

MONDAY, 28 JULY 2025

ESTIMATES—GOVERNANCE, ENERGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE— QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Jon Krause, Scenic Rim)

Committee Members

Mr MJ Crandon MP—Chair

Ms B Asif MP

Mr JT Barounis MP

Hon. MC de Brenni MP

Ms KJ Morton MP

Mr CG Whiting MP

Members in Attendance

Hon. MT Ryan MP

In Attendance

Hon. P Weir, Speaker

Ms C Kemp, Executive Officer, Office of the Speaker

Mr N Laurie, Clerk of the Parliament

Mr C Atkinson, Director, Corporate Services and Electorate Office Liaison

Ms M Harmer, Director, Property and Facility Services

Ms B Watson, Director, Assembly and Committee Services

The committee met at 2.00 pm.



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Good afternoon. I declare this hearing of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee open. I acknowledge the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people of this state and their elders past, present and emerging. I also acknowledge the former members of this parliament who have participated in and nourished the democratic institutions of this state. Finally, I acknowledge the people of this state, whether they have been born here or have chosen to make this state their home and whom we represent to make laws and conduct other business for the peace, welfare and good government of this state.

I am Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim and Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Under the provisions of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, I will preside over today's hearing. The members of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee are: Mr Michael Crandon, chair and member for Coomera; Mr Chris Whiting, deputy chair and member for Bancroft; Ms Bisma Asif, member for Sandgate; Mr John Barounis, member for Maryborough; the Hon. Mick de Brenni, member for Springwood, who is substituting for Mr Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba; and Ms Kendall Morton, member for Caloundra. The committee is joined by other members who have been granted leave to attend and ask questions at the hearing today.

I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at the Deputy Speaker's discretion or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised its proceedings to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat. Staff who are assisting our witnesses here today are permitted to use personal electronic devices in the chamber. I ask all present to ensure that phones and other electronic devices are switched to silent mode or turned off if not in use. I ask all members to please ensure that is the case as well. I also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in this chamber.

The House has determined the program for the committee's estimates hearing. Today the committee will examine the proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 for the portfolio of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the times specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage. This session will examine the proposed expenditure of the Speaker until 3.30 pm.

I remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing orders and rules of the Legislative Assembly. On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Speaker, the Clerk of the Parliament, officials and parliamentary officers, and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the Speaker or the Clerk. Please remember to press your microphones on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of the Queensland parliament open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Mr Speaker, if you wish, you may make an opening statement of around five minutes.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you to the members of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee and the guest members for attending the hearing today. Thank you to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for chairing today's hearing and assisting me in chairing the remaining hearings over the next fortnight. I am pleased to be here this afternoon at the 2025-26 budget estimates hearing for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in my capacity as Speaker.

As I do in the House every morning, I would like to start by acknowledging the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people of this state and their elders past, present and emerging. I also acknowledge the former members of this parliament who have participated in and nourished the democratic institutions of this state. Finally, I acknowledge the people of this state, whether they have been born here or have chosen to make this state their home and whom we represent to make laws and conduct other business for the peace, welfare and good government of this state.

I wish to welcome to the front table Mr Neil Laurie, the Clerk of the Parliament; Ms Coral-Leah Kemp from the Office of the Speaker; and other officers of the Parliamentary Service who will be assisting in answering your questions today regarding the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025. As members of parliament, we are assisted by the hardworking staff of the Parliamentary Service. As Speaker, I am exceptionally proud of the staff and the high standard of service that they continually deliver.

The past year has been another busy one for the service, with the state election being held in October followed by the opening of the 58th Parliament in November. The Parliamentary Service did an incredible job in preparing every aspect, overseen by the Clerk, Mr Neil Laurie, and the Deputy Clerk, Mr Michael Ries, who stepped up when the Clerk was injured.

As Speaker, I enjoy seeing students and members of the public visit Parliament House. Last financial year we welcomed 77,900 visitors to the parliamentary precinct including 17,485 students. Additionally, our education team conducted 37 virtual activities and 30 activities in regional locations, reaching over 2,000 participants.

Last year the parliamentary committee office maintained a high level of activity, overseeing 161 public hearings and briefings, with 30 held outside Brisbane; conducted 205 private meetings; processed 3,735 submissions; and examined 31 bills.

This term, Mr Deputy Speaker, you have assisted me in hosting numerous diplomatic and consular visits representing Japan, Korea, China, Canada, Romania, New Zealand, Philippines, Vanuatu, Spain, Denmark, Taiwan, Norway, Solomon Islands and Qatar. In May, I was honoured to

host the Hon. Stephen Felix, Speaker of the Parliament of Vanuatu, and a delegation of members to co-sign the new 10-year partnership agreement. I also have recently been in discussions with the Parliament of Papua New Guinea about the re-signing of our parliamentary agreement.

I will now turn to the 2025-26 estimates for this parliament. As mentioned in my speech on the budget, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025 provides for total funding of \$146.5 million for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service for the current financial year. The majority of additional funding approved for 2025-26 will be directed to a range of significant capital programs.

Some of the headline projects include \$28.1 million over four years to deliver the remaining stages of the annexe refurbishment program. Works will focus on staff workplaces on levels 3, 5 and 6 of the annexe, together with external spaces on level 3; \$2.9 million over four years to upgrade electorate office security and access control systems; \$11.2 million over three years to deliver priority electorate office relocation and refurbishment projects, targeting approximately 31 sites—almost one-third of the electorate office portfolio; and \$1.6 million to replace the existing AV broadcast system used to publicly broadcast parliamentary proceedings and committee hearings.

It is a privilege to be here today appearing before this committee. Once again, thank you to the committee for your work in scrutinising the budget. I look forward to addressing any questions you may have.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Members, we will now move to questioning on this bill. We will go to non-government members first. I call the deputy chair.

Mr WHITING: I will defer to the Manager of Opposition Business and member for Springwood.

Mr de BRENNI: My question is of the Clerk. I refer to page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements for the Legislative Assembly. Can you advise the committee whether the additional transparency measure of allowing crossbench members to ask a prehearing question on notice regardless of whether they are on the portfolio committee has been retained for this year's estimates?

Mr Laurie: No. Sessional orders for each estimates are determined by the House and, unlike last year, there was no provision made.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Clerk, can you advise if there has been a substantially greater amount of time to allow for scrutiny in this year's estimates?

Mr Laurie: You will have to forgive me for not tallying up the hours precisely. My overall impression is that the estimates are spread out over more days, but it is roughly equivalent in terms of time.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Mr Clerk; that is my understanding as well. Can you advise if the estimates arrangements, as you said, agreed to by the House and implemented by committees, continue to provide for government members to ask government ministers questions?

Mr Laurie: Yes.

Mr de BRENNI: Can you confirm it is the case that the only main change to the 2025 estimates arrangements compared to those of last year is that it is to be chaired by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly?

Mr Laurie: There are two changes that I think are significant. The first is the chairing of the committee by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker; and the other was that in 2024, but not previously, there had been a strict allocation of time between non-government and government members. They are the two significant changes.

Mr de BRENNI: I assume you are referring to the requirement last year that 70 per cent of the time allocated was for non-government questions?

