

THURSDAY, 31 JULY 2025

ESTIMATES—STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE—HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS; YOUTH

Mr Speaker (Hon. Pat Weir, Condamine)

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Jon Krause, Scenic Rim)

Committee Members

Mr JJ McDonald MP—Chair

Ms JM Bush MP

Mr TA James MP

Mr D Kempton MP

Mr SR King MP

Mr BJ Mellish MP

Ms LM Linard MP

Ms C Mullen MP

Ms MAJ Scanlon MP

Hon. G Grace MP

Hon. GJ Butcher MP

Members in Attendance

Mr MC Berkman MP

Ms SL Bolton MP

Ms K-A Dooley MP

Dr CAC Rowan MP

In Attendance

Hon. ST O'Connor, Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth

Mr Matthew Adams, Chief of Staff

Mr Christien Duffey, Advisor

Ms Caet Young, Advisor

Department of Housing and Public Works

Mr Mark Cridland, Director-General

Ms Alice Proberts, Acting Executive Director, Office of the Director-General

Mr Matthew Nye, Acting Deputy Director-General, Housing and Homelessness Services

Ms Danielle McAllister, Deputy Director-General, Policy, Performance and First Nations

Mr Andrew Bennett, Deputy Director-General, Procurement

Ms Ainslie Barron, Assistant Director-General, Public Works

Ms Sarah Amos, Deputy Director-General, Social and Affordable Housing Growth

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

Mr Angelo Lambrinos, Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner

Mr Tim Murphy, Chief Financial Officer

The committee met at 8.30 am.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Good morning. I declare this hearing of the estimates for the State Development, Infrastructure and Works 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 State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee are: Mr Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer and chair; Ms Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper and deputy chair; Mr Terry James, the member for Mulgrave; Mr David Kempton, the member for Cook; and Mr Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah. The following members are substituting for Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley: the Hon. Meaghan Scanlon, the member for Gaven, from 8.30 am to 10.45 am; Mrs Charis Mullen, the member for Jordan, from 10.45 am to 11.45 am; and the Hon. Leanne Linard, the member for Nudgee, from 11.45 am until 12.15 pm. 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. Please note that the first three rows of the gallery are reserved for departmental and ministerial staff who are supporting the minister. Members and others who are attending to observe are welcome to sit in the remaining rows or in the gallery.

The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat. 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 remind all members of that 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 Bill 2025 for the portfolios of: the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth; the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games; and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the time specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, which is available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage.

The sessions today will examine the proposed expenditure for the housing, public works and youth portfolio areas until 12.15 pm; sport, racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games portfolio areas between 1 pm and 4.45 pm; and the transport and main roads portfolio area between 5.15 pm and 9.30 pm.

I remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. In respect of government-owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth, the director-general, officials and departmental 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 minister or director-general. 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 areas of housing, public works and youth open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish you may make an opening statement regarding the housing portfolio area of no more than five minutes and we will then proceed to committee questions.

Mr O'CONNOR: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker and committee members. As all members will know, it has never been harder for Queenslanders to have a safe, secure and affordable place to call home. The Crisafulli government has inherited an unprecedented housing crisis and that demands an unprecedented response. That is exactly what our first budget delivers.

We are increasing housing supply as our No. 1 priority because more supply creates more options for more Queenslanders, whether they need social or affordable housing, are renting or have the aspiration to buy their first home. Our 2025-26 budget locks in \$8.1 billion to secure our housing foundations and get more places to call home out of the ground faster, delivering our commitment of one million homes, including 53,500 social and community homes, by 2044. We know these are ambitious targets, but delivering this supply is the only way to turn around the housing crisis.

To achieve our commitment, a record \$5.6 billion will be invested in delivering new social and community housing over the next four years alone. For the first time ever our budget locks in baseline funding beyond the political cycle of \$500 million per year from 2029-30, creating a long-term pipeline of social and community homes for Queenslanders most in need. This baseline funding is not just a Queensland first; it is an Australian first.

More than 6,000 social and affordable homes are currently in construction or under contract to be delivered across our state, but we know more are needed. We are ramping up delivery through our Queensland housing investment pipeline and our always open procurement process where, from next month, community housing providers will be able to submit proposals year-round instead of waiting for sporadic, funding limited, time limited grant programs. This budget also locks in increased multiyear funding for specialist homelessness services and more than doubles funding available for headlease properties to help support our most vulnerable.

We have locked in more than \$380.1 million over five years to enhance our crisis response. This includes the Immediate Housing Response and temporary headleasing accommodation to support the delivery of frontline housing and homelessness services while we get more homes built. This funding for crisis response is in addition to increased funding of \$208.9 million to extend the 20 per cent uplift to specialist homelessness services across Queensland to June 2029. This funding certainly gives frontline staff, our own departmental teams and funded specialist homelessness services the resourcing and stability they need to help more Queenslanders who are doing it tough.

We are also delivering a landmark new master agreement with community housing providers which will reduce the number of individual agreements from around 2,000 to just over 100, enabling agreements and cutting frustrating and unnecessary red tape.

For a housing system under pressure we need to balance this record funding along with improved policy settings, which is why we have implemented a new antisocial behaviour policy and a tenancy management framework to restore fairness to our public housing system. It is all about empowering our hardworking housing officers to properly manage our tenancies.

Annual rent and eligibility checks for all social housing tenants have recommenced from 1 July 2025 to confirm if tenants still meet longstanding thresholds and that their social home still meets their needs. These reforms will also encourage voluntary downsizing among households that no longer need larger homes which may be better suited for the thousands of families we have waiting for social housing.

Within our first 100 days in office we have also achieved agreement with the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council to co-design a new Palm Island Rent-to-Buy Home Ownership Scheme, part of our government's commitment to turning around home ownership rates in our state.

We are fixing the housing system while we deliver more homes. Our reforms will also complement the independent Queensland Productivity Commission's construction sector inquiry. The interim report was released today and it is damning of the former Labor government. Labour productivity in the construction sector today is only five per cent higher than it was in 1994-95, compared to the growth in the market economy of 65 per cent over the same period.

Since 2018, construction productivity has declined by around nine per cent. If productivity had remained at 2018 levels in Queensland, we would have 77,000 more homes than have been delivered over that time period. If Labor's BPIC CFMEU tax had remained in place until 2029-30, the resulting impact would have been a net cost to the community of up to \$20.6 billion, with project costs increasing

by up to 25 per cent; up to 26,500 fewer homes would have been built; and rents would be 8.3 per cent higher than they otherwise would be.

We are only just getting started to reform our entire housing system through delivering on our commitments, making record investments and laying the foundations for our plan to help more Queenslanders have a place to call home. I thank the committee and I look forward to your questions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We will proceed to questions for the estimates. I turn to the non-government members first. Member for Cooper or a delegate?

Ms BUSH: I will go to the shadow minister.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Director-General and all members of the Public Service, for appearing before the committee today. Director-General, how many of the 6,000 social homes mentioned in the minister's opening remarks were approved for funding before the most recent budget?

Mr Cridland: Since 1 November 2024, 2,902 homes have been contracted.

Ms SCANLON: Of the 6,000 that were specifically mentioned in the minister's opening remarks, how many were approved for funding before the budget that has just been handed down by the Crisafulli government?

Mr Cridland: Those 2,902 homes were contracted after 1 November 2024. At that point they were approved for funding when they were contracted.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, you were the former director-general for housing under the previous Labor government, yes?

Mr Cridland: Yes.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, you would be aware what money over this term of government had been budgeted by the former Labor government for the delivery of social and affordable housing under a range of programs including but not limited to those outlined in the answer to question on notice No. 3, yes?

Mr Cridland: I will just check question on notice 3 first. I just want to clarify that you are looking for a global figure. There are a lot of programs listed.

Ms SCANLON: I am not looking for a global figure, Director-General. I am just asking: you would be aware what money over this term of government—the term that the Crisafulli government has been elected for—had been budgeted for by the former Labor government under those programs over this term of government. You would be aware of that information, would you not?

Mr Cridland: It would be easier for me to answer in a way that I have the data, which I am happy to provide. In terms of the increase provided to deliver frontline housing services, that is \$794.7 million over five years in additional funding for frontline housing and homelessness services and then an additional \$1.892 billion over four years for capital.

Ms SCANLON: Point of order, Deputy Speaker, on relevance: while that is interesting information, Director-General, I am specifically asking your knowledge of—as I said, over this term of government you would be aware what—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: with respect to the member for Gaven, the director-general is being complete in his answer, and he has only said a couple of sentences.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lockyer. Member for Gaven, I noticed that you raised a point of order but then proceeded with your questioning. I am happy for you to do that. Director-General, I think there is another question coming your way.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, my question is: you would be aware, under the range of programs that were outlined in that question on notice that I just referred to, that there was funding that had been budgeted for by the former Labor government that will spill into this term of the Crisafulli government. You would be aware of all of that funding, would you not? I am not asking you to provide me with a figure. I am just confirming that you would be aware, for example, that QuickStarts, the Housing Investment Fund—all of those programs—would be continuing into the term of the Crisafulli government; is that correct?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: the member is giving a narrative, not asking a question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, thank you for your point of order. Member for Gaven, I hear the question you have asked and the context behind it. I think the question has been asked clearly a couple of times. If we could proceed, that would be appreciated.

Ms SCANLON: I will take that as a confirmation that the director-general is aware of that information.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. You cannot take my statement as a confirmation of that at all. Please proceed with your questions.

Ms SCANLON: I will put it to you this way, Director-General. It would be reasonable to expect that a director-general who held that portfolio in the previous government would be aware of money that had been budgeted for by the former government—or even if you were a new director-general that information would have been handed to you. You were in the position that you were the former director-general. I am just confirming that you have knowledge of all of the money that was budgeted for by the former Labor government.

Mr Cridland: Yes, I confirm I was the director-general of the former department.

Mr O'CONNOR: I would have thought the shadow minister would know that.

Mr Cridland: This new department commenced on 1 November 2024, and our first budget was handed down just recently.

Ms SCANLON: My question then is in relation to page 22 of Budget Paper 4, specifically in relation to Queensland's housing investment pipeline. Director-General, is this funding solely to build new social and affordable housing and, if not, what exactly will this funding be used for?

Mr Cridland: I will ask the deputy director-general of social and affordable housing growth to come forward to answer that question.

Ms Amos: I thank the member for the question. Could I ask you to repeat it, please?

Ms SCANLON: My question is in relation to page 22 of Budget Paper 4, specifically in relation to Queensland's housing investment pipeline. Is this funding solely to build new social and affordable housing and, if not, what exactly will this funding be used for?

Ms Amos: The 2025-26 state budget provides \$5.6 billion over four years to support the delivery of social and community housing. It includes an additional \$1.892 billion in new funding towards social and community housing.

Ms SCANLON: Can you answer my question, though, in relation to page 22 of Budget Paper 4? That is in relation to the \$74 million over four years. Is this funding solely to build new social and affordable housing and, if not, what exactly will this funding be used for?

Ms Amos: Thanks for the clarification. The \$74 million relates to operating expenditure associated with supporting the delivery of social and affordable housing. That includes costs for FTEs and other related operating expenditure.

Ms SCANLON: So none of that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, in accordance with the standing orders, subsequent questions need to go back through the director-general.

Ms SCANLON: Sure. Director-General, can you confirm that any of that money, the \$74 million, is capital for the delivery of social and affordable housing?

Mr Cridland: As the deputy director-general said, this is the capital component of the cost to provide the staff without which we could not deliver the capital program.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Director-General, but just to confirm: this funding is not going to actually build social housing; it is just paying for the operational costs associated with staff—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: with respect, the member is providing commentary, not asking a question, and the director-general should be allowed to answer.

Ms BUSH: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: the questions are in order. There is no standing order which has been violated. It is an estimates process. The shadow minister is afforded the opportunity to ask those questions and put them to the relevant representatives. We have a short time here already in estimates. If we could perhaps be allowed to get on with the questions.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: the director-general is being responsive to the question as asked, as are other witnesses here today, and they should be afforded the opportunity to respond before moving on to next lines of questioning.

Mr O'CONNOR: Deputy Speaker, I can assist the shadow minister if it helps the committee.

Ms SCANLON: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I asked the—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is up to the shadow minister.

Mr O'CONNOR: The funding refers to public servants—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, Minister—

Mr O'CONNOR:—whose jobs were ending on 30 June because of the budget we inherited.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you do not have the call at this point in time. It is up to the members on this side of the table to decide who they ask the questions of. I take on board all of the points of order. Member for Gaven, I respect the way you are asking the questions. There is some element of argument or statements in some of your questions, and also I think one or two of them may have been a little repetitive, but I am not going to pull you up on that. However, I ask you to ask that last question again without any commentary and then I think that issue, as I have been hearing, has been answered.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Director-General, just to confirm: that funding is operational funding?

Mr Cridland: This is important funding to fund the technical staff that we need to deliver the social and affordable homes. Without these important staff, we could not deliver on the 53,500.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, in relation to page 103 of Budget Paper 4, Queensland's housing investment pipeline—this relates to the \$1.892 billion figure: can you confirm this funding is solely to build new social and affordable housing and, if not, what else this funding will be used for?

Mr Cridland: Yes, that new funding of the \$1.892 billion over four years and the \$500 million per annum is to support the housing investment pipeline.

Ms SCANLON: Just to confirm, Director-General: that is entirely for capital for the delivery of social and affordable housing?

Mr Cridland: I will confirm for the member.

Ms SCANLON: Thank you, Director-General. As a follow-up in relation to that same line item, can you confirm if any funding previously budgeted for by former Labor governments or provided by the Commonwealth government is included in this \$1.892 billion figure?

Mr Cridland: I will confirm on the Commonwealth dollars but certainly not previous state government funding in that amount, yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before you proceed, member for Gaven—on the penultimate question there, were you going to come back to the committee with the detail?

Mr Cridland: Yes.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, in relation to page 23 of Budget Paper 4, social housing maintenance program, can you advise what the total amount of funding provided for this financial year is for the social housing maintenance program?

Mr Cridland: The budget in 2025-26 is \$325.178 million. This is up from \$309.324 million in 2024-25.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, you would note, though, that in the 2023 financial year my understanding is the department spent \$386 million. Why has less been budgeted for this financial year?

Mr Cridland: The original budget for 2023-24 was \$325.424 million. Obviously, maintenance is both planned and reactive, so through the last two years particularly we have sought at midyear budgets or other occasions supplementary funding to meet unplanned demand. In 2023-24, we sought supplementary funding of \$55 million which brought it to the total of 380 that you referred to.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, how much money broken down by each financial year is in the budget for upgrade works?

Mr Cridland: I will come back to the member on that with that breakdown, Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: By the end of the housing session, if possible.

Mr Cridland: Yes, by then, thank you.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, has the minister directed you to continue the statewide suspension on the sales program and, if so, for how long?

Mr Cridland: I have received no such direction.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, can I confirm that in the middle of a housing crisis, the housing minister has not provided clarification to the department of housing about whether that sale program pause will continue?

Mr Cridland: As in prior years, the department is continuing to review its portfolio to identify where it may no longer be cost effective to retain ownership of homes due to damage from fire or natural disasters or where homes reach the end of their useful life. The department will also consider releasing land where it is not able to support social housing outcomes so it can be unlocked for other developments, and of course, we also continue with our sales to tenants and sell homes where it is required to support infrastructure.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, to be clear, has the suspension on the statewide sale program been lifted?

Mr Cridland: In terms of the budget, there is an expectation of sales, as there has been in previous years that we have budgeted for.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, you would be aware, though, that the former government issued a pause on the sale program, given we are in a housing crisis. You are telling me that the Crisafulli government has recommenced the sale program of selling public housing homes on the open market?

Mr Cridland: The department at this point has not recommenced a sales program.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Gaven. We will head towards government members' questions now. There will be another opportunity for non-government questions.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, can you update the committee on any significant budget shortfalls that the previous government and previous minister left you to clean up?

Mr O'CONNOR: One of those was in fact just highlighted by the former minister, and that was the former minister's line of questioning around our staff who do a great job in our department. I call them the 'building stuff' part of the department. Some of those staff, because of the budget we inherited from the former minister, were no longer continuing beyond 30 June if we had not stepped in. We had 48 FTEs who are public servants dedicated to delivering social and community housing who were not funded beyond 30 June, but that funding, that I actually sincerely thank the shadow minister for highlighting, continues those roles. You cannot deliver those social homes without having a team within the department who do such a great job doing that. I want to thank them all for the work that they do. One of my favourite parts of this job is going to sod turns with them and seeing just how happy they are at the projects they have worked on and they always love seeing them come out of the ground. That was just one example of the major shortfalls that we inherited from the former government.

Despite announcing \$3.1 billion under the former government's Homes for Queenslanders plan, less than \$100 million of that plan was allocated as permanent ongoing funding. That is just three per cent of the total amount.

I do not know how they expected this plan to turn around the housing crisis when so much of that funding was temporary. Some 108 of the 289 FTEs within that plan were classified as temporary; that is 37 per cent of the total workforce. That is why we have worked so hard to make sure that our pipeline of new social and community housing delivery is secure. It starts with having a Public Service who are secure in their tenure and who know that their jobs will go on beyond 30 June.

In the housing and homelessness service area alone, we had \$166.7 million in temporary funding that was, again, due to expire on 30 June 2025. The funding uplift of \$51.6 million for the homelessness sector was not funded beyond that date by the former government. This would have had a shocking impact on those frontline services who do such a fantastic job. We had \$13 million in temporary funding supporting 48 dedicated departmental staff, as I ran through earlier, thankfully highlighted by the shadow minister. This would have really impacted the ability of our department to get those homes built.

Member for Cook, to address these black holes we have acted with our first budget. We have locked in that 20 per cent uplift all the way through to June 2029; that is \$52 million in 2025-26 and

\$208.9 million over the entire budget period. Headleasing, which is such an important part of our crisis response, was going to drop by \$18.2 million after 30 June with the budget that we inherited. In contrast, we have locked in an additional \$24.2 million in 2025-26 and \$123.9 million over the period of this budget. We are taking a responsible approach to long-term service delivery. Above all, we are providing funding certainty to turn around this housing crisis.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, the department of housing has now recommenced the rent and tenancy reviews that were stopped by the former government in 2020. Can you please update the committee on progress to recommence these reviews and are there any examples where the system has failed to support those who need it most?

Mr O'CONNOR: This is, to me, bare minimum management of a housing system. It is what we see our community housing providers do every single day. Unfortunately, under the former government those reviews were not recommenced. They sat there for five years. Of course, no-one argued about the pause that occurred during COVID but we were well and truly past COVID by 2024. That meant that around 45 per cent of our tenants in social housing had not provided any information, because they had not been asked for any information, around their income, their assets and, therefore, their eligibility. With tens of thousands of vulnerable Queenslanders on the waitlist, that is completely unacceptable.

When the Crisafulli government announced the recommencement of these reviews on 1 July, we saw some incredibly disappointing scare campaigns from the Labor Party. This shows that, once again, they just want to use vulnerable Queenslanders as a political prop when it suits them. Making claims around longstanding eligibility asset tests and limits and trying to claim that there is a conflation of those two eligibilities for incoming and ongoing eligibility was incredibly disappointing. Our work is all about making sure our social housing system is fair, it is equitable and it meets the growing needs of our state. It will ensure homes will go to our most vulnerable who, on those eligibility criteria, are genuinely the most vulnerable in our community.

I want to thank our housing officers for the work that they have done to bring annual tenancy reviews back in from 1 July to confirm ongoing eligibility. We had tenants who were continuing to receive assistance when they were, in fact, ineligible. With over 29,000 active applications on our register—with more than half being identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness—it is important that we prioritise housing support for those who are most in need in our community. I will give some examples that we found through the work of our housing officers. A couple living in social housing in Townsville with a joint assessable income of \$168,630 were paying just 180 bucks a week in rent. It is an example of how a set-and-forget approach to running the housing system led to situations where people in social housing were receiving support that nobody would think is acceptable. There was an example, as well, of where housing assistance was provided to a tenancy that began as a single household but is now far exceeding the ongoing eligibility limit because of the addition of a spouse with a working income.

Our reviews are all about ensuring that our tenants remain eligible for assistance, that they are paying rent based on their household's income and, of course, that that property is still suitable for their needs. Of course, that longstanding rent amount is 25 per cent of the household's assessable income. The Crisafulli government has taken a compassionate approach to any increases that are identified as part of this process. We have brought in rent caps. Fifteen dollars a week per year will be the maximum amount of any increase, which is fair. It is reasonable. It will mean that the impact of what could be a significant change for someone is as low as it possibly can be. Tenants who are found as part of this process to no longer be eligible for public housing will be supported to find a home in the private market and, of course, they will have access to the department's full range of housing products—bond loans, rental grants. It will all be there to help support that transition. Rent reviews may also mean a rent decrease for some tenants who have had a change in their household circumstances or income.

As I outlined in my opening, it is also a chance to make sure we can help our tenants choose to right-size within our portfolio. Those who are living in housing that no longer meets their needs will be offered support and incentives to move to a new home, if that is the decision they want to make. For tenants living in homes with more bedrooms than they need, this could free up larger properties for families who are waiting. It is completely sensible and, given the incredible quality of our new homes, I would strongly encourage them to take it up.

Since 1 July and, as at 24 July—which is my most recent data—we have initiated 941 rent reviews. As a part of this, households are given 28 days to provide household and income information for the department to assess where required. We will continue to deliver these reviews to ensure public housing is allocated to the Queenslanders who need it most. I want to again thank our hardworking housing officers for the work they do every day.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, the department recently commenced a new antisocial behaviour policy for public housing tenants. Can you outline how this is progressing in its implementation?

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, the Crisafulli government is taking action to address dangerous and repeated disruptive behaviour in public housing to support the delivery of peaceful and safe neighbourhoods across our state. From 1 July 2025 we introduced a new public housing antisocial behaviour policy, which sets out clear expectations for public housing tenants, for household members and for visitors. It supports our hardworking departmental staff to take appropriate action should those behaviours continue or escalate.

Tenants, household members or visitors who damage property, who threaten neighbours or our housing staff or who engage in repeated antisocial behaviour may be issued a warning, receive a breach notice or, in some circumstances, receive a notice to leave. Households with three substantiated breach notices within a 12-month period will risk having their tenancies ended. There will be a zero tolerance for severe and dangerous behaviours such as violence, serious damage to property or illegal activities such as drug manufacturing. Actions to end these tenancies will be taken immediately.

Between 1 July 2025 and 16 July 2025, following the introduction of this new policy, four first and final notices were issued for dangerous and severe behaviours including one in Caboolture where an urgent termination order was sought from the tribunal in response to severe and dangerous antisocial behaviour at this particular property. The department has taken action under the new policy following ongoing complaints, frequent police presence, police raids, several arrests and the recovery of stolen property. The new policy will ensure that the behaviour of public housing tenants, the household occupants, visitors or other people allowed onto the property comply with the tenancy agreement and with community expectations.

We know the overwhelming majority of public housing tenants do the right thing; I would say it is more than 99 per cent. This is about that small minority who want to cause a disruption and a dangerous environment for others. I want to thank all members who have written to me with particular examples for our housing officers to action, and that is members from across all sides of politics and across the entire parliament. This is a significant issue we all have raised through our electorate offices. I will hand to the director-general for further information. We might get the deputy director-general, Matt, to run through how this policy is working to get some more information for committee members.

Mr Cridland: I will ask the Deputy Director-General of Housing and Homelessness Services to come forward.

