the next morning to load the truck. When he got there at five o'clock the next morning, he went to turn the lights on in the shed and there were no lights on and no wiring. In that period of time, they had come in and stripped it out.


I spoke to another landowner who had the same issue of sheds being stripped out. He rewired that shed four times—it was stripped out four times. We hear of the cables being snipped off electric grain augers and underground submersible pumps being dragged out of the bores and the long power cable that feeds the power to the pump being cut off and taken away. If people drive out through regional Queensland, they will see the big concrete grain silos. Out on the downs, a lot of those have no copper left in them; they are stripped bare. One of them in the Norwin area was redone. It cost in the vicinity of \$250,000 to rewire that grain silo.

At the time I wondered how to address the situation. I talked to the rural crime squad, which has a base in Drayton in the electorate of Condamine. I asked what we could do to make the public more aware of it and what landowners could do to try and help protect themselves. We had a forum out in the Nangwee area that was put together by the stock squad and my office. The staff in my office work closely with both the rural stock squad, the police and Neighbourhood Watch. We all came together at a shed meeting and the stories just kept coming from different people who had had the same thing happen.

There had been a significant arrest made recently which slowed things down, but it has gained pace again. I was talking to an electrician from Pittsworth about two weeks ago. He had a phone call to go out to a job on a water pump that pumps water out of the Condamine River during a high-flow event. This landowner went down to turn his pumps on and there was no wire. It had been stripped out completely. This pump was about two kilometres off the road. So somebody had found that pump, driven in and stripped it bare at a time when he needed to pump water. This was his opportunity. That is a significant loss. It cost \$30,000 to rewire that pump but the loss much worse than that.

We heard some of the committee members talking about the underworld being mixed up in this. That does not surprise me at all. Whenever there is a cash commodity that sort of organised crime becomes involved. The fact remains that these people are selling this product somewhere. We are hearing of Ergon sites where they store their wire for projects and they put high fences around it. They come out and cut it and rolls of wire are taken. We are hearing of compressors on gas wells in the Western Downs that they have put chains around that have been taken completely off the well and then

stripped bare of copper. This is happening on a widespread scale. When someone is turning up with a truckload of copper on a semi-regular basis, surely there has to be some questions asked as to where they got this material, how they accessed it and the legitimacy of it. There are definitely ways that this problem can be slowed and controlled. A cash market always makes it hard but this is having a significant impact on regional Queensland. It is of huge concern to them and we need to take action on this for the security of regional Queensland.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.55 pm): I, too, rise to address the Transport and Resources Committee's report titled *Inquiry into scrap metal theft*. I do so following my good friend and colleague, the member for Condamine. I say that it is not just an issue for regional Queensland; it is an issue for South-East Queensland. I note that the inquiry at the outset commended the City of Moreton Bay for their advocacy on this important issue. As a member who covers the northern and a lot of the rural parts of the City of Moreton Bay, I can attest to that. I know that they made a submission and gave explicit details of particularly the number of sporting facilities that were being stripped of copper from their lighting. I find that quite despicable. In a lot of these places, their facilities are paid for by a combination of Commonwealth, state and council grants but all of that funding is coming from the ratepayer or the taxpayer. Everything else that goes on at those clubs is done through the hard work of volunteers who fundraise through their canteens, through their administrative fees to participate in the sport and through sausage sizzles and the like. Then, these individuals come along and think it is okay to ruin all that by stripping the cabling from the lighting at the footy field. This has such a devastating impact on those community sporting organisations.

I, too, commend the City of Moreton Bay for bringing this issue to the attention of the government and for making a submission on this important matter. I want to point out that it has become a significant safety issue in the southern parts of the electorate of Glass House as well. I hesitate to mention some specific locations but it is happening so frequently that I am going to: the street lighting at the interjection of Steve Irwin Way and Beerburrum Road at Beerburrum; the lighting across Six Mile Creek at Elimbah on Beerburrum Road; and at several locations on the D'Aguiar Highway between Caboolture and Woodford. TMR are having the copper stripped out of the streetlights and TMR will go back and rightly replace it, for obvious safety reasons, only to find that not 24 hours or 48 hours later it is taken again.

I understand that TMR have now hit the pause button because they cannot keep repeating that same pattern of behaviour. They have advised me that they are looking at a number of solutions that will ensure we can get the lights back on but that can prevent any further theft. All I would ask of TMR is that they progress that as quickly as possible. I have had a number of constituents increasingly concerned that some of the intersections—particularly Steve Irwin Way and Beerburrum Road at Beerburrum—are very unsafe without that lighting. The longer the delay in finding a solution to restore it, the greater the concern within the community that something serious will happen at that intersection. I do not want there to be a serious accident. I do not want there to be a death at that intersection. I want TMR to get this right so that we do not continue to go around in circles, but it does need to happen sooner rather than later.

My message is the same as the many others who have spoken on this. The individuals out there who think this is a worthwhile endeavour need to think again. I think the government needs to take on board the recommendations put forward by this committee in terms of strengthening some of our responses, strengthening some of our laws and ensuring we can act quickly to identify those who are undertaking these thefts and bring them to justice.


We need to find their distribution—the way they are getting rid of the metal—and put an end to that as well. If we can disrupt that network, then we can prevent this stupidity that is costing community organisations hard-earned money and the opportunity to participate in active sport as well as costing communities their safety, particularly on our main roads. That is something I know the residents of places like Beerburrum, Elimbah and Wamuran are particularly passionate about. I call on TMR to come up with a solution as quickly as possible to ensure we have safety on those roads.

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Debate, on motion of Mr Perrett, adjourned.

CRIMINAL CODE (DEFENCE OF DWELLINGS AND OTHER PREMISES— CASTLE LAW) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Criminal Code for particular purposes. I table the bill and its explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill, statement of compatibility with human rights.

Despite claims by the state government that crime continues to drop across the state, we all know there is a much bleaker story for those living with the scourge of crime across Queensland. It does not matter who we speak to, crime continues to be the No. 1 concern for people of all walks of life. Queenslanders do not feel safe walking to their cars or being out in public at night-time. Even worse, they do not feel safe in their own home. It is one thing to be scared to leave your home, but it is a whole different scenario to be scared while living in your home. It is supposed to be a place of sanctuary.

One of the scariest things imaginable is being confronted in your own home by an intruder. Feeling powerless in a situation like that actually petrifies us. In Queensland if people want to defend themselves from a home invader in their home, in layman's terms they must only use like-for-like force. Failure to do so may result in criminal charges ranging from assault through to murder. Across Australia our current laws do very little to protect those who are faced with the real prospect of having to defend themselves, their property and their loved ones. Victims' rights should always come first, and lawmakers in this state must recognise that. The bill I introduce, the Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2024 has a number of policy objectives. It is a policy that the KAP has adopted. I am pleased to introduce this bill and describe it to the House.

The objective of this bill is to amend section 267 of the Queensland Criminal Code and provide clear guidance and legal provisions for individuals who are forced to defend themselves and others within their homes. This amendment is commonly referred to as 'castle doctrine'. Section 267 of the Criminal Code governs the use of force in situations where a home owner or occupier defends their property. However, an increase in home invasions due to unbridled youth crime and crime in general across Queensland has called into question the clarity and applicability of this provision. The proposed amendment seeks to broaden the circumstances in which an individual can lawfully respond to a home invasion with such force that may cause grievous bodily harm or even death to the intruder.

According to the Queensland Government Statistician's report, there was a staggering 11.2 per cent increase in Queensland's crime rate in 2022-23 compared to the previous year, with 11,089 offences committed per 100,000 people. There were 51,000 break and enters recorded across Queensland in 2022-23. It is appalling to see those numbers climbing at such an alarming rate.

The castle doctrine is a legal principle that recognises a person's right to defend their home against intruders without facing legal consequences. The root of this castle doctrine can be found in English common law as far back as 1604 in a famous case where the Court of King's Bench held, 'That the house of everyone is to him as his castle and fortress as well for defence against injury and violence, as for his repose'. It stems from the idea that a home is a person's castle, a place where, like I said earlier, they should feel safe and secure. The doctrine strikes at the very core of individuals' fundamental rights to protect themselves and others within their own property.

This bill, if passed, will allow individuals to use force, including deadly force if necessary, to repel intruders and the castle doctrine principle reduces the burden on a home owner to prove the necessity of their actions. It provides them with the legal protections and peace of mind during a time of crisis. After the situation has unfolded those who have been subjected to such a horrible scenario should not be faced with the fact that they may then be part of a police investigation to see whether or not like-for-like force was used.

Under the current section 267, when faced with a home invasion, an individual is limited to only using necessary force to prevent or repel a home invasion and it must be done under the reasonable belief that the intruder was entering the dwelling with intent to commit an indictable offence. An individual cannot be expected to think objectively and respond in proportion when faced with a home invasion when any underestimation of the threat could result in severe consequences. I must remind the House that those consequences could result in serious harm of their family members, their property or even death. Therefore, the test in section 267 of the Criminal Code is inadequate to offer the necessary protections to home owners or occupiers who respond to the threat of a home invasion here in Queensland. A householder startled by an intruder at night is not well positioned to make an informed

decision or a measured evaluation of how they should respond. This bill seeks to provide the requirement that individuals seek from the protection of the law in this situation.

The only protection an intruder should be afforded in this state is the front door of a house. Once they cross into the premises, it should be up to the home owner or the individual in that premises as to how they defend themselves. We have also included in this bill the definition of 'premises'. This is to ensure that we are encapsulating all the places that people unfortunately in this state call home, which may include a home, a house, a tent or a caravan. I will go into that now. The term 'premises' does not appear in the current section 267 defence. It has been included in this bill for the purpose of including the following terms. The explanatory notes state—

Pursuant to Schedule 1 of the Code, the definition of 'Premises' includes—(a) a building or structure, or part of a building or structure, of any type; and (b) a group of, or part of a group of, buildings or structures, of any type; and (c) the land or water where a building or structure or a group of buildings or structures is situated; and (d) a vehicle, or a caravan; and (e) a tent, or a cave; and (f) premises in which more than 1 person has ownership.

It goes on—

This Bill achieves its policy objectives by allowing an individual to use force that is likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm against an intruder in circumstances where the intruder:

- enters or attempts to enter the dwelling or premises in the night; or
- uses or threatens actual violence; or
- is or pretends to be armed with a dangerous or offensive weapon, instrument or noxious substance; or
- is in company with 1 or more persons; or
- damages, or threatens or attempts to damage, any property.

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The above circumstances are identical to the circumstances of aggravation that already exist in the code in section 419 relating to burglary, section 427 relating to the unlawful entry of a vehicle for committing an indictable offence and section 408A relating to the unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessels. Failing the presence of any of the above circumstances, the amendment also provides that it is lawful if the individual using the force reasonably believes that the intruder is attempting to enter, or remain in, the dwelling or premises with intent to commit an indictable offence in the dwelling or premises and that the force is necessary to prevent the commission of the offence against the home owner.

There are no known alternate ways of achieving the policy objectives without this bill before the House today. The bill will provide people with a greater sense of security at home by supporting community values and historic legal policy that has revolved around a person's right to defend their home. In terms of the cost of this bill to Queensland taxpayers, there would be no significant additional funds required from the Queensland government's consolidate revenue. Some may argue that it may even save this state government some money.

With regard to consistency with fundamental legislative principles, this bill may not be consistent and may breach the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1992. There are clauses in this bill that may impact the rights and liberties of offenders by being inconsistent with natural justice under section 4(3)(b). However, it is considered justified to address the seriousness of the increase in home invasions across Queensland and also supports what Queenslanders have been calling for.

During our consultation process we heard from a number of Queenslanders across the state who had been asking to be able to protect themselves in their own homes. Ensuring that Queenslanders have the right to protect themselves should be paramount. The scales need to swing back the other way. There are too many rights for the perpetrators in this state. Right now people are asking the state government to ensure that there are good laws to protect them in a time of crisis. I am often asked why castle law is not law in Queensland. Because of the number of times that that question has been asked of me and my fellow KAP members, we are introducing this bill to test whether or not both sides of this House and the crossbench support what Queenslanders are calling for.

The reality is that, when someone has to make a split-second decision—whether it is fight or flight—they do not have the time to decide whether or not, in layman's terms, like-for-like force is about to be used. A real scenario that could play out is when someone has come into your house with a baseball bat and that resident has to ask themselves, 'Is the bat I'm about to use in defence the same size as the offender's bat?' Is using a knife going to be considered like-for-like force? The reality is that people should not have to ask themselves that. They should be able to defend themselves on their property. That is what Queenslanders are asking for. They want the right to be able to stand up to those

who are trying to take away their freedom and liberty on their own property. Queenslanders deserve good laws to protect good people, not the perpetrators. I commend this bill to the House.

First Reading

Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.13 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee

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

MOUNT ISA MINES LIMITED AGREEMENT (CONTINUING MINING ACTIVITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (3.14 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement Act 1985 to provide for continued mining activities in Mount Isa. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement (Continuing Mining Activities) Amendment Bill.

Tabled paper: Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement (Continuing Mining Activities) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement (Continuing Mining Activities) Amendment Bill, statement of compatibility with human rights.

This is the question that this bill asks the parliament: are we prepared to sit by and let a global mining commodities trader based in Switzerland determine the future of copper production in Queensland, or do we want this parliament on behalf of the people of Queensland to determine that? Clearly, the legislative mechanisms are not there at the moment to facilitate that, so let us put them in place to give this House the right. As was said by the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, let us exercise our sovereign rights over our minerals and engage in facilitating more mining of these critical minerals and copper. Here is an opportunity to do that. Mount Isa is the third largest copper mine in Australia and the global commodity has said, 'This is getting a bit tough for us. We're going to ship those jobs overseas.' There are people lining up to buy the mine, so here is an opportunity for us to address that and say to that global commodity, 'No, you don't make the decisions on the future of copper production in Queensland. We do.'

Mount Isa Mines had a special act created for it. It was the town initially and then the municipality eventually built up around it, but because the town was so integrated with the mine's functions the mine built a lot of the housing, the original stores and schools and what have you. One of the sewerage works in town is still owned by the mine, so there was a lot of integration with its own infrastructure. An act was created which gave the mine special conditions over things like environmental controls and the way it interacted with the community. Not many mines have had their own act created for them. Mount Isa Mines did, and at that time its staff were a part of the community. All of the managers lived in town, as did all of the permanent workforce. The mine helped provide housing. It was part of building Queensland—so much so that at the Q150 celebrations the people of Queensland voted that the mine was the most significant business in Queensland's history. That demonstrates why it had its own act created. Sadly, it does not play that role in our economy now. Most of the managers do not live in Mount Isa anymore. The majority of the workforce is FIFO or contract. I am told that before I lived there the mine used to hold a Christmas party and all of the kids in town—it did not matter whether or not your parents worked at the mine—got a toy at the Mount Isa Mines Christmas party.

The mine built the sports ovals and donated everything and at every ball there were tables full of Mount Isa Mines staff. That is not the case anymore. The opposite is the case. It is just another mine that is extracting as much as it can until it gets difficult or it does not suit it. When a company has over 100 mines scattered around the world, including six other copper mines, when things get a bit tricky

and its capital is better deployed somewhere else it will move its operations, as the mine's owners have done in Mount Isa. Some 1,200 copper-producing jobs in Queensland have been shipped offshore to its mines in Africa and South America. That is where it will get a better return on its investment now so that is where its operations have moved to, and we have let that happen.

This bill is about giving power back to the Queensland people so they cannot be exploited at the whim of a global commodity trader such as Glencore. Usually when a mine closes it activates environmental obligations, and that is problematic in Mount Isa because it has tangled all of the operations together—the zinc, the lead, the copper smelter and the copper mine. The mine operator has said that it has closed the mine down as it is depleted. That is what it told us months ago in its announcement, which sent the city of Mount Isa into shock. It said, 'We've run out of ore. The mine's had its life. It's had a good run. We're closing it down,' but that has not triggered any significant environmental obligations. There is an alleged \$2 billion worth of environmental obligations for it to commit to, but it does not need to because it has said that it is still operating as a mine, and that is not right. If it is going to shut down those 1,200 jobs and there are people lining up to get in on that mine to keep it operating, it should not be allowed to ignore that point. However, we are not addressing that point today with this legislation.

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The identified problem here is that there are known reserves in Mount Isa. According to Glencore's annual report, there are enormous copper reserves in Mount Isa, which has a current high price nudging \$10,000 a tonne. All the talk in the financial papers is about how wonderful copper is and the future of copper. I have a fun fact: they say that in the next 25 years we will have to produce more copper than has ever been produced in the history of man. We are overseeing the shutdown of the third biggest copper mine in Australia when other people are saying, 'We can keep operating that mine.'

Members might not believe me on that, but Glencore disposed of all of its metal assets around Australia. Cobar was sold. Ernest Henry Mine was sold. This is among the last remaining assets, bundled together with McArthur River, that it has in Australia. It is a big thing for someone to buy. When they sold Ernest Henry Mine they told the community, as Glencore has done the entire time of its tenure of Mount Isa Mines, 'There's not much life left in this'—so don't go out and invest in the community. That is what they are insinuating when they say that. They would say, 'Look, we might operate for only another four or five years; just be mindful of that.' That is what they would say at all the community information sessions. Within 18 months of being the owner, junior Australian mining company Evolution—with pockets not as deep as Glencore—added another 17 years to the four years that Glencore said it had at Ernest Henry. A new Australian focused mining company—not a global commodities trader—wants to go in there, develop, drill, explore, expand, see what opportunities are there and raise the capital. That is what miners do.

A global commodity trader that owns six other copper mines around the world is not so interested. If they have big open pits in Africa or South America, where the labour and environmental conditions are not so 'bad', why would they deploy \$100 million—or whatever the number is—to keep Mount Isa going for the next few years? What do members think they would decide to do? We are endorsing those overseas wages and conditions by not putting the blowtorch on Glencore. It should not be allowed to sit on this resource.

I acknowledge that Mount Isa is a depleted resource. We know that. We know that it is getting difficult to mine. Again, all I can say is look at the annual report and look at the reserves. I can report to the House that multiple parties—not one or two—have been coming to my office. I am not an international mines broker, but they are saying, 'Mate, can you get us an introduction at Glencore? We would be really interested in talking to them. We think we can do something with this copper mine.' There are people knocking at the door trying to get access to this. Under the current laws, Glencore can sit on this for the next 30 years: 'Let's just wait until we need it.' That is not right. That is not doing the right thing by the people of Queensland. They are given the right to mine so long as they mine it. They are not given the right to mine only to sit on it as long as they want, until it suits them. That should never be the case, but that is what we are endorsing if we do not change things.

The mechanics of the bill are very simple. The minister must approve any change in operation, such as ceasing an activity, reducing the scale or closing a facility, if that change were to have an impact on the community of Mount Isa or the economy of Queensland. It is simply about giving the power back to Queensland. If they do not comply, they are forced to go out to tender. We are not even saying, 'Use it or lose it.' They would not lose it; they would just be forced to sell it on the open market. There are people lining up to buy it. We are not even being as harsh as we should be. We are not saying, as most people say, that they should use it or lose it. This is better than the conditions we give the pastoral industry. Over 70 per cent of Queensland is leasehold, and a great majority of that is

pastoral leases given to people on the condition that they continue livestock operations. If people discontinue livestock operations then they can be forced to or they are kicked off without remuneration. This measure is nothing different from the condition we apply to everyone in this country in relation to other commodities and production activities. It is simple mechanics.

We are talking about 1,200 jobs. I know the government could end up throwing out \$50 million with its grant packages, but \$50 million will not replace, year on and year out—or even over the next 10 years—those 1,200 jobs. That does not even scratch the surface. There is no alternate. There is nothing in the future to replace 1,200 high-paying mining jobs, not to mention the threat to copper production, the future of the copper smelter and everything else in that supply chain all the way to the copper refinery in Townsville and the fertiliser plant that takes the sulphur from the acid plant that comes off the copper smelter at Phosphate Hill. All of those operations rely on viability. There are very big stakes at play here, probably more to the detriment of the economies of Townsville and Brisbane. As I said, the majority of the workforce out there now is FIFO. This hits the state just as much as it does Mount Isa.

The Prime Minister is making grandiose statements about exercising sovereignty over our minerals, saying that we have to embrace critical minerals and the new economy. We cannot do that unless we expand copper production. We cannot expand copper production when we are overseeing the shutdown of the third-biggest copper mine in Australia. If it was fully depleted and there was no-one wanting to buy it, fair enough, but we have buyers who say that they can operate that mine and that it is of great interest to them. The price of copper is nudging \$10,000 a tonne. We have one of the biggest mining deals in modern mining history with BHP trying to buy Anglo. That deal is all about copper and the future of copper. It has a bright future. Members need only read the *Financial Review* or any mining magazine to know that copper is the hot one out there. However, we have the wrong owner of the wrong mine. They have the zinc and lead operations and, like I said, the smelter operations. They can passively sit on that and play games. They have over 100 mines around the world. They have six other copper mines. It is not really a big deal to them. When Evolution bought Ernest Henry Mine, they said, 'This is a very small mine to Glencore, but it is a big mine for us and we are throwing everything at it.' They did that and they put 17 years onto the life of that mine. We want another Evolution to come along and buy the Mount Isa copper mine.