Mr Laurie: That is correct. In the 2024 estimates there was a 70-30 split between non-government and government.

Mr de BRENNI: That is not being provided for 2025?

Mr Laurie: No.

Mr de BRENNI: Can you please confirm that the individuals required, under the new standing orders moved by the LNP Leader of the House, to chair all estimates hearings are in fact the LNP member for Condamine, who was nominated by the LNP Premier and LNP Deputy Premier to be the current Speaker, and the LNP member for Scenic Rim, who was appointed by the LNP Premier as the Deputy Speaker?

Mr Laurie: Yes, that is a matter of fact.

Mr de BRENNI: I further refer to pages 1 and 4 of the SDS regarding parliamentary committees. Mr Clerk, can you confirm that the chairpersons of portfolio committees appointed by the Legislative Assembly are all members of the LNP?

Mr Laurie: Of portfolio committees, yes.

Mr de BRENNI: I table an article dated 13 December 2020 titled 'David Crisafulli: "Broken" Queensland Budget Estimates system "in need of repair"'. In this article the now Premier outlined his plans for a reformed estimates, outlining three recommendations. Please provide a copy of this to the Clerk. Please turn to page 4. At page 4 the now Premier outlined his plans for a reformed estimates, outlining three recommendations. Mr Clerk, would you please read the highlighted section on page 4 of the article for the benefit of the committee.

Mr Laurie: Certainly. I will start with the preliminary—

Some of the changes to be examined could include:

- increasing the time available to examine expenditure to ensure adequate questioning can occur;
- an Opposition or cross bench member to chair the committees to help ensure a fairer go;
- limiting the opportunity for 'Dorothy Dixer' questions from Government members which exist simply to allow ministers to wind down the clock.

Mr de BRENNI: The article you have just read from, which I tabled, states that the now Premier would 'introduce them as Premier from the first hearings of the next term in 2025—if the LNP wins power at the 2024 election'. Mr Clerk, can you confirm that none of the items proposed in the article have been implemented, despite the Premier indicating that he would?

Mr Laurie: I can indicate that the items I have just read out have not been implemented.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, the Clerk has just confirmed that there is no material change to the way estimates is being conducted this year. The Parliamentary Library has advised that on at least 22 occasions the then LNP opposition complained about the estimates process. I have just tabled an article where the now Premier indicated that he wanted to do estimates differently. Mr Speaker, is it the case that the now Premier misled Queenslanders regarding his intention of estimates reform based on the fact that the reform has not been implemented? Is it a broken promise, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: There are a couple of things I will say in answer to this. This is estimates process No. 1 of a four-year term. The now Premier made certain commitments during the election campaign which, as you have just read out, could be some of those changes. This is the first one for this estimates. It is being chaired by me and the Deputy Speaker. We will wait to see how that goes. We will see whether that is the same in the next estimates and the one after and the one after that.

Mr de BRENNI: In the article we just examined, the quote that I read out was that the Premier would introduce them 'from the first hearings of the next term in 2025'. Can you confirm this is the first hearing of the next term of 2025?

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, it is the first hearing. I have not seen that article. It is hearing No. 1 in the first year of the four-year term; correct.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, on the basis that this is the first hearing and the quote from the article indicates a commitment to introduce those changes from the first hearing, is that a broken promise?

Mr SPEAKER: I do not have that article. I have not read it in full.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Manager of Opposition Business, it would be appreciated if you put a question that does not contain an inference.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, you have had the benefit of having the article there for some time. I can assure the committee that this is in fact, as confirmed by the Speaker, the first hearing and that the article does directly say that the intention was to introduce it from the first hearing. Can the Speaker then confirm that in fact those changes have not been implemented in this first hearing?

Mr SPEAKER: I just noticed that this article is dated 13 December 2020. I know there were a number of statements made by the Premier. I do not know the date of his last statement. This one is obviously four years old. Without seeing all of the other statements, I am not going to draw those sorts of conclusions.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you for confirming that. Mr Clerk, can you confirm that if a member of parliament attends committee business such as chairing an estimates hearing and that member stays overnight here in the annexe they would be entitled to claim an overnight allowance of \$148?

Mr Laurie: Yes, they would be entitled to claim that.

Mr de BRENNI: Considering that the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are required to chair all estimates hearings and considering that estimates goes over nine days, do you accept that there could be an additional cost to the parliament of potentially many thousands of dollars for having two additional members attend estimates to do the job that chairs are already paid to do?

Mr Laurie: Yes. I suppose it is an entitlement and if the entitlement accrues and they choose to claim the entitlement, the answer is yes.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I note that the chairpersons of portfolio committees are paid an additional \$71,705 to do that job of chairing. I also note that the LNP Premier said that he wanted to treat taxpayers' money with respect. Can you outline how the parliament budget will accommodate the additional requirement of having the Speaker and Deputy Speaker chair estimates and how this additional cost is respecting taxpayers' money?

Mr SPEAKER: I have never been a chair of a committee; I have only been a deputy chair of a committee over 10 years. I know that the work that goes into preparing for the estimates process does not all happen on the day of the estimates. There is an enormous amount of work, as you would be aware as well, that goes into preparation for an estimates process. It is an enormous workload. The commitment has been made to try to improve that process. This is, as I said, the first estimates of this four-year term and we will decide after that how it has worked. As happened when this process for this estimates was put in place, it will then go back to the House. If there are going to be any changes, that will be a decision of the House. For this process to have happened at this sitting, it was a motion in the House which was passed and supported by both sides.

Mr de BRENNI: I understand that. Perhaps you were not following the point of my question. The point of my question was that there are chairpersons of committees who are paid a substantial additional amount for performing those functions. Given that they could have been doing that work, my question is: what is the additional impact on the parliamentary budget for the requirement that the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker be here for the entirety of the estimates process?

Mr SPEAKER: Once again, I would just say that chairs have a big job all year round, for 12 months of the year. It is a big workload and they need to be remunerated for that. As far as an additional budget for this process, the best estimate I am receiving is \$3,000 and possibly as high as \$4,000, which would be the max.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you.

Mr WHITING: Mr Clerk, I refer to page 4 of the SDS. In reference to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee's examination into the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, can the Clerk advise how much was spent by the committee on the use of charter aircraft during the inquiry?

Mr Laurie: Is this the one where they were looking at the power generation up near Rockhampton?

Mr WHITING: Yes.

Mr Laurie: I will get someone to find that total cost out of the committee cost. If you are going to the charter cost—is that what you are talking about?

Mr WHITING: Yes.

Mr Laurie: I understand that the charter cost was approximately \$12,000, but I can get further and better details for you about that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you could look for that, and if we do not get it before the end of the session, you can talk to the Speaker about taking it on notice.

Mr Laurie: We will look for it. If we do not get it, with the Speaker's permission I will take it on notice.

Mr WHITING: Mr Clerk, I can advise that we were on the tarmac waiting to leave and I witnessed government members in discussions with the pilot and the member for Mirani. Subsequently, the flight route was changed and the member for Mirani was seated in the copilot seat—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, do you have a question?