Mr Nye: As the minister was saying, the policy was implemented from 1 July. It has had some good results in terms of the action that we have been taking but also in terms of seeing some of the behaviours. Across the first four weeks we issued 545 antisocial behaviour notices; 42 of those were in relation to dangerous or severe behaviour such as the one the minister mentioned in relation to Caboolture, 327 of those were minor and 176 were serious. We have also issued seven first and final notices to leave and obviously, as the minister said, we will be going to QCAT where we need to on those ones.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That completes the question. I am going to go to non-government members for your next question.

Ms BUSH: We will go again to the shadow minister.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, I have a follow-up on a response you provided earlier. I want to be really clear. Director-General, my question is: how many of the 6,000 social homes mentioned in the minister's opening remarks were contracted before 24 June 2025?

Mr Cridland: I will ask the Deputy Director-General, Social and Affordable Housing Growth to come forward.

Ms Amos: I would like to thank the member for the question. Could I ask that you repeat it, please?

Ms SCANLON: How many of the 6,000 social homes mentioned in the minister's opening remarks were contracted before 24 June 2025?

Ms Amos: Based on the evidence that we have in the department at the moment we understand that 3,365 social and affordable homes were contracted prior to 1 November.

Ms SCANLON: With respect, Deputy Director-General, my question was very clear. I appreciate the answer you have given me, but that was not the answer to the question I just asked.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order: the member for Gaven is an experienced member of this House and once again she is providing a narrative, not asking a question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order, member for Lockyer. Member for Gaven, I allowed that question. However, I think it is the third time you have asked it.

Ms SCANLON: It is not—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: By my recollection it is the third time it has been asked. I would suggest perhaps that it is time to move on to the next questions.

Ms SCANLON: With respect, Mr Deputy Speaker, this is an examination of the budget. I have asked a question that has not been answered. I will ask the question again—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Ms SCANLON:—or I will take it that the department is refusing to provide an answer to my question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please pause, member for Gaven. Member for Lockyer, what is your point of order?

Mr McDONALD: The point of order is that the member for Gaven has asked a number of questions. The respected officers are answering those questions. The member may not like the answers, but the director-general and his team are being very responsive.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Member for Gaven, I do not appreciate the reflection on the commentary that I gave around the nature of the questioning. By my recollection you have asked this question a number of times. The answers given have been relevant. It may not be that the answer is what you want to hear, but it is the answer given by the minister, the director-general or other officials. You should move on to your next question, please.

Ms SCANLON: I will put it this way. Director-General, will you take on notice if the information is not available to the department how many of the 6,000 homes mentioned in the minister's opening remarks were contracted before 24 June 2025?

Mr Cridland: I thank the member for the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, only the minister can take a question on notice.

Mr Cridland: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The issue that is making that difficult to answer is the date 24 June as opposed to the end of the financial year, 30 June. That is the challenge I am contemplating. You said 24 June 2025 and we work to the end of the financial year, 30 June 2025.

Ms SCANLON: The budget was handed down on 24 June. If you could provide figures for both dates that would be useful.

Mr Cridland: We will use our best endeavours to come back to you on that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, it is to the minister's discretion as to whether they will come back with that detail before the end of session or, alternatively, take it on notice.

Mr O'CONNOR: I think the member is trying to see new properties from the budget. Is that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not worry about the question.

Mr O'CONNOR: We will endeavour to get what we can by the end of the session.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, can I confirm how much money was spent to undertake the review of social housing income limits?

Mr Cridland: The contract was issued in April 2024 with a total value of \$63,488.

Ms SCANLON: Have you provided the outcomes of this review to the now housing minister?

Mr Cridland: I appreciate the report that the member referred to did not recommend a methodology that could be adopted in Queensland. We have certainly briefed the minister on the report but without a recommendation and we have not put anything to executive government on this.

Ms SCANLON: Minister, are you aware that your now police minister's office wrote to me last year wanting to know the outcome of the review that you are now saying you are refusing to undertake?

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Deputy Speaker?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please pause, Minister.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order relates to an imputation which is in that question. I wonder whether the question should be rephrased.

Ms BUSH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: it is within standing orders. It simply asked for a yes or a no.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, could you repeat the question, please, absent any suggestion of imputations?

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not believe there are any imputations. It is a matter of fact that the police minister's office wrote to me last year wanting to know the outcome of the review, and I ask: is the minister aware that the police minister wrote to me seeking an update of this review that the minister is now refusing to undertake?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will allow the question.

Mr O'CONNOR: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker; I am very happy to speak to the review that the shadow minister is asking about. The shadow minister, when she was in my role in August 2023, mentioned to the media that there would be a review of social housing income limits and that it had been commissioned. Not much happened between August 2023 and April 2024. The department in April 2024 contracted with SGS Economics & Planning, with the figure that the director-general just outlined, to undertake that review. That review was submitted in August 2024. I am advised that the former minister was briefed on that review the following month. On the issue that the former minister is now so passionate about, nothing changed—not in this period, which covers well over a year, and certainly not within the 10 years that Labor were in government. Those eligibility thresholds remained the same and they remain the same now, despite the misleading scare campaigns we have seen from the Labor Party.

With over 50,000 Queenslanders on our Social Housing Register who are, by the current eligibility thresholds, the most vulnerable in our community, we need to prioritise getting those Queenslanders into homes as quickly as possible. These thresholds were not touched by the former minister when she had the opportunity to do so or when she had even had work underway to do so and spent tens of thousands of taxpayers' dollars on that work. The former minister did not take that opportunity. She was in this role for a significant amount of time and she did not make the changes that she is so passionately arguing about now, so we have—

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order with regard to relevance. My question was very specific about the knowledge of the police minister's office writing. If the member does not know, I am happy to move on.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Thank you for your point of order, member for Gaven. Member for Lockyer, is it to that point of order?

Mr McDONALD: It is; thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The minister is being directly relevant to the question and providing a sensible response.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable member for Gaven, there were two parts to your question—one about the knowledge of another member about the member's correspondence to the minister and also about the report and whether it was going to be implemented or not. I am listening to the minister's response. It has been relevant and I sense that there is still some to come from the response, which I think the committee should hear.

Mr O'CONNOR: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think the member is referring to correspondence to her when she was minister. That is a matter for her at that point in time and I have outlined very clearly the actions she did or, rather, did not take on this issue that she is so passionately raising now.

Ms SCANLON: Minister, an investment property in your electorate of Biggera Waters purchased in, say, 2015 for \$365,000 would now have a median value of around \$700,000. Do you accept the value and cost of housing has increased and, if so, why will you not increase the income threshold for social housing?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: there is a clear imputation in that and an assumption.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is actually the seeking of an opinion in that the minister is being asked to give an opinion about whether he considers the cost of housing has increased. Member, you could rephrase the question.

Ms SCANLON: I am happy to rephrase the question, Mr Deputy Speaker. What is the reason for the housing minister refusing to review the income threshold for social housing tenants?

Mr O'CONNOR: Just in relation to the first question that the shadow minister attempted to ask, the cost has gone up. The cost of delivering housing has gone up and we have a Productivity Commission report that was released today which shows that, because of the system run by the former government, of which the member for Gaven and shadow housing minister was a central part, we have 77,000 fewer homes than would have been delivered otherwise since 2018. That has had a significant impact on housing affordability across this state and housing availability across this state.

In terms of the eligibility thresholds that the member is asking about, I have been very clear. We have over 50,000 Queenslanders on our waitlist who are eligible under the current thresholds. The member is right: those thresholds are low. That means, by definition, these are the most vulnerable people in Queensland. We need to get that waitlist under control and we need to see it going in the right direction before we can even consider these things. That is the central priority for me as Queensland's housing minister—to turn around the system that we inherited: a system where only 509 homes on average were delivered over the decade that the former government was in power; where we saw social housing increase at barely a third of the rate of the population growth that occurred over the same period; where we saw community housing at half that rate.

We have a significant challenge to turn this around, but my priority is making sure that our most vulnerable are housed. That is of course conjoined with the actions that we are taking across government with the Residential Activation Fund through the Deputy Premier's portfolio and through all of the great initiatives on home ownership that the Treasurer is undertaking. It is a whole-of-system approach to turn around this housing crisis. We just need to make sure that we support those most vulnerable without changing those eligibility requirements which the former government did not do in their decade in office and the former minister did not do despite commissioning a report, publicly speaking about a report and being briefed on a report. There is no credibility here, and we are very proud of the actions that we are taking to turn around this crisis and in particular our build program.

Ms SCANLON: I table a copy of a transcript of a comment made by the Premier. I want to draw the committee's attention specifically to the quote—

... the Minister has put steps in place to make sure that every person who is vulnerable, who is sleeping rough, will be able to have that short term accommodation.

Director-General, my question—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just before you ask your question, could we just make sure they have seen the document.

Ms SCANLON: Certainly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General and Minister, do you have that tabled document? The quote, I think, was in the fourth paragraph.

Ms SCANLON: The fourth paragraph—the last block.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please proceed.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, under the IHR guideline changes made by this LNP government, can you confirm if a single mum with two kids working full-time on the minimum wage—so around \$948 per week—sleeping in her car tonight would be eligible for social housing?

Mr Cridland: As the member is aware, the assessment for social housing considers many factors—financial and non-financial—and it looks at extraordinary circumstances. Just to step back a minute to refer to the IHR guidelines, it is very clear in those guidelines that our SHS providers, which run the IHR system—the immediate housing response—can make an initial booking for up to two weeks. There is a requirement then for the family in this case—the household—to engage with our housing service centres within seven days to commence the social housing application and assessment process. That can take up to 28 days. Within that time, which is now at about a month, they can engage with our SHSs and with our HSCs and determine what is the best way to support them for housing. On entry into the immediate housing response if they are in need, they are not assessed at that entry point for social housing eligibility. That is an ongoing process.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, as a follow-up, it is the case, though, that the guidelines prevent someone from getting emergency housing if they are not on the Social Housing Register; correct?

Mr Cridland: No, that is not correct. It does not prevent them from getting emergency housing. As I said, SHSs can make an initial booking of up to two weeks. Within seven days the household with that booking has to engage with our housing service centres to commence the social housing application process. That is then assessed, and that can take up to 28 days. It may not take that long but can take up to 28 days before it is determined whether they are eligible for social housing or not, so it does not prevent them from getting emergency housing.

Mr O'CONNOR: There goes the scare campaign.

Ms SCANLON: I thank the director-general for that response. You would agree though that it has been inserted into the guidelines that to be eligible for IHR you need to be on the Social Housing Register. That is what the guidelines outline to those specialist homelessness services; is that correct?

Mr Cridland: Again, no, that is not correct—'to get', the wording you are using 'to get it', you do not have to be on the Social Housing Register. You have to engage with us within seven days to commence the social housing application process and, as I said, that can take a further 28 days to assess. I would also make the point that if at the end of that assessment period it is determined both on financial and non-financial criteria, including any extraordinary circumstances around that family, that they are not eligible for social housing, there are a multitude of other products and housing assistance that can be provided by the SHSs to support them. The IHR is just one product of emergency accommodation.

Ms SCANLON: You would agree, though, that the guidelines state—

The intake into an IHR is only applicable where:

...

- the customer is eligible for social housing;

Mr Cridland: The guidelines do need to be read in their entirety. I acknowledge that is on the front page, but throughout the guidelines it is very clear. These guidelines were developed in consultation with the specialist homelessness services. Their advice to us is these are practices that they are conducting already. Thank you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We might go to government members' questions now. We will go to the member for Moggill.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, can you outline the government's capital investment in social and community housing and how this compares to previous approaches in other states? There is a reference in the budget papers to the Queensland Housing Investment Pipeline. What does this mean?

Mr O'CONNOR: The Crisafulli government's first budget is all about securing our housing future with a record investment in social and community housing to help our most vulnerable Queenslanders. This includes an additional \$1.967 billion over the four-year period alone, including \$1.892 billion in capital funding to grow our Queensland Housing Investment Pipeline and contribute to the delivery of 53,500 social and community homes by 2044. The Queensland Community Housing Investment Pipeline will be our new, always-open, procurement process to support community housing providers to grow and do what they do best, which is deliver and manage homes for vulnerable Queenslanders. This is a first for our state, obviously supported by the record funding in this budget period of \$5.6 billion, but it is the ongoing that is really special—that baseline funding. Our department is very excited for it to, for the first time, be a program—that is the word, is it not, Mark?

Mr Cridland: Yes, program.

Mr O'CONNOR: We are a program and that has made our department very excited because it is a secure pipeline of funding instead of just going and looking for random grant programs that are time limited and funding limited. We actually have a baseline locked in beyond the forwards with technically no end date—half a billion dollars from 2029-30 locked in as a baseline to secure and grow that pipeline of new social and community housing.

Over the past decade, as I have outlined to the committee before, the average that the former government delivered per year was just 509 social homes across our state. We are ramping this up. Our record investment will help build a sustainable social and community housing pipeline and contribute to the delivery of our target of 53,500 social and community homes, which includes our

specific target of getting that up to delivering 2,000 social and community homes on average by the end of this term of government—by the end of our first term.

The department is finalising the arrangements of this always-open procurement process with sector consultation underway. The QCHIP is set to open for submissions from the community housing sector in the first quarter of this financial year, as I have outlined. Through this funding, support could include grants or availability payments and the department will be looking to provide more information on delivery against our targets and social housing needs to inform proposed developments. The process will also be structured around a staged and consultative approach with the view to minimise the time and costs for community housing providers to pitch ideas to us. Consultation with the sector, as I said, is ongoing as we finalise these arrangements and I look forward to announcing the official opening of the QCHIP in coming weeks. Ultimately this will mean more homes for Queenslanders in all corners of our state.

We are also delivering new youth foyers to support young Queenslanders who are earning and learning, more supportive housing with wraparound services for people with complex needs and more social homes in remote and discrete First Nations communities. There will also be more homes for those escaping domestic and family violence, with 10 new or replaced domestic violence shelters. The first of these will be in North Queensland and they will be delivered by the end of this year. We promised a fresh start for Queensland, member for Moggill, and that is exactly what we are delivering through our first budget and its record investments.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note the participating member, member for Redcliffe, and call her for a question.

Ms DOOLEY: My first question is to the director-general. Can the department advise how many housing offers have been made to persons experiencing homelessness within my electorate of Redcliffe and within the city of Moreton Bay and, of these, how many offers have been rejected?

Mr Cridland: Our department's critical response team works as part of a co-responder model with state funded specialist homelessness services and local councils to conduct outreach to homelessness hotspots and to connect people experiencing homelessness who are willing to engage with housing and support. In the Moreton Bay region that you particularly mentioned, member, our critical response team partners with funded specialist homelessness service provider Encircle to conduct a weekly outreach. Over the entire region the CRT has engaged with 81 individuals and, through the financial year of 2024-25, 219 individuals from 174 households were supported into temporary or long-term accommodation.

In relation to specific areas in that region, I will not go into too much detail, member, because there is a pending court case, but we have conducted, since March 2025, outreach to the area that is often reported, Goodfellows Road at Kallangur, on 10 occasions in conjunction with Encircle. We conducted our last outreach there on 8 July in a joint effort with Encircle, the Queensland police and Moreton Bay council officers. We engaged with 11 individuals, nine of which have been offered and declined temporary accommodation, including a number of people who have been previously provided accommodation and exited due to their behaviour, and then there are a further two people who have no identification therefore cannot enter the IHR system and they have declined offers of support to get ID through the specialist homelessness services. We will continue, as we do with all councils, to provide co-responder outreach where it is deemed safe to do so.

Ms DOOLEY: Can the minister outline how the Crisafulli government is delivering housing solutions within my electorate of Redcliffe?

Mr O'CONNOR: I thank the member for the question and I thank you for being here to raise these issues on behalf of your community. I know it is one of the top issues, if not the top issue, that you are facing in that part of Queensland. You are a staunch advocate for resolving this and for the actions that we are taking to resolve this housing crisis. So thank you, member for Redcliffe.

As I have outlined, our budget locks in \$5.6 billion to get more social and community housing built to, of course, support that target of 53,500 homes. As has been well ventilated at this hearing already, we already have more than 6,000 social and affordable homes in contract or under construction to be delivered across this state. Member, I can advise you that this includes around 670 across the Moreton Bay region, including in your electorate of Redcliffe.

While we are working to boost housing supply, we have a range of private rental products to help people find, get and ultimately keep a home. As at 30 June 2025, across the City of Moreton Bay we have had 1,820 households provided with a bond loan, a bridging bond loan or a bond loan plus, at a

total cost of around \$4.4 million. We have had 429 households provided with rental grants at a cost of just over \$400,000, 144 households provided with RentConnect services and 408 households provided with a rental security subsidy to really take action across all parts of the housing system.

As at 30 June 2025, the department has committed \$11.9 million in homelessness program funding to seven non-government organisations to deliver nine specialist homelessness services across your community. These deliver 84 places of temporary supported accommodation. We also have provided that 20 per cent uplift to those services all the way through to June 2029, and we visited Encircle not that long ago. We are working through our regulatory environment with those services over the next 12 months to lock in the long-term secure contracts that they have long wanted to see to give their workers the certainty that they deserve.

Member, I think you might have opened the Peninsula Support Hub earlier this week with the Deputy Premier. The Crisafulli government supported the delivery of the Peninsula Support Hub in partnership with the Moreton Bay council, The Breakfast Club and the Salvation Army to offer housing referrals, case management, meal services, laundry and shower facilities, and social connections. There is a lot happening, and I appreciate the member's advocacy to get even more happening. We are really determined to turn around this housing crisis. The city that you represent and live in is front and centre in those efforts.

Mr JAMES: Minister, can you outline how the government is supporting people experiencing homelessness with emergency housing support through the Immediate Housing Response program and have you had to address any gaps in policy or funding?

Mr O'CONNOR: I greatly appreciate that question, member for Mulgrave, particularly after the line of questioning we heard from the shadow minister. I think the shadow minister will have to reflect on some of the—now that we have confirmation—false claims on the IHR program. I think those claims might even have been made in the House. They are incredibly disappointing scare campaigns that are weaponising vulnerable Queenslanders but, hopefully, not deterring them from seeking the support that we have available because there is a record amount of support available. I hope that that commentary from the opposition has not muddied the waters or deterred anyone from reaching out for housing help.

While our focus is, of course, on building and unlocking long-term housing solutions, we need to be delivering a better crisis response than the one that we inherited. People experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness can receive that assistance through our funded initiatives delivered by specialist homelessness services across Queensland, including the Immediate Housing Response. Those households may be accommodated in hotels and motels while they actively engage with our services to find a more permanent housing solution. We have committed, not just this year but over the forward estimates, \$380.1 million to deliver that crisis response. This includes temporary accommodation and also our headleasing program. We know that headleasing is a much more appropriate place for some vulnerable Queenslanders to be living. Nobody wants to see, in particular, a mum and her kids in a motel room for three to four months or even longer. That is a completely unacceptable environment. We are working hard by doubling the funding available to headleasing to deliver more suitable environments while we construct the homes that our state needs.

The crisis accommodation funding has been increased by \$209.7 million, as I have outlined, which includes \$113.6 million in 2024-25 and \$96.1 million in 2025-26, addressing a funding shortfall that we were left by the former government. I refer to the comments of the Premier earlier this year, around the time that we were fixing that shortfall, that we were tens and tens of millions of dollars—in fact, over \$100 million—short for the accommodation program that we inherited. That meant that thousands of vulnerable Queenslanders were living in hotels and motels and there was no funding to continue that. We fixed it. We stepped in to fill that hole and to make sure that those vulnerable Queenslanders can continue to have a roof over their heads.

Our homelessness services are the primary entry point to our short-term temporary accommodation program. We will continue to work closely with those services to ensure they see the investment they need in homelessness programs and to make sure those services meet the needs of our most vulnerable Queenslanders.

As has been raised already today, effective from 1 April, our new policy and revised guidelines, which as the director-general outlined were developed in close consultation with the sector, were based on the guidelines and the parameters that the sector had for the program that they were running already, but we aligned it across the board because the program we inherited from the member for Gaven was essentially 'anything goes'. There were no rules around eligibility and no controls. There was no requirement to get the people in these taxpayer-funded hotels and motels onto a secure, stable housing

pathway. That is what our new policy does. Our revised guidelines ensure that the IHR assists our most vulnerable Queenslanders who are in need of shelter and it supports them to obtain longer term secure housing.

The criteria includes being homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is pretty commonsense to include that in a crisis accommodation program but it was not there before. All other options for shelter need to have been exhausted. They need to be eligible for social housing, and there are parameters around that, as the director-general explained. We require the people we are supporting to actively engage with our providers to source suitable long-term accommodation. We also require—and this was something that the homelessness services were already doing—a contribution that is set at the same rate as someone would pay within the social housing system.

People will be considered ineligible if they have previously had accommodation terminated by one of our providers within a six-month period, which is a particular concern in relation to property damage and behaviour. Across Queensland, a lot of hotels and motels were pulling out of the program because of the enormous amounts of damage they were experiencing. People will also be ineligible if they have previously left safe and stable accommodation in favour of this motel style accommodation or if they have declined a reasonable offer of safe alternative accommodation within a six-month period. That reasonable offer includes six locations that they can list of where they would be looking to be housed within our social housing system.

These updated program guidelines mean that our support is targeted to our most vulnerable who have genuinely exhausted all other options for accommodation. Under the previous policy guidelines that the member for Gaven put in place, some customers were misusing this support by engaging in repeated poor behaviour, disturbances, having unauthorised guests or in some cases handing over the whole room to another individual. Threats were made to not only our housing staff but also the homelessness service workers and the broader community and there was general antisocial conduct. We had people refusing to engage with support services or even preferring motel stays over long-term housing outcomes. That had a significant financial impact as well. From 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025, our SHSs reported spending in excess of \$590,000 on repairs to accommodation.

We have heard of cases such as a client in emergency accommodation who refused to engage with a homelessness service while receiving multiple breaches for poor behaviour, which led to an eventual exiting. What was of most concern was that that client had a social housing property interstate that they had refused to move back to or relinquish while the taxpayers of Queensland were funding them to stay in a motel. In another instance, a client refused to accept any offers of accommodation anywhere other than a specific hotel within the Brisbane CBD. They had also declined two offers of suitable social housing. No further offers of emergency accommodation were made and this client was referred to other support services to address their housing needs.

These cases do not fit with what I think the expectations of Queenslanders would be. They do not deliver the housing outcomes that we need to see. When a household is found to be ineligible for assistance, the department does fund providers that are able to support these households to deliver a wide range of other initiatives under our homelessness programs, which includes temporary supported accommodation and tenancy sustainment services. In fact, we visited one a few weeks ago in your electorate which was run by Vinnies.

While in short-term temporary accommodation, these households receive support from our dedicated case managers through our homelessness services. This is a commonsense approach to something that we inherited. It is a far better outcome for the individuals whom we are seeking to help, and it is a far better outcome for the department and the taxpayers of Queensland because we are making sure that every dollar counts and because it is going towards achieving a housing outcome.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will move to non-government questions. Does the member for Noosa have a question to ask?

Ms BOLTON: Good morning, everyone. Minister, regarding your commitment to social and affordable housing, has forecasting been undertaken on the expected increase of eligibility once the income thresholds are updated to reflect 20 years of inflation, wage increases and housing costs?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Noosa, there is an element of hypotheticals in that question; however, I will allow the question on the basis that I think the minister is willing to answer it.

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, I am. We ran through in detail earlier the work commissioned by the former minister and the approach that the new government is taking to eligibility thresholds and the priority we have on increasing our build program so we can get that waitlist under control and moving in the right

direction. I do not have any particular information. I can endeavour to get back to you by the end of the session. I am happy to refer to the director-general if he has anything further to add to that particular query.