It is a pretty simple ask that I put before the House: let's make these foreign owned companies, which are doing stuff—all for the community, either use it or lose it—although, like I said, we are not even being that tough. We are just saying, 'Use it or put it to tender and sell it.' It is a pretty good deal for them in that they would not be pushed out. We are just saying, 'Put it out to tender.' That would be at the whim of the minister. That is how it should operate in this state for all mines, but in this bill we are limiting this measure to Mount Isa Mines. I ask the House to consider the bill.

It is really important that we send signals to the global community that we are not just here to be exploited. In Australia, we are at risk of becoming a quarry as more and more of our value-add becomes less competitive, maybe, around our energy. I acknowledge that the investment in CopperString does help with our energy but, at the same time, we have to acknowledge that we are paying the highest industrial energy prices in the world right now in the North West Minerals Province. We are only addressing what was a terrible problem in the first place.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, it has been brought to my attention that you have used unparliamentary language. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr KATTER: I acknowledge that, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I withdraw. Lastly, we should reflect on some of our great Queensland government heroes, such as Sir Leo Hielscher. When approached by a prospective bauxite miner, he said, 'Well, I am sorry; there has been a terrible misunderstanding. In Queensland, we do not issue mining licences for bauxite but we do issue licences for smelter and aluminium.' He was saying, 'If you are going to come to this country to mine, you will have to learn how to value-add as well because we want you to value-add, provide jobs and invest in the state.' We need more of that attitude for our miners in Queensland.

People cannot just sit on our resources at their whim. They cannot export jobs overseas at their whim. There is a lot being invested in the future of the North West Minerals Province. If they do not share our vision for the North West Minerals Province—there is \$650 billion worth of metals there—they can move on. We do not want them in this country. They can go and invest somewhere else. They can have a happy life in Africa and South America, but we do not want them in Mount Isa. Sell it to someone who is going to use it, provide wealth for the economy and the royalties that get sucked up down here to build footbridges. Then we can all be a bit happier. This measure is about making sure

those minerals are put to good use for the benefit of the people of Queensland. I ask members to seriously consider this for the future of Mount Isa and to send a signal to mining companies that we are not here to be exploited; we are here to take control of our future in copper production. With that, 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 Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1383, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.



Ms LUI (Cook—ALP) (3.30 pm), continuing: Streamlining our emergency services will ensure efficiency and a strong coordinated approach should we ever have to face a severe weather event again.

The committee received 20 submissions to the three bills, of which three submissions spoke exclusively to this bill and six submissions referred to the bill as well as one or both of the other bills in the emergency reform amendment package. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the proposed reforms in the bill. The three bills proposed to enable a range of disaster and emergency services reforms to enhance Queensland's capacity to respond to natural disasters and keep people safe in the state's oceans and waterways.

The Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 recognises the Queensland State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland and aligns both entities under the control of the Queensland Police Service. The objectives of the bill contribute to the reform of Queensland's emergency services and disaster management arrangements by: establishing Marine Rescue Queensland as a statewide marine rescue service; establishing the State Emergency Service through the State Emergency Service Bill; aligning Marine Rescue Queensland and State Emergency Service under the control of the Queensland Police Service through the bill, which will make the necessary administrative and consequential amendments for this to occur; and formally establishing the State Disaster Management Group within the Disaster Management Act.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and effort of all the emergency services in my electorate—VMR, SES and rural fire. Responding to emergencies often puts them in the most challenging situations. Without fail, they go far and beyond for the community and they deserve our thanks.

There are a couple of things I want to highlight. First, I want to mention the work of the local disaster management groups—in particular, the LDMGs in the Cook shire, the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal shire, the Mareeba shire and the Douglas shire—for their efforts in the Far North Queensland floods. They all did a phenomenal job with coordinating a disaster response within their council jurisdiction and across boundaries. As seen in the FNQ floods, the severity of the disaster certainly puts a lot of financial pressures on my councils. I note that the Local Government Association of Queensland was supportive

of the bill as part of the emergency services reform amendment package and the call to allocate significant resourcing to the collection of the emergency service levy from prescribed properties.

Second, I want to mention the acts of kindness by good Samaritans. During the floods in FNQ, we saw local good Samaritans volunteering their time to help with rescue missions. Magoo is a local helicopter pilot who was the first on the scene during the floods, landing on rooftops to rescue people and taking them to safety. I met Magoo during my trip to Cooktown in late December where I thanked him for his hero effort. In his humble words he said it had to be done. I heard a story of a young fellow who I have never met. I heard his story of bravery rescuing people in his tinny and taking them to safety.


I want to acknowledge the many other good Samaritans who risk their lives to rescue people in desperate situations and in need of help. Even though the bill continues civil liability protections to the SES and its members through the Civil Liability Regulation 2014, it does not include the actions of good Samaritans like Magoo and the many other good Samaritans who will continue to go out of their way to help humanity.

I am speaking to this bill because I want to see a more streamlined, coordinated approach to disaster response. The pooling of resources will certainly increase our capacity to respond effectively in the event of a natural disaster and especially in a vast and complex electorate like mine. This new way of doing things will certainly go a long way for us in Far North Queensland.

I am fully supportive of this bill. I want to commend the Miles government for bringing this legislative reform to the House. I know it is going to be a true game changer for the future, and streamlining all the emergency services under the one umbrella will strengthen our capabilities and increase our capacity to perform better under extreme circumstances.

Before I finish, I want to acknowledge and thank my good friends Kim Richards, the member for Redlands, and Aaron Harper, the member for Thuringowa, for their support for me and my community in Cook. The member for Redlands flew into Cairns on Boxing Day, and we were then on the road to Cape York as she accompanied me to the different communities that I look after on Cape York. Both the Redlands electorate office and the Thuringowa electorate office assisted with making welfare calls into the Cook electorate, and I am so very thankful and grateful.

I acknowledge the committee, the committee secretariat and Hansard for the work that went into the examination of the bill. This is a good bill that promotes efficiency in disaster response. I commend all of the bills to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise to address the cognate debate on the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. From the outset, I want to acknowledge the significant contribution made by countless local residents, volunteers and personnel who make up our incredible local emergency service units and agencies within the electorate of Moggill and more broadly the western suburbs of Brisbane, including the Kenmore Ambulance Station, the Brookfield Rural Fire Brigade, the Indooroopilly Police Station, the Karana Downs Police Station, the Inner West Crime Prevention Unit and the Queensland Police Service officers based at Bellbowrie. I also wish to acknowledge the service and contribution of emergency services personnel and volunteers at our Pullenvale Fire and Rescue Station, the Pinjarra Hills Ambulance Station, the Moggill Group SES and the Karana Downs Fire and Rescue Station.

As we know, Queensland has a reputation for its tumultuous severe weather seasons and resultant natural disasters. Our seasons can often be sudden and unpredictable, with storms and natural disaster events presenting a perpetual challenge for local communities. Whether it is floods, bushfires or severe storms, our state has to endure life with significant severe and unpredictable weather events and the barrage of nature's fury. This includes local communities within the electorate of Moggill.

Amidst the turbulence and disruption, Queensland's emergency services have always stood as unwavering pillars of community support. As we see time and again, the extraordinary resilience and dedication of our emergency service personnel often assists in mitigating the social and community impacts of these disasters. These brave men and women exemplify the best of Queensland and its spirit of selflessness, often risking their lives to rescue stranded individuals, provide essential aid and restore normality to affected communities.

As the state member for Moggill, I have witnessed many such extraordinary acts of service and dedication to our local community where our emergency services have gone above and beyond to ensure the preservation of life and the protection of property.

In addressing this debate, I particularly want to focus my contribution on specific matters of disaster management and elements of these various pieces of legislation as they pertain to the electorate of Moggill and the western suburbs of Brisbane. In particular, I wish to address elements related to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024.

I acknowledge that this legislation will formally establish the role of the State Recovery Policy and Planning Coordinator within the Disaster Management Act, which was a key recommendation of the review led by the Inspector-General Emergency Management. This legislation will also strengthen the appointment process and expands the functions and operations of the State Recovery Coordinator. I also acknowledge that amendments in this legislation will emphasise that a guiding principle of the Disaster Management Act is that consideration should be given to the improvement of the resilience of a community across the four phases of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery when planning for disaster management.

Following the severe flood and weather events of February and March 2022, I provided detailed submissions to both the *Brisbane City Council 2022—flood review*, led by the former governor of Queensland, the Hon. Paul de Jersey AC, CVO, QC, and to the Queensland state government's *South East Queensland rainfall and flooding—February to March 2022 review*, led by the Queensland Inspector-General Emergency Management, Alistair Dawson. I also welcomed the then Queensland State Recovery Coordinator, Major General Jake Ellwood Rtd DSC, AM, CSC to the electorate of Moggill, where I accompanied Major General Ellwood on a visit to locally affected suburbs to assess planned recovery strategies, plans and infrastructure works.

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As I highlighted in my submissions, and as I have also provided through written correspondence and in speeches to the Queensland parliament, there are specific disaster management, infrastructure, coordination and other matters that must be addressed for local residents in the electorate of Moggill. These matters include specific localities and communities within the electorate of Moggill that suffer geographical isolation during times of severe rainfall and subsequent flooding. To that end I have been consistently calling for, and supporting, the formal designation of Mount Crosby State School, including its hall and associated facilities, as an approved community support centre to be activated during natural disaster events.

I have previously provided letters of support to the federal member for Blair and again provided another letter of support in February of this year trying to get urgent action to be undertaken by both the Queensland and federal Labor governments to enable the release of funding by the Australian federal government's Disaster Ready Fund to enable essential infrastructure upgrades at this location to better support local residents. It is disappointing that both the Labor state and federal governments have refused to act on this thus far. I would specifically call on Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, federal Minister for Emergency Management, to prioritise funding and work collaboratively with the Queensland Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery.

I also want to reiterate the calls of local residents who are seeking a dedicated ambulance station to enable better service delivery for local residents of Karana Downs, Mount Crosby and surrounding suburbs. The lack of a dedicated station was a significant concern during the natural disaster events of 2022. The geographical isolation experienced by local residents, particularly of Mount Crosby, Karana Downs, Lake Manchester and Kholo during the 2022 severe weather event and natural disaster also underscored the need for the urgent progression of the new Mount Crosby vehicle bridge, which I have long been advocating for over many years. I am pleased to confirm that this bridge has now been completed and opened, servicing residents of both the electorates of Moggill and Ipswich West, although community concerns remain in relation to the deck height of the bridge and its flood immunity.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the LNP's member for Ipswich West, Darren Zanow MP, who understands the importance of local infrastructure, flood resilience and service delivery across our shared regional communities.

In relation to other communities in the electorate of Moggill, there are a number that also experienced the devastating impacts of natural disasters and geographical isolation including, but not limited to, Bellbowrie and Moggill, and there needs to be an ongoing examination of how this is managed. During the severe weather and flooding event of 2022 I worked hard, along with Councillor Greg Adermann, councillor for the Pullenvale Ward, to support local residents who were experiencing


significant hardship and serious impacts as a result of the lack of coordination across disaster management agencies pertaining to local, state and federal governments. Whilst I acknowledge the various changes that have been implemented following the 2022 floods and the additional cross-agency and disaster management coordination changes that will be further facilitated through the passage of these pieces of legislation, there are still ongoing issues relating to local residents who are trying to seek a satisfactory disaster recovery solution.

I am continuing to support a local Kenmore resident who has been rejected multiple times through the voluntary home buyback program despite neighbouring and similarly affected properties being eligible and purchased under this scheme. These are also matters which I have previously provided written correspondence on to the Queensland state government.

Finally, I want to briefly address the proposed changes to the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, and in particular I draw to the state government's attention the submission provided to the Queensland parliament's Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee by Mr Michael Gordon, a constituent of the Moggill electorate and longstanding member of the Brookfield Rural Fire Brigade for over 25 years. As the LNP's shadow minister for fire and emergency services articulated earlier in his contribution, there have been a number of elements of these changes which have raised further questions. There have also been significant concerns with regard to the Queensland state government's insufficient consultation and communication with our dedicated urban and rural fire brigades. Such concerns were also highlighted by Mr Gordon, who stated in his submission that he was surprised that the Labor government's proposed legislation could have progressed as far as it had without 'any sort of feedback by whom it may affect', and secondly 'that there was only seven days made available to provide a submission'. Such limited consultation and time frames for feedback is completely unacceptable. This is yet another example of the state Labor government's failure to treat Queenslanders with respect and comprehensively listen to their concerns.

In the electorate of Moggill our urban and rural fire brigades provide an invaluable service to our community, including for residents of Anstead, Brookfield, Upper Brookfield, Mount Crosby, Karana Downs, Kholo, Kenmore Hills, Kenmore, Chapel Hill, Moggill, Bellbowrie and other surrounding suburbs. This includes in the preparation and response in times of disaster, particularly when it comes to fires. I again reiterate my calls to the state Labor government to work in further collaboration with other agencies and levels of government to enhance bushfire preparedness for communities in the electorate of Moggill, including the consideration and provision of additional resourcing and communication. When it comes to emergency services and disaster management, there is still more that must be done to improve the resilience of our communities and ensure the timely and efficient coordination of all agencies when preparing and responding to natural disasters.

Finally, and in concluding my contribution, I wish to highlight the extraordinary decline and decay that is occurring with respect to democratic processes here in Queensland in the parliament under this state Labor government. This debate has involved the combining of four pieces of legislation as part of a cognate debate. The allocated 10 minutes for many elected representatives to address this substantial vote is entirely inadequate given there may be unintended consequences which may occur because of the lack of scrutiny that cannot be undertaken as part of this debate due to these time constraints. Queenslanders deserve better.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the cognate debate of the bills before the House. In particular, I rise to speak to the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023.

Where would we be without the many volunteers who do so much for our communities across Queensland. Today I want to acknowledge the great crew at Coast Guard Brisbane. Based in Manly, QF2 is tirelessly out on the water no matter the weather. They do not care if they are putting themselves at risk: if a call goes out for help, we know that we can rely on those volunteers who come to the rescue of boaties in times of need. Out there on our beautiful Quandamooka country in Moreton Bay our crew, QF2, led by Craig Bowen and his team, work tirelessly. I give a big shout-out to each and every coastguard member not only in my electorate but across Queensland. I want to thank them for everything they do to ensure those who decide to go out on the water are safe and looked after if they need a hand.

Currently, marine rescue services are provided by two principal organisations: the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association of Queensland, VMRAQ, with 26 squadrons and an estimated 1,400 members; and the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association of Queensland, AVCGA, which has 21 flotillas and an estimated 1,200 members. VMRAQ and AVCGA are two separate, independent

organisations with different structures and different assets, but they do provide similar services. They also place a great reliance on volunteers and local community fundraising to operate. Might I add, they are also subsidised by the Queensland government.

That is why I am particularly disappointed to have heard the member for Moggill's contribution about how these bills are rushed and how difficult they are. We have been doing the Blue Sky Review for some time. This is just another example of the whingeing and whining of those opposite because they do not have anything to offer. All they have to offer is whingeing and whining because they do not deliver anything. I have yet to see a private member's bill. I have seen a blue and yellow pamphlet, which is all they have. I very much doubt they even have Volunteer Marine Rescue and coastguard in that document. At least we are going ahead and doing things to help important members of my community and members across all of Queensland, because this will make a huge difference.

No longer will volunteers have to go out and rattle the tin. No more will they have to call me and say, 'Can you help us raise funds? Can you buy our life jackets for us?' We as a government are supporting them, and we are making sure they are going to have the vessels they need to protect all Queenslanders—that is, each and every Queenslanders. As a government, that is what we will do. We will deliver. As I said, I have no idea what those opposite intend to do with our volunteer coastguard and VMR, because to date I have heard nothing apart from their usual whingeing and whining.

As a consequence of the current arrangements the provision of marine rescue services arises when VMRAQ squadrons and AVCGA flotillas operate in overlapping areas, and this is occasionally unclear. Further, there is a lack of integration between these organisations which may lead to inefficiencies through the duplication of services, assets and costs.

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The Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 will establish Marine Rescue Queensland. MRQ will be a dedicated marine service for all of Queensland, in addition to providing other maritime services to government entities and the community. This is a commitment from the Miles Labor government, and it is in response to the Queensland community and consistent with the KPMG independent review of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.


There are many advantages of an integrated, statewide marine rescue service. MRQ will deliver an enhanced service through better interoperability between units. There will also be better clarity around roles and responsibilities for the multiple agencies responsible for providing marine rescue services as well as, importantly, an increase in the quality of services provided by developing standardised training, procedures and policies and enhancing asset management.

In addition to making legislative changes to support and improve MRQ, the Miles Labor government has also provided \$27 million for the establishment of MRQ and other funding will be allocated indirectly to provide corporate support to benefit MRQ and the SES, including corporate support from QPS. These changes will begin from July 2024 and will see the existing VMRAQ and AVCGA transition in stages over a 12- to 18-month period.

The committee report made two recommendations—firstly, that the bill be supported and, secondly, that the Queensland Police Service's Reform Implementation Taskforce undertake public education and information sessions to effectively engage and inform State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland volunteers as part of the implementation of the emergency services and disaster management reforms.

The police and emergency services Reform Implementation Taskforce is committed to ongoing engagement with the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue volunteers, as well as local communities, to ensure the successful implementation of emergency services and disaster management reforms. In addition, the program has established an MRQ implementation working group to assist with planning and delivery and the supporting of volunteers throughout the transition process. This group has met 18 times to date. Information packs and engagement materials have also been provided to units to share with not only their members but also interested community members.

As we lead up to the transition over the next few months, the RIT is committed to increased engagement and education opportunities for volunteers and to deliver additional targeted community campaigns. Notably, there will be some other changes as well. The MRQ Bill 2023 will authorise MRQ members to enter a place without a warrant when performing a function of the MRQ and reasonably suspect that there is a dangerous situation there. That will provide more protections for these wonderful volunteers who, I remind everyone, put their lives on the line each and every day for people that they are unlikely to ever meet. They will possibly only meet them when they are at their worst. I commend all of my volunteers for the hard work that they do for my community. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (3.53 pm): I also rise to contribute to the debate on these four important emergency service bills that form part of Labor's urgent major disaster management reforms, even though they were conceived some six years ago. I would also like to pick up on a point mentioned by the member for Lytton, who spoke prior to me. She was belittling people who were being critical of the lack of consultation conducted during the development of this bill. I point out that the Community Support and Services Committee, which reviewed these bills, heard from 20 submitters, and the theme through a lot of those submissions was criticism of the government for the lack of transparency and consultation on these bills. I and my colleagues on this side of the House will support all of those stakeholders and submitters in this important disaster management space who openly and, quite rightly, criticised the government. I condemn the previous speaker, the member for Lytton, for belittling and criticising those stakeholders for raising that issue.

The cognate debate includes the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, the State Emergency Service Bill 2023, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I thank my colleague the member for Burdekin for his in-depth analysis. He earlier shared his views and the views of stakeholders and asked a number of legitimate questions that stakeholders have asked us to raise in this place. I do not intend to ask those same questions, but I support his foreshadowing of our opposition to clause 31.

Forgive me for stating the obvious but there has been a lot of muddy water under the bridge and many fires at our doors since Labor realised in 2018 that Queensland needed a more cohesive disaster management approach. Queensland is prone to widespread, multiple natural disasters. In fact, we have the most occurrences in the country.

Disaster management is mostly a ground-up operation—the first eyes that raise the alert and the first feet on the ground are our first responders and they are usually the ones fighting imminent danger while simultaneously sending out the call for more help. Our volunteer emergency service workers number in the hundreds of thousands. In this state, we would be weak and vulnerable without them when facing Mother Nature and human misadventure. As Queenslanders, we trust and are proud of our emergency and disaster management workforce and we must have faith in the government's ability to lead the complex intergovernmental and interagency communication and coordination of resources across all of the helping hands and angels in the night in order to protect our families and communities from harm both through and post disasters.

The 2018-20 Blue Water Review into maritime rescue services and the 2021 review into the scope, function and structure of the QFES precipitated a raft of recommendations by the government to tighten the ship, so to speak. At a cost of more than \$27 million, which is nearly four times the annual operating cost of Marine Rescue Queensland, the review was a start and it paved the way for ample resources and time for meaningful consultation and engagement from all involved. My fear, and the reservation of my colleagues and stakeholders who may be late to detailed and tasky conversations, is that a lack of inclusivity when merging different cultures could derail the effort. If we cannot bring these two together and protect the culture and altruism of volunteerism, the success of this merger—though logical and responsible in nature—will be threatened. We will not know until we are in the trenches to some degree.

These reforms seek to address the function, structure, culture, efficiency, funding and sustainability of Queensland's disaster management services; modernise service delivery arrangements; simplify operational structures and focus resources. This has meant the volunteer workforce, such as the SES, marine rescue and coastguard, will merge with a highly regimented structure—the Queensland Police Service. It is particularly important that regulatory changes are made clear, that actions and responsibilities are delineated and that scalable sets of arrangements be in play to not only achieve efficiencies but also save lives.