Mr WHITING: And the flight was made longer near one of the member's own properties. My question is: is it appropriate that taxpayers' funds are used to divert a plane at the whim of a member of parliament who is not a committee member and whose property adjoins a wind farm and may be materially affected by the legislation? Is that a conflict of interest?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you are seeking an opinion from the Clerk about appropriateness—

Mr WHITING: With respect, my question is: having set that out, is there a conflict of interest?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a different question.

Mr WHITING: I table that.

Mr Laurie: Can I provide you with the information that I am aware of. On 29 May 2025 the committee resolved to use a charter flight to complete two regional hearings in Rockhampton and Biloela and conduct site visits, including aerial inspection, within the time available. The charter flight between the two locations included a scenic inspection of large-scale wind and solar farms, and sites to be included as conditions permitted were Clarke Creek, Moonlight Range, Moah Creek and Smoky Creek. It is not common but is not untoward that a committee would use a charter flight to travel. Often it is the most economical and efficient option. The usual approval processes for the committee's travel in this regard were followed. This involved the committee resolving to undertake the travel and use the charter flight and the committee secretary approving the travel, in accordance with their financial delegation.

That is the information that has been provided to me. I am unable to comment on the information that you have just provided from the table. I am not able to comment on that because I do not know the veracity of it, if you like. I do not think it would be appropriate for me to give an opinion based on material that I have not yet verified.

Mr WHITING: I understand that. The question was: is there a conflict of interest for this? Is that something you will be getting back to us about?

Mr Laurie: It is not my role to determine whether or not there is a conflict of interest in a committee proceeding. That is actually a matter for the committee. If a member has an interest to declare in a matter then the member is required by standing orders to make a declaration. Of course, in this situation the member who may have the conflict was not actually a member of the committee but rather, as I understand it, had sought leave of the committee to join the committee and was granted that leave. They are not a member of the committee per se, so there is a complication there. The question about the actual declaration of a conflict is a matter for members of committees under standing orders. The question of determination of conflicts and what should happen is a matter for each committee.

Mr WHITING: I note that I just tabled some verification—a picture of the flight with the member for Mirani in the copilot seat.

Mr Laurie: As a matter of fact, that may have occurred. I do not know.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Bancroft. We will go to government members for questions.

Ms MORTON: My question is for you, Mr Speaker. Page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements provides that one of the Parliamentary Service's objectives is to 'safeguard, promote and strengthen the important institution of Parliament'. I note that during the last 12 months we celebrated our 100th female member of parliament, and I am honoured to be No. 106. Can you outline any other specific initiatives to honour our first female member, Irene Longman?

Mr SPEAKER: It has been a significant milestone, the election of 100 women to the Queensland parliament, some of whom are sitting at the committee table right now. The trailblazer was Irene Longman. I can update the committee on some developments. Mrs Irene Longman was elected to the Queensland parliament on 11 May 1929 and was the first female member of the Queensland parliament and only the third woman to be elected to an Australian parliament at that time. In recognition of her achievement, Mrs Longman was asked to move the address-in-reply to the Governor's speech on the opening of parliament on 21 August 1929.

Mrs Longman faced several challenges as the only female member of parliament. She was not allowed in the parliamentary dining room, for example, and at the time there were no female facilities in Parliament House. Despite this, during her time in parliament, Mrs Longman was responsible for the

appointment of Queensland's first female police officers and the creation of a separate Childrens Court. Mrs Longman was defeated at the 1932 election and a newly formed federal electorate was named after her in 1994.

The Queensland Parliamentary Service is in the process of commissioning a life-sized bronze sculpture depicting Mrs Longman eating at a table. It will represent the fact that, being a woman, she was never allowed to use the parliamentary dining room and was required to take her meals on the verandah. The bronze will be situated on the level 5 colonnade, adjacent to the Strangers' dining room.

It is anticipated that the commissioned sculpture will be unveiled on International Women's Day 2026. In addition, Parliamentary Education has a picture book in development with a view to having it available in time for the launch on International Women's Day 2026. The working title is *Kirra and the Statue* and will contain illustrations that celebrate the Queensland parliament. It is the story of a young girl who, with the encouragement of her teacher Mrs Longman—named from Irene Longman—petitions the Queensland parliament to create more statues of women in public places. The book will contain illustrations of Queensland Parliament House and its important symbols and features. The chosen colour palette has been inspired by the French Renaissance stylings of the Old House. The book will also contain a curriculum guide and teachers' notes, including a biography of Irene Longman, with reference to the 100 women milestone. The picture book will make an excellent school presentation gift for members of the parliament. We have big plans to recognise the election of Irene Longman.

Ms MORTON: Mr Speaker, page 6 of the Service Delivery Statements provides an overview of budgeted staffing FTEs for 2024-25 and 2025-26. Could you provide an overview of the staffing increases for the parliamentary precinct reported in the Service Delivery Statements?

Mr SPEAKER: Changes in total staffing numbers in any given year are for a range of different reasons. In terms of staff within the parliamentary precinct, staffing numbers remained fairly constant for many years until some growth over the last two to three years, with initiatives such as the creation of a graduate program and a new People and Culture service area.

In terms of the staffing figures reported in the SDS, it shows a total increase in precinct full-time equivalents of nine for the 2024-25 period. This increase relates to five new roles created to directly support the introduction of 93 additional assistant electorate officers in 2024-25. These roles exist in service areas directly servicing electorate staff clients, including Payroll Services, People and Culture and IT Services. Two new roles were created to support important AV services. These roles were created following a strategic decision to bring these roles in-house rather than continue with an external contractor support model for AV services. One new role was created in Security and Attendants Services following an internal review and the decision to create two specialised attendant teams—one team looking after the main reception and one team looking after tours and chamber duties. There was one new role created to provide support to the Leader of the House. This resourcing is consistent with resourcing provided in previous parliaments where the Leader of the House is not a minister.

For the 2025-26 year, the SDS also identified a further increase in precinct staffing of 11 full-time equivalents. This increase includes five full-time equivalents, approved to support the delivery of specific new initiatives, including three FTEs in Property Services to deliver an expanded electorate office improvement program over the next three years, and two FTEs in security for 2025-26 to assist delivering an upgrade to electorate office security systems and conduct security assessments required under a recent remuneration tribunal decision regarding members' home security.

There are a total of six additional FTEs associated with an organisational restructure of the Parliamentary Service that commenced from 1 July 2025. These roles include: two new roles in a new Strategy Policy and Planning Secretariat under the direction of the Deputy Clerk; two new roles in the new electorate office coordination unit to improve service delivery, training and communication with electorate office clients; one new permanent role in People and Culture to support the ongoing development and content creation for our new online learning management system; and one new permanent role in Property Services to deliver project management services for a range of complex projects both within the precinct and across electorate offices.

I support the need for these resources as the Parliamentary Service delivers an unprecedented program of work over the next three years.

Mr BAROUNIS: The Service Delivery Statements make references to parliamentary precinct support services which is inclusive of accommodation and hospitality services. Could the Speaker outline if and how Queensland produce is included in the dining choices on offer to visitors to the parliament and the general public?

Mr SPEAKER: Parliamentary Catering Services continues to be passionate about supporting local Queensland producers, and we have a range of initiatives in place to promote these relationships. Some of these include display of the local region and farms from where produce is sourced on dining room menus. Many of these suppliers are family-owned with agricultural operations spanning several generations. A seasonal menu features a wine match with each dish, with a heavy emphasis on Queensland winemakers. Queensland wines are used exclusively for House pour options.