Mr Cridland: I just wanted to repeat a comment I made earlier about the eligibility. The incoming income limit is one test. There are many financial and non-financial considerations such as assets, trusts and exceptional circumstances such as long-term unemployment, whether they are able to work or whether there are medical or disability issues. All of those exceptional circumstances are considered as part of the comprehensive eligibility assessment. There are many cases where people who may not have met one criteria, such as the income limit, have been accepted as eligible onto the register. To give you an example: in the first nine months of the last financial year we added 378 ineligible households to the register due to the fact that they had other exceptional circumstances. The income limit is only one of the factors.

Mr O'CONNOR: Just to add a little bit more to that, they were generally women experiencing domestic and family violence and there were a couple of pensioners who were together. They were included in the 300-odd cases that the director-general mentioned there.

Ms BOLTON: Given the policy constraints around downsizing and also the outdated income thresholds, can the minister advise whether more government housing will be transferred to community housing providers so that Queenslanders can access up to that \$5,000 per annum as part of the assistance?

Mr O'CONNOR: We want to see community housing increase in this state. I am not happy with the level that it is at. It is sitting at around 16 per cent of our total stock. It is directly related to the fact that we are experiencing the crisis that we are experiencing. The data that we have seen in the Productivity Commission's interim report, which was released today, shows that we would have had 77,000 more homes had the policy settings not been put in place by the former government.

I do want to see community housing grow. We are very much driving our entire build program in that direction. We are working through our master agreement with those providers. That is a significant piece of work, but it is well and truly underway. We are making some good progress with the providers who are trialling it and are the first to move on it. Those discussions will be part of it. We want to see what options we have to increase community housing, and everything is on the table. The build program is the central part of it. As part of those agreements with those providers going forward, we absolutely would be open to that and open to ideas to grow their portfolios because they are an enormous part of the solution.

We want to gear our whole system towards supporting them. That is what the pipeline I was running through earlier was all about. It is about making sure that they can bring ideas to us all the time. We want to always have that open so that we do not have particular rounds that are open for particular times with set parameters. They will be able to come to us with an idea and we will run through it with them and hopefully make as many of those projects as possible a reality. Absolutely, that will involve our existing stock as well.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, just to quickly clarify: one of those options would be to transfer existing stock across to community housing management?

Mr O'CONNOR: That absolutely will be on the table. In fact, the 1,005 homes that we announced after our successful bid in the second round of the Housing Australia Future Fund will be managed by community housing. We had the first three in a position to get those projects underway immediately. They are the ones that we will be delivering, but they will be managed by community housing. We were successful at getting 1,005 homes from round 2 of the Housing Australia Future Fund, which was double what the former government achieved through round 1. We very much look forward to working with the Commonwealth constructively going forward.

Ms SCANLON: Director-General, in relation to the Pathways Shared Equity Loan for social housing tenants, you would be aware it was revealed in estimates on Tuesday that the department of housing had informed a staff member in the Labor opposition office who was following up on a concern raised by a social housing tenant who had tried to access the loan that this program had been cut. Director-General, my question is very specific: prior to my providing this evidence in Tuesday's hearing, were staff in the department of housing told funding for this program had been discontinued—yes or no?

Mr Cridland: I can advise the member that in 2024-25 a total of six new households were assisted with the department's home lending products for a total investment of \$899,016 against a total

budget of \$17 million. There were no new settled Pathways Shared Equity Loans in 2024-25. Whilst the department is reprioritising funding to the housing fund to where support and assistance across the housing and homelessness service is most needed, the loan products are continuing. In fact, a new Pathways Shared Equity Loan that was applied for in 2024-25 was approved in the last week. We have clarified this with our team, and I apologise to them and to customers for any confusion.

Ms SCANLON: Whilst I appreciate all of that context, I just want to confirm that department staff were told funding for this program had been discontinued at the point in time I just asked about.

Mr Cridland: If there was any confusion around the budget outcomes—and there has been no change to the budget outcomes—I apologise to our team. We have clarified with our team that the reprioritisation of funding does not mean the cessation of those loan products.

Ms SCANLON: I would like to move now to the LNP's supposed signature housing policy. My question is to the minister. Can you confirm how many new room rental arrangements have occurred since 7 December 2024 as a direct result of reforms to allow first home owners to legally rent out a room without losing their concessions and grants?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: could I just clarify that that is within the remit of the minister's portfolio area given it is a whole-of-government policy that, as I understand the question as asked, would be related to the Treasury portfolio? I want to clarify whether that is within the remit of asking here or whether it would have been more appropriately asked during the Treasury estimates committee hearing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, are you asking about the first home owner grant eligibility criteria in relation to the renting of a room?

Ms SCANLON: I am referring to the legislative change that allows tenants to rent out a room. In relation to the point of order just made, the Residential Tenancies Authority and the act sit under the housing minister. I would have thought this is something he could provide an answer to, given the data obtained by the Residential Tenancies Authority.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is my view that that question does relate primarily to Treasury. However, Minister, if you have any information you can provide the member in relation to the matter, that would be appreciated.

Mr O'CONNOR: We are happy to get the RTA to get some data on room agreements signed, if the member is happy to go down that path. Again, this is within the Treasury portfolio. The RTA do not have numbers on—

Ms SCANLON: They could not answer the question either.

Mr O'CONNOR: Who, Treasury?

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

Mr O'CONNOR: We are happy to get the RTA to get some data on rooming agreements. We can see what we can find for the particular dates the member is asking about. We saw in the session the other day that there were many questions to the Treasurer around programs that are clearly within my portfolio. I reiterate some of that information that the director-general shared. The loan products that the member—again, much like the—

Ms SCANLON: Relevance, Mr Deputy Speaker; this has nothing to do with the question that I just asked. I would like to move on.

Mr O'CONNOR: Member, you are very interested in this product.

Ms SCANLON: It is not an opportunity—

Mr O'CONNOR: The settled loans—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, is the loans issue something you were going to come back to the committee about or is that another issue?

Mr O'CONNOR: I have been advised that the RTA does not hold the data that the member is seeking. On home ownership generally—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will come back to the questions you were going to come back to later in the session. Member for Gaven, do you have a further question?

Ms SCANLON: Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. Minister, you have been critical of the former Labor government for buying properties to provide social and affordable housing while we were building. In fact, in one circumstance you referred to it as 'adding fuel to the fire'. Can you explain why, then, you

did media at Cannon Park Motel, that was approved for funding by the former Labor government, saying it would make a real difference to vulnerable Queenslanders?

Mr O'CONNOR: Our commitment around purchases was very clearly around the Housing Investment Fund. I thank the member for giving me the opportunity to remind her that not a single newly completed dwelling was opened within the term of the former Labor government. Despite the three years, I think it was, that that fund was running, you did not manage to open a single new home and have tenants in a single new home within those three years—not a single one.

There will, of course, be purchases that happen across our portfolio. We have tens of thousands of properties across our portfolio. There are well over 65,000 that we manage ourselves. There are set criteria and specific circumstances around any acquisitions. I am very comfortable with those criteria. That is part of the responsible management of any property portfolio. I am very comfortable with the criteria our teams have around those properties. We will not be going down the path that the former Labor government did where the HIF was used to purchase homes to make the numbers look better when they realised that progress was nowhere near where it should have been.

That is much like the loan product that the member was just raising—a loan product that she came into this place to apparently advocate for the other day and then went out on social media and advocated for—where there was not a single settled loan in 2024-25 from that product. I have not heard many positive words around Boost to Buy, which had over 11,000 expressions of interest.

We are in this scenario because we had a former government that was focused on optics, not outcomes. They were focused on headlines, not housing. The Productivity Commission's report shows the failures of the former government and the system that they managed, particularly around our construction sector productivity, which led to 77,000 fewer homes.

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: relevance. The minister is rattling off a whole lot of blame. I would like to move on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I take your—

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just one moment, member for Gaven. What is your point of order?

Mr McDONALD: Directly to the member for Gaven's point of order, the minister is being directly responsive to the question and providing a full response.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, thank you for your point of order. Member for Gaven, I know you would like to ask another question. Minister, you were being relevant to the question. Member for Gaven, you asked about the reasoning behind his comments about the purchase of a property. Minister, have you nearly completed your answer or do you have more to add?

Mr O'CONNOR: I will finish that point because the member for Gaven was the building minister too in the former government. Under the settings that she oversaw we had the least productive job sites in the nation, with at least two days lost—

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: we are in the housing portfolio examination. I accept the response the minister has provided. I would like to move on, please.

Mr O'CONNOR: I am finishing off.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was a very open-ended question in asking for the minister's reasoning. Minister, keep it to the reasoning behind the question that was asked.

Mr O'CONNOR: Construction productivity is very relevant to housing and it has led to 77,000 fewer homes being constructed since 2018 because of the policy settings of the former government. The member for Gaven oversaw that particular portfolio area for almost two years. We are very proud of the delivery that we are ramping up. Our clear aim is to be delivering over 2,000 social and community homes by the end of our first term. I will hold that up any day of the week against the system we inherited from the former government and their average of just 509 homes a year over their decade in power.

Ms SCANLON: My question is to the minister. Can you outline which properties currently providing social and affordable housing purchased through the Housing Investment Fund you think the government should not have purchased, based on your response just then?

Mr O'CONNOR: Again, we were not in government. They were decisions you made. We are honouring those decisions and any that were not finalised or any transactions that were not completed. Those houses are there. All we can do is control the pathway forward. As you can see from our budget, our pathway forward is all about the construction program to deliver new supply. That is not just in my

portfolio. Across the budget there is \$8.1 billion that we have delivered. The Deputy Premier is declaring PDAs and announcing Residential Activation Fund projects across—

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: relevance. We are now talking about other portfolios. If the minister has answered the question, I am happy to move on.

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a bit more to say about housing supply.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, thank you for your point of order. Minister, we might go to the next question.

Ms SCANLON: My question is to the director-general. Has Homelessness Ministerial Advisory Council received a copy of the final report of the independent review of homelessness system and services response?

Mr Cridland: No.

Ms SCANLON: Minister, if, as you assert, the Homelessness Ministerial Advisory Council is not just another 'talkfest'—your words in parliament—why have no formal outcomes such as meeting minutes, action summaries or implementation plans been publicly released to date?

Mr O'CONNOR: I would encourage the member to speak to any of the attendees at the now two meetings that we have held of that body and the two meetings we have held individually of the subcommittees of that body that we have set up. They have been extremely productive meetings. They have been, for the first time, a space where we have brought all the key parts of government together to focus on outcomes and to focus on delivering the change that we need to see.

Just last week we had our first subcommittee meeting with our South-East Queensland local governments where we had in fact the vast majority of mayors from the south-east come along and engage in a very productive session with our key staff and me. We have had a supportive housing subgroup meeting, which again has been reporting outcomes through to the main committee. We have had great support from the stakeholders who are involved in that body.

It is not just something like the endless round tables or summits—all those approaches that we saw from the former government with disastrous consequences. This is a regular meeting body that comes to us every two months to sit down with the top parts of government and have those ongoing conversations and that ongoing accountability to us on the actions that we are taking.

At this Monday's meeting we updated the members on our budget outcomes. We had a detailed presentation on our 'programs re-imagined' piece, which is the title of the work that we are doing to reform the way that we regulate our specialist homelessness services. It focused on simplifying the regulatory environment for those services as we move to the longer term contracts that the Crisafulli government has committed to delivering.

I do not think I have ever seen more hexagons in my life than the hexagons we saw on the slides there of the current program landscape and the absolute mess that it is. It was a really good working discussion with feedback as we went and direct access to the key public servants who are delivering that part of the system.

The supportive housing subgroup reported back to the main body with some really good outcomes and some good actions to get our 'building things' part of the department in there for the next meeting to talk about the opportunities we have as part of our 53,500 target. We have had great feedback as well from attendees or members of the council. The Mental Health Commissioner, Ivan, said of the first meeting—

I think this is one of the first times that I've come to a meeting where it was more about action, rather than talking about the problem. And what I liked particularly from my perspective on people with mental health problems and drug and alcohol problems who are homeless, was a strong focus on supportive housing. That is the missing piece, and that is one of the major answers to our homelessness problems currently in Brisbane.

They are excellent meetings, member for Gaven. They are driven by having not just a pressure release, media driven event like the ones that you used to conduct. They are a regular, methodical, considered way of having a dialogue with our department on driving action with our department and, in fact, having accountability with our department given the wide range of stakeholders who make up that advisory council.

Ms BUSH: Point of order: could the minister be reminded to use proper titles?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Of course. I am not sure what you are referring to, member for Cooper.

Ms BUSH: He has used the word 'you' twice.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments should come through the chair, Minister, just like in the House down the hallway. I remind members to use proper titles, please. I am aware that the member for Maiwar may have a question to ask.

Mr BERKMAN: I wanted to put a question to the director-general just to clarify the options for Queenslanders seeking housing support under the new government. There was some discussion before about the LNP's new public housing antisocial behaviour policy whereby a social housing tenant who records three instances of antisocial behaviour could be evicted. If their behaviour is dangerous or illegal then they and the whole household could be evicted and banned for two years.

Director-General, I think you said before that, where someone is ineligible for both the Immediate Housing Response—so emergency accommodation—and social housing, there are still other products available to them. Can you please clarify for us how many people in Queensland are currently banned from both social housing and the IHR because of antisocial behaviour and those policies together, and can you please advise a list of other products that you said are available to them?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two parts there. Director-General, if you are able to answer that, it would be appreciated—one at a time.

Mr Cridland: I might ask for a repeat of some parts of the question at some point, member, but I will do my best to answer your question. It is important to set the context around the level of accommodation we are providing through the Immediate Housing Response through our partners at the specialist homelessness services and also through our refuge accommodation assistance that is being run by our department. Taking the first one, IHR: we provided over 471,000 nights of accommodation in 2024-25. For our refuge accommodation assistance, we provided a further 293,000 nights of accommodation. From recollection, that assisted over 9,000 people throughout the year with emergency accommodation.

I will move to other products. If they are deemed by our specialist homelessness services to be ineligible under IHR for a variety of reasons that are in the policy guidelines, there are other services like accredited residential services, crisis accommodation, private rental support, other temporary supported accommodations and full supportive housing options. The sector's desire is to make sure that anyone who is deemed ineligible for this one product for various reasons, be it their behaviour, they are supported by other options.

That is important because we use about 401 motels and hotels across the state. They are all privately owned. Where people misbehave and cause damage—as the minister alluded to, there was nearly \$600,000 worth of damage caused to those motels—they jeopardise the entire system for everyone who is in them. At the moment we have just under 4,000 people in those hotels and motels, and we need to keep access to those to provide that assistance.

Mr BERKMAN: I appreciate the importance of that emergency accommodation with one in my electorate. The element of the question that has not been answered is: can you tell us how many people are currently banned from both social housing and the emergency accommodation options because of antisocial behaviour and the IHR policies taken together?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, do you have that detail?

Mr Cridland: I have a part of it. I might have to look into the social housing options for you. In terms of the IHR, the advice I have from our specialist homelessness services is that they reported having to exit 96 households. Of those, 59 per cent was due to aggressive or abusive behaviour, harassment towards residents or breach of hotel-motel regulations.

Mr BERKMAN: Just to be clear, that is the IHR component alone. Are you coming back to us on how many people have been deemed ineligible for social housing under the three-strikes policy?

Mr Cridland: My team has beat me to it. There have been no evictions under the antisocial behaviour policy to date. In the last financial year, there were 45 evictions in total for behaviour under the fair expectations of behaviour, the preceding policy.

Mr BERKMAN: Do you have any assessment of the overlap of people who in the last financial year are now ineligible for both social housing and IHR emergency support?

Mr Cridland: The new IHR policy commenced on 30 May, so there has been no overlap as yet, with reference to the answer that no-one has exited social housing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, there were some questions taken on notice earlier. Do you have details to hand that you could provide to the committee?

Mr O'CONNOR: I will hand over to the director-general.

Mr Cridland: I have three in total. The member asked about the breakdown for upgrades. It is \$583 million over the FEs: 2025-26 is \$167 million; 2026-27 is \$150 million; 2027-28 is \$133 million; and 2028-29 is \$133 million. That is the breakdown for upgrades.

The member asked about the \$1.892 billion. I can confirm that is all new state capital funding for social and community homes.

Finally, the member asked about the more than 6,000 social and affordable homes in construction and under contract. Thank you for asking that, because it shows me that my fantastic team in social and affordable housing growth somehow managed to contract 392 homes in the four days between 24 June and 30 June. The ones contracted prior were 5,655.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Director-General. We will go to government members questions. Member for Cook?

Mr KEMPTON: Can the minister update the committee on the government's commitment to progressing housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including the target that by 2031 the Crisafulli government will increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized—not overcrowded—housing to 88 per cent?

Mr O'CONNOR: As Queensland's new government, we are determined to close the housing gap for First Nations communities, but we know that safe, secure, suitable housing has been underdelivered in the past. We are committed to reducing overcrowding in First Nations communities and we are working towards the target that you referenced of at least 88 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriate housing by 2031. The 2021 Census data showed that Queensland is at 81.2 per cent, which was an improvement by a very small amount from the 79.4 per cent found in 2016. That means we are not currently on track. That is why we need to ramp up the delivery of new homes.

As outlined earlier, we provided \$5.6 billion in capital funding over four years for the delivery of social and community homes. This includes \$182.2 million in 2025-26 alone to address overcrowding in remote, discrete, urban and regional locations so that every First Nations person in Queensland has a safe and secure place to call home.

Our target of 53,500 new social and community homes includes at least 1,200 social homes to be delivered specifically in First Nations remote communities, in partnership with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local government authorities. I know this is of particular interest to you, member for Cook, given the significant First Nations population you have across the remote and discrete communities you proudly represent. I am pleased to advise you that there have been 34 new social homes completed in the communities of Laura, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, Torres shire and Wujal Wujal, providing new homes for members of your community.

Through our budget we are committed to delivering more housing outcomes to the remote, discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within your Cook electorate. This includes 153 new social housing dwellings in the communities of Aurukun, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum in the Northern Peninsula Area and Pormpuraaw, with 44 extensions to social housing to support overcrowded families and 78 new land lots that will be used for new social housing specifically in Kowanyama, Napranum and Mapoon.

We continue to advocate to the Australian government—we have done that several times already in the relatively short time we have been in government—to receive more investment in our state in First Nations housing to address these issues. In March this year I signed an agreement under the Housing Australia Future Fund Acute Housing Measure, securing the first \$25 million of \$50 million allocated to Queensland for repairs, maintenance and improvements to housing in the state's remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This funding is welcome but it is not enough. Being a highly regionalised state, we have unique challenges. You know that better than anyone, member for Cook.

I continue to advocate to my federal colleagues for renewed federal funding for remote housing supply to support all governments' commitments to closing the gap. I note that remote housing funding to Queensland has not been provided from the federal government since 2018. The Northern Territory is really the only jurisdiction to receive federal funding for remote First Nations housing supply. We look at that deal as the gold standard. That is the metric. We would like to see something of that type delivered for our state as well. With the Closing the Gap timeframe of 2031 fast approaching, we need to see a refreshed approach to how we are going to close the housing gap.

We have heard feedback that we can improve and enhance housing commitments for First Nations Queenslanders to ensure that resources are prioritised and better directed towards on-the-ground outcomes that deliver real and lasting benefits. A number of stakeholders have pointed out to us that the Our Place Action Plan does not include a sufficient focus on the vital issue of housing supply in discrete First Nations communities, which we know is a key priority not only for First Nations councils but also the Local Government Association more broadly. To respond to this feedback, member for Cook, I can inform you that we are putting together an updated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan, which will take a system-wide approach to accelerate the delivery of much needed additional homes in remote communities to address overcrowding and expand home ownership opportunities for First Nations Queenslanders. The new action plan will form part of the initiatives under the new 20-year comprehensive whole-of-government housing plan we are finalising at the moment.

We are going to continue to work to improve housing outcomes by listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Queensland. That includes Palm Island, where work is well and truly underway to unlock innovative pathways for first home ownership in First Nations communities with the rent-to-buy home ownership scheme being developed with the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council to enable our social housing tenants on the island to buy the home they live in. I have visited Palm Island several times, including to launch the scheme earlier this year. It will be the first of its kind and it will be transformative for this community, where just 1.4 per cent of residents own their own home compared to the state's overall rate of 64 per cent. We are committed to working with councils in remote communities to unlock other pathways into home ownership and deliver education programs to prospective first home buyers to support sustainable home ownership in the future—in many cases, for the very first time.

Mr JAMES: Can the minister update the committee on how the Crisafulli government is providing housing help to Queenslanders experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence?

Mr O'CONNOR: That is a very important question. It is one that has been ventilated to a small degree already by the committee, but I am very keen to provide further information on the fantastic work our teams are doing in some very difficult circumstances.

Women experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence and their children need immediate access to safe and secure housing with the right supports to help them recover from these situations. Safety is our department's first priority. As at 31 March, 27 per cent of applicants on the housing register identified as having experienced domestic and family violence as compared to 24 per cent at the same time last year. In the first nine months of 2024-25, 8,826 people were assisted by our funded specialist homelessness services in Queensland. They identified domestic and family violence as the main reason for seeking assistance. This was a 20 per cent increase on the same period the year prior.

Customers requiring immediate assistance were provided with specialist housing products and services to assist them to transition to safe, secure housing. Once those immediate safety needs are met, people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence are supported with longer term housing as it becomes available. This can include headleases with case coordination support and brokerage for essential goods and services as well as private rental products. We also have a statewide specialist response team that provides expert advice, guidance and direct assistance to our frontline housing staff. We have flexible assistance packages that provide tailored financial and practical assistance such as basic furniture, removalists or repairs to damage. In 2024-25 there were 738 households that were provided with assistance through these packages, at a total cost of \$1.4 million. Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, 1,470 new households who identified as experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence were allocated social housing.

We are very proud to be delivering an enhanced response here. We are committed to more targeted accommodation for this cohort of Queenslanders, including the 10 new or replacement domestic and family violence shelters. It is a really important issue, and I thank you for raising it and allowing me to get some of the data on record that shows the great work of our housing officers and our homelessness services across Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time for this session has expired. We have now reached the end of the time allocated for the consideration of the proposed expenditure. The questions that were informally taken on notice have been answered. I thank you, Minister, as well as the officials and departmental officers. Minister, I will give you 20 seconds to thank your staff if you would like to. However, we are coming back so you might want to wait until then.

Mr O'CONNOR: I will do it at the end of the session.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The committee will now break until 10.45 am, when the committee will examine the estimates for the portfolio area of public works.

Proceedings suspended from 10.30 am to 10.45 am.

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The committee will now examine the estimates for the public works portfolio area. Minister, if you wish, you may make an opening statement regarding the public works portfolio area of no more than five minutes

Mr O'CONNOR: Thank you. We have budgeted over \$3.2 billion for the public works part of our portfolio in the 2025-26 state budget, which includes funding for disaster management and the construction and management of government employee housing, and to continue to roll out the Building Reg Reno to make our state the building capital of the nation. Our construction arm, QBuild, plays a vital role across government and we are continuing to grow their workforce, including in procurement and contract management experts as well as new tradies and apprentices. I am proud of how QBuild always steps up in tough times to respond to severe weather events, and I want to thank all of our teams for their efforts across Queensland earlier this year, which I had the opportunity to see firsthand.

QBuild's growth includes taking on record numbers of new apprentices, which is securing our pipeline of the next generation of new tradies. In fact, applications open in August for the next intake of QBuild apprentices. Last financial year we recruited 62 new apprentices, and I thank them for choosing to start their careers with us. They will be helping build and maintain our essential public infrastructure like schools, social housing, police stations, correctional facilities and healthcare centres that Queenslanders rely on every day. Others will be based in our Rapid Accommodation and Apprenticeship Centres where they will have a vital role in delivering modular homes. These homes built by QBuild are providing more social housing for vulnerable Queenslanders, particularly in First Nations communities, and homes for essential workers, such as our police, teachers and healthcare workers in regional and remote areas.