On 28 April 2023, the disaster management group was established under the Disaster Management Act 2003 with the Queensland Police Commissioner in charge. The restructure to emergency service will be achieved by: establishing Marine Rescue Queensland, MRQ, as a statewide marine rescue service through the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill; combining the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and the volunteer marine rescue associations into one entity; establishing the SES through the State Emergency Service Bill 2003; aligning MRQ and SES under the control of the QPS through the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, which will make the necessary administrative and consequential amendments for this to occur; formally establishing the State Disaster Management Group—SDM Group—within the state Disaster Management Act through the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill; appointing the QPS Commissioner as CEO to connect federal, state and local

agencies to planning, guidelines and frameworks; and establishing the Queensland Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service Queensland as two separate fire services housed within the Queensland Fire Department.

In theory, these four bills aim to emphasise the value of each organisation, promote volunteer engagement and provide a framework that outlines the purpose, functions and command structure of each organisation and the roles of their members. However, while the LNP will not be opposing the bills, it would be remiss of me not to flag the concerns raised in relation to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by members of many of my local rural fire brigades operating on the Sunshine Coast. First and foremost has been the haste in rushing this legislation through parliament. The limited time for consultation across the large, extensive volunteer base has meant the process for meaningful engagement and discussion has been impeded.

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The original focus of the legislative reforms around the structure, operation and funding for the Rural Fire Service is significantly different to what is now being proposed, and combined with the limited opportunity for consultation has meant many volunteers have been left feeling disengaged and like their voices were not heard and their concerns were not addressed. In relation to the first three bills and their connection to each other, the Community Support and Services Committee resolved to align key engagement activities in relation to its examination of them, including receiving a total of 20 submissions, a public briefing from the QPS on 12 February 2024 and a public hearing on 4 March. One of the committee's recommendations was to the QPS Reform Implementation Taskforce to undertake public education information sessions to engage and inform SES and MSQ volunteers so as not to disenfranchise them. Generally, submitters were supportive of the bill, albeit the lack of consultation was raised a number of times.

The LNP fully supports any attempt to improve the emergency response of agencies and volunteer groups for regular operations and disaster management. The cost will be in the vicinity of \$10 million over two years to the Reform Implementation Taskforce and \$142 million per annum ongoing to be distributed to the SES, MRQ, extra disaster management functions of the QPS, an extra 143 firefighters, corporate support, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and other supports. I do have concerns about how additional functions being brought under the umbrella of the QPS may impact their core functions, particularly when QPS numbers are already at all-time critical lows. At the public briefing, the QPS acting assistant commissioner, Marcus Hill, stated—


The reforms will bring almost 8,000 volunteers—
being VMR and SES volunteers—

under the police umbrella as well as staff members. This will require the development of additional capability and capacity within the organisation.

We must not forget—in fact, we must protect—our emergency service volunteers, including our SES and rural firefighters who run to danger without a pay packet to compensate them. Last year in Queensland, SES volunteers conducted more than 92,000 hours in operational tasking and 330,000 hours in training, admin, public education, recruitment, fundraising and equipment maintenance.

In my electorate, I am proud of the Coolum SES, which has have been led by the same resolute and dedicated leader for the past 40 years, Mr Brendan Jones. Brendan was recognised for his outstanding service and was presented with his life membership last year. He was humbled, as many of our unsung heroes are, and simply said in an interview with the local *Coolum Advertiser* that he joined the SES because he figured 'it wasn't rocket science to give back to the community'. Well, it may not be rocket science, but it is so much more than that to our local community. Giving back to the community is what drives our volunteers and it is quintessentially Australian. Selflessly, they sign up for service and sacrifice, putting their lives on the line to protect others. Frontline workers and volunteers deserve to feel respected, heard, valued and prioritised, because their work binds us together and keeps our human spirit alive.

I am also extremely proud of the many volunteers rural firefighters across my electorate, including the brigades of Bli Bli, Eumundi, Maroochy River, Doonan, Verrierdale, Kiel Mountain and Yandina North Arm. Many of these volunteers were part of the first responders when fire broke out in my electorate in Peregrin Springs back in 2019. They kissed their families goodbye and went to work, voluntarily, busily saving lives and saving property. They never ask for much afterwards, and despair at what they could have done better. They are essential threads in our fire blankets. On behalf of our community, I want to thank them and all of our volunteers.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.03 pm): It pleases me greatly to stand up and talk to these cognate bills, particularly for our emergency services in each of our communities. I have been absolutely blessed to have worked with many State Emergency Service members, Rural Fire Service members, volunteer marine rescue services, coastguard and water police—you name it. I was in many situations in my former career with the Queensland Ambulance Service, particularly winching onto some of these boats or retrieving patients in our community, where those emergency services had got there first and were doing a remarkable job looking after the patients. We see them deploy to natural disasters in our state. In North Queensland, we are not strangers to natural disasters.

These changes will enhance delivery of disaster and emergency services in Queensland, particularly as climate change increases the impacts from emergencies and natural disasters in communities. The bills will make legislative changes to reflect recommendations made in the independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the IGEM review, the Blue Water Review and a number of others that the committee covered.

I will talk to Marine Rescue Queensland first. Bringing both the VMR and coastguard together under one umbrella is a sensible move. They will be better supported. I heard the member for Maryborough give his contribution on this. We see many of our emergency service volunteers out raising money. To have structure and funding locked in under one umbrella is entirely sensible, and I am looking forward to seeing the Marine Rescue Queensland established in our state. The State Emergency Service Bill 2023 will align both Marine Rescue Queensland and SES under the control of QPS. It formally establishes the State Disaster Management Group within the Disaster Management Act.

My SES group in Thuringowa is ably led by Lewis O'Rourke. Yes, that name is very familiar. He is the husband of the former minister, Coralee O'Rourke. Lewis and I talk together quite a bit. I have an ambition to deliver Thuringowa its own home for our State Emergency Service branch. They are currently joined up with Townsville in a heritage listed building at the bottom of Castle Hill. It is totally inappropriate; it is aged out. They deserve a new home and I will work hard to deliver that for Thuringowa SES.

As I said, I had the pleasure of meeting SES members in many situations and many jobs over the last three decades in my former career. Some of the things they responded to and were first on the scene at were remarkable. I can remember being a station officer at Black River, now Northern Beaches station, in 1995. I shared that facility with the Black River rural fire brigade and the Black River SES unit. Quite often, if I responded to a nasty accident on the highway, they were the first ones there helping out. I will forever remember that working relationship. I quite often recall that when we meet with them at various functions and they get their meritorious awards for years of unpaid service to the community. Those awards are well deserved. I am looking forward to seeing that established under the bill.

I want to also tackle some of the opposition's comments around lack of process and lack of consultation. We just heard about that from the former speaker. I believe that the Reform Implementation Taskforce is committed to ongoing engagement with SES, Marine Rescue volunteers as well as local communities to ensure successful implementation of the emergency services and disaster management reforms. Since May 2023 they have delivered more than 280 engagement activities with SES and Marine Rescue volunteers and staff transitioning to SES and Marine Rescue Queensland under the Queensland Police Service. Again, it is going to give structure.

The member for Burnett's statement of reservation contained concerns regarding lack of information provided to volunteers—which I have just addressed—and how the new arrangements will operate in respect of the potential compulsory acquisition of equipment and finances of individual SES, Marine Rescue and VMR organisations. I am going to go backwards in time. In 1990 when I joined the then Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade we had 97 different structures all under separate boards. We had been serving the community throughout many decades. In 1992 we transitioned under a machinery of government to the Queensland Ambulance Service. That was 32 years ago that we changed to the QAS.


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We all woke up the next day and the sky was blue, the water was wet and we still had our stations and the community was still respectful of all of those ambulance stations which now have grown to over 230 locations across the state. Back then, QATB was a fifty-fifty arrangement with the community and the state government of the day. To have secure funding to make sure they are getting the flood boats, they are getting the equipment, they are getting the trucks, they are getting the training is all together a very good move by this government in making these reforms and putting our emergency services up

where they belong, giving them the training and giving them the equipment that they need. There is nothing scary about that. The entire Ambulance Service went through that reform and continues to operate and has grown bigger over the years.

It is all about volunteers. As members know, I continued to volunteer with QAS from 2015 when I was elected right through to 2022 when I finally retired. It is special when you are doing unpaid work and you are joining with emergency services people at jobs on the road. It keeps you grounded and makes you remember where you came from.

To all of our volunteers out there, no matter where they are located throughout Queensland, thank you for your service. The Queensland government, through these reforms, will ensure you are looked after and that you will have the equipment that you need to respond to communities in times of need in Queensland. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.11 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the cognate debate and to place particular focus on the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Rural fire brigades are the backbone of our communities and the first and last defence against bushfires in regional Queensland. I want to bring to your attention the fact that last year with the Tablelands community we saw massive bushfires in the Silver Valley, the Herberton, Irvinebank, Watsonville, Innot Hot Springs, Mutchilba, the Mount Garnet area and through that greater part of that region. A lot of trees were wiped out, along with crops, fodder, homes, sheds—you name it.

The RFS has a long, proud tradition, however this appears to be under attack through this bill where the government wants to place all powers of a voluntary rural fire brigade into the hands of the Police Commissioner. This brings great concern to rural firefighters in rural and regional Queensland. I want to also say that you have to be very careful in targeting rural fires and particularly the issue of the centralised system. To give an example: when a previous minister in the Newman government targeted the rural fires, he also targeted the paid staff. There was a massive revolt and it came to the point where, to settle things down, they introduced what they called the Malone review into the Rural Fire Service. I have a lot of respect for Ted Malone. He was able to cool things down at that time. Further, the RFS membership is already seriously in decline across the state. This attempted takeover will result in a mass exodus of volunteers. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House as this is the feedback we have been receiving.

There are plenty of details in this bill that talk about the disaster management reforms that addresses that. There is very little that addresses the aftermath of the disasters and the gaps that currently exist in the relief funding process, both in state and federal government. I acknowledge the Cairns MPs and also the member for Cook and the northern part of the Hinchinbrook electorate which copped some flooding, but there was a massive deluge as a result of Tropical Cyclone Jasper. My area was hit twice: one was Jasper and the other one was a tropical low which dropped 450 millimetres overnight. A lot of homes, businesses and properties in my electorate stretching from Babinda right through to the lower Tully region were destroyed.

I want to thank the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery for her assistance during that recent event. She visited my electorate twice and spoke with many of the affected constituents who were facing very serious issues. I also acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, particularly as we had three highways cut off—the Kuranda Range, the Gillies Highway and the Palmerston Highway. As an example, to get to my electorate, at one stage I had to drive virtually to Townsville and then back up to Tully, as a result of those three road closures.

As a result, there were many issues that were brought to our attention—particularly with regard to the Kuranda Range. We have been pushing very powerfully, and it has been lobbied for 40 years, for a new straight inland highway fast-tracked from Cairns to the Tablelands. We now have the Barron River Bridge which is going to be replaced which will cost over \$450 million. There are massive amounts of funds that have been put into that range.

The other issue that was brought up was the 44 closures every year, which is almost once a week, on that range. In regards to the fast-track of the highway, if we are going to spend \$440 million we may as well go straight through the range. This was pushed 40 years ago by great state members of that region. The way to resolve the issue of the 44 closures, the damage to the speed monitoring cameras and the considerable damage caused to the structure of that range during flood periods is to build that highway.


Another thing that came out of that is some of the anomalies in the sense of the funding afterwards. We appreciate the fact that the minister and the transport minister addressed many of those

and alleviated those concerns, and I would like to expressly acknowledge that. However, there are a lot of different issues that need to be addressed and particularly, as an example, the fact that you can have a flood and a highway is wiped out. With a place like Millaa Millaa, which is right at the top of the range, when all the businesses in that community rely on the Palmerston Highway, it is devastating to see that shut for two months. There is nothing in the criteria. There is nothing there to support the system to try to keep those workers on and keep those employees employed during that 2½ month period. I know the minister's office has been working on that.

Another issue that came out of it, too, was the fact that once those highways are cut off—they are major arterial routes—the trucking industries, no doubt, have to do at least two, three or four extra runs through the Tablelands to try to pick up all the fruit and vegies and take them south. Then you see the prices go up to an extra \$30 to \$40 a pallet, and that falls back on the farmer. The farmer relies on that \$40, and there is nothing there to support the farmers. There needs to be exceptional circumstances provisions put in place in those sort of conditions.

Also in regards to general households trying to make claims through the funding process for these disasters, there is so much involved. I use an example of Heidi where she had a freezer floating at the bottom of her house. Because the freezer was not upstairs, she could not claim for anything. She lost compressors and lost everything. Because that freezer was downstairs, she could not claim for that.

There are a lot of broad issues, but there is a lot of concern that we do have in regard to the rural fires. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House.

037  **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (4.19 pm): Queensland is Australia's most disaster-prone state, having faced nearly 90 significant natural disasters and weather events over the past decade. Research indicates that the financial toll on the Australian economy due to those disasters is expected to grow from \$38 billion annually in 2021 to at least \$73 billion a year by 2060. The substantial impact of natural disasters on Queensland underscores how critical it is that our emergency services are performing optimally. To that end, various organisational frameworks have been developed at the local, state and federal levels to address the four phases of Queensland's emergency management and disaster response system: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

The Queensland disaster management arrangements operate on a tiered structure as outlined in the Disaster Management Act, facilitating a progressive scale up of support and aid to affected communities. Disaster management groups are established at the local district and state levels and are entrusted with planning, organising, coordinating and executing measures to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster events. Those groups receive backing from coordination centres operating at corresponding levels and tasked with harmonising information, resources and services that are vital for disaster operations.

At the grassroots level, local governments bear the primary responsibility for disaster management through the implementation of their local disaster management plans, overseen by their respective local disaster management groups. If a local group lacks the capacity to handle the disaster and needs additional resources, it can seek support from disaster management groups at the district or state levels.

These bills are the result of two reviews into the efficiency and effectiveness of Queensland's emergency management system: one commissioned by our government back in 2021, and one delivered by the Inspector-General of Emergency Management last year. Queensland is set to reform its legislative framework concerning emergency services and disaster management in a phased approach. These bills are the first stage and will implement the legislative changes that are needed to restructure emergency service arrangements. This will be achieved by: one, establishing Marine Rescue Queensland as a statewide marine rescue service through the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023; two, establishing the State Emergency Service through the State Emergency Service Bill 2023; three, bringing MRQ and the SES under the jurisdiction of the Queensland Police Service via the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, which will enact administrative and consequential amendments to facilitate that integration; and, four, formally instituting the State Disaster Management Group, the SDM group, within the Disaster Management Act through the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023.

Acknowledging the vital contribution of SES and marine rescue volunteers to the effectiveness of these services, the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland bills will establish the SES and MRQ as separate entities with their own acts. This is to underscore the significance of each

organisation and to establish a clear framework outlining their purposes, functions, command structures and member roles.

The Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill makes a number of amendments to various bills. These include: amendments to the Civil Liability Regulation 2014, preserving current civil liability protections for the SES as an organisation and its members, as well as expanding those protections to the new MRQ and its members; amendments to the Disaster Management Act 2003 to formally establish the State Disaster Management Group within the act, as recommended by the Inspector-General of Emergency Management; consequential amendments to the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 to accommodate the relocation of the SES and the realignment of our disaster management arrangements; and amendments to the Police Service administration Act 1990 to incorporate Marine Rescue Queensland and the State Emergency Service into the Queensland Police Service. These amendments ensure the QPS commissioner can deliver consistent governance and command structures for those personnel, streamlining the delivery of these critical services.

The SES bill will achieve its objectives by establishing the SES through the new State Emergency Service Act. The bill expands the functions of the SES to better reflect the services that the SES provides, or may be expected to provide, for the community. These functions include: to perform rescue or similar operations in an emergency situation, including the helping of injured persons; to protect persons, property or the environment from danger or potential danger associated with a situation; to perform search operations in an emergency or similar situation; to perform response activities in severe weather events; and to perform other activities to help communities or other entities prepare for or respond to, recover from and enhance resilience from an event or disaster.

Command and control within the SES will be achieved through the appointment of an SES chief officer, SES commanders and SES local controllers. Those roles are designed to ensure appropriate management of the SES is achieved at a state, regional and local level. The new MRQ Act will establish MRQ, which will be a dedicated marine rescue service for Queensland, in addition to providing other marine services to government entities and the community. The MRQ membership will consist of the MRQ chief officer, MRQ employees and MRQ volunteers. Consistent with recommendations from the independent review report, the bill provides the QPS commissioner with functions that will assist in the administration of MRQ and will ensure that MRQ is strategically aligned with other emergency services agencies. Command and control within the MRQ will be achieved through the appointment of an MRQ chief officer, MRQ coordinators and MRQ unit commanders. Just as with the SES, those roles are designated to facilitate the appropriate management of MRQ in a tiered system. The fire services will be similarly amalgamated to the Queensland Fire Department with the RFB and the QFES existing as separate entities under one chain of command.

In conclusion, as the state most affected by natural disasters, it is critical that Queensland's disaster management system continues to be efficient, flexible and responsive into the future. This is especially the case in this era of climate change. These bills are the first step in a process of reform that will strengthen Queensland's emergency response capability and streamline the delivery of these services. Pertinent to these bills is the fact that the Miles Labor government has strengthened the laws around protection and compensation for volunteers in line with career services. In addition, the bills pull in government funding so that those organisations do not have to rely on fundraising as they have in the past.

Collectively, in my region, I would like to thank the RFB units from Belli Park, Bli Bli and districts, Image Flat Cooloolabin, Kenilworth, Kiel Mountain, Kureelipa, Mapleton, Maroochy, Obi Obi, Palmwoods, West Woombye, Yandina North Arm and Valdora Yandina Creek. In the SES I have Kenilworth, Nambour and districts, and Noosa. I also have ancillary firefighters in Cooroy. I want to thank all of the units on the Sunshine Coast and Noosa. Obviously, I do not have any VMRs or coastguards under Marine Queensland, but I thank all of the units across the Sunshine Coast and Noosa. I know that they protect not only us but also the rest of Queensland. I particularly give a big shout-out to all of the volunteers from my RFB and SES units who participated in Anzac Day commemorations. They did a wonderful job of keeping us all safe by making sure the streets were barricaded off whilst the rest of the citizens of our great region enjoyed the commemorations.

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Debate, on motion of Mr Skelton, adjourned.

MOTION

Path to Treaty



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (4.28 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes that nearly 70 per cent of Queenslanders voted 'no' in the federal 'Voice' referendum—the highest 'no' vote of any state or territory in the country.
2. notes that the government currently has no mandate for negotiating or entering into binding treaties with groups appointed to represent Queensland's tribal peoples.
3. calls on the government to immediately refocus its time and energy and resources helping vulnerable Queensland households, families and workers faced with one of the worst cost-of-living crises in the state's history.

I rise to speak to the motion circulated in my name. On 14 October 2023 Queenslanders turned out in their millions to deliver the biggest no vote in the country at almost 70 per cent. Out of 30 federal electorates in Queensland only three voted yes, and these crossed the elite confines of the green, wealthy inner-urban seats of Brisbane. In Capricornia, however, which encompasses the electorate of Mirani, 81 per cent voted no, with some booths returning a no vote at over 90 per cent. That is 90 per cent. Even working-class and regional electorates held by Labor including Ipswich, Logan, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns voted no in overwhelming numbers. The Premier's own electorate crosses the boundaries of two federal electorates, both of which voted no. If that does not tell Labor how much it has lost touch with its own voter base, then I do not know what will.

Despite all this, the government believes it still has a right to completely ignore the will of its own constituents. The sheer scale of the yes campaign's defeat should have told Labor right then and there that any plans for treaty making are now at an end. Instead, the Miles government is doubling down on its plans for a state-based treaty system. In doing so, Labor is basically telling Queenslanders, 'We don't care what you think and we're doing it anyway.'

I opposed the Path to Treaty Bill from the outset mainly due to the lack of details contained in the bill as to what this treaty process would entail. Since then more details have been released about the process. A *Courier-Mail* article on how treaty will work states that after three years of truth-telling hearings—

the inquiry could lead to financial reparations, health reforms and curriculum changes by the state government as part of landmark treaty negotiations with Queensland's First Nations groups.

The government has already set up the First Nations Treaty Institute along with a framework for negotiating and signing treaties on behalf of the Queensland people. According to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, 100 separate treaties could be negotiated depending on how many Indigenous groups come forward. That is 100 separate treaties.

The government has absolutely no mandate for any of this. No mention was made of treaties during Labor's 2020 election campaign—none that I could find at any rate. Besides that, Labor could hardly claim mandates for treaty signing on the basis of an election held four years ago. After last year's referendum result, it has zero mandate for forging ahead with one now. Such radical changes should not be introduced without the consent and the support of the Queensland people. There are also the other people, the tribal people.

The Premier needs to take the treaty proposal to the next election and let Queenslanders decide for themselves whether they want it or not. Meanwhile, the roads in Queensland are a disgrace. There are people marching in the streets every time we come to parliament because they are not happy with the way things are going here. The price of Queensland's steel-making coal has fallen 25 per cent. Royalties are down. Queensland's share of GST is down. The population is exploding. Current forecasting shows the state's total non-financial public sector borrowings could reach as much as \$188 billion by the 2027-28 financial year. The Treasurer then went on to proudly state—

Our government will use debt to provide the cost-of-living relief that Queenslanders deserve. We will use debt to deliver the infrastructure that our growing state demands and we will use debt to reduce inflation and increase the productivity of Queensland's economy.