Our catering team set aside time each month to research and actively pursue opportunities to work with local businesses. An example of this is a partnering relationship created with Summer Land Camels whose handwash we use in our premium dining outlets. Some of the other local suppliers include: 9Dorf Farms, Brisbane Valley Quail, Redridge Produce, Gold Coast Bakeries, The Cheeseboard, Mountaintop Mushrooms, Burleigh Marr Distributions, Golden Grove Estate, Sirromet Wines and Symphony Hill Wines.

We regularly support over 30 local suppliers and distributors through procurement of a range of local fresh food and vegetable produce. We also offer a selection of 22 Queensland produced beverages—wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks and sparkling water—on the dining room beverage list.

The catering team encourages the suppliers we work with to join the Queensland Government Food and Beverage Supplier Directory to improve their access and profile amongst other potential public sector clients. We actively use our micro site to promote local partnerships with Clovelly Estate, The Cheeseboard, Mineral Water Direct, Passport Specialty Coffee, Golden Grove Estate Wines who are all featured in the supplier spotlight stories on this dedicated catering and dining site.

A key strategy for our catering, sales and marketing plan is regular ticketed and partnership events in Strangers' Restaurant. The goal is to engage with new customers and showcase local Queensland producers. Last year we ran two popular degustation events: the first partnering with Golden Grove Estate and Storm King Wine Co and the second partnering with Stanbroke on a five-course meal featuring their beef in each course. Queensland spirits are now taking the spotlight in the Lucinda Bar, featuring locally distilled favourites from Cauldron Distillery, By.Artisans and many more. I am pleased to advise members that we are currently in discussions with Pechey Distillery to create a specially crafted Speaker's spirit to be available for sale through our gift shops, so stay tuned for the upcoming promotions with our partners.

Mr BAROUNIS: I refer to page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements which identifies a Parliamentary Service objective to promote and strengthen the institution of parliament. Can the Speaker please advise us of any recent initiatives to help promote some of our unique artefacts and heritage collections?

Mr SPEAKER: In 2023, the Parliamentary Library introduced the Vernon Collection Management System, marking a significant step forward in how the parliament's heritage collections are managed and shared. This new platform enables the creation and publication of online displays and content, drawing directly from the rich resources documented in the Vernon heritage database. Additional items of interest have been added to the Vernon platform over the last 12 months including the O'Donovan Catalogue Origins Collection, the Speaker portrait collection, heritage menus and historic paragraphs of Brisbane. Each new item is catalogued and photographed. This improves the discovery of items and creates a useful narrative for members of the public and researchers alike.

I am also proud to announce that on 13 December 2024, the O'Donovan Catalogue Origins Collection was officially inscribed by the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register. Launched in December 2000 with the support of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, the Australian Memory of the World Program contributes to a global effort to preserve documentary heritage, joining more than 60 similar programs around the world. This significant recognition acknowledges the collection's unique contribution to Australia's documented heritage.

The O'Donovan Catalogue Origins Collection provides a compelling insight into the development of political thought, social mobility and self-education in early Australian society. A rare example of a now largely obsolete catalogue format, the collection is particularly notable for containing handwritten annotations by Denis O'Donovan and other prominent historical figures. Its preservation offers a valuable window into the intellectual and cultural landscape of the time. Public interest in this historical collection has been positive and is expected to increase since its inception on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register. The collection is available via the parliamentary website and its online Heritage Collections.

In 2024, the parliament was proud to celebrate the milestone of 100 women having served in the Queensland parliament, beginning with Irene Longman in 1929. Some 95 years later, following the 2024 state election, this historic number was surpassed. To commemorate this achievement, the Parliamentary Service hosted a series of events and created an educational display highlighting the contributions of many of these trailblazing women. The commemorative activities included a dedicated social media campaign, an International Women's Day debate and a range of themed merchandise available through the gift shop. A special International Women's Day luncheon was held in the Strangers' dining room. A panel of speakers including Joan Sheldon AM, LEEANNE ENOCH MP, AMANDA CAMM MP and MEAGHAN SCANLON MP spoke of their experiences in politics.

On 14 March 2025, the 50th anniversary of the role of the Leader of the House in the Queensland Legislative Assembly was recognised. The role was established in 1975. To commemorate this significant milestone, a photographic display was curated showcasing the modern leaders of the House. The event was attended by both current and former leaders of the House to honour their contributions in this role.

Mr CRANDON: Thank you for that fulsome response, Mr Speaker. I refer to your response to a question on notice regarding the refurbishment program for the remainder of the Parliamentary Annexe. Can the Speaker provide further information regarding specific works to be completed during the 2025-26 year, please?

Mr SPEAKER: As the member is aware, there has been a lot of work done on the annexe—well overdue, might I add. As outlined in the question on notice response, the completion of the annexe refurbishment will continue in stages over the next four years. Several projects have been scheduled for the 2025-26 financial year. Works are continuing on level 7 to address significant waterproofing issues and complete the levels 3 to 7 facade repairs, including concrete spalls and window seal replacements. All sealant between the precast facade levels will also be replaced. These works are expected to be completed by December 2025.

As a priority, the level 5 annexe external colonnade paving will be replaced with a new pedestal paving system to address the ongoing maintenance issues of movement resulting in excessive gaps between pavers and paver stability. The new pedestal paving system will be appropriately slip resistant, allowing for the removal of the mats that are currently in place. These works are expected to commence on 15 December 2025, after the final sitting week of the year, and be completed by the end of January 2026.

A number of refurbishment projects across levels 5 and 6 of the annexe are planned including the provision of a new office area for Payroll and Financial Services on level 6; provision of a new communal staff breakout area on level 6; and the upgrade of the northern amenities to address equitable access compliance on level 6. These works are expected to commence in September 2025 and be completed by early February 2026.

Works will then focus on the provision of new office space for the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner on level 5; refurbishment of the cafe and coffee shop on level 5; provision of a new function space for private dining on level 5 which will also serve as cafe seating overflow during sitting weeks; the provision of a new committee hearing room on level 5; the provision of four meeting rooms on level 5; and the provision of a new office area for property, catering and marketing staff on level 5. These projects are expected to commence in January 2026 and be completed by November 2026.

Mr WHITING: We are ready for our questions now.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your assistance, member for Bancroft. I was just coming to you—

Mr WHITING: Thank you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: However, before you ask your question, I think the Clerk might have an update to previous questions.

Mr WHITING: We can take that at the end. We would prefer to get to our questions first.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: As you wish.

Mr WHITING: I would like to go to the member for Morayfield and opposition whip.

Mr RYAN: Good afternoon, Clerk and Speaker. My first question is to the Clerk. I refer to page 4 of the SDS in respect of accommodation and hospitality services and the statements outlined on pages eight through to 10 regarding employee expenses. Clerk, yes or no: did the Queensland parliament incur a taxation liability in relation to any accommodation provided to members or members' families?

Mr Laurie: Yes, but if I can—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do.