Our use of modular builds helps to address the current challenges in traditional construction, such as labour shortages, material waste and project delays due to weather, which means we can deliver more housing faster. As well as our own construction program, QBuild is managing contracts for other builders to deliver more housing through both modular and traditional builds.

We also have our outstanding major projects team who are overseeing capital projects worth a combined value of \$2.63 billion. That will leave a lasting legacy for communities across Queensland, like the Beaudesert replacement courthouse—something of particular interest to you, Deputy Speaker—Logan Reserve schools and the Southport supportive accommodation project. I want to commend their recent work completing the Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre ahead of the unacceptable completion schedule we inherited from the former government. There are also exciting opportunities from the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and we have already provided the Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority with detailed, market-ready design briefs and other support to develop project validation reports and their procurement activities.

Our public works team is also progressing regulatory changes through our Building Reg Reno to boost productivity and to reduce red tape and unnecessary costs for tens of thousands of builders, tradies and subbies. By removing annual financial reporting requirements for individual SC1 and SC2 licensees, it has meant less paperwork for around 50,000 of these licensees. That represents 97 per cent of individual licensees across Queensland.

A new Queensland Housing Code is also part of our Building Reg Reno. Industry have told us that the varied local design and siting rules across a multitude of councils in all parts of our state is a barrier to faster building approvals, so we have developed a modernised framework through the QHC to help make it easier to get homes built. Over 70 per cent of new homes built across Queensland are detached dwellings like this, but around three-quarters of local governments have different design and siting rules. Our Building Reg Reno will help tradies spend less time on paperwork and more time on the tools by finally updating the outdated building regulations.

These reforms will also complement the independent Queensland Productivity Commission's construction sector inquiry. The QPC's interim report, which was released today, is damning of the former Labor government and the way they managed our construction industry. Productivity today is nine per cent lower than it was in 2018, which has led to fewer homes and higher rents. It means industry today needs nine per cent more labour than it did in 2018 to produce the same level of output, and that means there are fewer homes being built, significant delays and cost blowouts on major projects across our state. The preliminary findings justify the Crisafulli government's first referral to the

newly established QPC and our decision through the procurement part of this department to pause Labor's BPIC CFMEU tax.

More restrictive and complex regulation has made construction more difficult and more expensive. If BPICs were to remain in place until 2029-30, the resulting impact as found by the Productivity Commission would be a net cost to the community of now up to \$26.9 billion with project costs increasing by up to 25 per cent, meaning up to 26,500 fewer homes would be built and rents would be 8.3 per cent higher than they otherwise would have been. This is in addition to the 77,000 fewer homes that the commission has found were constructed because of those settings since 2018.

Data suggests that there have been no material improvements to safety outcomes since BPICs were introduced as well. In contrast, we are driving productivity in our construction sector and boosting our own building capabilities. I thank you for the opportunity to make an opening statement. I thank the committee for being here and I look forward to your questions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to non-government members' questions.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, with reference to page 5 of the SDS, can you confirm that the Queensland government has reduced investment in government employee housing from \$162.9 million in the 2024-25 budget to \$144 million in 2025-26?

Mr Cridland: There has been no reduction in the \$677.5 million capital program to build 439 additional government employee homes between 2022 and 2027. That figure just reflects the cash flow of the build profile.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, based on your response and previous budget documents, I calculate there is approximately \$130.2 million left in the capital program for 2026-27. Can you please confirm whether there is any additional or new funding for government employee housing allocated in the forwards?

Mr Cridland: As just mentioned, we are continuing to deliver the program out to 2027 and we are engaging with agencies now about the program beyond 2027.

Ms MULLEN: To confirm, there is no funding in the forwards at this time?

Mr Cridland: There is funding in the forwards.

Ms MULLEN: Beyond 2027?

Mr Cridland: I would have to check to see if any of that funding moves over a financial year as those homes come online, but I will come back to the member this session for that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Director-General.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, can you confirm that the demand for government employee housing continues to grow annually, particularly in regional and remote areas, due to the expansion of frontline services such as health, policing and education?

Mr Cridland: Yes, I can confirm there is ongoing demand for government employee housing, particularly in rural and remote areas. We have a government employee housing interdepartmental committee where we are working with all the agencies to forward-plan their demand. We are obviously not the workforce planners for health, police or education. We ask them each year what their forward demand is for their workforce and where and what the configurations of those dwellings are, and that is what we take forward in our program. Important work is happening now to determine the forward demand beyond the current program.

Ms MULLEN: Based on the work that you do across all of those departments, has the department then modelled the projected demand for new or upgraded government employee residences over the forward estimates, and does the current level of funding meet the projected demand?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two parts to that.

Mr Cridland: Deputy Speaker, yes. We are actively modelling forward demand with agencies.

Ms MULLEN: The second part of the question is: does the current level of funding meet that projected demand?

Mr Cridland: Until we have completed the forward demand modelling, it is difficult to put a funding figure on it. The funding we have at the moment is sufficient to deliver the 439 new homes out to 2027.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, how many new government employee residences have been constructed or required since November 2024?

Mr Cridland: I will have to come back to you in this session with that breakdown, member.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will keep a note of two now, I think, member for Jordan.

Ms MULLEN: Thank you. Has the department provided advice to the government regarding any risks of service disruption or workforce shortages due to any inadequate housing provision?

Mr Cridland: As I mentioned previously, the workforce planning requirements for individual agencies are a matter for them. They provide us with their projected forward demand on an annual basis. At the moment we have a program, as I mentioned, out to 2027 and we are working on that forward demand profile with those agencies.

Ms MULLEN: To be clear, your department is responsible for delivering government employee housing. Should it not also be responsible for understanding and planning for the cumulative housing needs across government agencies, rather than referring back to those individual agencies?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I believe this is the third time that the member has asked the question and I think she is being argumentative. The director-general is being very responsive.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lockyer, for your point of order. I am not sure about that of order; however, I did hear the question and consider you are asking for an opinion, member for Jordan. Perhaps you could rephrase the question or ask another one.

Ms MULLEN: Perhaps another way of wording it: can the department effectively deliver government employee housing if it does not hold or model a whole-of-government picture of forecast demand?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I think that question should be directed towards the minister on policy.

Mr KING: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I put it to you that the member for Lockyer is raising frivolous points of order. He might be at a different hearing to me, but I am hearing these questions as different questions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Kurwongbah, for your assistance. I am listening carefully to everyone's points of order, member for Kurwongbah and member for Lockyer. Member for Jordan, I think that second question also was asking for an opinion, but I will allow the director-general to answer it—something about the effectiveness of delivery.

Mr Cridland: To reiterate, the program is a demand-driven model where we partner with agencies to determine their housing requirements going forward. I do not think it is a wise use of money for us to speculate on any agency's forward demand. That demand is set by their attraction and retention policies, their employment contracts, their service delivery requirements and the availability of housing in the communities where they are looking to increase their service. We certainly partner with them and, as I said, there is an interdepartmental committee for government employee housing with all the agencies represented. We take forward the delivery of those homes once a demand is established through that process.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, I note the minister's response to estimates pre-hearing question on notice No. 16 in relation to the vacancy rate for government employee housing. Isn't a persistently low vacancy rate a signal that there is no buffer to support workforce growth, emergency placements of flexible workplace deployment?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, that question is also seeking an opinion but I will allow you to respond.

Mr Cridland: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Again, the department works closely with agencies to ensure housing supply aligns with demand in a continual cycle of asset construction, upgrades and replacements. Vacancies can arise where agencies do not require additional staff. In particular locations, staff have made independent housing arrangements for when available housing does not align with the needs of the agency. I would also mention our vacancy rate at 0.72 as at 30 June reflects the challenges in the private market. Vacancy rates were no exception to that but, as I said, we continue to forward plan in partnership with all agencies to meet their demand.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, can you confirm whether agencies have reported instances where the lack of available employee housing has delayed or prevented recruitment, despite those low vacancy rates?

Mr Cridland: Yes, agencies have raised with us that they have additional demand. That is known, and it is why we are modelling where that demand should go, what the configuration of that housing is and how long they need it for et cetera. Yes, I expect there will always be demand for government employee housing. We will make sure we work with agencies to understand and supply that demand.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, as you would be aware, teachers are on strike next week, nurses have also been taking industrial action and the police are calling their deal insulting. Government employee housing is an important condition of employment for many frontline workers in regional, rural and remote areas of Queensland. Why is the Crisafulli government not investing any new money into government employee housing and relying on the previous Labor government's investment to support worker housing?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, there are a number of imputations in that question, so I will allow you to answer the question with some latitude.

Mr O'CONNOR: In fact, those imputations are against the former Labor government because we are delivering the exact program that the former Labor government put in place. While we continue to deliver that program which again, as the director-general has outlined, goes until 2027, we are undertaking work that has never been undertaken before to model that demand across government and to inform our future decisions around future investments into the government employee housing program.

As much as I would like to be here before the committee and report that we have resolved all of the issues that we have inherited within our first nine or 10 months, I cannot report that. We are undertaking a really critical piece of work across government to inform our future decisions to deliver the government employee housing that our workforce needs in all parts of Queensland. As a Liberal National Party MP, it is not so much an issue in my part of the Gold Coast but for so many of our members, including a couple here at this table, it is really important that we get this housing delivered. That is why we are working to see what we can do better while we continue to roll out that program. As I outlined, it has not been undertaken before. I suggest the imputation against the former government's program is something that could have been raised when you were a member of the former government, but we are rolling out that program and figuring out a way to do things better for future budgets and future decisions.

Again, it goes through to 2027. There is technically time out until then to continue to roll out this program but we want this work to be completed well and truly before then. We want this work to be completed as part of the next budget process. We are working with agencies to get that done. Things have been made harder, of course, by the lack of general housing supply across Queensland. The independent Productivity Commission's interim report shows there are 77,000 fewer homes across our state since 2018 because of the productivity issues across our construction sector that are a direct result of the way that the former government managed our construction sector—that has absolutely added pressure to the housing environment across this state. Across our entire portfolio, and across government in fact, we are working on supply, supply, supply. The deputy has made many announcements already through the Residential Activation Fund which is a landmark \$2 billion fund to unlock more lots across this state, including in regional Queensland where he has enjoyed, I think, joining all four of the members at the table to announce some of that funding in regional Queensland to get those projects out of the ground and to deliver more housing in every part of the state.

We absolutely consider this fundamental. Work is underway. We sincerely hope that we can do better than the former government did in finding the way forward. I am very confident that we will be able to do that.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, to clarify: you are continuing to roll out the Labor government's program to 2027 and there is no new or additional funding in your budget for 2025-26 for government employee housing?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a question there, minister.

Mr O'CONNOR: We are in 2025, member.

Ms MULLEN: Yes.

Mr O'CONNOR: There will be budgets before the program that the former government that you were a part of put in place expires. As I have just outlined, we want to do better and we want to have that work completed well before the program that we inherited. I am very happy to make the commitment that we will have an improved pathway forward from what we have inherited well before the timeline

that the former government put in place out to 2027. We can do better, we must do better. That is why we are undertaking a piece of work that has never been undertaken before across government to get a sense of that demand and to get a secure pipeline going forward for government employee housing.

Again, we are honouring the program that we have inherited but we just have not had the time to turn it around and to get the new pathway forward in the timeframe that we have had in government. We are working towards that but there is a bit of time out to the current pathway that was laid out by the former government; it is all the way out until 2027. We have time to turn things around and to do better. I very much look forward to updating the committee and the broader Queensland public on that pathway forward.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will now go to government member questions. Member for Lockyer.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, can you please outline to the committee the key benefits to Queensland taxpayers since the government paused the best practice industry conditions?

Mr O'CONNOR: We are very proud to have procurement back with public works. Procurement has not been with public works for some time. Members can speculate about why that was, which particular minister had procurement and why they had it for so long but we are absolutely committed now, as Queensland's new government, to returning respect for taxpayers' money and restoring productivity in our building and construction industry while, of course, ensuring workers' safety is fundamental. It is a very timely question from the member for Lockyer because, as I have outlined several times today, the independent Queensland Productivity Commission have just released their interim report as part of their inquiry into the building and construction sector.

Mr Kempton interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR: I take that interjection from the member for Cook about 77,000 fewer homes being built across this state since 2018 because of the lack of productivity that resulted from the regulation of the building industry by the former government. One of my first actions as minister was to pause BPIC as we awaited the outcomes of that Productivity Commission report into the construction sector.

At the time of coming to government, the clear advice we received—the Treasury modelling we received—estimated that BPIC were increasing government project costs by up to 25 per cent, creating a net economic cost of between \$4.5 billion and \$17.1 billion and that this impact to the residential construction sector could cause up to 22,000 fewer homes to be built across our state which would have caused rents to rise an extra seven per cent between 2024-25 and 2029-30.

The Productivity Commission has undertaken further more robust modelling that has identified that by 2029-30 the cost of BPIC would have inflicted an economic hit of up to \$26 billion on our Queensland community; there would be 26,500 fewer homes—up from that initial Treasury modelling; and rents would have increased an extra 8.3 per cent. That is the legacy of the former Labor government.

Our decision to indefinitely pause BPIC has provided industry with greater flexibility to deliver government-funded construction projects efficiently and safely at a time when rising construction costs and productivity pressures must be managed carefully. We know that they were having a significant flow-on effect on the rest of the sector because just 0.12 per cent of participants in our building industry were able to bid for major projects under that system.

By removing the industrial relations requirements linked to BPICs, the government has also broadened the pool of contractors who are able to tender for these kinds of jobs. This is intended to increase competition in what is a very constrained labour market to particularly enable small and family businesses and regional businesses to have a greater chance of securing work on government projects and, importantly, to address the cost of living for the home owners and renters by really helping us get more supply out of the ground. Our BPIC pause provides greater flexibility to principal contractors and subcontractors. Subbies have a greater chance of securing work without needing to gain unnecessary prequalifications for building construction projects, and this is supporting cost certainty and providing more opportunities for these types of smaller operators. Our change is aimed at making procurement processes simpler more broadly, reducing the administrative burden for both agencies and industry, minimising delays and constraining project costs and schedules to keep them on time and on budget.

Initial feedback indicates more tier 2 and tier 3 firms are showing interest in larger government construction projects as a result of our pause, which is particularly helpful for these regional and remote communities where it can be challenging to attract and retain a sufficient workforce. Early observations indicate the suspension is helping to manage costs and broaden market capacity while continuing to

safeguard worker safety. Worker safety, fair wages and employment conditions of course remain protected under Queensland and national industrial relations laws. Insights gained from the Queensland government's procurement approach will inform our approach to ensure it respects taxpayers' money and delivers increased productivity and transparency to make sure we support innovation, are open to new ideas to make sure we are empowering local small and family businesses and, ultimately, drive better outcomes for Queenslanders.

I do acknowledge as well that the Productivity Commission's interim report, which was released this morning, makes a preliminary recommendation that BPICs should be permanently removed from the Queensland government's procurement policy. Should the opposition feel strongly about restoring BPICs, I would encourage them to make a formal submission to the Productivity Commission. They will be taking those submissions for another six weeks as they put together their final report, which is due to be delivered to government later this year.

Mr KEMPTON: Can the minister please outline to the committee how legislative and regulatory changes are supporting a well-functioning Queensland construction sector without compromising quality or safety?

Mr O'CONNOR: We are determined to make our state the building capital of the nation. We are progressing a staged package of reforms, which you would know as the Building Reg Reno, which is aimed at boosting productivity, reducing the burden on our construction industry and safeguarding investments to make it easier to build in Queensland. The reforms, which are all designed to complement the broader high-level work of the Productivity Commission's inquiry, are being progressively rolled out in four tranches. The first two tranches have been delivered and they included: pausing the further rollout of trust accounts to ease pressure on smaller contractors which were going to flow on to smaller building projects; removing annual financial reporting requirements for individual SC1 and SC2 licensees which, as I outlined before, has reduced red tape for around 50,000 individual licensees; providing additional time to meet fire protection licensing changes—again, that was some clear feedback we got from industry about the need to help them to meet that timeframe; providing a fee waiver to more plumbers who are undertaking particular fire protection work; and extending existing time limit exemptions regarding professional indemnity insurance coverage for building certifiers and the livable housing design standards contained in the NCC modern home standards for certain narrow lots and certain prebuilt small dwellings.

Our tranche 3 amendments, which are contained in the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, are aimed at making the QBCC a more customer-friendly regulator, supporting their digitisation and modernisation agenda, transitioning away from a paper-based environment and streamlining workplace safety notifications without compromising safety while increasing the associated penalty for licensees who do not disclose as they are required to.

We are considering further proposed legislative changes for tranche 4 which will be aimed at helping industry become more efficient by continuing to reduce red tape and improving and modernising legislation. Consideration is being given to reviewing licensing thresholds and improving consistency across all QBCC licensees—things like timeframes and the restoration of licences; reviewing insurance thresholds, cover amounts and the timeframes of the Home Warranty Scheme; streamlining the QBCC's internal review and dispute resolution processes; establishing a clear and consistent approach to implementation timeframes for future National Construction Code updates; further reducing the administrative burden associated with trust accounts; and providing guidance for trusts following insolvencies. We all know the importance of safeguarding the investments we have in our state into building more homes and other projects. Our focus is being combined with the commitment to reduce red tape by modernising legislation to support our building and construction industry to be more productive and to help us get all the things built that we need to build as a government.

Mr JAMES: Can the minister update the committee on how the Crisafulli government is backing its QBuild workers to deliver for Queensland?

Mr O'CONNOR: I thank the member for Mulgrave. It was a great pleasure to join you recently just north of your community at our facility up there, our RAAC, and to see the modular homes that are being constructed for First Nations communities across this state. Every day across Queensland more than 1,800 people go to work for our government builder, QBuild. Since becoming their minister, it has been my great pleasure to meet so many QBuild workers—from Palm Island to Bundy, Townsville, Caboolture and even right here in the CBD, where I had the great pleasure of visiting QBuild HQ. I love meeting our QBuild workers. They are always colourful characters. Whether they are new apprentices or veteran tradies, they have one thing in common—that is, a deep sense of pride in the organisation

and the history and tradition it has of supporting Queenslanders, particularly when they are most in need. That is one of the reasons our government is very proud to back QBuild and to support the way they deliver all across our state.

In addition to its existing workforce, QBuild has a target to boost its trades-based workforce to a thousand people by June next year. Last financial year our workforce grew by more than 260 people. To support that growth, we are also upgrading and redeveloping depots across the state; and to combat the housing shortages we are experiencing and to ensure quality training opportunities for the apprentices that we have, QBuild has established the rapid accommodation and apprenticeship centres in Eagle Farm, Zillmere and Cairns. Again, I very much enjoyed visiting the factory floors in these centres and seeing our apprentices learning new trades and contributing to getting these homes out the doors in modular housing.

QBuild also plays a critical role, as I mentioned, in every part of Queensland. I saw them in action at both ends of the state earlier this year. I was very impressed by the work that I saw and the way that they supported Queenslanders in their time of need and the way they helped us get our critical services back up and running in the wake of those natural disasters. Thank you again to QBuild. I am very proud to be their minister and I look forward to working with them in the years to come.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to non-government members' questions.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, are you aware of any government agencies or executives that have had approval to lease vehicles that fall outside of QFleet's standard fit-for-purpose selection list or recommended price brackets?

Mr Cridland: I ask the Deputy Director-General of Procurement to come forward if he is able to answer it. If not, we will get back to you before the end of the session.

Mr Bennett: Might I ask the member to repeat that question for me, please?

Ms MULLEN: Are you aware of any government agencies or executives that have had approval to lease vehicles that fall outside of QFleet's standard fit-for-purpose selection list or recommended price brackets?

Mr Bennett: Individual agencies for specific operational purposes may lease or procure vehicles that are outside QFleet's standard fit-for-purpose recommendations. Such vehicles might include specific fire tenders or vehicles for the Queensland Police Service. That is a non-exclusive list.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, can the director-general please provide the committee with a list of all of those vehicles that have been approved by agency that fall outside of QFleet's fit-for-purpose selection list or recommended price brackets?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, is that question directed to the minister or the director-general?

Ms MULLEN: To the director-general.

Mr Cridland: We will have to come back to you on that before this session is out.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. We will make a note of that.

Ms MULLEN: I have some questions regarding the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and hoping to call up the CEO and commissioner of the QBCC. Commissioner, can you please advise how many frontline and compliance FTEs were employed at the QBCC as at 1 November 2024 and at present and what is the current average case load per officer?

Mr Lambrinos: With regard to frontline staff, our frontline staff covered both our inspectorate and our claims managements team as well as our call centre staff, so are you looking for a combination of all those numbers?

Ms MULLEN: Yes.

Mr Lambrinos: So about 82 per cent of all of our staff are frontline staff and that is out of our 674 FTEs.

Ms MULLEN: So subsequently my question was: in terms of your investigative staff, what is the case load per officer?

Mr Lambrinos: We do not have that particular breakdown, but if it is something you are looking for we can certainly come back to you before the end of the hearing.

Ms MULLEN: Thank you, yes, so I am interested in a reported case load per officer in relation to that. Commissioner, can you provide the committee with the total number of unresolved or open compliance cases currently assigned to QBCC staff?

Mr Lambrinos: Sorry, but could I please have that question again?

Ms MULLEN: Of course. Can you provide the committee with the total number of unresolved or open compliance cases currently assigned to QBCC staff?

Mr Lambrinos: At the moment we have 558 cases that are pending allocation to an investigator and there are 437 active investigations on foot.

Ms MULLEN: Has any formal workload or mental health risk assessment been undertaken in relation to current case load levels?

Mr Lambrinos: That is absolutely the case. Workload has been a priority focus for us at QBCC and in that regard, although we have made some improvements in this space, there is clearly more for us to do. Over the last 12 months we have an absolute commitment from the leadership perspective to continue to improve these areas of welfare and employee engagement.

With respect to psychological wellbeing and safety, I am pleased to announce that we have permanently appointed a workplace health and safety function that is providing advisory support services for all our staff. We have also published an array of supporting material with respect to welfare and safety. We continue to develop mental health awareness within our organisation with respect to identifying psychosocial risks and mitigating strategies for our people. We also clearly have the employee assistance program in place that is providing free and confidential short-term counselling and wellbeing to our staff.

Over the last six months we have also rolled out a number of initiatives and in particular an onboarding program for our leaders to ensure that they develop an understanding of care leadership behaviours with respect to health and safety obligations. We have also delivered training programs that further develop QBCC's people to deal with and respond to customer violence and aggression as well as developing psychosocial leadership and supportive behaviours within our leaders. We have established a health and wellness network that comprises of staff who champion workplace wellbeing and mental and physical health and resilience in our people. We have also delivered complex leadership skills programs, which we call constructive conversations, across our leadership cohort. So all of these initiatives have already started to yield results since they have been rolled out, and that has been reflected in some of the follow-up surveys that we have conducted this year with respect to improvements in QBCC's leadership and management in this space.

Ms MULLEN: Thank you, Commissioner. Have QBCC staff or internal teams formally raised concerns with you or the QBCC executive leadership that current FTE levels are insufficient to manage—and I appreciate that you have not been able to give me case load numbers—case loads and, if so, what action was taken in response?

Mr Lambrinos: We have a budgeted 765 headcount for the next financial year. We are carrying a vacancy rate in that space that is probably higher than I would like to be operating at and therefore we will have a concerted effort this year to try and fill those vacancies so that we have the full capacity we need to deliver the services that we operate under. In that regard we are looking to unlock the capacity within our teams through our digital transformation program where we can start to transition some of those high-volume transactional tasks through to technology-enabled transactions and therefore create the capacity in our teams to do more of the high-value, customer-facing and outcomes focused activities that our stakeholders expect.