He then invited members to ask him any questions they like. I have a question for the Treasurer. If debt is so wonderful and cost free, why are struggling Queenslanders still paying billions in state taxes each year? The government obviously does not need taxes anymore; it can just use debt instead!

It is ludicrous to suggest that the government can keep piling on more and more public debt. The people out there—I spoke to the Wiri today. The government is doing nothing to help them. They do not want top-down management. They have seen it all before. They just want to work with the government to get to where they want to go as do all the people in Queensland. We should be restructuring everything to make it viable for everyone—for the struggling mums and dads, the families,

the workers, the small businesses that are setting up tonight. Everyone needs their fair share at the moment, otherwise there will be no money to pay for anything.

Let's do the right thing here. All I am asking for is us as a government and us as parliamentarians to do our job, and including everybody in what is happening at the moment is very difficult. People in my electorate are going backwards \$400 every week. These are mums and dads who are working. We should be giving everyone a hand instead of just piling it all into something. When we are in a position to do it at some other time, that is fine, but not at the moment.

Now is the time to be backing our people in the state, making sure we do our job as a government and making sure we do our job as parliamentarians.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerster—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (4.33 pm): I move—

That all words after '1. Notes' be omitted and the following inserted:

- 'the Path to Treaty Act 2023 was passed with bipartisan support in May 2023;
2. notes that the government remains committed to the Path to Treaty Act 2023 as legislated which commits our state to a path of reconciliation and dedicated efforts to closing the gap in life outcomes of First Nations Queenslanders; and
 3. condemns One Nation and the LNP for turning their backs on First Nations Queenslanders by continuing to seek ways to widen the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.'

If anyone needed any more evidence that Pauline Hanson's One Nation political party and the Liberal National Party are on a unity ticket they need look no further than the contribution of the member for Mirani. He is the member who proudly stood in this House and declared in his maiden speech that, as a South Sea Islander, he 'stood ready to carry on his ancestors' legacy', a legacy, as he went on to say, that was underpinned by his acknowledgement of 'the ancient first people of Australia and their descendants of all tribes, who cared for and walked these lands for many thousands of years'. He then went on to say—

We as Australian South Sea islanders have always respected their people and their traditions.

Where is that respect today?

Mr Andrew interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Mirani, you have just had an opportunity to make a contribution. It is now the member for Algerster's turn.

Mr ANDREW: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence. I have always stood by my people—

Mr SPEAKER: Do not argue the point. You take personal offence. Member, will you withdraw?

Ms ENOCH: I withdraw.

Last year this parliament passed the Path to Treaty Act 2023 with bipartisan support. In fact, all members of the opposition voted in favour of this legislation. This was a historical moment for Queensland. At the time the Leader of the Opposition acknowledged the importance of this moment, saying that he had hoped treaty would be a catalyst for materially improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this state, a genuine opportunity, he added, for our state to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians. The member for Surfers Paradise, in his contribution, noted the significant role that treaty will play in assisting to close the gap in life outcomes saying—

Path to Treaty is an opportunity for all Queenslanders to come together and build a more inclusive, respectful and reconciled state.

He also said—

Closing the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is a critical issue, and improving access to health services is an essential part of achieving this goal.

He went on to declare that—

Across the parliament, it is clear that we are all committed to closing the gap.

Those words quickly turned hollow when less than a year later the Leader of the Opposition and his LNP team capitulated to the far right of their party. The pressure from the extreme far right was demonstrable and what Queenslanders witnessed was an LNP whose word cannot be trusted; an LNP who, when it suits them, will happily jump into bed with the extreme views of the member for Mirani and One Nation. That is something we saw in the Ipswich West by-election when the LNP did a grubby preference deal with One Nation.


It is a fact that there is an unacceptable gap in life outcomes between First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous people in this country. A First Nations male born in Australia is expected to live 8.8 years less than his non-Indigenous counterpart and for females, it is 8.1 years less. Today I turned 56. Statistically, I have less than 10 years left. First Nations women and children are also, sadly, disproportionately impacted by family and domestic violence, something I have experienced personally. These experiences are not just statistics; they are the lived experiences of First Nations Queenslanders and, sadly, they are not unique to Queensland.

We need enduring, long-lasting agreements between government and First Nations peoples to tackle these challenges together—something that First Nation Queenslanders have been lobbying for over many decades, something that is at the core of treaty. That is why we remain committed to a Path to Treaty as legislated and to our commitment to reconciliation and to necessary action to close the gap.

In 2019 Queensland began its Path to Treaty when our government signed a statement of commitment to reframe the relationship with First Nations people, a commitment our government took to the 2020 election. Also in 2020 Queensland, along with all other jurisdictions, signed the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Since that time we have seen years of consultation, workshops and forums across the state via a number of stages led by the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the Eminent Panel, the Treaty Advancement Committee and the Treaty Working Group. If the member for Mirani, in his supposed respect for First Nations people, is looking for a mandate, there it is.

The path that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mirani and One Nation have chosen for First Nations people is the same path they have always chosen: one to widen the gap by cutting essential services, one that disregards the voice of First Nations peoples and one where the LNP and their word is worth absolutely nothing.

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 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.39 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Mirani—a brave motion introduced into this parliament. It seems that every time someone speaks against this there are cries of outrage from the public, and surprisingly it seems to be louder in Brisbane and not so loud at home. I am not going to stand here and say that no-one talks about it at home. There will be the occasional person who will raise it because it has been in the media a lot and perhaps they have an interest, but I will tell members what they do talk about at home. They talk about issues like those contained in the text I got at Christmas time from Andrew Colton saying, 'How come this bike I've got at the shop in Doomadgee is \$250 and the same bike in Mount Isa at Kmart is \$99?', or 'How come I'm buying a loaf of bread for \$13 in the government store at Doomadgee when it's one of the most disadvantaged communities in Queensland?', or 'How come no-one can get a job because of the blue card system?', changes to which all members in this place voted against when we were trying to get people into work in these communities. Of the 10 most disadvantaged communities in Australia, seven of them are in Queensland and those are all Aboriginal communities.

Ms Enoch interjected.

Mr KATTER: I will tell you what we are doing: we are trying to get action on blue cards. We are trying to make groceries cheaper. We are trying to—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Traeger, you will direct your comments through the chair, not at other members.


Mr KATTER: I take your advice, Mr Speaker. We are about action. If there is a problem in Doomadgee or Mornington, let us get some action for it. We come down here and say, 'Doomadgee has been shut off for the last three months. There's \$100 million for bridges to get up there,' and the government says, 'No, we'll do a treaty to help them.' We do not want a treaty; we want the bridges to Doomadgee so that people can get in and out and the groceries and the fuel can get in. They did not have diesel for two weeks there last month, so kids were not going to school. That town could not get diesel in, but the government has money to put all of these footbridges on the Brisbane River down here. It has money for Cross River Rail, but it does not have money to get bridges into Doomadgee to help people and yet it says, 'Let's talk about a treaty to help them.'

We would just like some bridges thanks. We would just like the blue card system amended so that people can get jobs. We would like title deeds on the housing so people can buy a house in Doomadgee like anywhere else in Australia. However, the government says, 'Let's not act on that. Let's talk about this stuff instead.' That is what makes us riled up. When the government talks about these issues, it does not connect with what we are seeing on the ground. We see real problems such as terrible health problems. Those on the government side talk about them. We all know about them, so let us act on them. Let us get cheaper grocery prices. It will cost the government money, and it has

worked out that the transport issue has not worked. It has worked that out now. We need some affirmative action in these areas. We are all good at talking about it and feeling all sympathetic, but put it into action. Every time we say, 'Let's do title deeds up there,' the government says, 'No, we can't do that.' When we say, 'Let's change the blue card system,' the government says, 'No, we can't do that,' and then we are back talking about all of these slogans and sayings. Maybe they have a place down the track—maybe they do—but let us have some action now. That is what we feel so strongly about and that is the frustrating thing.

The government comes out with words and policy statements. Let us forget about treaty at the moment because we are just hearing policy statements. Let us get the minerals out of the ground, but Mount Isa copper has been shut down. The government says that it has a new policy on manufacturing. Where is the manufacturing? It says, 'Let's do a policy on this. Let's do a treaty to help Aboriginal people.' How is that helping with their health? How is that helping to reform those kids from recidivist youth crime and getting them back to being functional members of society? How is that helping them? There are a lot of people in those Aboriginal communities who would share those same sentiments with me in terms of their frustration. There are some real issues that we want to talk about. We want them front and centre, not just talking about the word 'treaty' but saying exactly what the government is going to do in affirmative action.


Sadly, this becomes a smokescreen that politicians can use to not act and do the things that are needed. It becomes a smokescreen—a word that they can say so that it looks like they are doing something when in reality they are not getting down on the ground and doing the things that are desperately needed. We pay a cost for that. As I said, seven of the 10 most disadvantaged communities are in Queensland. Doomadgee has one of the lowest incomes with the highest grocery prices. Let us talk about that more in this parliament—that is, getting those grocery prices down, building some bridges in order to get access to the gulf, getting the education standards up and getting some funding that is even close to the funding that the Northern Territory is getting for education. Let us talk about that more and fewer slogans and sayings and aspirational ideas that are more nebulous and do not have that application on the ground. That is what the KAP wants to see. Well done, member for Mirani.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise to speak on the private member's motion moved by the member for Mirani. The member for Mirani getting up in the parliament to reference the 70 per cent of Queenslanders voting no at the federal Voice referendum is nothing to be proud of. We are talking about the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, so I ask the member for Mirani to show some decency and respect. I think what the member for Mirani missed is that the Voice was a vehicle for change. It was going to set the foundations for First Nations peoples to have a say on the issues that affect them. That has always been the aspiration for First Nations peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders—that is, to speak to issues that affect them. That is why we need actual mechanisms in place such as the Voice and such as treaty to enable First Nations people to be part of the decision-making process.

We talk about closing the gap. We need to go back to the core of the problem, and Voice and treaty open a door that is different. They give us the opportunity to look through a different lens—through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We talk about closing the gap, but we need to understand it from the perspective of First Nations people. It is no secret that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer the worst outcomes in relation to health, life expectancy, appropriate housing and education. I can speak of this because, as someone who was raised in a remote community and now represents one of the most complex electorates in Queensland, I can tell members that the odds are always going to stack up against my communities. We know there is a huge gap in life outcomes for First Nations people and non-Indigenous people in this country and we need strong mechanisms in place backed by government to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. What we need are enduring, long-lasting agreements between government and First Nations peoples.

I am proud to represent the Miles Labor government, to stand on the right side of history with First Nations peoples. I was proud to stand on the right side of history in 2019 when our government signed a statement of commitment to reframe the relationship with First Nations people to deliver better, well-informed results that work for communities. We on this side of the House absolutely back treaty. We on this side of the House are absolutely committed to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and Path to Treaty legislation that was taken to the election in 2020 and then passed in the House with bipartisan support in 2023. However, it did not even take 12 months before the LNP backflipped on its bipartisan support for treaty.

The member for Mirani and the LNP pretend that they are interested in closing the gap, but they are not. They are only interested in widening the gap. They are in it for themselves and using this as a political stunt to gain cheap political votes. My communities are not silly. I concur with Mayor Wayne Butcher when he describes nicely the actions of the LNP as dirty politics, saying that they have put their want for power above the people and that the treaty is about creating a modern partnership. He urges the LNP to rethink its strategies by saying that rejecting treaty is not going to solve disadvantage of Aboriginal people in this state. When the LNP and One Nation undermine the Path to Treaty, they are undermining the country's commitment to closing the gap. With regard to the member for Traeger talking about action, we are taking action, with treaty providing a vehicle for First Nations people to have a greater say over matters that are important to them. I do not support the motion.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.48 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member in Mirani. All Queenslanders acknowledge that the Indigenous people were the first inhabitants of the nation that we all proudly call home. I make mention of many First Australians I am friends with—those I went to school with, played footy with and worked with at Queensland Rail right throughout the state. Regardless of race, religion or creed, we are all mates, Queenslanders and Australians. Queenslanders do not want more talk and more false promises from government that only create division. This was highlighted recently when the majority of Queenslanders resoundingly voted against the Voice to Parliament.


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This government is high on rhetoric and tokenism, but lacks any real meaningful action when it comes to making a difference in the lives of those living in Indigenous communities. That is why Queenslanders voted against the Voice to Parliament and it is why Queenslanders do not want a Path to Treaty. Instead, they want real action on Indigenous issues which the government already knows about but seems unwilling or incapable of fixing. Since the referendum, the Queensland Labor Party has distanced itself and backed away from the Path to Treaty. Members of the Liberal Party who voted and talked so strongly about supporting the Path to Treaty in Cairns have now magically reversed their support since the referendum.

I cannot find any of the \$300 million for the Path to Treaty process being used to directly better the lives of Indigenous people living in communities in Queensland. The KAP has provided strong policies and has a strong record on Indigenous issues. An example is the cattle leases created under the landholding legislation in 1985. However, in 1991 the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 were introduced into the Queensland parliament by the Goss government as the new principal piece of legislation applying to Indigenous land. The introduction of these acts created issues for the existing lease applications and also meant that no new applications could be made, which was a tragedy for Indigenous land owners.

We also vehemently oppose the corporatisation and privatisation of Queensland railways by consecutive Labor governments as this eventually resulted in the loss of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers. On three occasions the member for Traeger has moved via his blue card bill for changes to the blue card system as this issue is currently holding back employment opportunities for Indigenous people across the Far North. This issue was brought to the member for Traeger by Indigenous leaders sick and tired of discrimination against those wanting to secure work in their own community. They were not asking for a treaty; they were asking for the blue card issue to be resolved. On three occasions the bill was voted down by the government and opposition despite widespread support from Indigenous communities and leaders across the Far North. If the changes had been adopted, we would have had a safer alternative to the current system and the ability for self-determination by Indigenous people, providing access to vital job opportunities.

The KAP has also pushed for the return of market gardens to address the high cost of food transportation to the communities and to help pursue a healthier lifestyle. We are in the grips of homelessness and a cost-of-living crisis, yet the government can spend \$300 million on another token gesture that will not make any real difference to the lives of those living in Indigenous communities. The \$300 million would be better spent directly on providing better outcomes for community, including access to better health services; dialysis and diabetes treatment; education; jobs; development of economic opportunities; and access to cheaper, healthier food. Everyone deserves equal opportunity and equal access to basic services, but we need real action—not more talk, broken promises and tokenism.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.53 pm): I start by saying 'Happy May Day' to everyone and note that some of the greatest trade unionists ever have been Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Next week the Greenslopes Reconciliation Action Group is hosting a community event highlighting the great work of the Yiman people, Johnny Danalis and many others in returning the Star of Taroom to the

Yiman people. This was a powerful act of reconciliation which has been good for the Yiman people, good for the community of Taroom and good for our entire state. The GRAG, as it is known, is made up of local people who voluntarily give up their time to work towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I worked with local community members to set up this group with the support, encouragement and endorsement of Reconciliation Queensland.

Our community voted yes to the Voice to Parliament. The GRAG actively campaigned in support of that referendum. While we accept that the people of Australia did not accept the proposal in the referendum, we utterly reject the notion that Australians are walking away from reconciliation. It is extremely disappointing that the LNP has used this referendum outcome to turn its back on the Path to Treaty and on Queenslanders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. It is very sad to see that the LNP seems to be on a unity ticket with One Nation.

The member for Mirani often rightfully raises issues in this chamber about the treatment of people of South Sea Islander descent; however, he seems to totally miss the irony of this advocacy given the stance his party has taken and its history in relation to other minority groups, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I ask the member to listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. When I chaired the select committee into ways to improve the lives of people with mental health and addiction issues, we spent time meeting with and visiting a range of First Nations communities across this state. I tried to capture their key messages in my chair's foreword to that report. I stated—

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples consistently told the committee of the intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation, and subsequent government policies, and the significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of their communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples told the committee that efforts to achieve justice like the Uluru Statement from the Heart, Path to Treaty, and reconciliation programs are not tokenistic, but are welcomed as genuine attempts to heal the scar at the core of our society, which continues to have an enormous impact on their lives.


We simply cannot close the gap if we do not do these things. We are doing these things because First Nations people have asked that they be done. We know that the outcome of supporting this motion is to widen the gap. It will make life worse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, whether they live in Holland Park, Kirwan, Yarrabah or Saibai Island.

When the member for Mansfield was the principal at Cavendish Road State High School, I remember her announcing with great pride on assembly at Cavendish Road that the entire region had achieved 100 per cent QCE attainment for students who were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Of course, if the motion put by the member for Mirani were supported, such measures just would not happen; in fact, the gap would widen. If we support this motion moved by One Nation—and sadly it seems the LNP is heading in the same direction—we will see: increased suicides, increased incarceration rates, decreasing educational outcomes, decreased life expectancy, increased impacts of domestic violence, and increased rates of mental health and addiction.

This is not just for a group of people in some far distant land; this is for our mates right here in Queensland—our friends, our neighbours, our school mates, our work mates, our parliamentary colleagues. Is this the Australia we want? I can confidently say that this is not what the members of the Greenslopes Reconciliation Action Group want.

The Member for Mirani says that we have no mandate. What mandate does he have in representing one seat in this parliament? I ask him that. Be honest, member for Mirani: what mandate do you have? Does the member have a greater say in what is correct with his party just representing one seat? The motion calls on us to do more in relation to cost of living. Member for Mirani, I agree with you, and we will be doing more.

Tackling the cost of living does not mean we cannot also come into contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Governments must be able to deal with multiple issues at once and there are always competing priorities. Each day the member for Mirani stands when the Speaker acknowledges the traditional owners. Clearly the member, unlike most in his party, seems to have some sort of respect for traditional owners. I urge the member to abandon this motion and this rhetoric. Abandoning his party would be the best thing forward in terms of its cruel attitudes and policies. I urge the LNP to reject this motion and to get back on the Path to Treaty. Labor will walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Queensland. We will walk proudly on a Path to Treaty.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.57 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the member for Mirani's motion. I support the motion. I rise off the back of the Path to Treaty debate in Cairns. Halfway through this contribution I expect those opposite to interject by calling me a racist once again. I know that the members opposite who interjected then know who they are. I hope they look deep inside their

souls to consider whether or not their words were justified. All we were trying to do was put up a different point of view of Queenslanders in this state. The KAP has a longstanding relationship with Indigenous people here in Queensland, right back to the member for Kennedy, Bob Katter, having a great relationship with Indigenous people across Queensland. What about the opportunities the member for Traeger's father helped create as state indigenous affairs minister? The pathways he created provided lasting opportunities for Indigenous people living in remote Indigenous communities across Northern Australia.

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The Path to Treaty is a colossal waste of money—\$300 million. We have an opportunity right now to materialise things for Queenslanders. We have been listening to Indigenous people for a long time. I even went along to the Path to Treaty committee hearing in Townsville. It was a circle. It was done differently from a usual committee hearing. It was a really good backwards and forwards conversation.

Mr Speaker, do you know what the Indigenous people who were there—the people the committee were there to listen to—were asking for? They were asking for sovereignty and for their land back. They wanted opportunities where government was no longer interfering in their affairs. They wanted the opportunity to start small businesses without the onerous burden of government legislation and regulation. They wanted to get into agriculture. They were talking about dams. For a second I thought they wanted to join the KAP because that is exactly what we are asking for from government. Indigenous Australia want the same things as non-Indigenous Australia—that is, for government to get out of their lives.

It blew my mind to hear what one lady said. It actually hurt me to hear it. This lady said, 'Why are we being asked to tell our story again? We have been asked to tell our story over and over. Government knows our story. We don't need to go through another consultation process with Path to Treaty, which is going to cost \$300 million to once again'—and I am paraphrasing—'open up the scars, open up the wounds, of things we have already shared.' Indigenous people have shared their stories. We know the atrocities. We learnt from the atrocities. What we want to do now is move forward as one state and fix the problems that we know about.

The member for Traeger tried to work with both sides of the House to get the Indigenous blue card scheme through the House. The reality is that no-one supported jobs in remote Indigenous communities by backing the member for Traeger. They found every reason not to. When you go to those remote Indigenous communities, you see the despair on people's faces. People are looking for hope. People are looking for jobs. They are looking for a way to start a business. It does not seem like there is any end to the misery. They do not need to tell their stories again. They need a government to listen to what has already been said to them time and again.

There are ministers on that side of the House who should be up there right now. They should be spending every waking moment up there in remote Indigenous communities, not doing fly-in fly-out visits and getting the same group of people around the circle every time they fly in and fly out and being told the same rhetoric: 'Oh, we just need a little bit for this and a little bit for that.' When you look at things like native title, how has native title helped remote Indigenous communities? You have a couple of people—a couple of families, I might add—who have done very well out of mining leases in this country. I can tell you something right now: it has not raised the standard of living for most Indigenous Australians. It is a shame. It is a blight on this country's history.

We said no at the referendum. Queenslanders have been saying. 'We don't want this,' since the Path to Treaty Bill was introduced. It surprised me that both sides of the House supported it and it passed through the House in Cairns. That really shocked me. It is good to see that there is forward thinking coming through. We do not know if this is going to continue. This is a waste of \$300 million. Do you know how many houses you can build in remote Indigenous communities for \$300 million?