Mr Laurie: The Parliamentary Service is liable to pay fringe benefits tax on certain benefits provided to employees and members of parliament. One of those that we have to pay for is housing that is used in the Parliamentary Annexe when it is not relating to parliamentary business. Members are asked to declare that in time for the FBT year ending on 31 March every year.

Mr RYAN: I want to explore that a little bit further, in particular, the categories that may attract fringe benefits tax. Firstly, is it correct that if a member of parliament uses their bedroom for personal or private reasons FBT will be payable?

Mr Laurie: Essentially, yes; members are asked to declare whether or not they have used it for personal or private reasons throughout the FBT year.

Mr RYAN: Another category could be if a member of parliament uses their bedroom as their usual place of residence.

Mr Laurie: I would refer to my answer to the previous question. If a member was staying in the Parliamentary Annexe and they were at the annexe because they were attending to parliamentary business, then there is no FBT payable. It is only if they are staying there and they are not attending to parliamentary business—

Mr RYAN: For want of another description—

Mr Laurie:—whatever purpose.

Mr RYAN:—if they were living in the Parliamentary Annexe?

Mr Laurie: I refer to my previous answer. If they are there for parliamentary business, it is not payable. If they are there and there is no parliamentary business, it is personal and FBT would be payable.

Mr RYAN: Exploring another category, just for the sake of clarity, if a member of parliament's family was using the accommodation and the member was not present, would FBT liability be incurred by the parliament?

Mr Laurie: Yes.

Mr RYAN: Can you provide the fringe benefits tax overnight figure that the parliament uses to pay per room night? I will give you an example. If a minister stayed in their bedroom for a private reason, what would be the FBT liability paid for the room per night?

Mr Laurie: The FBT rate applicable is dependent upon the value of the member's accommodation and in the annexe it ranges from \$195 to \$280 per night depending upon the room type. I am assuming that the higher figure relates to the larger ministerial rooms.

Mr RYAN: That is per night?

Mr Laurie: Per night.

Mr RYAN: That is not the value of the room; that is the FBT liability for the room?

Mr Laurie: That is the notional calculation that we use based upon comparable rates for the type of accommodation.

Mr RYAN: Sorry to interrupt you, because there is a distinction between the value of the room per night and the FBT liability attracted?

Mr Laurie: The value I just read out is the value that we assign to it and FBT is calculated at 95 per cent of that value. Does that make sense?

Mr RYAN: It does. Thank you very much for that. Can you provide the total fringe benefits tax liability for bedroom accommodation provided by the parliament for the most recent FBT reportable period?

Mr Laurie: The most recent FBT reportable period was the FBT year ending 31 March 2025, and 13 members declared private use of the members' accommodation in the annexe. In total there were 39 nights declared as being used for private purposes during the FBT year ending 31 March 2025.

Mr RYAN: Can I clarify? That is just the category—because we went through the categories before—of members for personal nights, not members for their usual place of residence or members' families staying without the member? That is the total?

Mr Laurie: It is members' declarations of personal nights, and the total amount for that FBT year was \$8,073.

Mr RYAN: Thank you. Before asking the next question and in the interests of transparency, I note that while I rarely use the Parliamentary Annexe accommodation, I did properly report one night in the last year, so I was one of those 13. Clerk, you would be aware of this document, but I will table it for the interests of members. There is a memorandum that is circulating from your office—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Morayfield, if you could pause for a moment. As you are not a member of the committee, we need to have leave for a document to be tabled.

Mr WHITING: I will table it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bancroft is tabling the document on your behalf, member for Morayfield. Could we have it distributed before we proceed so everyone knows what is being talked about?

Mr Laurie: Yes, I am familiar with this document.

Mr RYAN: The tabled document is a memorandum from your office, Clerk, to members regarding the reporting of personal or private use of the annexe accommodation for the purposes of determining the parliament's fringe benefits tax liability. From the memorandum it is clear that it is an honesty system for members of parliament to declare private nights or nights used by their family in their absence or if they were using the bedroom as their usual place of residence. That is correct, isn't it?

Mr Laurie: Yes, we do not monitor members' use of their bedrooms. Therefore, it is a default that it is an honesty system.

Mr RYAN: In respect of the information that members have provided, you have already mentioned that 13 members reported 39 nights that attract the declaration. How many of those nights were declared by the Premier?

Mr Laurie: I do not have that level of detail with me.

Mr RYAN: Could you get us that information by the end of the session?

Mr Laurie: If Mr Speaker is happy to take it on notice, I am happy to try to obtain the information. If we cannot do it during the hearing, I will do it afterwards.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Understood. We will come back to that.

Mr RYAN: It would be good to get it by the end of the session, please. Of course, as your memorandum that has been circulated requires a breakdown of category, whether the members' family is staying in the absence of the member, whether it is the member's usual place of residence or whether it is the member—

Mr Laurie: Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not want to cut the member off, but that is not the case. It simply says were there nights that were private component; it does not actually provide a category per se. They just have to declare the number of private nights and the number of rooms used on those nights.

Mr RYAN: Thank you. In preparing that information to come back, hopefully by the end of the session, could you please provide the list for all 13 members?

Mr Laurie: With the concurrence of the Speaker, I am happy to try to obtain that information if not by the end of the hearing, on notice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will come back to that.

Mr RYAN: Noting, of course, that list will have 13 members of parliament on it and 39 nights, Clerk, I refer to an article entitled 'Queensland ministers Tim Mander and Amanda Camm's secret relationship outed' where it states '... Mander has been holed-up for about three months in his taxpayer-funded digs in the Annexe ...', and I have a copy of that article.

Mr WHITING: I table that article.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That article has been tabled by the member for Bancroft. I will circulate that too.

Mr RYAN: Three months is 90 days on my account. Clerk, based on this information, has the member for Everton reported his personal affairs to you that he is using the annexe accommodation as his usual place of residence or for personal or private reasons, thereby triggering an FBT liability for the parliament?

Mr Laurie: You will appreciate that I am not going to disclose at this hearing conversations that may have taken place with individual members. If I start that process, it is a very slippery slope for confidential advice and disclosures between myself and members.

What I can say is that at some point in the future there will be an FBT return that will be produced and the member will have to make that declaration as it is. What I would also say is that the member is a minister of the Crown and, like other ministers of the Crown, they stay in the annexe quite regularly during periods—for example, during periods when they are here for cabinet or other ministerial meetings, whatever the case may be. It will be for the member at the end of the period that we are talking about to make the declaration and then we will deal with that accordingly.

Mr RYAN: I think it is important you outline the categories which trigger FBT liability because there is a distinction between a usual place of residence attracting an FBT liability and staying away from home for personal or private reasons. In light of that—

Mr Laurie: With respect, member, you are making that distinction. I am not. The distinction that I make for the purposes of—

Mr RYAN: Clerk, your memorandum has a separate dot point for it.

Mr Laurie: The distinction that I make in terms of the arrangement we have with the ATO per se is whether or not the parliamentary accommodation was used for parliamentary purposes, and we also talk about their usual place of residence. I understand that. This whole arrangement came into being, if you like, because of a dispute that occurred sometime in the late nineties or early 2000s—actually, it was definitely the late nineties—where a member had holidayed at the annexe with their family and there were other members who made complaints about that when they were actually living there. That is the background to this whole process that we go through with the ATO. As I said, ultimately—and as you said—it is an honesty system, so members at the end of each period have to declare it and it is up to them to declare it.