Ms MULLEN: Have QBCC staff or internal teams raised concerns with you or the QBCC executive leadership that these proposed digital or productivity improvements will not meaningfully reduce case loads or workload pressures and, if so, what has been communicated in relation to that?

Mr Lambrinos: There has been no direct communication with me or my leadership team in that regard. What we are doing through these initiatives is improving the quality of the information that we receive from our licensees. In that regard for licensee application timelines, we would expect that through this digital transformation the quality of submissions that come from the applicants increases and improves which therefore will allow our teams to more efficiently work through those because they are more complete and they are of higher quality. Similarly with where we have allocated our resources, it is at that frontline demand where inspection times have come down from 20 weeks to nine weeks over the last two years—that is a 55 per cent reduction in wait times—and we have also established dedicated claims management teams to work through those case loads as well.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Jordan, I am aware that the member for Maiwar has a question and I would like to call the member for Maiwar to ask his question.

Mr BERKMAN: I have a question which I think is best directed to the director-general. It is now over two years since the independent Developer Review Panel delivered its report recommending an accreditation, disclosure and registration scheme for developers, as well as other steps forward. It has been reported, I understand, that the LNP will not proceed with a developer licensing scheme as was recommended. My question is: when was that decision to reject the recommendation for developer licensing made and who made the decision?

Dr ROWAN: Can I raise a point of order?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you may raise a point of order.

Dr ROWAN: I want to clarify whether this is again within this portfolio remit. Also, I would submit to you that there is a lengthy preamble to the question as asked.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will get some advice about that. Member for Maiwar, that was a slightly lengthy preamble and also there is an assertion in there around intent by the government, but I will get the director-general to answer the question as best he can, bearing that in mind.

Mr Cridland: The decision to not proceed was made by the government as it is a matter of policy. I will find out for you the exact date that that announcement was made. I do not recall it offhand. I will find that out.

Mr BERKMAN: I appreciate that. If I could ask a follow-up question?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: If it is a matter of policy, it is directed to the minister.

Mr BERKMAN: Certainly. One quick follow-up question to the director-general: can you advise what is the status of other important recommendations from that review, like recommendation 3 on clearer liability on developers for using combustible cladding and recommendation 4, clarifying that there is fairness in contracting rules for developers? Any additional updates around those recommendations would be greatly appreciated.

Mr Cridland: I am going to ask our assistant director-general of building policy to come forward and provide an update to the member on that.

Ms Barron: Could I ask the honourable member to repeat the question, please?

Mr BERKMAN: Perhaps I could simplify it a little. I am interested in whether the government has progressed its consideration of other recommendations coming from the Developer Review Panel—for example, recommendation 3 around clearer liability on developers for using combustible cladding and recommendation 4, clarifying that fairness in contracting rules apply to developers, or any other recommendations that are being progressed from that review.

Ms Barron: Thank you for clarifying the question. In terms of the recommendations that form part of the panel's statement, the former government tabled the independent Developer Review Panel's report in parliament in June 2023. This government is committed to ensuring Queensland's construction sector is well functioning and able to deliver the homes and infrastructure Queensland needs. There are a number of matters which, as you flagged, were raised in that report. Some funding was provided to Queensland Treasury last financial year in relation to looking at rectification of cladding. My team remains engaged in undertaking work in relation to unfair contract terms, which was raised by the panel as well as in a number of other forums. I would also note, of course, that the government has re-established the independent Productivity Commission and it has just released its interim report. There is a period of consultation now as well, so there is active consideration of the regulatory settings as they relate to the building and construction industry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are going to go to government members' questions and to the member for Moggill.

Dr ROWAN: I listened carefully to your opening statement, where you outlined a number of improvements—streamlined approval processes, updating building regulations, reducing red tape—but specifically I would like to know if you are able to share with the committee how your department is supporting the delivery of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Mr O'CONNOR: The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games presents a unique opportunity, as you would know as a Brisbane MP, to put this city and our state on the global stage. It presents an opportunity as well for our government to develop legacy opportunities across the infrastructure, housing and tourism areas. That is exactly what our 2032 Delivery Plan sets out. It is a

clear plan to deliver the critical infrastructure that we need to support communities across our state that will host the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority is, of course, responsible for the delivery of the games, on behalf of the government, of those new and upgraded sporting venues in particular that will be used during the games period. I again want to acknowledge the work my department is undertaking alongside GIICA to support the delivery of Brisbane 2032. This includes a recently opened expression of interest to deliver principal consultancy services to GIICA for four major venues—the Moreton Bay indoor sports centre, the Logan indoor sports centre, Barlow Park stadium and the Sunshine Coast Stadium. This work is being led by our major projects team. I again want to commend them and the work that they do. The Office of the Queensland Government Architect as well, within Public Works, is providing design advice to GIICA related to the design briefs and policies that will be needed for the future delivery of Brisbane 2032 venues, as requested.

I also recognise the opportunity to create housing outcomes in the communities that are hosting the games to ensure that vulnerable Queenslanders in particular are supported before, during and after the event in 2032. The 2032 Delivery Plan includes a once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure across our state and there is an opportunity to leverage this new infrastructure to support some really great housing outcomes. I have asked my department to consider its current land holdings and social housing delivery program to explore options in support of achieving that housing legacy. Our housing strategy must consider and respond to housing opportunities—again, before, during and after Brisbane 2032—in all communities across Queensland that are hosting these events to make sure this event can benefit all Queenslanders. That is something that I know the director-general is very passionate about as well. Across the world, I do not think we have seen a city host the Olympics that has properly done that—that has properly met those needs, particularly for our most vulnerable communities. Too often they are impacted by the games and there is no ongoing legacy for them, but we are determined to do things differently. I also want to acknowledge the work of our peak body, Q Shelter, who have been front and centre advocating for the housing and homelessness legacy that an Olympic event can leave for our state.

We very much look forward to continuing to help make Brisbane 2032 an outstanding event that can be enjoyed by all Queenslanders and an event that leaves a legacy in every part of our state, thanks to our new plan, which includes areas outside of the south-east.

Mr KEMPTON: My question is to the minister and relates to the Queensland Housing Code. Can the minister update the committee on how the Crisafulli government is progressing with the Queensland Housing Code and how this compares to alternative approaches?

Mr O'CONNOR: Again, the independent Productivity Commission has shown us those alternative approaches: 77,000 fewer homes delivered since 2018 because of the former government's regulation of the building industry. It is shameful and it is an enormous contributor to the housing crisis that we are experiencing in this state. That is why we are turning things around. Part of that is the work we have underway to progress the Queensland Housing Code to make it easier and cheaper to build new homes across Queensland. The new code will replace parts of the Queensland Development Code which have not been updated in over a decade.

We do not blame local governments for having to comply with that. Frankly, it is the fault of the state government for not providing a modernised framework for them. We are leading the way now to update those design and siting requirements to ensure that they are fit for purpose and align with the diverse community housing needs we have across Queensland and to, more than anything, streamline approvals to get new homes built sooner. At present, those design and siting requirements for new single detached dwellings and associated structures are regulated by both the QDC and local government planning schemes. Currently, 56 of the 78 local governments across Queensland have adopted alternative provisions in their planning schemes, which creates great complexity through industry, particularly when you see developments that occur across multiple local government areas. That happens frequently in the south-east and it adds complexity that is unnecessary.

To illustrate the impact that this has on industry, if you consider a single-storey slab-on-the-ground design with a double garage and three or four bedrooms being built at different locations across the state, as is happening all over Queensland, industry faces differing requirements for setbacks, site coverage and building heights depending on the local government's housing code. These variations will mean that industry has to spend extra time interpreting and complying with each council's unique housing code. That not only drives up the cost of the project but also creates uncertainty for the homeowners who are paying for those homes to be built. It adds delays to the

approval timeframes as well. Industry feedback on the level of alternative provisions adopted by local governments suggest that the Queensland Development Code requirements are absolutely no longer suitable and they do not reflect contemporary housing design principles or facilitate housing diversity and choice as they are meant to.

At present, we are conducting consultation on the proposed code and this will shape the final version. However, it has been stalled by the lack of progress that we saw under the former government. This was first flagged as part of the 2017 Queensland Building Plan. Implementation was absolutely stalled. It has resulted in local governments and industry continuing to navigate the complexity of different rules across Queensland. Any delays to implementing a single set of design and siting requirements contributes to unnecessary complexity. It drives up costs and it makes the housing approval process more complicated. The Crisafulli government is determined to progress this reform to modernise housing approvals alongside local government and to support the delivery of affordable high-quality housing for more Queenslanders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that the director-general may have some information for the committee in relation to questions that he was to get some more information about. Director-General, is that correct?

Mr Cridland: Yes. Going back to the member's question around 1 November 2024 to 30 June 2025 and the number of GEH delivered, there were 71 new GEH delivered for that period. I said I would confirm what the final year of funding was for the 2022-27 GEH program. I can confirm it is the 2027-28 financial year so there is no tail on that. In terms of the member's question about the date of the developer review announcement, that was 19 June 2025. I invite the QBCC commissioner to come back to the table.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: About the average case load per staff.

Mr Murphy: With regard to the case load, it averages out to 12½ cases per FTE.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was a question about the vehicles approved.

Mr Cridland: It is on its way, I am told.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are here until 12.15. Thank you for furnishing the committee with the other material in relation to this section of the proceedings. Member for Mulgrave?

Mr JAMES: Minister, can you update the committee on how your department supports the government's response and recovery from natural disasters?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute.

Mr O'CONNOR: What a good question. Of course, the member for Mulgrave has had a long career in local government and, given the region he represents, he understands more than most the impact of natural disasters. I am very proud of our department's effort to support Queenslanders in the worst of circumstances. Hundreds of housing staff have been deployed in this period to support people across our state. In terms of this portfolio specifically, 3,108 QBuild customer assets have been impacted by the three severe weather events we have seen. QBuild received customer requests on 1,331 assets, which have all been completed. Two hundred and seventy-one of those QBuild staff were on the ground to support that response and, in many cases, those QBuild staff had volunteered to deploy to those disaster areas. Every time I am in one of those areas, I see staff from all parts of the state. I thank them for taking on that work and choosing to go and support Queenslanders when they are doing it tough. I thank you for the opportunity to highlight that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The session has expired. The time allocated for the consideration of the public works portfolio area expenditure has expired. Thank you, Minister, officials and departmental officers for your assistance. The committee will now examine the estimates for the youth portfolio area. Minister, I note that there is one answer to a question to come from the public works portfolio before 12.15. If you wish to make an opening statement of no more than five minutes regarding the youth portfolio area, you are welcome to do so. We will then have some questions for you.

Mr O'CONNOR: It is a great privilege to be Queensland's Minister for Youth, which is a role that was re-established by the Crisafulli government because of the importance that we put on giving young Queenslanders a seat at the table. Our task in government is to create the conditions where all young Queenslanders can step confidently into leadership roles. That is why we are investing in leadership pathways, ensuring meaningful participation and backing the ideas and solutions that young people themselves are putting forward.

In the 2025-26 state budget, we have allocated \$4.214 million to support a range of youth initiatives including the Queensland Youth Parliament, Queensland Youth Week, Safer Schoolies and the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program to amplify young Queenslanders' voices and encourage their leadership. We are investing more than \$95,000 to partner with YMCA Queensland to deliver the Youth Parliament, a program that is now in its 30th year. As the youngest minister in the cabinet, I have a particularly strong interest in this initiative and some of the unique challenges young people face stepping into leadership roles. This year we received a record 471 nominations from young people who are keen to represent all parts of our state through that program. That clearly tells us that young Queenslanders want to be at the table. They want to learn about our parliamentary processes. They want to learn about how legislation is drafted and debated. They want to advocate for change in their communities. I look forward to the Residential Sitting Week where youth members will debate youth bills just next door in the assembly chamber.

However, our commitment does not end there. For many young people, leadership is not about this place; it is about leading in their community and it is about leading in culture and identity. That is why in 2025-26 we are investing more than \$260,000 to support engagement and leadership opportunities specifically for young First Nations Queenslanders. This includes \$190,000 for the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. Over two decades, more than 750 young Queensland First Nations leaders have participated in this program. One of its unique features is its sustainable leadership model. Alumni return each year as mentors and facilitators to ensure that each new generation is supported by those who have walked in their footsteps.

Participants will also engage in the Eric Deeral Indigenous Youth Parliament, gaining firsthand insights into the processes of this place from a cultural perspective that honours self-determination and collective leadership. Nominations are now open for this year's program, scheduled for November.

Another highlight of 2025 in the youth space was, of course, Queensland Youth Week, which featured a new grants program aimed at empowering young people to host their own community events. Of the 84 events statewide, 15 were youth-led with 10 held outside of South-East Queensland. Across all of these initiatives our approach has been clear: young Queenslanders are not simply being consulted; they are co-designing, leading and creating lasting legacies that strengthen their communities and our state as a whole.

In November our Safer Schoolies response will begin, with up to 15,000 young people set to attend the Gold Coast celebrations. There will be a dedicated schoolies hub, a range of support services and around 1,000 volunteers to assist them throughout the week. In Airlie Beach a further 1,500 school leavers are expected to celebrate, and they will be supported by a Recharge Zone and a shuttle bus service. I am pleased to report to the committee that last year both responses were delivered safely and successfully, with no major incidents reported. We are preparing for another successful year and working to ensure the end-of-school celebrations are as safe as possible for not just our school leavers but also our local residents, our businesses and the broader community. I know our young people will, again, do us proud. Our Safer Schoolies response ensures young people have somewhere safe to celebrate the end of their schooling.

It is not just our young people who like to kick up their heels and enjoy our state after dark, which is why the other part of the youth portfolio is to ensure we have a safe, vibrant and thriving night-life economy across Queensland. In 2025-26 we have budgeted more than \$450,000 for the office of the Night-Life Economy Commissioner. In February 2024 there were 12,607 core night-life businesses across Queensland employing over 200,000 people. Our commissioner, John 'JC' Collins, has been meeting with and listening to stakeholders across this industry to gain their insights into the challenges and opportunities to boost this industry across our state.

I will take this opportunity to congratulate JC on another achievement: Powderfinger had three songs in Triple J's Hottest 100 of Australian Songs of all time over the weekend, which is a fabulous achievement. I think it was three. One of these many people here can fact-check that, but I am pretty sure it was three.

Stakeholder consultation from JC has identified the top three issues affecting the sector as being liquor regulation, noise regulation and business pressures. I have tasked the commissioner with producing our state's first night-life strategy by the end of the year to outline initiatives to ensure the thousands of live music venues, theatres, festivals and restaurants across the state have the right conditions to thrive in and to ensure locals and visitors alike can enjoy a vibrant and safe night-life across Queensland.

To conclude, this is particularly important ahead of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We cannot artificially create a vibrant and thriving night-life in 2031. That work needs to start now. I am very much looking forward to seeing the strategy that the commissioner puts together. I look forward to your questions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We will go to questions. I acknowledge we have a participating member here, the member for Nudgee. I will give her the call.

Ms LINARD: Good morning, Minister, Director-General and departmental staff. Minister, young Queenslanders raise cost of living as one of the key issues they are facing. Did you advocate for young Queenslanders when your government ceased vehicle registration discounts and universal electricity rebates in the recent budget?

Mr O'CONNOR: Member, that is not related to the youth portfolio, but I do thank you for the question. This is a very specific hearing about the youth portfolio. It is a hearing that we are able to have for the first time in several years because we have a youth portfolio again and, because we re-established this position, a Minister for Youth again. Youth is linked with housing because housing is one of the greatest pressures that young Queenslanders are facing. That pressure has been enormously added to by the fact that 77,000 fewer homes have been built since 2018, which is making it harder than ever for young Queenslanders to—

Ms LINARD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: the question was with respect to the cost of living, not specifically housing. I mentioned the rebates that have ceased for vehicle registration and electricity.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: the question, as asked, was very broad in nature. Specifically, we are here to ask about the expenditure within the portfolio areas under the minister's remit. A bit of latitude has been provided and the minister is answering the question. He has referred to some specific elements related to the broad nature of the question. I would submit to you that the question is not really related to the responsibilities under the minister's portfolio. I did not raise a point of order originally. I could have done that. The minister is being responsive to the question as asked.

Ms LINARD: Deputy Speaker, I am happy to speak to relevance, if you would like.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, that is okay, but thank you for that kind offer. Minister, I acknowledge that parts of the question are not within your portfolio remit, strictly speaking, in relation to cost of living. You were addressing the housing issue. I will give you some latitude to also address the other parts of the question as they relate to cost of living and youth matters.

Mr O'CONNOR: I believe the rebates the member is referring to would be a matter for the Treasurer. I believe those rebates were not budgeted for beyond the period that the former government, of which the member was a minister, had put them in.

Ms LINARD: The question was: did you advocate for young people?

Mr O'CONNOR: Member, that is a matter for you and your advocacy when you sat around the cabinet table. We have a substantial amount of cost-of-living relief in this budget. We have a substantial amount that will support young Queenslanders, and I am very comfortable with that. Our sports vouchers, in particular, are outstanding. Again, they were going to end on 30 June. They were not funded by the former government. We have inherited so many things and so many black holes.

We have taken a targeted, responsible, calm, considered and methodical approach to decisions we have made around this budget. There is still record cost-of-living support across the government. In my area in particular it predominantly relates to housing. I am very proud of the contributions we are making. In addition, 77,000 more homes could have been constructed had the former government, which you were part of, not regulated the building industry in the way it had. It has been found that rents will go up 8.3 per cent.

Ms LINARD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: relevance. He is now talking about housing, which was the previous session. This is about youth.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: the original question was about cost of living and the minister's advocacy. He has articulated clearly that one of the biggest problems for youth is housing and he is trying to give an answer.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you have broadly been relevant to the question, but we might move on to the next question.

Ms LINARD: Minister, have you met with Ms Brittany Higgins regarding the government's decision to indefinitely pause respect at work laws, and are you concerned this delay puts young Queenslanders, particularly young women, at increased risk of harassment in the workplace?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I understand that question is alluding to legislation which is under the portfolio of the Attorney-General. There will be an opportunity for that to be addressed later on. I would like the member to reference the SDS papers in relation to this year's budget with respect to that question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I accept that point of order. That matter is squarely within another minister's portfolio. However, member, if you rephrase the question in a way that relates to the minister's portfolio responsibilities for youth, that may be a way of progressing.

Ms LINARD: Page 3 of the SDS states that the service area—

... facilitates and supports opportunities for young Queenslanders to ... be involved in shaping government policies, programs, and services on matters of importance that impact them ...

The administrative orders for the minister reference youth affairs. The charter letter states he should—

Investigate and activate opportunities to better allow for young Queenslanders to be consulted and informed on work undertaken by the Queensland Government.

In the minister's opening statement, he said he was giving young people a seat at the table and amplifying young people's voices. He said they are not simply being consulted; they are co-designing. I reference the consultation draft on the minister's website, and there are many other documents that reference these issues as being the key issues of concern raised by young people when they were consulted. I asked the minister about advocacy, not about the policy detail on these matters. I fail to see how this is not relevant. It is all directly relevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you have a question?

Ms LINARD: I have many questions. I will ask the same question: did you advocate on behalf of young people or meet with Brittany Higgins regarding respect at work laws being paused indefinitely, given discrimination in the workplace is one of the key issues young people have raised and is referenced on your own website in the *Empowering young Queenslanders for a bright future* consultation report?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: I understand that Brittany Higgins is no longer a youth and how would that be of relevance to this hearing.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: under standing order 115, I would submit to you that there was a lengthy preamble in relation to that question. Perhaps the member could rephrase the question and come to the question without the lengthy preamble.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your points of order, member for Moggill and member for Lockyer. I am not going to venture on the member for Lockyer's point of order. In relation to the member for Moggill's point of order, I appreciate the context the member for Nudgee has provided to the committee. Minister, the respect at work legislation is not in your portfolio, but I put the question to you. You can answer it in line with your responsibilities.

Mr O'CONNOR: I have addressed that at length in the House and have highlighted that the federal protections that were in place remain in place. The Premier addressed this the other day and highlighted the rushed nature of that legislation and the concerns that have been raised by a variety of sectors. I have absolute faith in the Attorney-General and the work that is being undertaken after that pause. The Commonwealth protections in place through that pause remain in place.

With regard to a meeting request, I have not received one. I would be happy to sit and listen to that feedback from Brittany or to discuss this with her, but I have not received a meeting request. I would sincerely hope that the member has some kind of request from Brittany to raise this and is not just raising this to try to bring her name back into public attention.

I completely respect her ability to raise these matters publicly, and welcome her doing that, but if the member is trying to make a political point of her situation without her input or her involvement then I would be extremely concerned by that. I have not received a meeting request. That is the answer to your specific question.

Ms LINARD: No, Minister, I am raising an issue that young people are raising with me as one of the key issues of concern to them. Minister, have you met with any young people, particularly young women, to understand their lived experience of harassment in the workplace and their views or

concerns with your government's indefinite delay in the respect at work laws? The beginning of that question was: have you met with any young people to understand their lived experience?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: the member for Nudgee has referenced legislation related to the portfolio responsibilities of the Attorney-General and I would submit to you that this is again not directly related to the portfolio responsibilities and the estimates process that we have here, as well as that legislation being under the responsibility of the Attorney-General.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nudgee, I agree that that is not strictly within the portfolio responsibilities of this minister. He did answer your previous question which was somewhat similar. I would suggest, in that light, that perhaps we go onto another matter.

Ms LINARD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of clarification: are you ruling that I cannot ask questions of the Minister for Youth in respect of his advocacy on behalf of young Queenslanders as it is irrelevant in this portfolio?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, and I would ask that you not reflect that. However, the minister in his previous answer has already addressed that issue.

Ms LINARD: Director-General, will pill testing be provided at schoolies this year?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: I believe that policy question is under the remit of the health portfolio area and there will be an opportunity next week for members of the opposition to put those questions to the director-general of health, the Minister for Health or other officials at that time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two matters. Member, I am advised that that is a policy issue which, in any case, would need to be asked of a minister. Secondly, that is a matter for the health portfolio. I would ask you to ask another question, please.

Ms LINARD: I am asking about the Safer Schoolies initiative which is run by this department and funded by this department. I am asking if it is going to be offered as part of the program.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could you state that question again please, member.

Ms LINARD: Director-General, will pill testing be provided at schoolies this year as part of the Safer Schoolies safety framework and program?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: that is the same question as before which relates to the health portfolio or at least should be addressed to the minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I am advised that that is a policy question which should be addressed to the minister.

Ms LINARD: Page 2 of the SDS references the Safer Schoolies program and the minister referenced the Safer Schoolies initiative in his opening statement. Is it being ruled that I cannot ask questions about Safer Schoolies and the safety framework, which is referenced on the website and talks about ensuring that young people are kept safe during the week at schoolies? If the answer is no then it is no, but I am not asking about the policy imperatives of a health program.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, is that question for me or for the minister?

Ms LINARD: It was a question to the director-general, but I am seeking clarification, Mr Deputy Speaker, if you are ruling I cannot ask questions about whether this will be part of the schoolies program offered by the department. I am not asking about the policy imperative itself in Health.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, if you could rephrase your question to the director-general so that it is seeking information about a program of the department and what may be involved in it not an issue of policy, that would be of assistance.

Ms LINARD: Sure. Director-General, I reference your website about schoolies week and Safer Schoolies, and quote—

Safer Schoolies is a Queensland Government initiative dedicated to helping school leavers celebrate safely and make positive choices. Our goal is to support school leavers during their end-of-year celebrations by providing a strong safety framework ...

While I appreciate you do not deliver it, is pill testing part of the overall strong safety framework that sits under that in your department?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: that is a matter for the health portfolio not this director-general.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, I have heard your point of order. Director-General, please answer that question in relation to how the department delivers that program, bearing in mind that the policy matters in relation pill testing sit within another department.