An opposition member interjected.

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

AYES, 47:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

NOES, 36:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Mr SPEAKER: A division has been called. Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 47:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman.

NOES, 36:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. notes the Path to Treaty Act 2023 was passed with bipartisan support in May 2023;
2. notes that the government remains committed to the Path to Treaty Act 2023 as legislated which commits our state to a path of reconciliation and dedicated efforts to closing the gap in life outcomes of First Nations Queenslanders; and
3. condemns One Nation and the LNP for turning their backs on First Nations Queenslanders by continuing to seek ways to widen the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Miles Labor Government, Travel Expenses



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (5.10 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Premier to detail to the House by 22 May 2024 the total cost of using the two luxury jets by the Premier and the Minister for Police and Community Safety between, and inclusive of, Monday 22 April 2024 and Friday 26 April 2024 by (i) individual aircraft and (ii) individual sectors as Queenslanders struggle with the cost-of-living crisis.

We know what has happened this week to the airline Bonza. Obviously the government were not supporting Bonza when they were deciding to fly up and down the coast.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: No, no. The Premier has defended this ridiculous spend. The police minister and the Premier obviously do not like each other. They obviously do not speak to each other. They obviously have to go to the same places but they cannot sit on the same plane. We are talking about a luxury jet that can sit approximately 10 people. The police minister was so nervous—

Mr Bleijie: Why couldn't he fit on the plane?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection: why couldn't he fit on the plane? Maybe the police minister is a nervous flyer. Maybe the Premier did not want to hear from the police minister about what the local police officers were saying on the ground about the increase in the crime rates across the state, so they had to hop up and down the coast separately. In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, we know the Premier's defence for spending—we are guesstimating and that is why we moved this motion today—let's say \$60,000 on—

An opposition member: More than that.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: More than that? I will take that interjection. We are guessing. What do you think a second-year nurse in Queensland gets paid? They get paid roughly \$63,000. That is what my daughter is getting. Look at the nurses in this state who are struggling through the cost-of-living crisis, yet the Premier and police minister and goodness knows how many other staffers and hangers-on had to go. No-one turned up to their press conferences, so they needed all of their staff around them to make it look like someone was listening. What do you say to those families whose electricity has gone up 20 per cent and because of the crime rate their insurance is going through the roof? The cost of putting sporting equipment on their kids is going through the roof. People are making the decision to not even send their kids to local sport on weekends. Why? Because we have a government that is so out of touch with the cost of living.

The Treasurer of this state stood in this House again today with a straight face and tried to say that Queensland has one of the lowest electricity costs in the nation. How out of touch is this guy? Seriously! The Premier tries to excuse two jets hopping up and down the coast as regional travel. I have news for the Premier: going up the coast is not regional travel; that is coastal travel. Just like a seagull he goes pop, pop, pop up the coast. We all know what seagulls do. That is basically what this Premier has done up and down the coast on not only Monday but also Tuesday. Then he wanted to sleep in his own bed, so he comes all the way back to Brisbane. Then he pop, pop, pops up the coast again just like a seagull. That is not regional Queensland hopping; that is going up and down the coast of Queensland.

Let's have a look at some of the time they spent in coastal Queensland. On Monday he arrived in Townsville. Let's give credit to the very fast driver who probably got him to town. Let's give him 20 minutes. Then he would need another 20 minutes to get back, so he was literally on the ground in Townsville for less than an hour. The one that I think is hilarious is that he arrives in Cairns at 6.07, so he races down the tarmac, jumps in a very fast car, gets into town and tries to meet someone, has a snooze for the night—I am sure he had dinner with someone, probably the CFMEU or someone—then wakes up the next morning and has to zoom out to the airport and be back on the jet plane by 8.27. This is a Premier who is so out of touch that even when he is in coastal Queensland he does not spend any time listening to Queenslanders who are struggling with the cost of living.

We have a police minister who is too scared to fly with the Premier and we have a Premier who does not even talk to the police minister. Let's say they spent \$60,000. That is \$6,500 per hour per jet plane and it is completely unacceptable. One of my constituents said, 'With all due respect, they went to Townsville. They had to take two jets in case one got stolen.'



Mr SMITH (Bundaberg—ALP) (5.15 pm): I move—

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat, member for Bundaberg. Member for Callide, you are warned. I will give this as general advice to the House. As I have said on many occasions before, I need to hear the amendment and I will warn anyone who interrupts the reading of this amendment.

Mr SMITH: I move—

That all words after 'House' be omitted and the following inserted:

1. notes that the use of aircraft via QGAir is for a number of reasons including organ transfers and transporting state personnel, including police and emergency services workers and the use of the aircraft is released pursuant to the usual process;
2. notes that aircraft have been utilised by officials for decades, and will continue to be, to ensure they are able to serve Queenslanders throughout the large and dispersed state of Queensland;
3. notes supporting and representing regional Queensland and delivering community safety measures is vitally important to Queenslanders; and
4. notes the Miles government's commitment to supporting Queenslanders through the national cost-of-living crisis.'

I am proud to be part of a government that represents all Queenslanders, not just those in the south-east corner. We are a government that governs for all Queenslanders because we represent Queenslanders all across the state—from the cape in the north to the coast in the south. I congratulate the Premier and police minister for travelling to all corners of our state to talk about issues that matter to Queenslanders—Cairns, Townsville, Hervey Bay and, of course, Bundaberg. It was important to have the Premier, the police minister and the new Police Commissioner in Bundaberg last week to make an announcement to the people of Bundaberg about supporting our hardworking Queensland Police Service officers.

I have been talking to our local police about upgrading the Bundaberg police station since the days of patrol inspector Michael McGarry, when we spoke about the need to increase facilities so we can have more police out there on the beat and give them the facilities they need and deserve. We know it is only the Miles Labor government that has committed, and is committed, to delivering a \$20 million upgrade to the Bundaberg police station. This upgrade will deliver additional space to accommodate future growth as police undertake the biggest recruitment drive in Queensland's history. As the Bundaberg region continues to grow we need a modern and well-equipped police station to ensure our region maintains pace and that we continue growing our police force locally.

The \$20 million expansion is backed by our Community Safety Plan for Queensland, and it is necessary because of the major uplift of frontline police personnel we are delivering on this side of the House because there will always be more police on the beat under a Miles Labor government—more police like Assistant Commissioner Matthew Vanderbyl, who spoke to me on the ground about the opportunities this \$20 million will provide for the vulnerable persons unit in Bundaberg. The vulnerable persons unit supports victims of domestic, family and sexual violence. This is an important upgrade because we know that domestic violence is real in Bundaberg. We know that family and sexual violence is real in Bundaberg. Creating opportunities for more entry and access points throughout the station so victims can feel safe in putting forward their account so we can make sure perpetrators go to jail is a good thing.

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What do we know about the LNP? Their spokesperson in Bundaberg called it a shiny distraction for voters. They believe that an investment in supporting victims of domestic, family and sexual violence is a shiny distraction. What a disgrace that is! What an absolute disgrace for victims in Bundaberg and right across Queensland. That is what the LNP think. That is what the LNP spokesperson in Bundaberg has said. That means that Queensland police officers will have \$20 million taken from them in the middle of the night by a proposed LNP government. That is their record.

When the LNP were in government, they cut 110 senior police positions. All up, more than 300 police personnel were sacked by the LNP government under Campbell Newman. They failed to fund new police positions. They cut police training. They reduced firearms training and they forced police to pay for their own body worn cameras. We are delivering for our police. The LNP made them pay for equipment that keeps them safe from prosecution. What is worse, they cut police monitoring of more than 1,700 sex offenders. We are putting the money in to give victims the support they need. The LNP are on record: they will cut, they will sack and they will sell. What a disgrace!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! The House will come to order. I am pretty lenient most of the time to let us get through all the speakers, but if the House does not come to the order when I call it to order then that will take up time and some speakers will miss out at the end.

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.21 pm): Who would have thought that the member for Bundaberg would be game enough to get up and take on the job of trying to defend the indefensible, that is, his Premier and his police minister, as a tag team, taking luxury jets while making out that somehow they are there for the battler and that they understand the cost-of-living issues in Bundaberg. How out of touch can the member be? Then again, this is the member for Bundaberg whose own members, in the previous sitting, moved to gag because they did not want to hear from him. This time they have decided that he is the patsy to do the job of defending the Premier and the police minister who travelled throughout Queensland in tag-team jets, at an estimated cost of upwards of \$200,000 of taxpayers' money—although who knows how much it cost. They spent upwards of \$200,000 to fund their little personal trip throughout Queensland

In amending the opposition motion, the government is trying to make out that this is all about the cost of living. What a cheek! They are so out of touch—out of touch at 40,000 feet. They wave to people on the ground and say, 'We're consulting with you as we fly in and fly out of these Queensland hubs.' There is a simple question that this government should answer if they believe in transparency and accountability. If they believe in transparency and accountability then they should tell us how much the tag-team, high-flying Premier and police minister spent on those two luxury jets to fly them around Queensland last week. They should tell us, because the member for Bundaberg certainly did not want to. He thinks it is good value for money. However, they will not tell us. When the Premier was asked this question only yesterday in parliament, he not only failed to provide a straight answer; he squibbed and misled this parliament by inferring that somehow—

Mrs Frecklington: He might have had jet lag.

Ms SIMPSON: He might have had jet lag. He inferred that this information would be published as part of the public ministerial records. That is deliberately misleading Queenslanders. In fact, it is a bit slick and tricky. The Premier knows that the way his government flight data is currently published will not reveal those specific dates and amounts. The data is published in aggregated format with a whole-of-year costing, so the Premier's answer was dodgy and less than straight. It was designed to mislead and obstruct Queenslanders from getting a straight answer about how their money was spent on that two-jet trip around Queensland. The register of Queensland government air hours does not provide the breakdown for individual dates.

I ask: should taxpayers know the cost of the Premier's and the police minister's jetsetting trips as they played tag team last week? Of course they should know. Of course they have a right to know. As I have said, some estimates put the cost of one jet at \$ 4,500 per hour and about \$6,000 per hour for the other jet, which means the three-day, back-and-forth, tag-team trip around Queensland cost over \$200,000 of taxpayers' money. Let the government clear this up. Let them release that specific information and table it in this House.


If the state government believed in transparency, they would release those costs rather than tell people, 'We're doing it for your own good; just trust us.' The patsy—sorry—the previous speaker tried to make out that it was all in the interests of the Bundaberg people. It is not in any Queenslanders' interests. The government have to explain it, put it on the record and let Queenslanders decide whether they really considered a commercial flight as a more cost-effective way of getting around Queensland. They have not come clean and it is highly doubtful that they will.

High-flying Premier Miles is taking over from former premier Palaszczuk as a lover of the high life, from red carpets to the rarefied air of tag-team luxury jets at 40,000 feet. After nine years in government, Labor's born-to-rule mentality means that they are out of touch with the cost-of-living impacts. I table an example from the public record of office expenses of the former premier as well as the air register, which lacks clarity and gives an indication of why the current Premier is misleading the House about what he will release. There are anomalies in what the supposed charter costs were because they have not come clean.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Public Report of Office Expenses for the Ministerial Portfolio of Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the period 01/07/2022 to 30/06/2023'.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Queensland Government Air—Hours by Minister and the Governor Q4 2022-2023 (Period 1st April 2023—30 June 2023) as at 30/06/2023'.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to speak to the amended motion. I have been looking forward to it. I think I am going to enjoy it. When it comes to listening and delivering for Townsville, we blow those opposites out of the water. The Premier has been to Townsville so often that I tell him that he should leave a swag at the airport. Every time he comes to Townsville, he delivers for our city. In four short weeks, he delivered a police helicopter. We all know about helicopters—don't we, member for Kawana? We remember his trip up to Lincoln Springs with the same mob that made donations to the LNP. He had to take security with him—\$5,000 an hour. He could not even drive a couple of hundred kilometres. The member for Kawana is nice and quiet on that one. He does not like hearing about that.

When it comes to delivering, we are delivering more police. As I said yesterday, 122 more police are hitting the Townsville streets thanks to the Miles government. The Premier was up there just last week to announce \$100 million for the brand new Kirwan police academy, which we will build under a Labor government. The LNP was going to sell our academy. In Townsville, we back our police; we do not sack our police. We are providing them with the infrastructure and everything else that they need.

Labor are also delivering for our region. I can tell the member for Nanango that Townsville is part of regional Queensland. We are delivering CopperString, which will deliver good, stable jobs and secure our renewable energy future. CopperString is the project that the Leader of the Opposition is absolutely quiet on. Will he back it? Probably not. We are delivering an expansion to the Townsville hospital, which will provide an extra 143 beds.

Mr Walker: Hear, hear!

Mr HARPER: Thank you, member for Mundingburra. That project will support more than 1,000 good construction jobs. It allows our city to have confidence.

Mrs Frecklington: Get back to your amended motion. Even your amended motion isn't touching on this.

Mr HARPER: I take the member for Nanango's interjection and she will love this bit. The LNP do not care about Townsville. Even the Leader of the Opposition did not want to stick around after he lost his seat in 2015. He cut and ran—and, boy, did he cut. On his watch, the LNP cut to the bone and we will not forget: 390 health workers sacked; 197 TAFE workers sacked; 37 police personnel sacked, some of whom I know. They told me what they thought of the Leader of the Opposition. The LNP tried to sell the Port of Townsville. They cut more than \$20 million in road funding. Does the member for Nanango know what the worst thing is? They will do it all again. They do not support our royalty measures. They do not support people in Townsville. I have seen the Premier deliver a lot in Townsville in five short months and we are very thankful for everything he has done. When he comes, he listens, he acts and he delivers. When the Leader of the Opposition comes to Townsville, he gathers his candidates for the standard 20-minute photo shoot on a street or at the C Bar.

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I have to tell this story. Back in 2020, the Leader of the Opposition was at the polling booth during the election. He spent the rudimentary 15 minutes doing the handing out with the same candidate that he has endorsed to run against me in this 2024 election. He came over to me on his way out and said, 'You've got this, mate. See you back in parliament.' My goodness me. If you cannot back your own candidate, why would you re-endorse—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The comment is completely and utterly untrue and I ask the member to withdraw.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the point of order in silence.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take personal offence and ask the comment to be withdrawn.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Broadwater, that language was unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw.

Mr HARPER: The people in Townsville, the people in Thuringowa, know my record of delivering, champion. I might have hit a nerve, hey. No ticker there, Leader of the Opposition.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim, I was attempting to get your attention but you were yelling so much you did not hear me, even though I was raising my voice. You are warned under the standing orders.

Mr HARPER: I will enjoy this last minute because the people of Thuringowa know that I deliver unmatched by the LNP. Your candidate, your charge, did not commit \$30 million to the Kirwan police station and has not committed \$100 million to the academy. You are all gob now. Up in Townsville, when I am out doorknocking in Kirwan, I can tell you what they think of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are warned.

Mr HARPER: I know what the people in Thuringowa think of the Leader of the Opposition. They have described him as slick and slimy and they do not like him in Thuringowa.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will have silence while I take some advice from the Clerk. Member for Thuringowa, you have used unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw. The people of Thuringowa know that I will continue to back them and back our local police. We do not sack our police. We will deliver for our city. It is clear by the rejection of the LNP that they do not care about regional Queensland and they do not care about community safety.



Mr JANETZKI (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.32 pm): Hasn't the member for Thuringowa shown his real colours here tonight with the personal abuse heaped on the Leader of the Opposition. Let me

tell you, member for Thuringowa, that it just doubles our resolve to get Natalie Marr across the line. We are coming for the member for Thuringowa and Natalie Marr is coming hard for you, member. We will be throwing everything because we—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Your comments will come through the chair, member for Toowoomba South. There will be no more gesticulating across the chamber and putting comments directly at people or you will be warned on your feet.

Mr JANETZKI: Mr Deputy Speaker, through you, we will be coming hard for the member for Thuringowa. For too long, the people of Townsville have been taken for granted by this government on crime, on housing and on cost of living.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Resume your seat, member for Toowoomba South. Members, the debate has now strayed very far away from the motion or the amendment. I have given some latitude to speakers but I now bring you back to the motion or the amendment.

Mr JANETZKI: While I am talking about those members opposite, I have to note that the amendment moved by the member for Bundaberg was talking about organ transfers. I do not know whether there were any organs iced on the convoy of planes up and down the eastern seaboard, but I do think the Miles government is on life support. I had better give attribution to the member for Kawana for that one.


I want to make some serious points. Why did the member for Nanango have to move this motion here tonight? The reason is that we do not trust the Premier. Firstly, the people of Queensland do not trust the Premier to give a straight answer as to how much these flights cost. Secondly, and more importantly, the people of Queensland do not trust that the Premier understands the priorities to fix the cost-of-living crisis. The cost-of-living crisis is shown through the Premier's lack of judgement over a very long period of time—whether it be the appointment of a former Labor state secretary, disgraced MP, UMR consultant and member of the Channel 7 election commentary team in 2015, Mike Kaiser, as the independent, most senior bureaucrat in this state; or the Premier having wasted a thousand days on the Olympics, squandering the goodwill of the Queensland people on the Olympics, and then we found out last week he spent \$4½ million on consultants in direct conflict with the Coaldrake report, which has now seemingly been binned by the Premier of Queensland. Who should go out to defend the Premier on the spending on the jets but the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

An opposition member: His good friend.

Mr JANETZKI: Yes, his good friend. When the Deputy Premier and Treasurer comes out, I just think, 'Here is a Treasurer who understands all about money!' He has broken his tax promises, he has increased the renters tax in the middle of a housing crisis and then we saw the patients tax in the middle of a health crisis. Worse than that, he signed off the cheque for the quarantine facility at Wellcamp for \$223 million. He has been in a Cabinet Budget Review Committee that has seen project overruns across the board. He has been signing the cheques to billionaires using the money of hardworking Queensland taxpayers and then he got free newspaper advertisements across the country for it.

Then today we had the Treasurer talking about PsiQuantum. We were getting schooled by the Treasurer today on quantum computing. He was implying that we would not have any idea. Mind you, the Treasurer was reading off a ministerial statement so I am not exactly sure what the Treasurer would know. What he did not say about PsiQuantum is that it is \$470 million of equity and loans over which no-one really knows where the jobs are coming. Are they American jobs or are they Australian jobs? The Treasurer has never disclosed how much is loans and how much is equity, and nobody really knows over what investment time frame that money will be given. We will never take advice on priorities from the Treasurer or Premier of this state. How do you ever trust a government that has taxed more, borrowed more, spent more and left Queenslanders with less to show for it? How can you ever trust a government with that record?

Despite desperately scheming to take out the trash decisions they have made for the last 10 years, it is too late. Government members have been there—all of them—for all of it and they have stunk out the joint. They cannot solve Queensland's problems because they are Queensland's problems and it will only change when Queenslanders change the government.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.38 pm): I would like to speak in support of the amended motion moved by the member for Bundaberg. My region is one of the best regions in the state and we deserve to have the Premier and ministers of this state come and visit and engage with the community and hear from our frontline workers. Our local police force deserve to have a visit from our new Police Commissioner. The police are out there on our streets doing the hard yards, keeping everyone safe in

our community, and they deserve to be able to engage with the Premier, the police minister and the commissioner.

After the Mackay community cabinet meeting, locals were pleased that they had the opportunity to talk with the Premier, ministers and senior public servants. I was talking earlier today to Clacy Fatnowna about another issue and just out of the blue he said that it was so important to have the Premier and the ministers in town. He said it was so relaxed and to be able to talk to them was so important.

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The visitors met with Kylie Porter from GW3. She said it was exactly what their community needed. Vic Vassallo said to me that it was so easy to get a meeting. He did not expect to speak with the Deputy Premier; he thought he would just speak with staffers. However, this is what happens when you bring ministers to town. I doubt those people have ever voted Labor—or ever will—but they appreciated having the Premier and the ministers listening to them. This proves that my region wants our leaders to visit locally so that we can talk to them. We want them to know what our strengths are and we want them to know where we need a hand up to take the next step.

Our youth parliament member for Mackay, Mikalia Green, was allowed to take a few minutes off school the other day to meet with the Police Commissioner and the Mackay-Whitsunday senior police officers to discuss the crime bill she will be debating in the youth parliament. This was only possible because they came to Mackay.

The Miles government is accessible to members of the community regardless of their political alliances. It is very arrogant of those in the south-east who are bleating about the Premier and ministers coming to my region. We deserve to have them where we live. We on this side of the House are looking after regional communities. We are doing that by investing in programs that work and giving our police the tools that they need to be able to do their jobs.

I would like to make special mention of the expansion of the incredibly successful youth co-responder model. Last month in Mackay we celebrated the three-year anniversary of the Mackay youth co-responder team. I say thank you to the police minister for coming up and meeting with the team. In that time, they have made over 5,000 engagements. They are doing the hard work by turning around the lives of young people. When the Premier visited Mackay last, he went out with them overnight to see the good work that they are doing for himself. He can see that this is an incredibly successful model which pairs police and support workers to deliver highly tailored and direct support services. It was great to be able to visit those support workers with Minister Farmer when she was in town to hear from the frontline people delivering services so that we know these programs are working.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: I know that those opposite, by the way that they are calling out when I am talking about our frontline workers, do not respect the work that they do. They do not care about our young people.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders.