Mr RYAN: In light of the history you just outlined, are you aware of any ministers' families that are using the annexe accommodation in the absence of the member?

Mr Laurie: As I said, I do not monitor the use of those accommodations. I just do not want to and we do not. We expect members to fulfil the form's requirements. There is nothing that has been brought to my attention of anything untoward and so that is my answer.

Mr RYAN: Speaker, are you aware of any ministers who are using the annexe accommodation for personal or private reasons or as their usual place of residence, or are you aware of any ministers' families that are using the annexe accommodation in the absence of the member?

Mr SPEAKER: It is not something that has been raised with me. I do not walk the corridors checking who is staying in which room. No, that has not been raised with me.

Mr RYAN: I guess, Speaker, this is the challenge with the honesty system, in that the FBT liability attracts to the parliament and it is paid for by taxpayers. The Clerk is the accountable officer for providing accurate information to the tax office, yet there is no system beyond the honesty system which we have discussed today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was not a question in that statement.

Mr RYAN: Is that correct?

Mr SPEAKER: I was going to ask if that was a question or not. No, it is an honesty system and, as far as I can make out from what the Clerk has said, that has been for at least 20—

Mr Laurie: Twenty-seven years—something like that.

Mr SPEAKER: It has been in place for a long, long, long time.

Mr RYAN: On the theme of honesty, Speaker, what communications do you and your office have with the Premier or Deputy Premier in respect of the daily running of parliament, in particular the chamber?

Mr SPEAKER: Just to be clear, you are asking if I have discussions with the Premier or Deputy Premier before a sitting day?

Mr RYAN: In respect of the daily running of parliament, yes.

Mr SPEAKER: No, I do not—not at all.

Mr RYAN: Speaker, have you spoken to any member of the cabinet, including the Premier or Deputy Premier, about your approach to your responses in today's estimates hearing?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you for the question and the answer is no.

Mr RYAN: I refer to page 1 of the SDS. On 2 April 2025 the Deputy Premier interjected during a personal explanation by the Leader of the Opposition where I am advised he said words to the effect of, 'You knew for two days, mate. You knew for two days.' The personal explanation was in response to a confidential letter from the Speaker two days earlier, dated 31 March 2025, asking the Leader of the Opposition to make a clarification. Speaker, it is concerning in the extreme that the Deputy Premier appeared to have known about the correspondence from you to the Leader of the Opposition. I have an extract of *Hansard* and the letter for your reference.

Mr WHITING: I table that extract.

Mr RYAN: Did you or anyone in your office inform the Deputy Premier about this confidential correspondence?

Mr SPEAKER: I will just have a look, but I can say straightaway that I do not talk to anybody—deputy premiers, ministers, shadow ministers, backbenchers—about any correspondence that comes into this office. I will vouch that my staff do not, either.

Mr CRANDON: I have a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a moment. Member for Morayfield, I would like to seek some advice. I have a point of order from the member for Coomera.

Mr CRANDON: My point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, is relevance to the estimates process, relevance to the budget. I cannot see any relevance here. This is a fishing expedition.

Mr WHITING: On that point of order, it is 181(g). It is about the efficiency and effectiveness of administration.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your points of order. I will seek some advice. On the point of order in relation to relevance, the advice I have received is that the questions do go to efficiency and the running of parliament. However, in relation to the question itself and the authentication that has been provided to the committee, the *Hansard* extract does not, in fact, record the interjection that has been put into the record here today in estimates as having been stated so—

Mr WHITING: In that case, would the Speaker be able to take up this issue and investigate it and review it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Chair, you have just interrupted me. I am in the middle of making a ruling. I would ask you not to do that again, please.

Mr WHITING: Okay, I will come to you afterwards.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The question itself also contains inferences that are against standing orders. Questions need to be asked without imputations or inferences. I think there was also an imputation made in relation to the Speaker when you were asking the question. The question has been answered by the Speaker and I would ask that you please move on to the next question.

Mr WHITING: I have a point of order. An inference is where a question contains a conclusion that cannot be substantiated. What we are asking is that the Speaker investigate this with *Hansard* to see if this interjection can be substantiated. I would not think it would be an inference. As I said before, we are asking for the Speaker to investigate this issue on behalf of the dignity of the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question had not been asked. I was making a ruling and you have interrupted me again, member for Bancroft. I reiterate the fact that the question, in my view, did contain an inference and also an imputation. It was relevant to the Speaker's area of responsibility but it has been answered by the Speaker. I ask you to please move to your next question.

Mr WHITING: The question from us is: Mr Speaker, would you be able to investigate this issue, looking at *Hansard*, and investigate it for the dignity of the House?

Mr SPEAKER: The usual process is that you write to the Speaker and I take it up from there. You are quite within your rights to write with your complaint.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We will go to government members' questions.

Mr CRANDON: Mr Speaker, further to the line of questioning by the member for Springwood earlier, are you able to confirm that the total hours for estimates committees sitting to examine the budget has in fact increased from 66 hours and 15 minutes to 70 hours and 15 minutes, which represents a six per cent increase compared to last year and, indeed, that there is an additional day involved as well?

Mr SPEAKER: I do not have that right in front of me, as far as I know. I am happy to take that on notice, whether we will have that today—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Try to come back by the end of the session and, if not, consider taking it on notice, Mr Speaker.

Mr CRANDON: Mr Speaker, can also you confirm that there is an entire additional day? In taking that question on notice, can you confirm that there will be an entire additional day?

Mr SPEAKER: I am happy to do that.

Mr CRANDON: Page 5 of the SDS makes reference to the parliament's capital program. Can the Speaker advise if the proposed capital program for 2025-26 includes any allocation to address the heritage fence restoration project that has been referred to in estimates hearings in previous years?

Mr SPEAKER: I will give you a brief background on the fence restoration project. In October 2017, the Parliamentary Service completed a major 25-year program to restore the stonework exterior of the heritage-listed Parliament House. The scope of the original restoration program included, as a final stage, the restoration of the wrought-iron and sandstone perimeter fence bordering Alice and George streets. While the original project, some 25 years ago, anticipated no change to the design and aesthetics of the fence, so a like-for-like restoration, a number of matters have supported a review of the proposed fence design.

Across 2018-19, the Parliamentary Service met with the department of environment and science and the Queensland Heritage Council to finalise a new and improved proposal that would address both functional requirements as well as heritage considerations. Key works proposed under the final design proposal include: dismantling the existing fence in stages and storage; the excavation of footings; new concrete footings, including reinforcement; the addition of a new course of sandstone blocks to raise the height of the existing fence; the reinstatement of the original stone fence and pillars, after repair; the structural underpinning of stonework to new footings; repairs to the palisade fence; the reinstatement of the original palisade fence; and the strengthening of the gates.

In November 2020, the department of energy and public works conducted a detailed analysis of the initial project costing to try to identify and refine aspects where costs could be reduced. The revised total project cost at that stage was \$10.5 million. In September 2021, a decision was made to place the stone fence project on hold whilst planning for the construction was underway for the annexe tower refurbishment project, given resourcing and access limitations.