Mr Cridland: The Department of Housing and Public Works leads the overall coordination of the Safer Schoolies initiative and works with a range of government and non-government service providers to ensure a coordinated approach to safety, including Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service. Obviously, during schoolies week the safety of young people and the local community remains our highest priority. That is demonstrated through the delivery of the emergency treatment centre, the recharge zones, the specialist mental health support, the diversionary activities to encourage young people out of their hotel rooms and into the drug- and alcohol-free schoolies hub—which is the safest place for school leavers—and conducts education sessions for year 12 students leading up to schoolies.

I would like to acknowledge the agencies that support schoolies and provide their own contributions to it. They are: the Queensland Police Service; Queensland Health, that provide medical services, delivered through the ETC, and mental health and social worker support; the Department of Transport and Main Roads, which provides transport services; the Department of Education; the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning; the Queensland Ambulance Service; the Queensland Fire Department; and the Department of Justice.

I would also like to acknowledge the great work of the Safer Schoolies team. When we came to this portfolio, it was a matter of days to the schoolies festival last year. It was incredible to learn what they do. As some examples, they gave out 13,500 wristbands and did hundreds of walks home. In the recharge zones, they handed out 53,264 cups of water and helped 289 young people. The volunteers worked 47,780 combined hours over the week to help more than 13,000 school leavers take part in the event. The welfare space treated 103 clients and the emergency treatment centre treated 244 clients. There were 3,508 calls to the Red Frogs hotline and a further 2,500 requests via the app. It was an amazing achievement by all, and I would like to acknowledge the Safer Schoolies team, who did a fantastic job with that event.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to government members' questions.

Mr McDONALD: Can the minister please outline how the Queensland government is supporting young people to access housing support, jobs in the department and a construction career with QBuild?

Mr O'CONNOR: Whether it is help with housing or kickstarting a career in construction, the Crisafulli government is committed to supporting young Queenslanders to thrive. In the first nine months of 2024-25, our specialist homelessness services assisted more than 11,700 young people—aged 10 to 24—across Queensland with housing or support services. The Queensland government is also investing \$40.5 million in 2025-26 to support new and enhanced housing and homelessness services for young people right across the housing spectrum.

We are delivering new youth foyers—an outstanding model for those young Queenslanders who are earning and learning—starting with Cairns, Hervey Bay and Moreton Bay, with more to come. These will build on the successful model of the foyers that we have already operating on the Gold Coast, in Logan—

Ms BUSH: Point of order: can I seek clarification if this is under the youth budget or under the housing budget—

Mr O'CONNOR: I am using your logic there.

Ms BUSH:—or where in the SDS this might appear?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, if you are able to relate this to the youth part of your portfolio, it would aid the member for Cooper in her assessment of your response. It is not necessary for it absolutely to be linked to the SDS, but I take your point of order. I give guidance to the minister re your response for the youth portfolio, please.

Mr O'CONNOR: My advocacy for young Queenslanders has resulted in this record pipeline of youth foyers, which are there to support young people aged 16 to 25 have a safe and stable home, with the 24/7 onsite support that they need while they complete their studies or their training and to get into the workforce and, ultimately, be able to sustain a tenancy on their own. Across Queensland we are also going to be delivering eight new supported accommodation services to provide immediate housing support for young people in crisis and to help them to transition to longer term housing outcomes.

Our other targeted initiatives that are a result of my advocacy for young Queenslanders as the youth minister, which was re-established by the Crisafulli government, are there to help keep young people off the streets including more housing pathways through youth subsidies and a Supported Tenancies initiative for young parents. We know that starting out on the right path is critical to having a positive outcome for our kids across Queensland. Additionally, our department offers a range of products and services to ease pressure for renters, who are overwhelmingly young Queenslanders, including access to RentConnect services, rental grants and bond loans.

We are also supporting young Queenslanders to take up a career with our state's builder, QBuild. We currently have over 160 apprentices with QBuild which includes over 60 who commenced last financial year in regions across the state, from Cairns to Charleville and everywhere in between. Fifty of those apprentices who commenced last financial year are under-25-year-olds, and they are learning critical skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives and their careers in construction.

Training the next generation of skilled tradespeople will help futureproof our construction workforce and kickstart the careers of new young apprentices who we welcome into QBuild ranks. In 2025-26 we are targeting an additional 40 apprentices. I encourage any young Queenslanders who, for whatever reason, are listening to this hearing to consider a career in construction, to consider taking up a trade and to consider doing that with QBuild. It is really meaningful work. They are an outstanding employer. We would love more Queenslanders to join us.

Our graduate program overall across the department is also creating opportunities for young Queenslanders to launch their career in our government and to bring new ideas and skills to our broader Public Service. As part of this program, 16 graduates are currently working in a variety of roles across the department including project managers, architects and town planners, and I am looking forward to meeting more of our current crop of graduates and apprentices as I travel around Queensland.

Mr JAMES: Can the minister update the committee—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mulgrave, I regretfully inform you that this session has expired. We have now reached the end of time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the youth portfolio area.

Ms BUSH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Cooper, the time for this session has expired. The only remaining business for the committee at this stage, in accordance with the order of the House, is to seek an answer to a question informally taken on notice in the public works session. I will now ask if the director-general or minister has an answer to furnish to the committee. It was in relation to vehicles.

Mr Cridland: There was a question related to special-purpose vehicles. I am advised that these vehicles are not leased or purchased through QFleet. For example, police purchase and manage their entire fleet. Decisions on what is deemed fit for purpose for those agencies is made by the appropriate delegate within their department.

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Deputy Speaker, on indulgence, can I give a very quick thank you to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you may acknowledge all of your staff.

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes. Thank you very much. I did not take the opportunity to do it at the end of the housing session, so I will do it now. I thank our office of director-general staff who have done an outstanding job putting everything together, and the director-general himself. Neil, Rebecca, Danny, Ben and Alice in the director-general's team have done a power of work to prepare for these hearings.

I acknowledge our deputy directors-general—Matt, Danielle, Sarah, Tanya, Michael and of course Graham. In our preparation for these sessions, Graham informed me that this is what he believes is his 25th estimates as an executive-level public servant—which is not something I think anyone would wish on their worst enemy. I want to congratulate Graham on achieving that milestone.

I thank my team, led by my chief of staff Matt, Caet, Jess and Bella and the entire team in the office. I particularly thank my head of policy, Christien Duffey, because today is his birthday. I want to say a very happy birthday to Mr Duffey.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister.

Ms BUSH: Point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Cooper, there are no opportunities to raise further business.

Ms BUSH: I just wanted to seek a point of clarification on the final comment back to us, Chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, member for Cooper. The answer has been provided by the director-general. The time for the examination of those estimates has expired. The committee will now take a break. The hearing will resume at 1 pm with the examination of estimates for the portfolio areas of sport, racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games, with the Hon. Speaker. The committee is suspended until 1 pm.

Proceedings suspended from 12.17 pm to 1.00 pm.

ESTIMATES—STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE—SPORT AND RACING; OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

In Attendance

Hon. TL Mander, Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Ms Kristin McGill, Chief of Staff

Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr Andrew Hopper, Director-General

Ms Amy Murdock, Executive Director

Stadiums Queensland

Mr Todd Harris, Chief Executive Officer

Racing Queensland

Mr Lachlan Murray, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Academy of Sport

Mr Troy Ayres, Acting Chief Executive Officer

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Good afternoon. We will now resume proceedings. For the benefit of those who have just joined us, I am Pat Weir, the member for Condamine and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Under the provisions of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, I will preside over this hearing. The members of the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee are: Mr Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer and chair; Ms Jonty Bush, the deputy chair and member for Cooper; Mr Terry James, the member for Mulgrave; Mr David Kempton, the member for Cook; and Mr Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah. The Hon. Glenn Butcher, the member for Gladstone, is substituting for Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley, between 1 pm and 3 pm. The Hon. Grace Grace, the member for McConnel, will substitute for the member for Aspley from 3 pm to 4.50 pm. 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 Speaker's discretion or by order of the committee. Please note that the first three rows of the gallery are reserved for departmental and ministerial staff supporting the minister. Members and others who are attending to observe are welcome to sit in the remaining rows or in the gallery.

The committee has authorised its hearings 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 also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in the chamber.

The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the sport, racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games portfolio areas until 4.45. We will then adjourn for a break until 5.15 before examining the portfolio area of transport and main roads until 9.30 pm. I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the time specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, which is available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage. I also remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly.

In respect of government-owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, officials and departmental officers and members of the public. For the

benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisers to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister. Please remember to press your microphone on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of sport, racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish you may make a short statement regarding the sport portfolio area of no more than five minutes.

Mr MANDER: I would like to start by thanking the committee for its participation in this afternoon's hearing. I know the sport portfolio is of interest to you and many Queenslanders in the communities that you represent. I have said many times—and I will say it again—that being the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games really is a dream job for me. Sport has literally shaped my life. This job takes me right across the state, as sport can be found in every part of Queensland. Sport is found in our stadia, parks, clubs, schools, back yards and streets. Sport has been a key fixture throughout my life and the lives of countless Queenslanders.

I know it is not lost on any of us that the actions and investments we make today have the power to positively impact the lives of Queenslanders. We must make every dollar count. The Crisafulli government understands the value of every taxpayer dollar, ensuring our investments deliver tangible results—unlike the wasteful spending we have seen in the past. The benefits of being more physically active can help not just on the sporting field but also in the classroom, in our communities, in preventing crime and easing the burden on our health system. These are all areas where, under the Crisafulli government, we are seeing real improvements through our focus on grassroots initiatives. Over the last nine months I have travelled across the state to meet with sporting clubs, state-level bodies and national sporting organisations and spoken directly with athletes, para-athletes, volunteers and passionate members of our communities. What I have heard is a clear desire for a government that delivers not just promises. One message has been very clear: sport is at the heart of Queensland communities, and it is the Crisafulli government that truly understands and invests in that heart.

There is a lot of activity happening right across my portfolio. What is more, the department and associated statutory bodies have responded with enthusiasm, agility and a willingness to make sport everybody's game. This is the difference our government is bringing—a results oriented approach. One of the key highlights includes the rollout of the \$250 million Games On! grassroots infrastructure program, which is well underway. We will honour all 117 commitments to enhance regional sporting and community facilities. This program directly benefits all of Queensland, ensuring that the Olympic legacy reaches beyond Brisbane—something the previous government often overlooked. I want Queenslanders to recognise that communities will receive this infrastructure or upgrade because of the opportunity for our state to host the biggest event in the world. It is only through the Crisafulli government's record investment and responsible management that we can provide these vital investments for our state. So far we are getting on with executing agreements, with funding flowing directly to clubs and councils. I look forward to hearing more about the positive changes this program will bring to Queensland communities over the next few years.

Next week will also mark the launch of the new \$250.5 million Play On! sports voucher program, which I know is anticipated by many of you and the communities you represent. This Crisafulli initiative directly addresses the cost-of-living pressures associated with sporting costs which Labor failed to secure in their budget. This program is all about offering better access, with vouchers allocated specifically for young Queenslanders in regional and country areas as well as those living with a disability.

The delivery of significant capital works is also underway at state owned sport and recreation precincts, with funding allocations in the 2025-26 budget. Over 320,000 people visited these precincts in the last year, with many Queenslanders visiting the facilities for school camps or school holiday activities. This funding injection will ensure our venues on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Townsville, Toowoomba and Brisbane are ready to host training camps or events in the lead-up to the 2032 games and support athletes and sporting bodies alike. This pro-active investment demonstrates our commitment to long-term planning and legacy—something the opposition constantly struggled to grasp.

The development of the new Queensland Sport Strategy is underway following the release of the discussion paper 'What Does 2032 Mean for You?' We are not just making decisions behind closed doors; we are actively engaging with Queenslanders and listening to their voices—unlike the top-down approach we have seen from the previous government. The feedback throughout this process has been

invaluable to the department, with many key themes emerging. These are the issues that matter to Queenslanders and these are the issues that the Crisafulli government is seeking to actively address, not just talk about. The previous government had years to address these concerns and, frankly, they failed. I look forward to releasing the strategy by the end of the year. It will set Queensland on a path to sporting excellence and community wellbeing for decades to come.

I would like to recognise the hard work of my department and Stadiums Queensland. I appreciate Todd Harris taking the time to appear before the committee today. I recognise and respect the importance of the estimates process and look forward to assisting the committee with its questions this afternoon and to highlight how our government is truly delivering for Queensland sport.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to non-government members for the first question.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, in reference to the government's Games On! program, can you outline how many of the grassroots sports infrastructure projects are not LNP election commitments?

Mr Hopper: If you just give me a moment to talk to a colleague. We are responsible for delivering 116 of the government election commitments.

Mr BUTCHER: So, basically, one project out of 117 is a non-government project?

Mr Hopper: We are responsible for delivering 116 of the government election commitments but there are election commitments being delivered by other departments. We have 116.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, for future rounds of Games On!, will any new merit-based or needs-based sports infrastructure grant rounds open this financial year for clubs that are desperately needing it?

Mr Hopper: The criteria for future funding rounds will ultimately be a matter for executive government. At this stage, we are in the process of resolving the Sport Strategy and that will inform future programs.

Mr BUTCHER: Can I just go back. Director-General, can you provide the full list of all grassroots sports infrastructure projects funded in this budget that were not pre-election commitments? It should not take much. I think there was one.

Mr Hopper: If I can clarify, we can certainly provide a list of the 116 we are responsible for but then, as I said, there are other departments responsible for other election commitments that are funded through that program.

Mr SPEAKER: So you will try to do that by the close of the hearing. Are you happy with that, Minister?

Mr MANDER: Yes.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, it has been reported that it was recently disclosed to your cabinet room that you and Minister Camm are in a relationship—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Are you asking the minister about things that happened in cabinet, and how does that relate to the budget?

Mr BUTCHER: I am just about to get to the second part of my question.

Mr SPEAKER: I will listen with interest.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, how long have you been in that relationship and when was your conflict-of-interest management plan lodged?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order: how does this relate to the budget estimates process? It does not.

Mr BUTCHER: Are you asking me that question, Member?

Mr SPEAKER: Can you give me a bit more clarity on that, please?

Mr BUTCHER: We are going through the conflict-of-interest integrity that this government claim they hold themselves accountable to. The question is in relation to a conflict-of-interest management plan around funding for projects which could have been in the area where the other minister comes from.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Speaker: again, how does this relate to the SDS and how does it relate to the conflict of interest?

Mr SPEAKER: That is a fair point.

Mr BUTCHER: It comes under the examination of the budget, Speaker.

Mr McDONALD: Where is the conflict of interest?

Mr BUTCHER: That is what I am asking. Is there a prescribed conflict of interest when two ministers have portfolios which can cover things that are funded—as in the Games On! program—and they are prioritised by that electorate? That is the question.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Speaker: could the member reference the relevant SDS and section with respect to the portfolio responsibilities?

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I will get you to re-ask the question. Could you rephrase it and make it clear as to what the question is looking for with regard to the budget?

Mr BUTCHER: I will. As I said before, it has been reported that you recently disclosed to your cabinet room that you and Minister Camm are in a relationship. Have you done a conflict-of-interest management plan in relation to relationships and funding of Games On! projects in the member for Whitsunday's electorate?

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, all of the appropriate declarations have been made to the Premier and to cabinet after consultation with the Integrity Commissioner.

Mr BUTCHER: Thank you, Minister. Are you happy to table that advice that you got from the Integrity Commissioner?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order: it is my understanding that information or advice that is provided by the Integrity Commissioner to not only members of parliament but also ministers is in confidence. The minister has answered the previous question but I seek your determination in relation to that matter.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I will leave it with you to respond to that.

Mr MANDER: What the member has said is correct. That is confidential information that does not need to be disclosed.

Mr BUTCHER: I am happy to move on. Director-General, I note that the minister was the shadow minister for sports previously. Has the minister now been engaged in ensuring that all of the Games On! election commitments are honoured and delivered?

Mr SPEAKER: I am not 100 per cent clear on that question. Could you ask it again for me, please?

Mr BUTCHER: It is going back to integrity. I just want to make sure that the minister has engaged openly and honestly in relation to projects that are being delivered in Whitsunday.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: my point of order relates to imputations within the question. I would submit to you that perhaps the question could be rephrased.

Mr BUTCHER: I just did.

Mr SPEAKER: That question is out of order as far as the director-general is concerned in its current form.

Mr BUTCHER: I am happy to move on. Director-General, in reference to the Games On! program, how many projects are funded in the Mackay-Whitsunday region?

Mr Hopper: If you give us a moment, we will give you that piece of advice. The answer is five.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, has the minister excluded himself from decision-making regarding grants, programs and projects in the Whitsunday region?

Mr Hopper: These are government election commitments so they have already been determined. We do not have any programs at the moment where this has arisen.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, in reference to estimates question on notice No. 1 in relation to the request for grants and funding, the department has said this task was too time consuming. I table the response, and I am sorry it is so large but it is quite detailed. Can you confirm, based on the document you will be provided with and the estimates question on notice provided to the committee, that those requests are the same—that is, basically, from last year to this year?

Mr SPEAKER: That might take the director-general a little while to have a look at that.

Mr Hopper: Sorry, member, could you repeat the question as it relates to the two different requests?

Mr BUTCHER: This is from the question on notice that was delivered with the level of detail in the response to those questions. Your department gave a response to the same question at last year's estimates. I am asking are they the same, the questions on notice from last year to this year?

Mr Hopper: I thank the member for the question. I will have to get the team to look at the document. It is significant. I would like to do that comparison. If the minister is happy, we will take the question on notice and come back before the end of the session.

Mr BUTCHER: Thank you, Director-General. If you could do that, that would be great. I am interested to understand why, if it was the same question delivered as that document you have in front of you and this year the commentary was around that you did not have the time or personnel to do that report for us.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, the question on notice was to the minister, so you might be better to direct your question to the minister.

Mr BUTCHER: More than happy to, Speaker. Minister, as the opposition sports spokesperson at last year's estimates you asked a question on notice which is basically the same question we have asked at this estimates, of which you have a copy. Are they the same questions on notice that you asked last year compared to this year? Is that the same question on notice?

Mr MANDER: I will reiterate what the director-general has said. It is on notice. We will have a look at the details of it—it is a very detailed document—and we will come back before the end of the session.

Mr BUTCHER: I will move on. Minister, earlier this week, it was uncovered that 13 MPs had used the Parliamentary Annexe for personal use. Are you one of the 13?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: these matters pertain to the estimates hearings that were held on Monday. As I understand, the line of questioning and the responses on Monday related to operations of the parliamentary precinct. That was the appropriate time for that information to be asked. I believe, in listening to those, there was some information provided by the Clerk and relevant people back on the day.

Mr SPEAKER: That is a relevant point of order. This was well-prosecuted on Monday and it is not relevant to this hearing. Next question, member for Gladstone.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, have you properly declared the Parliamentary Annexe is now your usual place of residence?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need a point of order. I will rule that one out of order. This is not relevant to this hearing.

Mr BUTCHER: To clarify, Speaker, this is about respect for taxpayers' money. We want to make sure that facilities being utilised are under the rightful meaning to do that.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: We are doing the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This is not relevant to the sports portfolio. We are doing sport. Move onto the next question.

Mr BUTCHER: Thank you, Speaker. Director-General, back to the Games On! program. What criteria will the department use to assess funding requests under the Games On! program?

Mr Hopper: Member, as I mentioned earlier, at the moment there are no programs afoot in relation to Games On! Subsequently, as we resolve the sports strategy and look to future programs, the criteria around those programs will be developed, we will seek the appropriate approvals and then implemented, but at this stage there are no programs.

Mr BUTCHER: At this point in time, the 117 projects that have been announced are at the minister's discretion, so that was his form in government. The Games On! program, as you call it, which is on the public website—all of these projects are at the minister's discretion and not the department's?

Mr SPEAKER: This is to the director-general?

Mr BUTCHER: To the director-general.

Mr Hopper: I think the fact that they are government election commitments probably answers that.

Mr BUTCHER: I will table an analysis of the Games On! funding that we have done in relation to that. This analysis of the announced programs shows that 76 per cent of the Games On! funding went to LNP electorates with only 18 per cent to Labor electorates. Would you agree with that summary?

Mr Hopper: I thank the member for the question. I would have to look at the data and confirm that that is what the data says. If you would like to give us some time to do that, I am happy to come back to answer that question within the session.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, in the electorate of Kawana, sports clubs received \$11 million compared to \$210,000 for Murrumba. Do the sports clubs in Kawana genuinely require 52 times more support than those in Murrumba?

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to talk about the Games On! funding program which is one of the biggest investments ever in community sport by this or any government. As has already been mentioned, there are around 116 commitments that have been made that were made as election commitments. We are quite proud of this program because this program will invest much needed money in community infrastructure. The shadow minister has just mentioned a couple, but there are many more. What is very different about this program, I would think, compared to previous governments' election commitments, is that we are committing to every promise that was made before the election, whether we won that seat or not.

The shadow minister just talked about a proportion question. From some of the preliminary analysis that I did of the promises, when it comes to the number of election promises, it is basically proportionate to the seats in the House won by the government and non-government members. We have been executing those arrangements, many of them in non-government-held seats, and we are very proud to do that. We keep our commitments, and despite scare campaigns that have been generated by non-government members about these promises, we have been in contact with every club that has received a promise and made sure that they are aware that the commitment will hold, and the department has been going through the processes that are necessary.

There can be inferences made by the opposition, but when you go into the communities and ask them whether they are happy about these community funding promises, they are over the moon about it. We are not just about investing in elite sport, which of course we have to do for the games; we want to make sure there is legacy for every region, town, city across the state that they can look at that and say, 'We have that because of the games of 2032.'

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to government members for some questions now.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, I commend the Crisafulli LNP government's new Play On! sports voucher program. Could you please tell the committee the key features of this new policy?

Mr MANDER: I know that you are a keen sportsperson who has benefited from being actively involved all of your life in different sports and endeavours. We understand that there are cost-of-living challenges for families at the moment. We wanted to make sure that was not going to be a barrier for families and young people being involved with sport. The Play On! Sports Vouchers program is a program that is fully funded for the rest of this term—something that has not been seen before at this level. It is record funding of \$62.5 million per year. This means we could have at least 300,000 vouchers in the hands of kids who want to play sport. As I have gone around the state and spoken to clubs and different sporting organisations, it has been welcomed.

There are a couple of distinct characteristics. We will make sure the money is allocated across two rounds to ensure both winter and summer sports benefit equally. I know that you, as a keen Rugby League man, would know all about winter sports, but people play sport in summer as well. It is incredibly important that those vouchers are delivered at the time that is appropriate for winter and summer sports.

This government recognises the decentralised nature of this state and how important our regions are. We want to make sure that money is allocated proportionately across the state and not just tucked into the south-east corner. The program ensures that.

We also want to make sure that people with a disability have an opportunity to play sport. There will be special allocation made for people with disabilities. In fact, I will give a guarantee now that any child with a disability who applies for this funding will receive it. Recent studies into people with disabilities show that 75 per cent of them would like to play sport but only 25 per cent of them do, because they lack the opportunity and many of our facilities are not accessible. Part of the Games On! funding, which has been spoken about, looks at making sure we have more accessible facilities for people with disability.

The program opens next Monday. We already have 500 providers in the system and 37,547 people and families have already preregistered. It has not even opened up yet. This is a very popular program and one that we are very proud of.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, I understand the Games On! grassroots infrastructure program represents a record government commitment to upgrade community club facilities. Can you please inform the committee of how this investment helps grassroots sports?