Mrs GILBERT: I am so incredibly proud of the work that they are doing in my community. I will not have those opposite putting their work down. What they are doing is what some may call a gold-star early intervention. We are getting on with the job.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Gregory is warned.

Mrs GILBERT: We are getting on with the job of putting in programs, unlike those opposite who just have slick slogans. They have spent all week trashing our plans. They just do not like our co-responder programs because they are working.

(Time expired)

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.43 pm): I support the motion moved by the member for Nanango. At a time when rents are soaring, when interest rates are soaring, when food costs are soaring, the Premier and the police minister thought it would be a great idea to go soaring off into the wide blue yonder in two jets. I am told by a source that it could be at a cost \$6,500 per hour per jet. If the Premier decides to front up to the people of Queensland, we will see how accurate that is. Let us assume it is. Let us assume it is just 10 hours per jet. That is \$65,000 each—\$130,000 in just a few days.

Median rents on the Gold Coast are \$850, up 10 per cent year on year up by around \$300 a week just a few years ago. It means tenants are committing as much as 50 per cent of their wages now to rent compared to 33 per cent a few short years ago. With rental accommodation accessibility at an all-time low, it also means that renters are having to share accommodation just so they are able to eat and pay for other expenses.


What about home owners? With current interest rates at six per cent to seven per cent, home owners are being served a double whammy with house prices soaring as well. Interest rates are at their highest since 2002. The average mortgage is around \$600,000. At six per cent interest, that is \$36,000 a year or \$3,000 a month. If we add a capital amount to try to pay down the loan, we are talking \$1,000 a week plus other costs.

Let us make a comparison. The Premier thought it was okay to spend \$130,000 on two jets to go around Queensland for a few days—for a few days—to hear from the people of Queensland what the people of Queensland have been telling the Premier for the last nine years. In a few days flying around Queensland he spent the equivalent of the rent or mortgage for as many as 250 households for a week. At a time when Queenslanders are forced to tighten their belts, the Premier and police minister were fastening their seatbelts on two private jets. At a time when Queenslanders are struggling to make ends meet, the Premier and police minister were flying from one end of Queensland to the other. The Premier and this third-term Labor government have lost touch with reality. They have lost touch with everyday Queenslanders.

In contrast, let us have a look at the LNP priorities to drive down the cost of living. These include reducing Labor government waste and stopping the cost blowouts rather than hitting Queenslanders with higher taxes and fees; delivering better services and infrastructure for every taxpayer dollar invested; identifying opportunities to reduce fees and charges; driving down electricity costs by properly maintaining our power plants; driving down insurance costs by reducing the impact of crime on premiums; driving down insurance costs by investing in natural disaster mitigation; and driving down transport costs by reducing traffic congestion.

The LNP has already secured cost-of-living wins for Queensland families by forcing the decade-old Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government to reduce the cost of a learner's licence by \$100 to help young Queenslanders; delay Labor's renters' tax; and delay Labor's patients' tax.

The LNP are focused on the people of Queensland. The LNP will provide grants of up to \$3,500 to subsidise solar panels on rental properties, saving renters up to \$700 on electricity bills as part of its supercharged solar for renters policy. The LNP will drive down power bills and deliver affordable, reliable and sustainable electricity with a maintenance guarantee for government owned power plants. This will ensure maintenance is not forgone to prop up the government's balance sheet, driving up power bills. At the end of the day in Queensland, Queenslanders will have the opportunity to send Labor a message in just a few short months time, an opportunity to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment to the motion. Community safety is everyone's business. Everybody should be safe in their home and feel safe in their home. I was very proud to be part of the Premier's listening tour as he visited regional Queensland to ensure our government is continuing to listen and deliver. We are investing in more police than at any time in Queensland's history. We have given them the tools they need to do their jobs.


This week the Miles Labor government has announced a major uplift in Queensland Police Service personnel—900 extra positions over three years as part of its Community Safety Plan. This builds on our government's existing 2,025 personnel commitment, bringing the total investment to more than 3,000 additional police personnel. In the Central Queensland police region, which covers Mackay, Whitsunday and Capricornia, this investment will deliver 57 new police positions. This is on top of the 26 additional positions that were announced a month or two ago for the Rockhampton and Capricornia coast area, including 10 additional police vehicles. Our government backs police 100 per cent, and that is why we are seeing this record investment.

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Like everyone in my local community, I greatly appreciate the effort that our police officers make each and every day to support community safety. We are also proud of the incentives and opportunities there are to make a career with the Queensland Police Service an enticing opportunity. There has never been a better time to join the Queensland Police Service with no application fees, free accommodation for recruits living at the police academy and an additional \$183 fortnightly cost-of-living allowance. Recruits at the Queensland police academies also receive a boosted training salary of approximately \$53,700 per annum. Police applicants have more than doubled since this time last year with 960 in the

pipeline in April 2023, compared to 2,079 in April 2024. The plan is working, and more and more people are deciding to begin a career that is dedicated to community safety. This is what good policy looks like; it is not slick slogans and cheap sound bites.

The opposition are hoping to use youth crime to sail into parliament but when I am out in the community, people still remember. In Central Queensland, the LNP cut 288 frontline health jobs including 10 in child and family health; cut 80 local TAFE workers; cut 39 officers who were responsible for protecting the Great Barrier Reef; sacked over 37 agriculture and fisheries employees in the central region; sacked five workers at the Port of Gladstone; cut \$63.1 million in Central Queensland road funding; committed to selling Eventide and North Rockhampton nursing homes, Gladstone port and the Stanwell Power Station; cut \$2.4 million in funding to the 10 community health organisations; cut \$1.5 million in funding from 11 local community support and local disability organisations like Anglicare that support vulnerable people in the domestic and family violence area—it was horrible what happened in that space; cut 56 workers from the road maintenance crews in Central Queensland; and cut the jobs of many of my friends who worked in QBuild in Central Queensland. It was terrible. People joked afterwards about the box man turning up. They would just turn up at your desk, bring in the box and you would have to pack your gear and be escorted out of the building. The way the LNP treated public servants was terrible. Electricity prices increased by 43 per cent for Central Queenslanders. People have not forgotten what the LNP did to Rocky and to Central Queenslanders. We saw a huge downturn in our economy, and it was terrible for everyone involved.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.53 pm): Before I talk about what I was going to talk about, I want to respond to the contribution that we have heard from the member for Rockhampton. Up until now I did not realise he was on the listening tour and potentially one of the seagulls who was travelling at 32,000 feet on not one—but two—luxury jets on a listening tour. From what I understand of their itinerary, on Wednesday morning they were flying back over Rocky. Maybe they stopped to drop him off, I am not sure.

On that morning at that time, in Rockhampton our LNP candidate, Donna Kirkland, was hosting a crime forum that I was at. We were listening to victims—real victims on the ground—not the pilots in private jets but victims like the young mum from Rockhampton we heard from. She is a working mum—an upwardly mobile family—with a husband and a seven-year-old son. For two years she scraped and saved for her prized car. She had saved for this car for two years. Shortly after getting it they woke up to find their house had been ransacked and the car had been stolen. They later found out that it had been stolen by a group of juveniles—which is often the case—who were well known to police. By the time they got the car back, it was written off and she is out of pocket \$12,000—\$12,000 for a family living in their dream home with their seven-year-old son. This will take them a long time to repay, if they ever do. The debt on that is something they will have to be pay down over time.

That amount is less than one hour in fuel alone for two private jets to travel this state. Not only is there a financial impact for this poor young mum. She spoke about her seven-year-old son who since that time is too scared to sleep in his own bed. They are dealing with not only the financial cost but also the emotional cost of crime in Rockhampton while this member is apparently on a listening tour on two private jets flying at 32,000 feet.


We heard from a Pacific island gentleman who moved his family to Australia, to Queensland, for a better life. He is a motor mechanic in Rockhampton. Recently, his yard was ransacked by young offenders and there was over \$150,000 in damage caused to vehicles that were in his yard. They did not belong to him, they belonged to customers. He now knows that is not covered by insurance and it will not be covered by compensation from the court because these young offenders were dealt with by the Childrens Court. He is out of pocket \$150,000 and that he cannot pay. This is a business owner in Rockhampton who we were listening to, with our candidate Donna Kirkland, while this member is one of the seagulls on this listening tour on two private jets flying up and down the state.

We also heard from a businesswoman who owns a motorcycle shop up there and who came for the second time. It was only a few weeks ago that she presented at the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee. Emotionally she gave her testimony to that committee which has now been sacked. She came again and told of the impact crime has had on her family business and her employees. If you are the member in Rocky, you do not need two private jets to take you elsewhere when you can come and talk to local victims of crime right in your own electorate.

This brings me to what I wanted to start with 3½ minutes ago: this is emblematic of this Labor government. They care more about how things look, than how they are. When no-one is looking, they think they can get away with it. Like their federal colleagues, they have their nose well and truly in the

trough. They are burning through the hard-earned taxpayer dollars of Queenslanders faster than a private jet burns through fuel. While they purport to be the battler's champion and to sympathise with the homeless people who are living in tents in the Premier's electorate and fight to save the planet, when no-one is looking they do not care about any of those things.

This takes me back to the member for Bundaberg's contribution. Where was he recently when I was in Bundaberg with our candidate, Bree Watson? He is in this House talking about how there will 'always be more boots on the ground under his government'. Bree Watson and I identified that there are 20 fewer police at the Bundaberg police station alone than what there should be. There are 20 vacancies—that is just at the Bundaberg police station. I have not got time to go through the surrounding police stations. So do not come into this place putting on a tough-on-crime pantomime saying that 'there will always be more boots on the ground under a Labor government' when he should know—if he does not, then he should be listening more—that the police in Bundaberg, like Rocky, are calling for backup. They have had a gutful. Nothing will change until we change the government. Hopefully in a few months time we will have the opportunity to show Labor the door in '24.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (5.58 pm): I rise in support of the amended motion that was moved by the member for Bundaberg. In doing so, I want to reflect on the behaviour of those opposite. It is clearly the case, judging by the original motion moved today and amended by the member for Bundaberg, that they live by the adage of 'do as I say and not as I do' when it comes to the motions they put forward in this place. It is like a form of amnesia has taken over that side. One day they say one thing, the next another. They create fiction to write their version of history. It is as if that side never used aircraft when they were in government to assist their premier, ministers and officials to get around our great state. It has been common practice for many governments over many decades. To insinuate that the use of QG Air to fly to regional Queensland is somehow a luxury shows again how desperate the opposition is to grab a news headline. It is, again, a further attempt by this opposition to rewrite history in recent debates. That is becoming prevalent on that side of the House.

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It is very important for this parliament to acknowledge that the great state of Queensland is a huge state and that to travel it and represent the people of Queensland is a big task requiring travel. Any attempt by those in opposition to try to restrict the Premier or his ministers in performing their roles is a sad reflection on their stated desires to represent the whole of Queensland.

Our Premier is someone who is unapologetic, listens and delivers for regional Queensland including my community of Hervey Bay. Last week I was so pleased to have the Premier, police minister and our new Police Commissioner visit my community and speak to our local police and residents about community safety in Hervey Bay. Our Premier gave an undertaking to regional Queensland that he would be there for all Queenslanders. Our Premier did not come just to talk the talk and use slick political slogans like the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP do. During his visit he showed real action on community safety which will make a difference to my community of Hervey Bay. He announced that the Miles government would deliver a new \$28 million police facility in Hervey Bay, doubling the scope of the original plan. He committed to delivering 98 more police personnel for the North Coast Region—and that includes Hervey Bay—many new officers to serve in my community. He listened to the round table of Hervey Bay residents who signed my petition for a new helicopter service and he delivered the Polair helicopter service to our region.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr TANTARI: He did. When I was first elected I gave the people of Hervey Bay and the fine women and men of the Hervey Bay police force a commitment that I would do my best to support them with new facilities and resources. Thank you, Premier and police minister; that has been delivered. That is what good governments do; they come to our regional communities and they listen and deliver.


Do honourable members know what else happened last week? In a stark contrast, the LNP shadow cabinet rolled into town and delivered absolutely nothing, just slick slogans and fancy photo shoots. They went and found a camera here, a camera there and made some outrageous statements. That is exactly what the people of Hervey Bay have come to expect from those opposite: they just rolled into town, went down to city hall and all they could do was just talk down the town. They rolled into town, found their cameras and then they were out again.

I have had conversations with the people of Hervey Bay and they continually say how much our government has delivered during my short term as their member. Why? Because when the former LNP member for Hervey Bay was in charge over a decade ago and he was the member for four terms, Hervey Bay got nothing to show for our growing community's needs. That is why our community backed the Labor member at the last election, because they were tired of being unrepresented, of seeing

nothing happening in Hervey Bay due to the inaction of the former LNP member. They know they just cannot risk the LNP candidate for Hervey Bay and the Leader of the Opposition, who have shown no plans to deliver for our region and the people of Hervey Bay.

On this side we have a Premier who will always deliver and listen to the people of Hervey Bay—more police and more tools that they need to keep our community safe. As a regional member, it is good to know that the Miles government has a focus on regional Queensland. When Premier Miles and his minister come to my place in Queensland, it says to the people of Hervey Bay that our government is serious about ensuring that their voices are heard. On that side they can only do one thing and that is cut, sell and sack.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member for Chatsworth is warned under the standing orders.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (6.02 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Nanango. I ask the parliament to think back to less than two weeks ago. It was a beautiful, crisp Brisbane autumn morning. The Premier and the police minister arrived at Brisbane Airport. They got out of their cars and their attendants took their luggage as they made their own way onto the tarmac. The Premier looked at the Minister for Police, they nodded and he said, 'Shall we?' Out came the aviator sunglasses—use your imagination—and the Premier said, 'How good is this? How good is this? We have finally made it. We both have our own jets.' Then the Premier said, 'Do you know what I feel?' 'What do you feel?' 'I feel the need—the need for speed! Are you up for it, Minister?' He said, 'I'm up for it!'

The minister had a pang of conscience and he said, 'But Premier, shouldn't we travel on the same plane together?' The Premier said, 'Don't be ridiculous. I've earned this and I deserve it. Besides that, I can't fit any more people on the plane. I have a cameraman, a sound technician, an autocue operator, a security detail, a social media consultant, a policy adviser and a bloke who does my tie every day—not very well. He said to the minister, 'You take your own jet because you deserve it and we'll have a race.' 'Sounds great,' said Minister Ryan. 'Can I be Maverick?' Premier Miles said, 'No, no, no. I'm Maverick. You're Goose. Because I'm the boss you need to give me a 15-minute head start. I'm taking off and you have to try to catch me.' That is what happened over the next hour and a half or two hours—whatever it took to go to Townsville. He said, 'Whoever gets there first can buzz over the flight towers as many times as they want because we are on the highway to danger'—

Mr O'Connor: To the danger zone.


Mr MANDER:—'to the danger zone. We're on a highway to the danger zone.' I missed it. I joke about this incident but the joke is on Queensland taxpayers. At a time when in the Premier's own electorate, which has been mentioned already, there are tent cities in local parks, this Premier sees no problem in using not one jet—we have no issue with that—but two jets leaving from the same airport at the same time and arriving a few minutes apart. He sees nothing wrong with that waste of money.

It was interesting to have a look at the speaking list tonight, and I think I might have heard the member for Maroochydore talk about defending the indefensible. Can you imagine what was happening when they were trying to work out who was going to speak on their behalf tonight, who were going to be the sacrificial lambs? They looked through this and they obviously said, 'He ain't going to be here in six months. He's not going to be here in six months. She's not going to be here in six months. Let's give it to them. It won't matter.' There was a really big reserve list as well; they had Pumicestone, Nicklin, Mundingburra, Aspley, Pine Rivers and Redcliffe. They were on the reserve list to speak on a topic that is indefensible.

There are issues that come up from time to time that we call 'barbecue stoppers', and this was one of them. Everywhere we went people were having little jibes: 'Did you catch a chopper here?' 'Where's your jet?' 'How did you get here?' I have not heard so many jibes since the Wellcamp debacle and, after that, the Gabba debacle. They are the types of things that make Queenslanders angry and those opposite have treated people with contempt. They have tried to defend the indefensible.

Returning to the member for Nanango's motion, if there is nothing to hide and if they are proud of their record with regards to using taxpayers' money wisely, why do they not come out and tell us how much it cost? Queensland taxpayers deserve to know.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (6.08 pm): All I can say is thank the good lord that source of entertainment is finished. Seriously, what an absolute debacle. Once again we have witnessed the inability of the other side to articulate any sort of facts and figures. The member

for Ninderry talked about 'private jets'. They are actually government jets, and the government jets were started by Joh Bjelke-Petersen. It was an LNP government that started using these aircraft and they have been used ever since. They are not actually private jets. They need to get their facts right, but we will come back to that later.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr Purdie interjected.

048 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders. You have been interjecting constantly. Member for Nanango, what is your point of order?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My point of order is that the member on his feet is clearly misleading the House. Even the Premier has said that one of them was a private jet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! That is not a point of order. If you believe there has been a matter of misleading the House, there is a process to follow, which you well know. Do not take points of order of that nature. Follow the process. You have no point of order. Member for Cairns, you have the call.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will be writing to you then if he continues.

Mr HEALY: I thought that some of the contributions to this debate by some on the other side were interesting given that this is what they have chosen to do six months out from an election. At a time when we have just released a significant body of work in relation to ensuring safety in our communities, this is their response! Those opposite whinge about not having enough time to debate topics and they whinge about not having enough time to articulate their message, yet when they do get time they come up with these frivolous little attempts to entertain one another. I know it has been entertaining for them, but I hope the people of Queensland are watching this because what we are seeing from the other side is nothing short of disgraceful. It is nothing short of absolutely disgraceful. If that is their idea of entertainment then they need all of the help they can get.

When it comes to the cost of living, we have heard absolutely nothing from that side. They have no strategy and no policy. However, I want to recognise one or two members. One of them quoted from their right wing blue document and I thought that that was impressive, but we are all still waiting to find out what those words mean. There is no detail, no policy, no structure—absolutely nothing at all.

Under Labor, with regard to power prices, there will be between \$550 and \$1,072 off every household's bill and \$650 off the bills of small businesses. The biggest package in Australia is underway. There is our free kindy, saving families an estimated \$4,600. That is what we want to see; that is a real policy. Then there are rego freezes and discounts for pensioners, seniors, primary producers and charitable organisations that on average will shave around about \$300 off each vehicle and 50 per cent off public transport for all pensioners, seniors, students, veterans and jobseekers. Free TAFE is absolutely significant. Free TAFE is driving a better future for so many across this state. Our FairPlay vouchers are ensuring that those at the lower end of the scale are being looked after. Those people who need it are getting it. Then we have our SwimStart program which is assisting people.

These are the things that work. These are the things that we are happy to debate. We are happy to have a debate. Anybody who would even watch—what was that movie?

Mrs Mullen: *Top Gun*.

Mr HEALY: *Top Gun*. Wow! I thought it was a horror movie the way it was being portrayed. These are the things that we would like to talk about. We would like to debate some of these issues, but, no, you come in here with these disgraceful, time-wasting motions—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments through the chair.

Mr HEALY: Those opposite come in here with these motions that mean nothing except to entertain themselves and allow for personal attacks.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Coomera.

Mr HEALY: They are allowing personal attacks because in the absence of details and in the absence of policies the only thing they have is personal attacks, and they go after individuals because that is the calibre of people they are. They do not have a policy; they do not have a strategy. As we get closer to the election, the people of Queensland and the media will want to know: what is their strategy?

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Coomera.

Mr HEALY: They talk about integrity. Their leader stood up in the Cairns Convention Centre and gave an ironclad commitment and then he flew down here and backflipped. When we are talking about integrity, when we are talking about being honest and all of those sorts of things, I would encourage those opposite to have a good long hard look at themselves. That aside, the fact that we are improving and we are making significant efforts in putting downward pressure on crime—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HEALY: You just need to relax; you could blow a valve. The important thing—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Coomera is warned.

Mr HEALY: Excellent. Anyway—

(Time expired)

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

In division—

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, there is a glitch with the bells. They will ring until 18 past, when they will cease and we will close the bars.

AYES, 45:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 32:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 45:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 32:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—


That this House

1. notes that the use of aircraft via QGAir is for a number of reasons including organ transfers and transporting state personnel, including police and emergency services workers and the use of the aircraft is released pursuant to the usual process;
2. notes that aircraft have been utilised by officials for decades, and will continue to be, to ensure they are able to serve Queenslanders throughout the large and dispersed state of Queensland;
3. notes supporting and representing regional Queensland and delivering community safety measures is vitally important to Queenslanders; and
4. notes the Miles government's commitment to supporting Queenslanders through the national cost-of-living crisis.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL**MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL****DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

Resumed from p 1422, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate of the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As the shadow minister for volunteers, on behalf of the LNP I want to thank every single one of the volunteers across Queensland who give their time willingly for the common good and without financial gain. Given that Queensland is the most disaster-prone state, we need every one of those volunteers.