It is expected that the stone fence project will take approximately 19 months to complete once work commences. Depending on the commencement date, the program may span three financial years. Due to the major interruptions to the precinct while the annexe refurbishment project has been underway, it was decided to delay further consideration of the project until after the 2024 election and the associated ceremonial opening of parliament. The project will need to take on some added urgency with the opening of the Queen's Wharf precinct and the associated increase in foot traffic in the general area of the precinct.

A further quantity surveyor review is planned to review these costs given the recent volatility in the construction industry and supply chain problems. Following this review, a formal request for CBRC funding will be considered as part of the 2026-27 budget process.

Ms MORTON: Mr Speaker, page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements makes reference to the Parliamentary Service Workforce Strategy and initiatives to modernise induction processes. Can the Speaker please outline what has been delivered to date as part of this strategy?

Mr SPEAKER: The Parliamentary Service is in the midst of significant change with rapid advances in technology and the growth of AI, ongoing works to improve and modernise our physical environment, and the new organisational structure changes that are designed to better focus the way we deliver services. Despite these changes, there is one constant that sets the Parliamentary Service apart and it is our greatest resource: our people. The Parliamentary Service Workforce Strategy identifies three key areas of action to meet our objectives: attracting and retaining the best talent; supporting our people to develop their capabilities; and creating and maintaining a positive, productive and safe working environment.

Over the past year, a range of initiatives has been developed to help modernise the way we recruit, induct, support and develop our staff, both here and in electorate offices. Firstly, we have recently modernised our internal recruitment policies and procedures and developed a series of toolkits to help select and recruit the best people we can. Training was delivered to our service area leaders in June and July 2025. We have also introduced a new digital onboarding process that allows new

employees to work through a range of processes in an integrated way, including providing necessary payroll information and personal details, arranging IT access, applying for security passes and being provided with access to the learning management system to start their formal online induction program.

The new learning management system, named ParLELearn, was launched in November 2024. This was initially rolled out in-house and then to electorate office new starters after the October election. The online system includes a welcome video and a structured series of learning programs that cover working at the Parliamentary Service, fire and evacuation, code of conduct and public interest disclosures, manual handling and ergonomics, workplace behaviour, bullying and harassment, cybersecurity and ICT use, and First Nations cultural awareness training. The key benefit of the ParLELearn system is that it can be used to deliver both customised and general learning material that can be completed in a self-paced way. The system also allows staff to be assigned specific training modules, track completion and provide automated follow-up and reminders.

For new employees, in May 2025 we also launched a buddy system that matches new starters with someone who can provide ongoing guidance to them through the first 12 months of their employment experience, which also now includes an informal meet-and-greet morning tea between new starters and the executive leadership team in their first few months. In terms of new electorate office staff, earlier this year we reviewed and redesigned the precinct-based induction program that we deliver four or five times per year. These programs now feature various practical sessions delivered by an external facilitator as well as important sessions covering difficult interactions and mental resilience. The feedback to these induction courses has been very positive.

In terms of other initiatives that are underway, we are soon to launch a new interactive careers page on our website. We are also developing new and modern styling for our position descriptions used as part of the advertising process for any recruitment. These initiatives are all designed to help us attract and retain the best people we can to build a modern parliamentary service into the future.

Ms MORTON: The Queensland parliament is affectionately known as the people's house. Can you, Mr Speaker, please outline how the Parliamentary Service seeks to support charities and other community organisations?

Mr SPEAKER: The Parliamentary Service is committed to working closely with the community to address needs, raise awareness and deliver meaningful benefits. One clear example of this commitment is the work of our catering and dining team, who actively minimise food waste and give back to the community. Since 2016 we have proudly partnered with OzHarvest, a national charity that collects surplus food and delivers it to organisations supporting people in need. Through this partnership we reduce food waste from Parliament House while contributing to vital food relief efforts across Brisbane. This is a tangible demonstration of our ongoing dedication to sustainability and social responsibility.

In addition to supporting food relief, Queensland parliament is also proud to support the Australian Red Cross. Over the past financial year the blood donation van has been hosted at parliament four times. Members and staff are encouraged to donate, and members of the public in the area are also welcome to contribute. This ongoing partnership reflects the Parliamentary Service's strong commitment to community service and social responsibility, showing that our support for Queenslanders extends beyond the chamber and into everyday actions that help save lives.

As one of Brisbane's most prominent landmarks, Parliament House also plays an important role in raising awareness of significant community causes and days of recognition. Through the lighting of the building we visibly demonstrate our support for a wide range of initiatives, including National Volunteer Week, NAIDOC Week, National Police Remembrance Day, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Seniors Month and many others. From celebrating our sporting achievements to acknowledging critical health and cultural issues, the lighting of parliament stands as a public symbol of solidarity, respect and community engagement.

Queensland parliament has proudly supported the Darkness to Daylight event as the official start and finish point for this important community initiative. Each year hundreds of runners and walkers gather at Parliament House to participate in the run to honour those tragically lost to domestic and family violence. By hosting this event, Queensland parliament helps raise vital awareness and funds for the prevention of domestic and family violence, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to supporting survivors and driving positive change across the community. These are just some of the examples of the many ways that the Parliamentary Service demonstrates its deep commitment to community wellbeing, social responsibility and fostering a more inclusive and supportive Queensland.

Mr BAROUNIS: Page 1 of the Service Delivery Statements identifies the Parliamentary Service's objective is to support the Legislative Assembly, its committees and its members. Can the Speaker outline how the planned annexe refurbishment works and technology modernisation will help support committees and their engagement with the public?

Mr SPEAKER: Since January 2024 the Parliamentary Service has been progressively delivering its comprehensive upgrade of the precinct's audiovisual systems to support the work of the parliament and its committees. In 2024-25 the focus was an upgrade of the Legislative Assembly chamber and its systems. Additionally, the upgrade works continued with the introduction of the new committee conferencing systems, the construction of two new contemporary committee rooms on level 3 and the upgrade of the existing Undumbi and Dandiir rooms.

In today's estimates hearing we are conversing via one of the parliament's new committee conferencing systems. The push-button microphones with table-top speakers have been placed in front of each of us. Within the dedicated committee rooms these are integrated into the room itself. The microphones and committee hearing set-up we are using here today are part of a system in the Parliamentary Service called Committee in a Box. This system is designed to be compact, be travel-ready and contain all the necessary audio components to host a committee hearing or parliamentary sitting in any facility either here at the precinct or offsite in a remote setting.

Two new contemporary committee rooms were built on level 3 and were completed and ready for operation in time for the 58th Queensland Parliament after the state election. Videoconferencing was a particular focus to better enable the widest engagement of witnesses as possible. Multiple large screens have been installed at the foot of each table to better provide a conversation-like experience for the committee, and high-quality cameras have been more appropriately positioned in rooms to provide better remote viewing. The Undumbi and Dandiir seminar rooms on level 5 have also been upgraded and can host committee hearings, if required. Throughout the whole process, the Parliamentary Service has worked to consolidate and standardise the range of technologies used to operate these facilities, ensuring that each room operates in the same way, making them more intuitive and less confusing to use.