Mr MANDER: Thank you, member for that questions. You represent a seat that is quite remote in some ways, up in Far North Queensland. It is important that we do not focus only on elite sports but also on community sports. We do not get elite athletes if there are not pathways and good facilities at the local level. That is why, as I briefly mentioned earlier, when we were looking at the general delivery plan for the games, we wanted to make sure it was not just at the elite level but also at the community level. That is what it will do. Different regions will be able to point to a swimming pool, floodlights at a local football field, new netball courts, new clubhouses, dressing rooms and say, 'We have that because of the games of 2032. That is the legacy that we are going to have in our area.'

It is a very important investment. It is a record investment in community sporting infrastructure. As I said earlier, we have started to roll things out already. One of the reasons we have had to do this is that there was quite a deal of neglect from the previous government with regard to looking after sporting facilities. I could not believe the correspondence I was receiving from different members of the opposition talking about whether these commitments were going to be made, when they were going to be made and how it was desperately needed, but they never made any of those promises. These promises were our promises, and we are committing to those.

The shadow minister spoke about different electorates getting a number of commitments. I am envious of the members for Aspley and Pine Rivers, who have three, four or five commitments. We are very happy to be able to do that. It really does become ridiculous when you receive a letter from the member for Pine Rivers about Pine Rivers Football Club. That club, in her words, is dilapidated and unfit for use—despite the fact that she has been the member there for the last 10 years. Suddenly in the last nine months, since there has been a change of government, those facilities have become dilapidated. It would be quite laughable if it was not so serious. They have no credibility when it comes to questioning us about the commitments we have made.

We are very proud of this program. It was also mentioned in the 100-day review by GIICA. That recognised how effective this program was and recommended that more money should be invested in the future. I will be arguing that case with my cabinet colleagues as we go forward, because we have seen how successful this program has been. I want to make sure this continues going forward.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, could you highlight specific projects that have been targeted towards women and girls?

Mr MANDER: I would love to. Promises have been made to many clubs that will receive commitments. Many of them involve upgrades that will improve conditions for female participants. There is one at Bulimba—a non-government seat—at Easts Rugby Union for new female change rooms, with a \$750,000 investment. There is quite a significant investment in Cairns of \$6 million. The member for Mulgrave will be interested in that as well. I am sure there will be a flow from the Cairns electorate with the Brothers Leagues Club—\$6 million for extra change rooms, including for females and to improve accessibility. Here is one in Gaven: the Magic United Football Club to build female change rooms—\$480,000. There is another one in Greenslopes. There is a common theme: these are all non-government seats. We will deliver women's change rooms at the Holland Park Hawks Football Club, a \$250,000 commitment. I have already mentioned the Pine Rivers Football Club: \$3.8 million for the Pine Rivers Football Club to replace the aging change rooms. I would love to have that investment in my electorate but Pine Rivers has beaten me to the punch! This is just a sample of some of the funding that we have that will go towards making facilities even better for women in sport.

Mr JAMES: Minister, \$64.2 million has been allocated for state owned and operated sports and recreation venues. Could you please tell the committee which facilities and what type of upgrades they will receive?

Mr MANDER: Since I have been minister, I have been encouraged to learn of some of the fantastic facilities that we have in the regions. The pride of public servants from my department who are responsible for the maintenance, the upkeep and the running of these facilities is palpable. They are very proud of it. They want to make sure that it is always kept to the highest standard. As you go through the driveway of these places you can see how well kept they are.

We have made a \$52 million investment over four years for capital upgrades and maintenance. It will ensure these facilities are well positioned to be pivotal facilities in the lead-up to the 2032 games. That is a very important point; as we go towards 2032, there will be countries that will want to base themselves here. In the lead-up to the games but also in the lead-up to 2032 itself, they will want to come out and check out our training facilities and acclimatise themselves. The Gold Coast Performance Centre will receive \$20 million to upgrade accommodation, both athlete and student, and there will also be improvements to the high-performance hub facility. The Townsville Sports Precinct will have \$4 million for multipurpose courts and a cooling system—it is pretty hot in that stadium so they are really going to welcome the cooling systems—and to host para-sport events, upgraded field lights and recovery and training facilities.

Then there is the Toowoomba Sports Ground, which is one that the member for Lockyer knows well. I think the stadium is named after his father. It is called John McDonald Stand, is it not? There is funding to improve the venue's amenity including a new scoreboard, shade and office space as a regionally significant performance hub. The Sunshine Coast Recreation Precinct will receive \$2.4 million for field lights, additional car park and storage for water sports equipment. The Gold Coast recreation precinct will receive \$2 million to upgrade field lights and the outdoor multipurpose playing field surface to bring it to premier standard. All venues have \$20 million for recurrent maintenance as well.

I do thank the local members from those areas who have advocated for these upgrades. Of course we have Sports House Brisbane as one of our facilities, the one that is right next to Suncorp Stadium. It was part of the previous Queensland government's response to the 60-day independent review of Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic venue infrastructure, which was completed in 2024 in relation to Suncorp Stadium to investigate upgrade options for the venue ahead of 2032. We will be doing that to make sure we get the best value for that fantastic site right next to Suncorp Stadium.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, page 8 of the SDS references capital investment for stage 1 redevelopment of Browne Park in Rockhampton. What is that funding for and why was it urgently needed?

Mr MANDER: This is a really good question. This was a project in Rockhampton at Browne Park, and I refereed at Browne Park. You may not know, but I was an NRL referee at one stage. It has a great history in Rocky and it was desperately in need of an upgrade. The funding initially was \$29.32 million which is what was approved in December 2022 by the previous government. That blew out to a total budget of \$56 million, a theme that we have constantly heard over the last nine months. Recently we had to find more money; \$3 million was allocated to this project from unallocated departmental budget, which now takes that project up to \$62.8 million.

It is important to know why we had to give that extra money. This is a little bit hard to believe, but when the previous government were scoping this project and budgeting for it, they forgot two very important things. Firstly they did the upgrade, and the rationale for the upgrade was to attract higher standard national NRL games, for example. However, they forgot that in order to do that you have to have lights that are broadcast standard so that those national sporting organisations will be happy to come. It was a bit of an oops moment in that despite spending \$60 million upgrading it to attract top level sport, it could not happen because they did not have the lights. It gets better: not only did they forget to budget for the lights, but they forgot to put in money for grass on the oval. The oval was totally and utterly torn up because of all the construction work that was taking place. Then we were told there was simply not enough money and there was never any money in the budget allocated to have the playing surface repaired. That is another example of incompetence from the previous government. We have had to chip in more money. We have to do it because if we do not put in that \$3 million, the previous \$60 million would have been wasted and the facility will not reach the potential to attract higher quality sports to Rockhampton.

Mr SPEAKER: We will move to non-government questions. Member for Gladstone.

Mr BUTCHER: I want to go back to the director-general in relation to the question on notice. You have had time now. Have you received any information on that as yet—the duplication of last year's and this year's question on notice?

Mr Hopper: We said we would come back by the end of the session and we will. I do not have an update as yet.

Mr BUTCHER: You do not have one as yet? Okay. I ask the minister: when is the sports strategy due and is it going to be called Games On! in the future?

Mr MANDER: I will answer the last part of your question first. Games On! is our community sporting infrastructure fund—\$250 million—which we have been speaking about quite explicitly here in the last few moments. That is one that we will continue and we will keep that focus. In relation to the sports strategy that we are dealing with at the moment, I have been travelling across the state to have community sessions with sporting organisations, volunteers, clubs and people generally who love sport in their community to work out how we take advantage of having the Olympic and Paralympic Games here in 2032. How does that become our north star with regards to where we make our future investments in local sport? It has been incredibly well received. I am going to get some numbers with regards to some of the participation that has taken place.

More than 420 people actually attended sessions live, for want of a better word and 1,921 surveys were completed by individual organisations that represented 57 local government authorities. There were over 90 written submissions. It was just so encouraging to hear local people talk about their love for sport and some of the challenges with volunteerism. If you go out to the regions you realise—Mr Speaker is very aware of this—how far people travel to play sport in the regions. They might travel four or five hours drive to have an hour's game and then four or five hours back and there are costs associated with that. We were looking at a number of themes to ensure people had access to more affordable participation opportunities and more flexible social options. We looked at how we can work collaboratively across government more collectively; how do we improve the attraction and recognition of incredible volunteers; how do we create more pathways throughout the system—

Mr BUTCHER: I think I am happy with that answer, Mr Speaker.

Mr MANDER: I am just starting—how do we increase the awareness and promotion of the benefits of participating in sport—

Mr SPEAKER: You could round it out pretty quickly.

Mr MANDER:—and physical activity more broadly—there is just one more point—and how do we drive collaboration across private and public sectors to leverage 2032 and gain lasting benefits across Queensland.

Mr BUTCHER: I hand over to the member for Cooper.

Ms BUSH: Minister, from the point that you started your relationship with the member for Whitsunday did you exclude yourself from all decisions—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms BUSH:—relating to election commitments or funding allocations for the Whitsundays region.

Mr SPEAKER: The question was still being asked. I am going to hear the question before I take points of order.

Ms BUSH: I am happy to repeat it. Minister, from the point that you started your relationship with the member for Whitsunday did you exclude yourself from all decisions relating to election commitments or funding allocations in the Whitsundays region?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order.

Ms BUSH: This is relevant to the portfolio.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: you made a previous ruling in relation to the line of questioning with respect to the matter and I would ask you to consider that.

Mr SPEAKER: No, I am going to allow the minister to answer this one.

Mr MANDER: Thanks, Mr Speaker. I have made all appropriate declarations that are necessary.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, what is the appointment process for the CEO of the Queensland Academy of Sport?

Mr MANDER: In terms of the appointment process, let me go back and explain why we are going through this process. The Queensland Academy of Sport has now become a statutory body, and that transition process is something that has happened over the last nine months. It was part of the department and it was a previous government commitment to transition it to a statutory body. We supported that when we were in opposition, so when we came into government we started that process. The big difference that occurred was that I do not believe the previous government were fully committed to the process and were quite happy for it to take a year longer than I would have liked, and so one of

my instructions to the department when I came into the role was that I wanted to accelerate this to make it effective from 1 July this year. They did that very well. It was quite an effort to do it and I congratulate—

Mr BUTCHER: Mr Speaker, with regard to relevance, the question was about the CEO being appointed.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you heard that aspect of the question.

Mr MANDER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point I am making is that that is why we have had to find a new CEO for the QAS. We are going through a process. The selection committee, that is mainly made up of members of the new board, have been going through that process. That process is ongoing and I am pretty confident that there will be an appointment or an announcement made in the not-too-distant future.

Mr BUTCHER: Minister, is former CEO Chelsea Warr being considered for the position?

Mr MANDER: Obviously, I am not going to talk about who has applied for jobs and who has not applied for jobs. That is confidential and that would not be appropriate to do.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, are you aware that misleading this committee is an offence under section 57 of the Criminal Code?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order: how does that relate to this SDS?

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the director-general to answer it.

Mr Hopper: Yes, I am aware.

Mr BUTCHER: In relation to the Queensland Academy of Sport during last year's estimates, following a line of questioning from the former shadow minister and now the minister sitting beside you, your response was considered by the Ethics Committee after a citizen's right of reply from Renita Garard. Do you stand by your remarks from last year about the advisory board, or has that changed?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order relating to how this relates to this year's estimates process. I ask if the member could outline how this relates to the budgetary matters under consideration with respect to the sport portfolio which we are addressing at the moment.

Mr SPEAKER: Just hold on a second. I will just take some advice. Member, could you explain to the committee why that question is appropriate to this year's estimates process?

Mr BUTCHER: The advisory board still exists as part of the selection criteria and comments made by the director-general last year were found not to be ethical, so I am just wanting to find out if the remarks from last year about the board are still his views at this point in time.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order: as I mentioned before, how does this relate to the SDS? I suspect that this matter relates to the Ethics Committee or should be dealt with in another forum—

Mr SPEAKER: Your point of order is relevant—

Mr McDONALD:—and there is an imputation involved.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, there are a number of things. Because this was in front of the Ethics Committee, it is relevant if you wanted to put that question to the Ethics Committee. It is not relevant to this portfolio, so we will move on to the next question, please. I am going to rule it out of order.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, are you or have you been investigated by the Crime and Corruption Commission?

Mr Hopper: Not to the best of my knowledge.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, the 2024-25 budget committed \$17.4 million annually from 2025-26 to 2027-28 for the QAS High Performance Strategy. Why does this funding not appear in the 2025-26 budget?

Mr Hopper: Member, as it is now a statutory body, I am advised that that money now exists in the administered line item of the budget.

Mr BUTCHER: Just to clarify, the program is still running and is funded as part of the transition back to the QAS as a statutory authority now?

Mr Hopper: Yes. The QAS, if you were to read the budget papers, has actually had an increase in funding, member, not a decrease.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, I note that Treasury estimates question on notice No. 18 regarding SwimStart was asked. The opposition was directed to ask a question regarding that program as part of this portfolio. Why is SwimStart not listed as an initiative within Budget Paper 4 under the sport portfolio?

Mr Hopper: It is in Budget Paper 2, member.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, the Deputy Premier stated that SwimStart is funded centrally. What does 'funded centrally' mean and what is the nature of those central funds?

Mr Hopper: I cannot speak on behalf of the Deputy Premier, but the department has a funding allocation for SwimStart and the program is live. As of 10 am today, there have been 693 vouchers issued with 112 vouchers redeemed so far, which is very pleasing to see.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, just as a backup to that question, I am curious as to why the Deputy Premier said that they are held centrally and they are not actually in a line item in the budget.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr McDONALD: The point of order is simply: if the member has a question for the Deputy Premier, they should be asking the Deputy Premier. The director-general has been asked to answer this question previously and this is repetition.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order, member for Moggill?

Dr ROWAN: The member for Gladstone is seeking an opinion in trying to understand the thought processes of other individuals who are not being questioned in the room today, so I would submit to you that the question asking for that opinion is not in order and that it should be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question, member for Gladstone. Director-General, answer it how you will.

Mr Hopper: Sorry, but could I have the question again, member?

Mr BUTCHER: I will change the question. It is ridiculous what is going on down that end of the table. I want to clarify the words used. The Deputy Premier of Queensland said that SwimStart vouchers were funded centrally. What does 'funded centrally' mean when it comes to the sport portfolio? What is that?

Mr Hopper: I am not sure that I can answer that on behalf of the Deputy Premier. All I am aware of is that we have an allocation for SwimStart. It is in our budget and we are utilising it accordingly.

Mr BUTCHER: I am happy to move on. As the minister has just stated in commentary, the round started on Monday. On what date was the start date for this program determined? Was it before or after it was raised by the opposition here in Queensland?

Mr Hopper: Which program are you referring to?

Mr BUTCHER: SwimStart.

Mr Hopper: You want me to clarify when the decision was made to set the dates?

Mr BUTCHER: Correct. Was it before or after it was raised by the opposition that it was not a line item in the budget papers?

Mr Hopper: Member, all I can say on the matter is that the funding for SwimStart is ongoing into the forward estimates and so the program continues and has continued.

Mr BUTCHER: I am happy to move on with it. Minister, can you guarantee to Queenslanders that SwimStart will be funded for the full four years of this program?

Mr MANDER: I am tempted to give you one-word answer, but I will not.

Mr BUTCHER: I am happy for a one-word answer.

Mr MANDER: Yes, but I am not sure what your inference is. Do you think we went and changed the budget papers after they came out about SwimStart? SwimStart is in the budget. Let me be clear: we are committed to SwimStart. We congratulate the *Courier-Mail* on the campaign that they had to promote safety for our children. It is so incredibly important in this state, particularly for those between

zero and four years of age. There is a commitment for SwimStart for the whole term. We are not backing away from it. We have not hidden it. It is quite clearly in the budget papers. I cannot be more clear than that.

Ms BUSH: Minister, how are you are prioritising the development and visibility of female athletes in Queensland ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic Games?

Mr MANDER: I mentioned a few of those earlier with regard to our Games On! funding. Many of those Games On! funding programs are associated with improving female facilities. New dressing rooms is the classic one, which is much needed as more and more females are playing sports that were traditionally associated with males so a lot of those clubs do not have the facilities that are required. We are really happy that the clubs are responding to that and that is why they have said that they need those facilities. I have many examples of that and I mentioned a few of those before: at Jabiru baseball field in Townsville there is \$1.575 million for upgraded lighting and female change facilities; at the Brothers Rugby Club at Crosby Park here in Brisbane \$6 million to fully fund upgrades which include modern female change rooms, which is really important; at the Aspley Hornets clubhouse \$1.8 million for two women's change rooms.

Ms BUSH: Point of order: sorry, I did hear this before. I am aware of the facilities. In addition to the facilities, how are you prioritising the development and visibility of female athletes—in addition to change rooms?

Mr MANDER: It is a shame, because there is such a long list of investments.

Ms BUSH: I am happy for you to table them.

Mr MANDER: Anyhow, I just mention that. We are doing many other things as well for females. The department has delivered a broad range of funding programs to enhance female participation, including the Active Women and Girls Program, the Queensland Pathways Blueprint and the Active Industry Base Fund. The department also supports the development of inclusive and accessible infrastructure through the Minor Infrastructure and Inclusive Facilities Fund to achieve positive outcomes for women and girls. The representation of female athletes in QAS supported cohorts and the Paris Olympic and Paralympic teams demonstrates the equity in QAS's funding model and program delivery, which is something that is important at our academy.

The QAS has introduced initiatives to foster greater involvement of women in coaching. The Gen2032 coaching scholarship program has seen 12 exceptional women coaches, with 52 per cent of participants engaged in a two-year full-time program. These coaches represent sports such as hockey, sprint kayak, rugby league, swimming, football, water polo, beach volleyball, sailing, rugby sevens, BMX freestyle and aerial skiing. Ten of those 12 women coaches were offered a further third year of scholarship support through specific Australian Institute of Sport funding. The QAS currently invests in six women team sports, two men team sports and mixed team sports of wheelchair rugby and continue to invest and develop female athletes and coaches in Queensland.

I was really encouraged a few weeks ago, in partnership with the federal government and the federal Minister for Sport, when we went out to QAS to talk about a program that supports women athletes who are experiencing pregnancy and want support in coming back to the elite level after the birth of their children. It was great to have some athletes out there who were really supporting that as well. We are very committed to making sure that the females in our state have every opportunity to play sport at every level.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to government members for questions. Member for Moggill.

Dr ROWAN: I acknowledge the service and contribution of the director-general in the portfolio. With reference to the \$24.2 million allocated for the construction of new police-citizens youth clubs and upgrades to existing facilities, can you outline how this investment will contribute to community engagement and youth development across Queensland?

Mr Hopper: The Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games is the lead agency in administering the \$67 million funding program with the Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association on behalf of the Queensland Police Service to support the construction of six new facilities and upgrade of 22 existing facilities. The objective of the program is to improve the facilities statewide to enhance the delivery of intervention, prevention and diversion programs as well as sport and recreation activities aimed at keeping young people engaged and on the right track.

As part of the 2024 state election the Queensland government has recently made additional commitments to this program under Resourcing our Police for the following two projects which the department has again been nominated as lead agency: there is an additional \$5 million to support a

new PCYC facility at Pimpama; and \$2.1 million to improve and upgrade facilities at the Pine Rivers PCYC. The new PCYC facility at Pimpama is one of six facilities under this program and the injection of funding secured through the election commitment will enable this project to move to the next phase. In Caloundra the new facility is in the finalising scope phase and is expected to move into construction in early 2026. Scoping, due diligence and sourcing of other funding contributions is underway for the remaining proposed new facilities at Rockhampton, Sandgate, Mareeba and Beaudesert.

In relation to the PCYC upgrades component of the program that have advanced this year, works in Inala, Ipswich, Napranum and Yarrabah have now been completed. At the Aurukun and Crestmead PCYC facilities the upgrades are anticipated to be completed in July 2025, which we are now at the conclusion of. Construction works to upgrade PCYCs at Cairns, Carindale, Mount Isa and Mount Gravatt are expected to commence later this year. Upgrading existing facilities and developing new ones is anticipated to enhance opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation and builds on the strong tradition of Queensland PCYC facilities providing vital support and activities to help young people develop self-esteem and social skills essential for leading productive lives.

Mr JAMES: Director-General, there is a forecasted allocation of \$17.5 million for disaster recovery. Could you please explain how you arrive at that estimate?

Mr Hopper: Under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, the department administers programs jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments on a 50-50 basis when extraordinary weather events occur, which is a category C or D activation. The Community and Recreational Assets Recovery and Resilience Program is a \$110 million program that has financially assisted 198 damaged sport and active recreation facilities to clean up, repair and become more resilient following the extraordinary disaster events of the 2021-22 financial year. The program is due for completion by 31 December 2025.

The Sport and Recreation Recovery Grant is a \$14.8 million program currently being delivered to damaged sport and active recreation facilities impacted by the South-East Queensland storms in late 2023 and by Tropical Cyclone Jasper. This program is due for completion by 30 June 2026. We also have a very specific targeted program from the outset of a disaster that provides ongoing support to not-for-profit sport and active recreation organisations with funding of up to \$5,000 for the immediate clean-up and re-establishment of facilities and activities.

To give the member some context, in terms of the actual extent of disaster activations, there have been 73 across 77 local government areas in Queensland. Our \$5,000 funding program is immediately available for eligible not-for-profit sport and recreation organisations located in those disaster-affected areas. It is a rolling funding program. It is about the initial clean-up and repair to get communities back on their feet and engaging in what often is a real hub for community members. As at 5 July 2025, across the 2024-25 financial year we have approved \$2.3 million to 494 organisations under all current activations in that regard.

Mr KEMPTON: Director-General, in relation to capital purchases in 2025-26, how does the department plan to invest in technology and modern equipment to support the growth and development of various sports across Queensland?

Mr Hopper: The minister has alluded to some of these elements. The department owns and operates six regionally significant sport and recreation venues that create inclusive, people-centred experiences with the aim of empowering everyone to be active and elevate the Queensland sport and active recreation sector. For the 2024-25 financial year, the significance of these venues is that they exceeded their customer satisfaction target rate and over 320,000 people came through those venues.

A really exciting milestone this year was the transition of the Gold Coast Performance Centre from the Department of Education into our department. It was wonderful to have those team members join our existing team members. There is a real common bond there and plenty of learnings are being shared. We have significant capital works projects in some of our venues currently underway, being the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast recreation precincts. Athletics facilities at the Gold Coast Performance Centre and the Townsville Sports Precinct received upgrades. I was at the Gold Coast Performance Centre when they showed how technology is being used to help train athletes on the track, which is fantastic. There is \$52 million over four years for capital upgrades and maintenance. It is very exciting to be able to have that level of support to really let our teams do the best they can to bring those venues to life and service the communities in which they exist.

There is \$30.3 million to support the clean-up and repair of community and recreation assets damaged by disaster events, which is fantastic. There is \$30 million, which includes a \$3.5 million

funding boost for the stage 1 redevelopment of Browne Park, which the minister mentioned earlier, to ensure the delivery of a premier field and TV broadcast standard lighting, in addition to the contemporary 3,500-seat grandstand, along with supporting an increase in ground capacity, public amenities, food and beverage outlets, and media and coach facilities, again with some significant technology overlay. There is \$24.2 million for the construction of the new police-citizens youth clubs, as we have talked about. Importantly, there is \$13.5 million, which includes \$11 million from the Games On! grassroots infrastructure program for stage 1 of the Rockhampton Sports Precinct to build a new home for netball with 16 outdoor hardcourts, clubhouse and changing room facilities and community play spaces. There is a range of capital activity going on, much of it underpinned by technology as well.

Mr McDONALD: My question is to the CEO of Stadiums Queensland. Mr Harris, can you update the committee on the latest figures for the economic contribution of and patronage at Stadiums Queensland venues?