I note that a number of submitters to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill raised concerns in relation to the limited time for consultation on the bill. Limiting time seems to be a bit of a common theme when it comes to this government. There are four bills with about an hour each in terms of time for debate. Some people impacted by these changes have volunteered all their lives in rural fire brigades and marine rescue, yet this Labor government only believes their volunteering future is worth a few hours of debate time. The chaos and crisis of this Labor government extends into this chamber. It just cannot manage the legislative program and then will guillotine debate to cover for its mismanagement. As outlined earlier by the shadow minister, I also note that the LNP will be voting against clause 31.

I want to commend the great work of the many local volunteers in my electorate in the State Emergency Service and the rural fire brigades for the work that they undertake. Often it is the brave volunteers whom Queenslanders rely upon to keep us safe during natural disasters. I want to give a shout-out to the Wallumbilla state emergency and rural fire station volunteers, who also operate a road crash response unit. I am particularly proud of the work that these volunteer members have done to establish the joint emergency services facility in Wallumbilla and what they also do to get the younger generation volunteering in their service.

In their submission to the legislation, the Kogan rural fire brigade raised concerns about the mandating requirements of firefighting and the incident control experience and fire prevention expertise being necessary to reflect the level of command and control. They went on to state that the recent fires in the Tara district saw incident control undertaken by many officers from both fire and rescue and rural fire services. Experience does count, but local knowledge and expertise are far superior. They also raised concerns about rural fire brigades being unincorporated associations and always having to regulate themselves via their management committees regarding membership behaviour. They state that at no time during discussions on the reform was this issue raised.


The new powers in this bill give authority to the commissioner regarding suspension, dismissal and disqualifying persons from holding any office or being an office bearer of a rural fire brigade. The Kogan rural fire brigade believes this is an overstep into its local affairs.

On behalf of all rural fire brigades in my electorate, I ask the minister for an assurance that locally raised funds are preserved for the exclusive use of the brigade to which the donation was made. Many of my rural fire brigade members remember what happened when the Goss Labor government raided the local ambulance committee funds. We do not need to see a repeat of this behaviour by Labor governments. We need to hear in this House the minister's ironclad guarantee that every cent of locally raised funds by the brigade will stay with the local brigade and be easily accessible by these volunteers.

I now turn to the issues raised by local governments. The bill amends the Disaster Management Act to enhance Queensland disaster management arrangements and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act to expand the Queensland Reconstruction Authority's functions. I bring to the attention of the House comments from the LGAQ in relation to the Disaster Management Regulation 2014. They state that, given the reforms in this bill, it would be advantageous to commence a review of the disaster district boundaries and that such a review would help to ensure that the new arrangements under

Queensland Police Service control are strategically aligned and enhance the ability to share resources. That is something that local governments do on a very regular basis during disaster times and disaster recovery. This resource mapping is further amplified by the Far North Queensland district where there are some 14 local government areas supported by one single DDMG. It is arguable that this district has a higher risk in terms of its exposure to natural hazards and has significant numbers of vulnerable people, with the additional overlay of geographic isolation.

The culture of volunteerism must be allowed to continue and flourish across Queensland. The LNP supports any attempt to improve the emergency response of agencies and volunteer groups for regular operations and disaster management. The implementation of this legislation and associated regulations will be a matter on which volunteers will want to see improvement from this Labor government.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (6.26 pm): We are incredibly lucky on the southern Gold Coast to have some fantastic local heroes serving us in our rural fire brigades and our local fire and emergency services. On behalf of our community, I want to thank the Tallebudgera rural fire brigade and their fantastic committee of officers, including chair Michael Laird, secretary Niki Naday, treasurer Susan Smith, first officer Ben Naday, second officer Joshua Hughes, third officer John Irwin, fifth officer Matthew Rynne, sixth officer Jackson Baker and seventh officer James Leuschner. A massive thankyou to our fantastic team at the Currumbin Valley Rural Fire Brigade, including chair Mike Verner, secretary Michelle Cotton, treasurer Marleen Verner, first officer Steven Dalton, second officer Debbie Holland, third officer Joe Squire, fourth officer Marcus Edwards, fifth officer David Cotton and sixth officer Jaya Jarrot. The work they do to keep our community safe is phenomenal.

On that basis, the Currumbin rural fire brigade has asked me to put out a notification. They are currently looking for a missing person in Currumbin Valley. They are involved in a search right now for this missing person and first officer Steve Dalton has asked me to notify everyone who lives around Taylors Lane in Currumbin Valley that police are searching for a 39-year-old man, Patrick Liedke, who has been missing since last Monday. Patrick is described as being of Caucasian appearance, solid build, 183 centimetres tall with short brown hair and brown eyes. The search is continuing today in Currumbin Valley and also in Cobaki, the Piggabeen area and on the New South Wales side of the border with the Rural Fire Service of Queensland, police and SES assisting. Anyone who has seen Patrick or may have any information regarding him is urged to please urgently call Crime Stoppers on 1800333000. I thank our Currumbin Valley Rural Fire Brigade for continuing the search for Patrick. For me, this particularly highlights the amazing work our rural fire brigades do and how important it is that they are supported.

The Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, among other things, amends the Fire and Emergency Services Act to establish Queensland Fire and Rescue and the Rural Fire Service Queensland as two separate services within the Queensland Fire Department. In relation to the structure of the new Queensland Fire Department and in particular how brigades and members of the Rural Fire Service Queensland fit into that structure, there are more questions than answers. The LNP's shadow minister has outlined those questions. Because the debate will be guillotined today and I will not have the time to outline those questions, I will not go through them. However, I really look forward to the minister's reply. In particular and of significant importance to our local rural fire brigades is a guarantee from the minister that locally raised funds will be preserved for the exclusive use of the brigade to which the donation was made. They do such a fantastic job. The example I have given here today is a prime example of that. I urge the minister to come to the table with an assurance that the funds that they have raised will be available for their use.

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I also want to speak to the part of this bill that deals with the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. I want to take this opportunity to give a massive shout-out to the fantastic VMR team in Currumbin: president Michael Brooks; vice president Ray Boak; secretary Margaret Jackson; treasurer Brian Ramsey; and committee members Rick Taylor and Trevor Andrews. Our fantastic VMR team do such an amazing job to support our community when they are using our waterways, beaches and open seas.

They regularly run sausage sizzles to support their organisation. As a result of their efforts, they were able to raise enough money to purchase some jet skis. Those jet skis were recently used to get out of the bar at low tide—they cannot get out of the bar at low tide using boats; they need the jet skis—to rescue some divers. The divers were diving off Palm Beach Reef. In rough seas their anchor detached from their boat. They lost track of their boat and they were floating in the open seas. Our marine rescue volunteers used the jet skis to get out there and rescue those divers. That is the great work they are doing in our community to keep us safe on the waterways and in the open seas.


It is because of them raising that money themselves that they were able to purchase those jet skis. It was thanks to the hard work of the volunteers that they raised the money to buy what was needed particularly in Currumbin so they can get out of the bar at low tide and perform those rescues. On behalf of the Currumbin electorate, I thank them for their wonderful work—both the volunteers and the whole committee. I want those amazing guys and girls to know that we are so grateful for what they do for us out in the open seas and on the waterways.

In relation to the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill, it aims to establish Marine Rescue Queensland as a statewide marine service. The bill has some consequential amendments to facilitate the government's objectives and amendments to facilitate the objectives of the other bills which are part of this cognate debate. Mostly it creates a single statewide marine rescue service. That single statewide marine rescue service is supported by our fantastic volunteers at VMR Currumbin.

There is some concern that just two months from the deadline this government has not in fact created the Marine Rescue Queensland body that it needs to create. My volunteers are very concerned that that body has not been created yet. They are very concerned that the minister needs to do better when it comes to consultation with them. They would like more consultation on how that body is going to be created and how it is going to be set up.

I also note that the shadow minister has raised some very significant questions that the minister needs to answer in relation to how the volunteer marine rescue set-up will work and how Marine Rescue Queensland will be set up, particularly in relation to the funds that each of these volunteer organisations raised, as in the example that I gave. Our marine rescue volunteers volunteered their time to raise money to buy those jet skis.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bills having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (6.32 pm), in reply: I would like to thank all members who made a contribution to the debate on the bills. It is an honour to be involved with our emergency services personnel through various ministerial portfolios since 2016. I know the high regard in which they are all held in the community, and I know that everyone in this place is in agreement about their bravery and dedication to the people of Queensland. These bills are central to supporting those personnel and implementing recommendations made in a number of reviews to improve our emergency services and disaster management arrangements.

I will now address the specific issues raised by members during the debate. This bill will improve our emergency services organisations and lead to a safer community well into the future. A member mentioned Brisbane City Council's concerns about any legal and financial liability that may arise through State Emergency Service members who are employed by local governments. In response, this bill places the responsibility on the Police Commissioner to ensure the proper administration, management and functions of the SES. This includes establishing appropriate mechanisms that allow for the management and discipline, where necessary, for the members of the State Emergency Service.

The power to suspend is limited to suspending the person from duties as a State Emergency Service member. The bill does not prohibit an SES member who is suspended from their duties from continuing to be employed by a local government. Importantly, conditions of employment are ultimately a matter to be determined through existing employee-employer arrangements. The Queensland Police Service has undertaken to consult further with the Brisbane City Council, the Local Government Association of Queensland and other impacted local governments on this matter.

Members also raised a number of operational issues relating to Marine Rescue Queensland. The answers to many of these questions are, as a matter of common sense and practicality, not canvassed within the bill or its explanatory material, but nonetheless have either been made available to the public through the Marine Rescue Queensland information online or to those involved in the transition process.

It was also asked whether there is a contingency plan should the transition or transfer of assets not occur by 1 July. In response to this, the issue is straightforward. Marine rescue organisations that are unable to transition to Marine Rescue Queensland will continue to be supported to deliver marine rescue services under existing arrangements and by service level agreements until they are able to transition. Details about the transition of assets and funds from VMR squadrons or coastguard flotillas to Marine Rescue Queensland have been shared through in-person meetings with the Marine Rescue Implementation Program representatives as well as in the frequently asked questions and information section in the Marine Rescue Implementation Program newsletters. Coastguard Queensland flotillas

and VMR squadrons will join Marine Rescue Queensland as part of the Queensland Police Service from 1 July 2024 in a phased unit transition approach.

As part of the Marine Rescue Vessel Replacement Program, the Marine Rescue Implementation Program has engaged with coastguard flotillas and VMR squadron volunteers to induct and train the crew on new vessels and systems introduced with the delivery of the marine rescue vessel. If for any reason a unit selected in the first phase of transition or a subsequent phase of transition is unable to transition, they will continue to be supported to deliver marine rescue service under existing arrangements.

It was also asked whether there is a plan to ensure marine rescue services are continued in areas where sufficient volunteers do not transition to Marine Rescue Queensland. I can inform the House that the transition of a marine rescue service organisation to Marine Rescue Queensland is not mandatory, although it is expected that these organisations will see the benefits and advantages of transitioning to Marine Rescue Queensland and will do so willingly and eagerly. However, if there is an area where a marine rescue service does not immediately wish to transition then existing marine rescue services can will continue to operate. This has been the example around Australia where these transitions have taken place.

A member also queried what the cost of upgrades for marine rescue services would be and whether the amount is fully funded. The Queensland government has already committed over \$22 million to replace ageing vessels within volunteer rescue units, with several vessels now delivered and many in the final stages of construction right now. This is in addition to the \$27 million annual ongoing budget, fully funded, for Marine Rescue Queensland. Through this funding under the newly established Marine Rescue Queensland, the Queensland government can better support the ongoing replacement and maintenance of vessels and facilities across the state. This is a substantial uplift on the current funding available to these organisations through the existing service agreements.

Members asked how the boating public would be advised of arrangements in their local areas. Marine Rescue Queensland, as a newly established entity, is set to launch an extensive public awareness campaign. This campaign will target the local communities surrounding transitioned units through digital channels, print media and local events. Volunteers will continue to be engaged via collaborative face-to-face information sessions, online public information sessions, transition workshops and other direct communications.

A member asked when documents about the transition and agreements will be made available to organisations. The transition has a six-phase strategy focusing on aligning Marine Rescue Queensland's core services with the unique needs of each region and its units. The first phase involves a detailed assessment of selected units from each Marine Rescue Queensland region. This is very important to note. Every unit across this large state is different and they operate currently under different conditions and they serve different communities. Some may require more support through transition; some may require less support. To accommodate specific unit requirements, transitions will be customised. If the unit is not comfortable or ready to transition then they will not transition at that time.

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A member also asked what vessel logging system will be used. I can inform the House that transition units will initially continue to operate with their existing vessel management systems, with a new comprehensive vessel management system being developed. Once this work is completed, all transitioned and transitioning units will be provided with all of the required support and training for the system prior to it going live.

A member asked how potentially three separate marine rescue organisations will be managed. As previously mentioned, the government is actively working with coastguard flotillas and VMR squadrons and will continue to support those units until the transition is complete.

The impacts of those services joining the Queensland Police Service was also raised. This government has always backed the Queensland Police Service and emergency services, and these reforms are fully funded. It is a massive \$578 million reform package that delivers more than 500 additional FTE to the front line. To be clear, these changes will not take any police officers or staff members away from the front line or from supporting frontline policing.

Finally, I will address the comments from a member who expressed his concerns about powers of entry afforded to Marine Rescue Queensland members under the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill. As I understand it, the member contended there should be no power for a Marine Rescue Queensland member who is trying to resolve a dangerous situation to enter onto any place apart from a vessel. This ignores the circumstance a Marine Rescue Queensland member may find themselves in when

performing their duties. The explanatory notes clearly outline where this power may be exercised, including an example where a member may need to gain urgent access to a jetty to fend off a boat that is moving dangerously close to the jetty and is threatening to cause damage to the structure if the member does not intervene. That is a clear example of where this power could, and should, be used.

I understand that my colleague the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services has already addressed queries with respect to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 during her contribution and will address any further matters during consideration in detail.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the personnel who worked in the development of this bill. In particular I would like to mention members of the Queensland Police Service executive: Commissioner—and former special coordinator—Steve Gollschewski, acting assistant commissioners Marcus Hill and John Bosnjak, acting special coordinator Kristyn Miller, SES Chief Officer Mark Armstrong and Marine Rescue Queensland Chief Officer Tony Wulff. I acknowledge members of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services executive: Acting Commissioner Steve Smith, Deputy Commissioner Kevin Walsh and Chief Officer Ben Millington. I acknowledge members of the State Emergency Service: Acting Assistant Commissioner Brian Cox and business reform coordinator Steve Dabinett. I mention members of Marine Rescue Queensland: reform coordinator Greg 'Ringo' Ringuet and the whole team from the Marine Rescue Implementation Program. I acknowledge members of the Emergency Services Reform Program: director Greg Obst and senior legal officer Reanna Fogarty. I mention the Queensland Police Service Policy and Performance staff: Inspector John 'Hendo' Henderson, principal strategy officer Laura Manley and Senior Sergeant Michelle Barry. I acknowledge QRA staff, including manager Jade McKennariey, principal legislation officer Mahala Butler, staff of the Rural Fire and Fire and Rescue Services who worked on these reforms and members of the QFES Independent Review team. I mention staff from QFES, including Carly Osborne, Jane Sprott, Deena Dalton, Joe Meagher and staff from the RIT who have worked hard to implement the changes that these bills will bring.

I would also like to thank the key stakeholders we have worked with for a long time throughout this process, including: Eddie Cowie from SES Volunteer Association, Graham Kingston and the whole team at VMRAQ, Allan Tennent and the team at Coast Guard Brisbane, John Oliver and Tony Cooke from UFUQ, Shaune Toohey and the Together union RFS branch, Ian Pike and the team at the RFBAQ and the Queensland Police Union. Most importantly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank every emergency service worker, volunteer, officer and paid staff member for what they do to keep Queensland safe every day.

I would also like to comment on the history of this moment. It is not too often that governments create new government organisations. We are seeing the creation, for the first time in Queensland history, of Marine Rescue Queensland, a government agency that will be supported, run and staffed by volunteers. We are seeing a transformation of fire services in Queensland with the creation of a Fire Department and, of course, the recognition of State Emergency Service as its own entity hosted by the police department. There is an element of history here. People who have served in these organisations for many years—some of them for many decades—will obviously have a lot of memories about the organisations they have been part of to date. I know they all have a lot of aspiration and excitement for the future because these reforms build an outstanding foundation for better fire and emergency services, both now and well into the future.

The government's paramount commitment has been to keep our community safe. These bills demonstrate that very commitment. I commend the bill to the House.

Question put—That the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the State Emergency Service Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Question put—That the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill

Clauses 1 to 39, as read, agreed to. Schedule, as read, agreed to.

State Emergency Service Bill

Clauses 1 to 57, as read, agreed to. Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Marine Rescue Queensland Bill

Clauses 1 to 33, as read, agreed to. Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

Clauses 1 to 30, as read, agreed to.

Clause 31—



Mr LAST (6.49 pm): When it comes to emergency management in Queensland, whether it be police, fire, ambulance or, in this case, our rural fire brigade volunteers, we need to ensure they are supported, resourced and, more importantly, provided with the legislative authority that they need to perform their jobs, including being protected. Who are the best people placed to provide the information that we as legislators need to get it right? That answer is simple—the volunteers and the organisations themselves. That fact underpins why the opposition are opposing the establishment of a fire service in Queensland comprising Queensland Fire and Rescue and the Rural Fire Service.

If this government were serious about getting this right, if they were fair dinkum, they would have consulted appropriately and allowed sufficient time for brigades and members to have input into this bill. To allow seven days for submissions is a joke and an insult to all those volunteers who give up their time and put their lives on the line to keep us safe. The fact that so many of our rural fire volunteers have contacted members of the opposition to express their concerns reaffirms our position to oppose this clause. The government have had ample time to get this right and, in their haste to ram this bill through the parliament today, they have come up short.

It is patently obvious there is widespread concern and misgivings within our rural fire brigade volunteers regarding the establishment of a single fire service in Queensland comprising Queensland Fire and Rescue and the Rural Fire Service. We cannot afford to lose any of our volunteers. We need our Rural Fire Service, as we do the Queensland fire service. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to both attract and retain our volunteer firefighters, and there is no surer way to losing them than giving them an uncertain future.

The opposition have identified a number of issues with this bill and, despite our calls for clarification from the minister, a number of those concerns remain unresolved. We are concerned about the command structure, the expenditure authority and delegation, the rural fire brigade funds and the legal status of these brigades when they transition to the new department. They are just a few of the issues raised by the opposition, and again during this debate.

Our rural fires deserve recognition, support and resources. More importantly, they deserve clarity and a structure that values them and allows them to continue providing the service that they provide. This bill needs to go back to the drawing board. There needs to be proper consultation with our rural firefighters, and we need to get this right for the sake of the Rural Fire Service and for the sake of Queensland.

Ms BOYD: The member for Burdekin has acknowledged the positive elements of this bill, saying the civil liability protections for volunteers are perhaps the most important of those elements. This is true, but now the opposition is rejecting the very clause of the bill that provides those protections. Clause 31 establishes Rural Fire Service Queensland as a fire service and formally recognises brigades and

their volunteer members as part of the RFSQ. It is this legislative recognition of the vital functions that volunteers perform on behalf of the state that enhances the civil liability protections that apply to volunteers under the Public Sector Act 2022 and the Civil Liability Act 2003. Without this clause, those protections will not become law.

I would like to acknowledge the volunteers we have in the gallery with us today. I acknowledge Matt, who was talking to me earlier this evening about being on the fireground and being threatened with a knife. I reflect on the comment that Jordan made to me where she told me a colleague of hers was threatened with a gun. These are protections that our rural fires need as they do the important work to keep us safe. It is unfathomable to me that the opposition is recklessly opposing providing volunteers with these very protections, but that is their record. They have no respect for our hardworking Rural Fire Service volunteers and would disadvantage them just to score a cheap political point.

The member for Burdekin opposes the establishment of the Rural Fire Service Queensland and Queensland Fire and Rescue as two separate entities within the Queensland Fire Department. This is inconsistent with the findings of the KPMG independent review which recommended establishing a new integrated department. When fire and rescue services respond to emergencies—whether that is bushfires, structural fires or road traffic incidences—that response requires coordination. The structures proposed in this bill support an integrated fire service that jointly recognises the skills, the expertise and the dedication of both professional firefighters and Rural Fire Service volunteers.

This structure is the best fit for Queensland because having a red truck and a yellow truck responding to an incident is better than having just one truck because two hoses fighting any fire is better than one hose, but two separate fire departments will never be better than one coordinated and integrated one with two distinct entities. The proposed structure supports separate budget arrangements for the Rural Fire Service and the Fire and Rescue Services. Regarding the funds currently held by individuals brigades—as I have said so many times—those funds will remain theirs. Those funds will continue to be operated under Brigade Management Rules. Moving forward, if a brigade sells equipment or vehicles that they have bought, those funds will be quarantined for future use by the brigade.

Mr HEAD: I too rise to speak on clause 31 of this bill, which the opposition will be opposing. I will second the comments of the member for Burdekin and the comments made throughout the debate on this bill. A lot was said about this clause and what this will do to our rural fires.