Looking forward, the Parliamentary Service will commence the upgrade of the red chamber and the Speakers' Hall at the conclusion of estimates and will work to upgrade the broadcast video production systems used to produce Parliament TV over the summer recess. These upgrades are an important part of ensuring that Queenslanders can engage directly with the parliamentary process through technologies that remove the barrier of distance.

Mr WHITING: We have a few quick follow-up questions.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, can I take you back to your answers to earlier questions regarding this estimates process and commitments made by the now Premier. At that time you said this was the first estimates of this term and that more changes could be made in future years. My question is: would you support implementing the changes the Premier proposed at the 2026 estimates hearings?

Mr SPEAKER: It is an evolving process. I am open to ideas and suggestions. We want this process to work in the best possible way. I think we all would like to see that.

Mr de BRENNI: I have a final follow-up question to the Clerk. Clerk, what would be the implications for the parliament if a member falsely declared they had not used their accommodation for personal use when they had and the parliament had not fulfilled its FBT obligations on that basis?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am cognisant that may be a hypothetical question that is also seeking an opinion. The Clerk may answer, if he so wishes.

Mr Laurie: I do not know. I would probably get a tax bill from the ATO for unpaid FBT. That is one consequence. I cannot think of any—

Ms ASIF: In respect of time, I am happy to ask my question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, the Clerk is answering a question.

Ms ASIF: I thought you had already answered yes.

Mr Laurie: Consider it answered.

Ms ASIF: I refer to prehearing question on notice No. 12, which states that 17 per cent of questions on notice were answered by ministers after the 30-day deadline and 18 per cent had to be sent back to ministers to re-answer. I table the LNP ministers' accountability failures leaderboard, with the gold medal going to Minister Camm, the silver medal going to Minister O'Connor and the bronze medal going to Minister Gerber, followed by former Speaker Minister Simpson—

Mr CRANDON: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: this is a very long preamble. Is there a question?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, there is a—

Ms ASIF: I have not been able to ask my question yet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is some validity to the member's point of order. I also note you are making imputations about ministers. It would aid the process if you could ask your question.

Ms ASIF: I have tabled this document, so it can be distributed. My question to the Clerk is: what guidance is the parliament providing the LNP ministers to answer questions and respect the legislature's right to hold the executive to account?

Mr Laurie: I suppose the most pertinent guidance is former Speaker Pitt's ruling that was made in March 2022 and which Speaker Weir has endorsed as the operating principles and expectations of answers to questions on notice. It is that ruling that we applied last parliament to ministers who did not answer questions on notice and it is the same process that we are applying this parliament to ministers who do not answer questions on notice.

Ms ASIF: On that, Clerk, could you please advise—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, given the time that has elapsed, we have to go back to the Clerk—

Ms ASIF: I believe it is 3.29; I believe I have one minute.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have to go back to the Clerk for some answers to questions asked earlier. Do you have a quick question?

Ms ASIF: I have a very quick question. Of the 22 questions on notice that were found by the Speaker to be formally unanswered, could you, Clerk, or the Speaker provide the answers to questions on notice for those 22 questions that were ruled unanswered?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are at the end of the session, Clerk. The time for examination of estimates has expired.

Ms ASIF: I am happy for that to be taken on notice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Sandgate. Clerk, I know you have some questions you need to come back to us about.

Mr Laurie: We will not take that on notice per se, but we will give consideration as to whether or not that material should be released.

Ms ASIF: I ask that that be taken on notice.

Mr Laurie: My instinct is that it probably should not be.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your request has been noted, member for Sandgate.

Mr Laurie: In terms of the questions that were asked during the hearing that we did not give the answers to, I can advise that in relation to the committee travel relating to the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the approved expenditure was \$23,000 and the actual total expenditure was \$19,156.88. I am informed that the charter flight referred to cost \$13,842.65, excluding GST.

In relation to the other question which was about members' declarations for FBT—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before you do that, I would like to place on the record for the fullness of disclosure that my name will be on that list you are about to refer to, but I was not asked to consider that matter so I do not consider that I have had a conflict, but please proceed.

Mr Laurie: My issue, Mr Deputy Speaker, is that in terms of the memorandum that was sent to members, that was distributed and tabled earlier, I made an undertaking on page 2 of that document that members could be assured that their privacy would be respected and the information would remain confidential. I am in the hands of the committee here. I do have the details, but I am very conscious of the undertaking that I gave in that correspondence. Mr Deputy Speaker, my preference would be to give the information to the committee on a confidential basis and then the committee can decide what it wants to do with it. I am very conscious that I do not want to breach an undertaking that I have given.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is an important consideration. Before we come to that matter, is there any other question that you need to come back to the committee about?

Mr Laurie: No, I do not think so.

Ms ASIF: Can I move that those questions on notice be tabled—the response.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment, member for Sandgate, I am seeking some advice. Clerk, there was also a question that you or the Speaker were going to come back on about the hours for estimates.

Mr Laurie: Unfortunately, we do not have an answer to that question ready so we will provide that on notice, with Mr Speaker's concurrence.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment, member for Sandgate and members. I am seeking some advice from the clerk. Member for Sandgate, what was the matter you raised before?

Ms ASIF: I moved that the answer about the fringe benefits tax be provided by the Clerk and be made public and tabled.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Sandgate has moved a motion. In accordance with the standing orders, there is a requirement for the committee to consider that matter in a private session. The proceedings will be suspended while the committee considers that in private and then we will resume.

Proceedings suspended from 3.34 pm to 3.44 pm.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hearing is now resumed. The committee has considered the motion before it in private session. I am informed the motion was not carried. We have now reached the time for the close of this period—

Ms ASIF: Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:—for the examination of the proposed expenditure of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms ASIF: Sorry—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, I am closing the session because, in accordance with the motion passed by the House, the time for the examination of estimates—

Ms ASIF: I move that the 22 questions on notice that were formally ruled unanswered by the Speaker be tabled or taken on notice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, the time for the examination of estimates—

Ms ASIF: Sorry, I have moved a motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. I have made a ruling. I was in the midst of closing the session because, in accordance with the motion passed by the House, the time for the examination of these estimates has expired.

Ms ASIF: With due respect, I had moved my motion before you closed the session.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate—

Ms ASIF: If you do not want transparency or the people of Queensland to know—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, please do not reflect on my ruling.

Ms ASIF:—that questions have been unanswered by their ministers—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, you are warned for reflecting on the chair. I ask you please to withdraw.

Ms ASIF: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Sandgate.

Mr WHITING: For clarity, Mr Deputy Speaker, are we going to vote on the motion or not?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bancroft, the time for the examination of estimates—

Ms ASIF: I am simply trying to put a question on notice—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, the time for the examination of estimates has expired.

Ms ASIF:—which is my right as a member of the committee.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, please cease your interjections. I note that any answers to questions taken on notice—and there was one—need to be supplied to the committee by 5 pm on 1 August 2025.

I thank Mr Speaker, the Clerk and other officials and parliamentary officers for their attendance here today. That concludes the hearing of estimates for the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee. I would like to thank the committee members and the visiting members who participated in the hearing. Thank you also to Hansard and the parliamentary broadcast staff, together with all of the other parliamentary staff who assisted here today. I declare the hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 3.47 pm.