Ultimately, unfortunately, no certainty is given to the many volunteer rural fires as to what the future may hold. Across the vast electorate of Callide, there are many rural fire stations that this will certainly will impact, whether it be Mount Perry, Builyan, Eidsvold, Goovigen or Brigalow. In my conversations with these local rural fires across the electorate of Callide, they have shared with me the difficulty in recruiting volunteers and the fact that, at times, they have not been properly supported by the government in the past. The question is certainly whether this change will make any difference to their communities as far as resourcing goes. We do not want to see the government stripping away their rights, as we have seen many a time.

A government member interjected.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection from a member who is not even in his seat. I would have happily spoken in detail about this legislation but the debate was guillotined and I could not talk in detail about the consequences of this legislation to my community. I would have happily spoken for a lot longer. There are plenty of rural fires across the electorate of Callide who have raised concerns about this bill, which I would have loved to have spoken about in great depth. With that, I note that we will be opposing this clause.

Division: Question put—That clause 31, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 48:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 36:

LNP, 32—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Crawford, Nicholls; Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Bates.

Resolved in the affirmative.


Clause 31, as read, agreed to.

Debate, on motion of Ms Boyd, adjourned.

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ADJOURNMENT

Parliament, Guillotining of Debates

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.03 pm): I just got guillotined by the Labor majority in this House. I was unable to speak on the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Labor Party used their numbers in here yet again to prevent members like me from speaking up for my community. Well, I will have my speech now.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, please leave the chamber quietly and members who are not in their seats will stop interjecting.

Mr Sullivan: It's not our fault you can't put yourself up the list.

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

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Stafford.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not helpful.

Mr LISTER: However, I do say that the guillotining and the dropping off the list is what is going to happen to some other people if they do not start governing this state properly.


One example of that is the bill that was just guillotined and which I was prevented from speaking on—the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. One of the things which I have watched with great irritation in the course of the debate on that bill was government members rolling their eyes and sniggering over our questions about what will happen to the funds that have been raised by individual rural fire brigades. Rural fire brigades have raised these funds with lamington drives, barbecues, fundraising and so forth. I understand that the commissioner at the public hearing of the committee considering this bill was unable to assure the committee that the funds would not become government funds. Looking at the bill and the explanatory notes and the explanations we have had so far—

Mr de BRENNI: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It has been brought to my attention that the member is referring directly to a bill before the House. I would ask you to provide him guidance in respect of anticipation.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): I will get some advice. Member, I ask you to stay away from any bills currently being mentioned in the House.

Mr LISTER: I will rise at a more appropriate occasion and speak about how I was guillotined then.

Small Business Month

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (7.06 pm): May is Small Business Month and it is an opportunity to celebrate the almost half a million small businesses that make up Queensland—in fact, 97 per cent of all Queensland businesses. On Wednesday, 15 May, the Brisbane Inner West Chamber of Commerce, along with the Westside Business Heart, will be joining up for the first time to host a small business lunch. Guest speakers include me—I will be talking about all the offerings that the Queensland government has for our small businesses—and our Small Business Commissioner, Dominique Lamb, who will be talking about her role in dispute resolution, mediation and advocacy. She is fantastic. We have had her out before.

The event includes lunch at Zegatos in Ashgrove, which is fantastic, and commences from midday. You can register from the Brisbane Inner West Chamber of Commerce website. At the event,


we will formally launch our Cooper Small Business Awards. Last year our office held the inaugural Cooper Small Business of the Year Award. It was a really popular event and a wonderful way to celebrate and support our local businesses and give them the recognition they deserve and need sometimes to keep their doors open.

Over 500 local businesses were nominated, and I want to recognise a couple of them tonight. Jordan Mostert from Just Movement personal training is fantastic. He is a young fellow who picked up our young entrepreneur of the year award, with nominees making statements like, 'Jordan has created a wonderful community of like-minded people who want to look after their health but are not traditional gym goers.' I am sure we can all relate to that. Then there is Pramesh and his family who run Cafe Tara, a well-established and loved local cafe. One nominee said, 'They are a great small business with friendly staff and great coffee and are always welcoming.' Our Small Business Awards will officially kick off on Wednesday, 15 May. I encourage all of our businesses across Paddington, Ashgrove, The Gap, Milton, Rosalie, Newmarket, Bardon and Kelvin Grove to get in touch with my office and pick up their Cooper Small Business of the Year Award pack.

While I am on my feet and talking about small businesses, I have to raise my concerns again about a pending DA before Brisbane City Council for the McDonald's restaurant application for the Ashgrove area. Many of us do not mind a bit of Mickey D's. However, over 2,000 Ashgrove residents—a third of our suburb in Ashgrove—have reached out to our office against this application. If council does approve this, it will be an absolute small business killer in the location in which it is planned. I am not against new restaurants and not against development, but this is a huge McDonald's. They are anticipating over 850 cars a day on a residential street where small businesses are already struggling. This is complete lunacy, and council really need to intervene and stand up for what the community wants and reject this application.

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Road Infrastructure

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (7.09 pm): With the budget only six weeks away, I would like to bring to the House's attention some issues in my electorate that I would love to see addressed. I notice that the main roads minister is here. Most of these issues refer to road issues in my electorate. This will possibly be the seventh or eighth time that I have stood up, before the budget, to speak about the intersection at the corner of South Pine Road and Stafford Road at Everton Park, right outside my office. That intersection is a major choke point for the north-west suburbs. Everyone who travels from Cashmere, Brendale, Warner, Albany Creek, Eatons Hill or McDowall and passes through that area on their way to work constantly complains about the delays. The intersection is not square. The plans have been ready for many years—in fact, since before my time. My predecessor, Murray Watt—I will give him credit for that—had the plans drawn up for that intersection, yet to date there is still no funding to fix up that choke point in the north-western suburbs.

The other issue causing concern in my electorate is the surface of Old Northern Road immediately outside the Bunyaville Conservation Park, which is right on the border of Brisbane City and Moreton Bay, right through the Jinker Track. That road was resurfaced around 10 years ago but it is breaking up again. Potholes are being filled every day. It is a major arterial road that deserves the best surface. I am asking again for the government to provide funding for that particular road not only for people's comfort but also because it is a road safety issue and there is the potential for damage to cars as they navigate the potholes.

The third road issue I would like to bring to the attention of the House is not in my electorate but immediately outside my electorate and that is the Linkfield Road overpass. Funding for this overpass has been promised by the state government on numerous occasions. It is frequently hit by trucks on the main highway, which then closes the bridge or makes it not as accessible as normal and limits the traffic flow there. This issue needs to be resolved. It is in the electorate of Aspley, the minister's own seat, and all he does is blame others, including the federal government which has provided the funding. Our electorate deserves better roads.

Nambour Community; Anzac Day

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (7.12 pm): I rise to speak to the House of the many happenings in the Nambour community. Firstly, I would like to inform the House of the 40th anniversary of Nambour Little Athletics, a significant achievement for the club. It was a damp day, but it certainly did not dampen anyone's enthusiasm. I would like to congratulate foundation member Keffed Cordwell to whom I had the privilege of presenting a 40-year badge. He is a stalwart of the club and maintains the grounds to an Olympic standard. I would like to recognise the 13th birthday of the Nambour Men's Shed. It was a


pleasure to enjoy a lunchtime barbecue with President Bob Ward and members, as well as foundation members Mark Wall, Jim Simonsen, Col Tessmer, Alan Cavanagh, Tony Bell, Wayne Ratcliffe, Shane Ratcliffe and Tony Oakhill. They contribute much to our community.

On a sombre note, I attended the dedication of the memorial for Ben 'BJ' Hunter. BJ was a young man whose life was tragically cut short. He was a promising young footballer at the mighty Nambour Crushers Rugby League Club and a hard worker on a local lychee farm. I commend the efforts of Tarsh Gardner and Leith Hensley from the club for pulling together the community, including the Men's Shed which made the bench and others who created a lovely garden of reflection. I was touched by the humility of Natalie Gorzalka and Chris Hunter, Ben's family, in accepting this memorial to their son.

Anzac Day is a national day of mourning and remembrance for our fallen service men and women. This year is the 80th anniversary of the heroic act of Pilot Officer Jim Hocking. Whilst conducting night training, the plane he was captaining suffered catastrophic engine failure. Jim stayed at the controls while his six crewmates parachuted to safety. He manoeuvred the failing aircraft away from the English village of March, also saving those souls. I thank our police, QFES, QAS, SES, RFB and other volunteer groups that ensured the many services in our region went well.

In Nicklin, we remember our fallen. We remember all of our community. We band together and we commit ourselves to fulfilling their legacy.

Calliope State School; Fire Ants; Beef Week

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.15 pm): Today, on behalf of the Calliope State School and the Calliope community, I table a petition with over 500 signatures calling on the government to fix the disaster that is the Calliope State School pick-up and drop-off zone. The Calliope community is a fantastic and proud community, and the families behind the school and the teachers and staff at the school do a fantastic job advocating on behalf of the students to ensure they have quality facilities as well as educating their students very well. They do a great job. For many years they have pleaded with the government to fix the Calliope pick-up and drop-off zone but, unfortunately, to date it is still a disaster. It sits on the Dawson Highway. Many cars queue there whilst heavy trucks come and go, some loaded with explosives as they head out to the mines. This is a critical issue for the Calliope State School.

Given that the budget will be delivered in only a few weeks, I call on the government to take note of that petition and ensure funds are allocated to fix this problem. It is a student safety issue that the community of Calliope has been fighting for resolution of for a very long time. I am not going to give up this fight until we see the problem fixed because the Calliope community need it and deserve it. With this petition, they have put their name to saying that they need it and they absolutely deserve to get it.


Tabled paper: ePetition (4026-24): Sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Head, from 507 petitioners, requesting the House to improve the Calliope State School drop-off and pick-up area for vehicles and pedestrians including more parking or set down spaces.

On another note, fire ants are now on the doorstep of the Callide electorate. When I came to this parliament, not that long ago, they were hundreds of kilometres away. Now they are tens of kilometres from the electorate of Callide and that is an absolutely disgrace. The minister for agriculture has been responsible for the department overseeing the so-called Fire Ant Eradication Program that has not eradicated fire ants. It does not even come close to eradicating fire ants. They have spread at an alarming rate. I tell you now, if we get a flood and they end up going down the Murray-Darling Basin it is all over, Rover. There would be no getting them under control then.

We need to get this program under control now. The Labor government has failed it for many years, for far too long, and the current minister for agriculture has been responsible for this program for years and years. He is incompetent, he is incapable and he should not be a minister at all, let alone the member for Ferny Grove. Nelson Savanh is a great candidate for Ferny Grove. I will back him every day of the week to win at the election and see this minister sacked from the parliament.

On a lighter note, Beef Week is next week in Central Queensland and it is going to be a fantastic event. If you are not doing anything next week, make sure you get up and get a steak into you. Come and celebrate all that is beef in Central Queensland. If you have had a great steak lately, I dare say it has come from the electorate of Callide. Get some more steak on your plate and have a good time next week at Beef Week.

Anzac Day

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (7.18 pm): Each year, as we solemnly commemorate the anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli, at Anzac Day ceremonies we see crowds grow in strength and number to pay tribute to those who have served our nation. This was very much on display in my electorate of Sandgate where, in the course of last week, I had the pleasure of attending many of the observances conducted by local schools. I would like to thank Labor's candidate for Sandgate, Bisma Asif, and those school leaders who laid wreaths on my behalf at the events I was unable to attend personally. It is great to see the Anzac traditions being upheld so respectfully by the students of today.


This year held particular significance for my community as it marked the 100th anniversary of the Sandgate War Memorial's dedication in the heart of our town. Residents of the Sandgate electorate came out in force to pay their respects at the Sandgate Memorial Dawn Service. It was a sombre ceremony made special with musical performances by students from St Patrick's College as well as a haunting rendition of *I Am Australian*, by Josh Butterworth, DeeJay Sandy and Derek Oram at the conclusion of the service.

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While listening, I thought of the time when Eric Bogle played at the adjacent Sandgate Town Hall. I was present while he performed his classic *The Band Played Waltzing Matilda* with the line, 'But as year follows year, more old men disappear, someday no one will march there at all'. Thankfully that is no longer true with record numbers of residents both young and old turning out at the Sandgate commemorative march to participate, support and remember those who served. Thank you to Andrew Law, Jim Lakey, Paul Harris, Chris Hawkes, the rest of the Sandgate RSL Sub Branch committee and those volunteers who put tireless hours into organising both these events.

The day was rounded off with my personal favourite Anzac Day event, the RAAF memorial sunset service in Brighton. This service at the memorial on the site of the World War II-era gatehouse of the Sandgate RAAF Station allows residents and patients from the Brighton Health Campus to pay their respects as the sun sets over the Brighton foreshore with yet another terrific display from the Australian Air Force cadets. On behalf of the members of the local community who joined this observance, thanks to Wing Commander Tony Lee OAM from the Australian Air Force Cadets national headquarters and Flying Officer Janelle Lee, Commanding Officer of the 224 squadron, AAFC, for putting on this special service with the support of a huge contingent of cadets. Lest we forget.

Kangaroo Point, Public Transport


 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (7.21 pm): Kangaroo Point is one of the most densely populated suburbs in Queensland, home to over 11,000 people. Despite thousands of people trying to get to work, uni and appointments every day, Kangaroo Point has an appalling public transport system. Kangaroo Point is surrounded by the Brisbane River but no CityCats stop at Kangaroo Point. Locals instead have to take their chances with the small and often crowded Cross River ferries and CityHoppers. Locals tell me they often cannot even get on a ferry as they are often too crowded. If you want to get any further down the river than the inner city, you have to get on a ferry, get off the ferry and then wait for a CityCat.

The Dockside terminal has just reopened after a much needed upgrade and campaign from the community, but are CityCats stopping there? No. In fact, the north side of the river has over twice as many CityCat stops as the south side. On top of this, the bus service is appalling. Only a handful of buses stop in Kangaroo Point and only one bus—the 234—stops in the Kangaroo Point peninsula. Outside of peak times, nearly all of these buses only run hourly. While the Dockside terminal was being upgraded, the 27 shuttle bus was helping to get people into the CBD. So many locals have told me that the 27 was a great service, often packed and, unlike the 234, actually ran on time. Now the 27 bus has been cancelled, locals have no choice but to rely on patchy and often late buses, or take their chances on the ferry. Locals have been campaigning to bring back the 27 bus. We urge both the City Council and the state Minister for Transport to take this matter seriously.

Of course none of these issues are the fault of the bus drivers or the ferry captains who work very hard to get us to where we need to go. The fault lies with the Brisbane City Council, the transport committee chair and the Minister for Transport who have treated the 11,000 residents of Kangaroo Point as unimportant. I am personally affected by this laughable public transport system. Members might remember that my car is now permanently out of action and for the last few months I have had to rely on the public transport system to get around. There are no CityCats I can catch and the buses are infrequent and often running late. This morning I caught the 234 from Kangaroo Point to the CBD to get to parliament and, of course, the 234 was running late. This gave me a chance to chat with fellow commuters who were waiting for the bus, many of whom said they were sick of the dire public transport system in Kangaroo Point. If the bus is running late again tomorrow and I am late to parliament, who

do we have to thank for that? We will thank the Labor transport minister and the LNP Lord Mayor who have left Kangaroo Point with a substandard public transport system.


Liberal National Party, Performance

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (7.24 pm): The upcoming election will be close and the polls are currently suggesting that by the end of October, Queenslanders may wake up to find the leader of the LNP as the premier. What will that mean for our community? The truth is he will not tell us. When journalists ask him about his policies, he dodges their questions and after 3½ years in the job he has not outlined any positive plans for the state. It is a small target strategy with slick lines but no policy detail. What we do know is that he has been very critical of our government's decision to make sure that the royalty rate mining companies pay for resources increases in line with global prices. These changes mean that Queenslanders will reap the benefit of higher prices for the resources that we all own. This has enabled us to increase funding to the health system and to deliver much needed infrastructure and funding of vital government services.

The Leader of the Opposition has said that he will renegotiate with mining companies so that more money goes towards their bottom line, rather than supporting government services and infrastructure in Queensland and, of course, in Stretton. It means that unless the leader of the LNP plans on increasing other taxes like stamp duty perhaps, he will create a big hole in the Queensland budget. His track record as a minister in the Campbell Newman government tells us that he is likely to try and fill this hole by cutting government services. We all remember what he and his colleagues did the last time they were in power. They closed schools; they closed youth mental health facilities; they packed more kids into classrooms; they sacked health workers; they cut health services; they sacked police officers and made them pay for their own protective equipment. In all, they sacked more than 14,000 government workers and we are still dealing with the flow-on effects of those cuts.

As a local member, I genuinely fear that the investments that we have made in local health care and schools will be scaled back or worse—cut, sack and sold by the Leader of the Opposition. The new Eight Mile Plains satellite hospital which is due to open at the end of May will be a game changer for our community. It will mean locals will have access to a minor injury and illness clinic without having to go to the emergency rooms at QEII or Logan Hospital. The LNP have been continually attacking these satellite hospitals, and everyone knows the reason—it is because if they have the chance they will privatise them. In addition, the Kuraby level crossing is something that my community has been very much looking forward to. It is something else that might end up on the LNP chopping block. These are the kind of local investments that we need to protect, and that will be my focus over the coming months.

Oakey, Fire Ants


 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.26 pm): Late on Thursday 18 April, I was alerted to a fire ant outbreak on federal grounds in Oakey by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. It was apparently two days after the fire ants were detected, according to the Premier's answer to a question without notice this morning. The outbreak was confirmed as being located on the grounds of the Army Aviation Centre on the outskirts of Oakey's town centre. This news was very disturbing, as at no time before had fire ants been found in the Condamine electorate, with Gatton being the closest location to Oakey with recorded infestations. Since then, we have learnt that over 100 nests have been found within the Army Aviation Centre and subsequently destroyed.

On Monday this week, I attended a briefing with representatives from the department and the national red imported fire ant eradication team who provided me with comprehensive information regarding the outbreak and the destruction of nests, which was appreciated. The fire ant nests have been present for approximately two years and the eradication team are confident that they have confined them to the Army Aviation Centre's grounds. Time will tell whether that prediction is correct. There will be at least 18 months of ongoing monitoring by the fire ant eradication team and restrictions on entry.

The most disappointing part of the whole situation is the lack of a management plan, consultation, communication and information provided to the local authorities, business owners and the community of Oakey by this government. Even the neighbouring residents to the base did not receive information until many days after the nests were found. This is, yet again, another failure by this government to inform or communicate. Until recently, there was no signage displayed alerting locals and travellers and no protocols or processes advertised as to what to do if you find a nest in your backyard. This has created a great deal of distress and anxiety in a community that has had more than its fair share of environmental issues which have damaged its reputation.

Oakey is situated within an agricultural region and therefore concerns were held about the geographic location of fire ant nests and whether they had spread outside the base. The close proximity to Oak Creek, especially given recent rainfall events, was concerning farmers, as was the potential of soil carrying fire ants being washed into the creek and then downstream and flowing into the Condamine River and subsequently the Balonne. I would hope for—and request—an open investigation into the source of the infestation and for this information to be publicly available with ongoing communication and information provided to the community regarding any developments and concerns the eradication team may have. To date, this has been almost non-existent. It is important the Oakey community feels confident that the threat of further infestations will be investigated thoroughly.

Rocklea Railway Station

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (7.30 pm): Cross River Rail is a bold and ambitious project envisaged by my government. The development will articulate a 40-year blueprint which will generate wider economic benefits for South-East Queensland through the delivery of new rail connections. The innovative and economic development corridor will incorporate a series of major clusters of economic activity and opportunities centred around Cross River Rail stations and linking to major facilities such as hospitals and universities. The project includes the delivery of extensive rebuild works for seven suburban stations between Dutton Park and Salisbury, with three of these stations—Salisbury, Moorooka and Rocklea—in my electorate. These rebuilds will significantly upgrade passenger safety and accessibility with new overpasses, lifts, kiss-and-ride infrastructure and bike facilities at each of the new stations.

Tonight I want to speak about the Rocklea station and the weatherboard outbound waiting shelter's historic connections as has been identified under the heritage impact assessments undertaken by Cross River Rail. As part of the heritage assessment it was determined that, unfortunately, the timber footbridge from Rocklea station was unable to be incorporated into the new works. Nevertheless, the footbridge has been photographed and documented as an archival recording. The final design for the new station incorporated reflective elements of the earlier historic installation.

Rocklea station has served the local community's transport needs since it opened in 1885, which is almost 140 years ago. The history buffs from the Railway Preservation Society of Queensland have accessed State Archives in their quest for verification of its history. They located the original drawings from 1884-85 for the Rocklea station which were reflective of the character, size and construction of the shelter. The original shelter was a timber weatherboard, skillion-roof open shelter with an attached store. The design included ladder frame brackets and struts, with the building sitting on timber stumps.

The original shelter was carefully dismantled by the rebuild team. The Construction Training Centre facility at Salisbury provided the space where a cohort of young professionals working with Constructionarium Australia rebuilt the shelter so it could be reinstated at the Rocklea station. The rebuild of the shelter was recently completed and I was thrilled to attend the official opening of the shelter where I had the opportunity to speak with the team that made the magic happen.

The House adjourned at 7.33 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, 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, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Zanow