Mr Harris: Whilst Stadiums Queensland is a commercially focused organisation, it relies on government funding to meet the capital and maintenance costs associated with its \$4.2 billion asset portfolio. Government invests in major sports facilities as they provide community, social and economic benefits to the community. Stadiums Queensland venues belong to Queenslanders, they are used by Queenslanders and they make Queenslanders feel proud.

Suncorp Stadium and the Gabba are iconic and nationally and internationally renowned. SQ's regional stadiums—Queensland Country Bank Stadium, Cbus Super Stadium and People First Stadium—are important to the livability and social fabric of their communities. The Sleeman Sports Complex, the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre and the Queensland Tennis Centre provide world-class facilities for community participation as well as for high-performance sport, competition development and training.

Stadiums Queensland venues contribute \$1.7 billion to Queensland's gross state product. They also provide an estimated 12,400 full-time jobs, including 7,000 directly and an additional 5,400 through flow-on activity. In 2024-25, approximately 5.5 million people attended a Stadiums Queensland venue. Over 1.5 million people participated in community sport and physical activity, taking advantage of the world-class facilities across each of our nine venues. There were 350,000 visits by athletes from across the high-performance athlete development pathway. Stadiums Queensland's community and high-performance facilities are used 363 days per year. They host school carnivals, school holiday programs, and community sport competitions and training while being home to national high-performance programs.

The economic impact of Stadiums Queensland venues was powerfully demonstrated this month with the British & Irish Lions tour matches at Suncorp Stadium. The tour, supported by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Brisbane Economic Development Agency, saw more than 38,000 visitors to Queensland and it is likely to have generated close to \$55.5 million for the Queensland economy.

In summary, Stadiums Queensland venues are returning approximately \$300 in total economic output per Queensland resident. They are contributing positively not just to the economy and event-based tourism but also to community sport, community pride and athlete development.

Mr KEMPTON: Mr Harris, one of your strategic goals is to be a world leader in the management of major venues. Can you tell the committee about any innovation or technical advancements you have implemented or are going to implement to achieve this?

Mr Harris: Stadiums Queensland is very proud to demonstrate its innovative practices across Queensland. We are an agile commercial organisation that is focused on providing exceptional service to all customers and returning value to the Queensland community. Innovation is key to our agility, which is an organisational value. Stadiums Queensland prides itself on the quality of its playing surfaces. Our grounds teams are dedicated, attending to their grounds 365 days a year, sometimes even on Christmas Day.

Cbus Super Stadium is renowned for having one of the best playing fields in the NRL. In late 2024 Cbus was the first stadium in Australia to adopt robotic mowing technology after the stadium's grounds manager, Phil Burke, was approached by Husqvarna about trialling their equipment. The robo mower, called 'The Blade Runner', makes it easier to repair turf patches through oversowing and is much lighter than the old heavy machinery which was previously required for this task. The mower takes about five hours to mow the field, meaning it can start at midnight so the grounds are ready to spray for line marking in the morning. As the mower is electric, it is not noisy, it is good for the environment and it is well suited to night-time use. Running the mower also assists with fatigue

management and means that ground staff can have weekends off when there are no events and means no-one is required to come in and mow on Christmas Day.

The Gabba has also been busy implementing innovative grounds equipment, becoming the first stadium in Australia to move to an electronic roller for the preparation of turf wickets. The roller is silent, has no emissions or fumes and has a range of features which makes the hours on the roller far more comfortable and safer for the team. Aside from its green credentials, the electronic roller also removes the risk of oil or fluid leaks on the wicket block. It runs for over 30 hours on a full charge and has solar panels to provide a continuous trickle charge.

Food and beverage operations at stadiums are more complex than most people realise. Our caterers need to respond quickly during events, serving between 30,000 to 60,000 people. In most cases they do that in a very short timeframe—inside two to three hours. There are significant peaks and troughs in service, with people rushing to get something to eat and drink at half-time or at an innings break. To help speed up service, Stadiums Queensland is looking at several automated solutions. These will allow fans to get their food and beverages quickly so they can get back to their seats and not miss a minute of the game. There is currently a trial underway at the Gabba of an automated beer-dispensing system. The EBar trial at the Gabba has automated beer pouring that will improve both the quality and speed of service. It is a type of vending machine for draught beer which is compliant with responsible service of alcohol and the venue's liquor licence. Similar trials using another type of system called a Boxbar will be held at Suncorp Stadium and Cbus Super Stadium in August and September this year.

Stadiums Queensland is also looking at other automated catering solutions, such as frictionless outlets. A frictionless outlet allows customers to leave with their purchases without going through the traditional checkout. It uses cameras and sensors to automatically charge customers for purchases. Equally, we are using AI to reduce food waste in our facilities. This is through the use of scales and cameras to create an accurate inventory of food waste. This results in cost savings and improved environmental outcomes.

Stadiums Queensland works closely with its partners, including the Queensland Academy of Sport, and organisations to deliver innovative and cutting-edge facilities for high-performance athletes. In 2023 Stadiums Queensland worked with the Queensland Academy of Sport and Australian Athletics to deliver the National Throws Centre of Excellence at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre. Not only is this an exceptional facility catering to discus, shot-put, javelin and hammer throw disciplines; it also sets the benchmark for sustainability. The building was one of Australia's first Climate Active zero-carbon-certified buildings. The facility used sustainable materials, including Queensland sourced timber and carbon-neutral concrete, and the design features enable the throws centre to be used without artificial lighting during daylight and negates the need for mechanical cooling due to its passive cooling.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Harris. That mower sounds like what we need on the Speaker's Green! I will go to non-government members. Member for Gladstone?

Mr BUTCHER: Mr Speaker, I wish to make a brief clarification, if I can, please. In an earlier commentary, I said the statements were found to be unethical; however, I should have said the Ethics Committee agreed that the citizen's right of reply should be included in *Hansard*. Thank you to the committee for giving me the opportunity to do that. I will hand over to the member for Cooper.

Ms BUSH: Minister, the SDS promises inclusivity but makes zero reference to women's sport or participation. Since becoming minister, what specialist funding programs have you initiated to develop female athletes?

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, I am not sure what else I can add to what I have already talked about with regard to infrastructure, improving facilities at the community club level and at the elite club level as well as the programs that are underway. There are many programs happening at the QAS. I think I have covered most of them.

Ms BUSH: If it would help to clarify, the question is: what specialist funding programs have been initiated since the minister took office, and which of those have been driven by the minister?

Mr MANDER: The other issue that I should elaborate on—and it is one of the key themes of our Sport Strategy—is inclusion. Whether it is women, people with a disability or other minority groups, it is important that we create every opportunity for them to participate in sport. As we put the strategy together, that will be one of the key themes. I think I mentioned it earlier as well that it is one of the

themes of the Sport Strategy. We are hoping to have that announced at the end of September, and it will include many of the strategies that I think the member is referring to. Let's remember that it is a new government and part of being a new government is reassessing and establishing our own policies. The prime reason for the Sport Strategy is to consult with those in the industry to seek their expertise to help us reach those objectives.

Ms BUSH: Just to get a finer point on it, there have been no specialist funding programs exclusively for women and girls that you have initiated since becoming the Minister for Sport?

Mr MANDER: I do not know what else I can add. I have already talked about what has happened with infrastructure and with the QAS. I mentioned a program for women who want to return to sport. We are funding that program with the federal government to support women to go back to what they love doing after they have had a child. Countless things are happening, but more will come after the strategy has been established.

Ms BUSH: I note they are not specialist funding programs, but I will move on. Minister, what is your strategy to increase female athlete representation in Queensland?

Mr MANDER: At the risk of sounding repetitive, we are undergoing a sport strategy to address these types of issues to ensure all Queenslanders have an opportunity to participate in sport and reap the benefits of sport. Stay tuned.

Ms BUSH: In relation to the Sport Strategy, when are we likely to see the results of that strategy?

Mr MANDER: It will be the end of September.

Ms BUSH: Which women's representatives and women's bodies are you working with to ensure women are included equitably as part of that strategy?

Mr MANDER: Through the Sport Strategy, I am dealing with grassroots people who come from clubs and state sporting organisations. Many of them—at least half—are females. My experience has been that females are the backbone of most clubs administratively, and I have seen and heard many great examples of females in leadership positions in clubs who continue to serve at their clubs despite the fact that their children have moved on, which is just inspirational. The clubs are their community and part of the fabric of who they are. I am speaking to females on a regular basis and predominantly female sport organisations as well. I might just clarify something too. I probably spoke too quickly before. The Sport Strategy will be delivered in November, not September. I just wanted to clarify that as well.

Ms BUSH: Minister, you have previously and publicly opposed gender quotas and recently repealed the requirement that half of the Brisbane 2032 Olympics organising board be women; is that correct?

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, can I clarify whether we will speak about this now or in the session on the Olympic and Paralympic Games?

Mr SPEAKER: Do you think it might be more relevant to the Olympics session?

Mr MANDER: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: We will keep this session to sport.

Ms BUSH: Recognising that, Minister, under your leadership, how can female athletes feel confident that they will be valued for their skills rather than their appearance?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order: that question clearly contains an imputation.

Mr SPEAKER: That is a good point of order. I will rule that question out of order.

Mr MANDER: Mr Speaker, I also take personal offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Ms BUSH: I withdraw. Given the history and your stance against gender quotas, how can female athletes feel confident that they will be valued and visible when you have failed to embed and champion measures like these?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order: I had to restrain myself from interrupting the question halfway through, but again the question has imputations and should not be allowed.

Ms BUSH: I am simply picking up on matters that are on the public record and giving an assurance to female athletes. I would think the minister would take the opportunity to address that.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I will leave it up to you.

Mr MANDER: I am happy to answer the question, Mr Speaker. In doing that, I will go back to a previous question where I was asked about who I have consulted with and been speaking to to ensure females have a voice with regard to the strategy and how we might increase participation in women's and girls' sport.

Some of the people I continue to speak with are people like Robyn Smith, the Chief Executive Officer of Sport Inclusion Australia. I have had a couple of meetings with her. She is also on the OCOG board. I speak with Christine McLoughlin, the Chair of Suncorp and the Minerva Network, which supports females in sport with a mentoring program. I also meet quite often with Kate Davies, the Chief Executive Officer of Netball Queensland, netball being predominantly a female sport. I meet with Ross Symonds, the Chief Executive Officer of Softball Queensland. I have had a couple of meetings with Sarah Loh, the Chief Executive Officer of Softball Australia, with regard to what might happen in that space. I meet with Libby Cook-Black, the founder of the Female Co. I meet with Michelle Moss, the Chief Executive Officer of Queenslanders with Disability Network. I meet with Cameron Sullivan, the Vice-President of Queensland Wheelchair Rugby League. I meet with members of the Australian Olympic Committee and Sue Hunt, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Sports Foundation. I meet with many people who are involved with sport generally, but particularly those who have an emphasis on females in sport. That is how I am informed.

I give an absolute guarantee, as a father of three daughters who play sport and have all their lives, that I know the benefits of sport for everybody, no matter what gender they are. I do not distinguish between people's backgrounds or gender. I am all about making sure that more people are playing sport because I have seen the benefits of it.

Ms BUSH: The minister has just outlined that he has met with Robyn, Christine, Kate, Sarah, Libby and Michelle, who are women, in relation to women's sport. Can the minister identify how many men he has met with in relation to the development of the Sport Strategy?

Mr MANDER: I am not sure where the member is coming from. I have just mentioned a number of men as well in that list. When I meet with people I do not meet them on the basis of their gender. I meet people who are representatives and volunteers of sporting organisations and sporting clubs right across the state. I am not sure what else I can say with regard to how committed I am to everybody, no matter what age they are and what gender they are, playing sport. I really cannot add anything more to that.

Mr SPEAKER: This will be the last question before we swap over.

Mr BUTCHER: Director-General, under the Games On! program and the funding allocations, I note that funding of \$500,000 went to Dayboro scouts to restore internal and external woodwork and paint. Can you explain how that fits in the envelope of the Olympic Games and sports moving forward?

Mr Hopper: I do not have the actual project itself immediately before me. What I can say is that the purpose of the Games On! program, as described by the government, is to deliver new or upgraded fields and courts, change rooms or lighting and clubhouse enhancements. I imagine that it falls under that bracket.

Mr SPEAKER: We will move to government questions.

Mr JAMES: My question is to the chief executive officer of Stadiums Queensland. Could you tell the committee some of the exciting events coming up at Stadiums Queensland venues around the state?

Mr Harris: Stadiums Queensland venues are home to Queensland's major sporting franchises across the NRL, NRLW, AFL, AFLW, A-League, Super Rugby, Super Netball, domestic and international cricket, Big Bash League, Women's Big Bash League as well as the NBL.

Before any major concert activity is accounted for, from anchor hirers alone there are at least 148 major sports events annually at Stadiums Queensland venues. As I mentioned in the previous answer, we have worked very closely with the Queensland government, Tourism and Events Queensland, local governments, local tourism bodies, national sporting bodies and event promoters to bring additional major events to our venues.

These partnerships bring internationally significant and diverse events to Queensland, including the recent British and Irish Lions tour games versus the Wallabies and the Queensland Reds games that were played at Suncorp Stadium in July; the Wallabies v Argentina match that will be played at Queensland Country Bank Stadium on 6 September; the Australia v India T20 international that will be

played at the Gabba from 8 December through until 12 December; and the Ashes test from 4 to 8 December.

There will be blockbuster stadium concerts at Suncorp Stadium including Metallica on 12 November, Lady Gaga on 9 December and AC/DC on 14 and 18 December. This will be followed by the Australian exclusive Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, which has four shows in February 2026. There will also be three Ed Sheeran concerts in February of next year. There will be Monster Jam monster trucks in October and World Supercross dirt motorcycle racing in November at CBus Super Stadium on the Gold Coast. Nitro Circus will be at Queensland Country Bank Stadium in October of this year.

Just this week, six Women's Asian Cup matches were announced, with CBus Super Stadium hosting those events from 2 to 19 March 2026, including the Matildas on Thursday, 4 March. There will be the return of the NRL Magic Round at Suncorp in 2026. We also have the 2026 UCI BMX Racing World Championships in July at Sleeman Sports Complex. If we look beyond 2026 into 2027, there will be Men's Rugby World Cup matches at Suncorp and Queensland Country Bank Stadium. As we go further out there will be the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2029.

Mr KEMPTON: My question is to the chief executive officer of Stadiums Queensland. Can you tell the committee about how Stadiums Queensland venues are accessed and utilised by the community and what community groups are benefiting from the use of these venues?

Mr Harris: As I touched on previously, we have extensive community use across our portfolio. In the last 12 months, over 1.5 million members of the community participated in sport and physical activity at our venues and really took advantage of the world-class facilities at our venues. Our venues also have high-community and high-performance use, hosting school carnivals, school holiday programs, community sport and competition, and high-performance programs.

To give a sense or a snapshot of some of the unique community activities that go on at some of our facilities, in addition to the standard ones that probably most people in the House are aware of being large swimming carnivals, athletics carnivals, tennis events and cycling events, we also host markets, fares and expos at the Sleeman Sports Complex and Nissan Arena; dance and cheerleading events at Nissan Arena and Sleeman Sports Complex; school graduations, awards and choir nights, and multicultural events at Sleeman Sports Complex theatre; and bands in the park at the Tennis Centre.

On top of those sorts of activities, we also allow the community to come in and use the venues for a number of social purposes and social benefits. We host Australian Defence Force training in Townsville. We host very regular training of emergency services personnel with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and QPS across all our portfolio venues to practise and be ready for any types of incidents that may occur at our venues.

LeagueAbility programs are held at Cbus Super Stadium in partnership with the Gold Coast Titans that provide participants with an intellectual or physical disability the ability to participate in inclusive modified games of Rugby League. Connect 2 Home events are held at People First Stadium which assist vulnerable people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness to connect with support and advocacy services to help them improve their situation. Lastly, in supporting homelessness and housing support activities, this year alone we have hosted the Vinnies CEO Sleepout at the Gabba and Cbus Super Stadium.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, what is the value of sport to Queensland?

Ms BUSH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: that is seeking an opinion.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I think it is a very good question for the Minister for Sport.

Ms BUSH: Regardless, it is seeking an opinion. It is not within standing orders.

Mr McDONALD: The term 'value' has economic value. That is what we are here for—budget estimates.

Mr SPEAKER: Rephrase the question.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, what is the economic value of sport to Queensland?

Mr MANDER: Thank you for that question, member. I am surprised that members of the committee would question the value of sport whether it is economic, social or for people's mental health because I believe the value of sport is priceless. Investing in active lifestyles can reduce long-term health costs and boost economic productivity. Member, it is estimated that for every dollar invested in sport and recreation a \$7 return is received across economic, health and educational domains. In

Queensland alone, the economic contribution of sport is estimated at around \$8.2 billion per year. That is equivalent to nearly 1.8 per cent of GSP.

Sport has the power to inspire, to connect, to educate and to heal communities. Local sporting clubs are at the heart of towns and cities right across Queensland. For many communities, the local club is the place to gather and celebrate. I have seen that many times as I have travelled across the state. I remember recently going to Longreach to see the Longreach Tigers. That night was a fundraiser for somebody who is a victim of an illness, an ailment. The community got behind them and sport was at the centre of that.

It also plays a key role in addressing barriers to inclusion and helps create greater local unity. Sport has the capacity to change lives and positively impact communities. The Youth Development Partnership Fund, a partnership with the Queensland Police Service, funds projects that improve mental health outcomes among youths who are at risk of offending across Queensland. Sport has the power to initiate positive social change and it is imperative we harness that power to maximise the potential. This is why we are investing in sport and further developing our sports strategy so we can leverage the games of 2032 to capitalise on this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Mr SPEAKER: We have now reached the end of the time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of sport. Thank you, Minister, officials and departmental officers. The committee will now adjourn for a short break until 3 pm when the committee will examine the estimates for the portfolio of racing.

Proceedings suspended from 2.45 pm to 3.00 pm.



Mr SPEAKER: Welcome back, Minister and officials. The committee will now examine estimates for the racing portfolio. Minister, if you wish you may make an opening statement regarding the racing portfolio area of no more than five minutes.

Mr MANDER: The racing industry contributes close to \$2.5 billion each year towards the Queensland economy and around 15,000 Queenslanders are employed by the industry. I have had the great privilege of travelling across the state to meet with members of the industry, to visit their clubs, to learn from them and to listen about the challenges they are facing in their communities. Racing in the bush is facing more than a few challenges, including workforce shortages, aging infrastructure and modern compliance standards. I have spent time in places like Goondiwindi and Longreach where, despite the challenges, locals rally around their clubs to volunteer and support the industry. These are challenges I am committed to overcoming. I want to see racing not just survive but thrive in the country.

I have spent time at tracks in regional centres like Bundaberg, Townsville, Cairns, Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast, where racing continues to be a powerhouse for the state. I have been to multiple harness and greyhound meetings and admire the passion of all involved in those codes. They too have endured their fair share of challenges, not least the infrastructure debacle for harness racing following the former government's Olympic venue chaos. Most recently, I was present for several of our flagship race days during Stradbroke season at Eagle Farm and Doomben, where we welcomed some of Australia's best horses, trainers and jockeys to Queensland. It has been well documented for some time that the BRC's infrastructure issues would need to be addressed. This is now up to us.

My charter letter clearly states that I must work to deliver modern, fit-for-purpose infrastructure in every part of the state. It also says that we must strengthen the integrity of the racing industry, ensure the long-term viability of all racing codes and ensure high animal welfare standards. I take this task seriously.

In March I launched a discussion paper titled 'On Track', which called on all Queenslanders who take an interest in racing to have their say on its future. It received more than 1,200 submissions throughout the discussion paper process. This discussion paper served as a prompt for the launch of the independent racing review, which is set to be the most comprehensive review into the Queensland racing sector in more than 25 years. The review will closely look at infrastructure challenges in Queensland racing, how to build on animal welfare standards and how to secure the long-term future of country racing. The review is expected to be handed down later this year. It will be a significant foundation for the future of racing in our state.

However, work has never stopped throughout the review process. I would like to recognise the hard work of Racing Queensland, led by Lachlan Murray; the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, led by Catherine Clark; and the Director-General of the Department of Primary Industries, Graeme Bolton, who also holds responsibility for racing integrity.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to opposition members for the first questions.

Ms GRACE: Minister, can you advise the committee of the current balance of the Racing Infrastructure Fund?

Mr MANDER: I will ask the director-general for clarity with that. We did make a recent investment from the Racing Infrastructure Fund to help the Bundaberg Greyhound Racing Club. They received promises previously that were not fulfilled with regard to transitioning their track from grass to sand. I was very happy to fund that out of the Racing Infrastructure Fund. I will just go to the director-general for some more details.

Mr Hopper: My records show \$33 million.

Ms GRACE: Mr Murray, can you advise of the status of the \$25 million allocated to Racing Queensland in the 2024-25 state budget to support work to plan and replace the main grandstand at Eagle Farm, and has a business case been developed? That would impact on the Racing Infrastructure Fund.

Mr SPEAKER: Who was the question directed towards?

Ms GRACE: I am so sorry; it is directed to the RQ CEO. I am sorry, I thought he was at the table.

Mr SPEAKER: Mr Murray, would you like to hear the question again?

Mr Murray: Yes, if I could hear the question again.

Ms GRACE: As the previous minister, I know that \$25 million was allocated in the budget last year to support work to plan and replace the main grandstand at Eagle Farm and develop a business case. What happened to that, because it impacts on the Racing Infrastructure Fund?

Mr Murray: Racing Queensland and the Brisbane Racing Club have been collaborating to deliver and design the construction of a new racing grandstand and events centre to replace the existing John Power stand at the Eagle Farm Racecourse. In June 2022 a preliminary design was completed by Hassel architects with a capacity of 5,800 people and was costed for delivery in 2027 at \$200 million excluding GST. A redesign to reduce the cost of the grandstand—

Ms GRACE: Can I just interrupt? I know we do not have a lot of time, Speaker, so can I just direct? It was the \$25 million that was in the last budget, not what happened in 2022. It was there last year. Was that spent on developing the business case and all of that stuff you were going through? Can you just concentrate: was the \$25 million spent and has a business case been developed?

Mr Murray: No, \$25 million has not been spent.

Ms GRACE: Minister, I refer to a media article titled 'Racing towards oblivion' about the BRC owing debt. I think you are aware of it, but I have copies here if you want to see it. It states—

We've been encouraged by positive discussions with Racing Minister Tim Mander and the Queensland Government.

Has your government committed to providing full funding for the replacement of the John Power stand at Eagle Farm?

Mr MANDER: This has been a big challenge for the Brisbane Racing Club. To put it in context, they have a grandstand that has been there for many years. It is starting to get to the stage where it will no longer be able to be used in the future. They have been—and I mean this positively—campaigning and lobbying the previous government as well as the current government with regard to funding to replace that stand. We are not talking about a small investment here; we are talking about a multimillion dollar investment. In the current climate it is very difficult for governments to hand over tens of millions of dollars without good rationale and business cases.

We are in ongoing discussions with them. One of the reasons we initiated the racing review was to address this specific issue, not just with the Brisbane Racing Club but with infrastructure right across the state. Revenue flows going back to the industry had softened because there has been a softening in the wagering market, and that has affected some of the revenue flows as well. We are in constant contact with the Brisbane Racing Club to try to work out a solution. I am growing in confidence that our racing review will help us out in a major way with regard to addressing this and many other issues with regard to infrastructure. I look forward to that when it comes out and having discussions to remedy that situation.

Ms GRACE: Mr Murray, why wasn't the \$25 million spent to do the preliminary work that the minister just said needed to be done in order to facilitate a decision happening? Who gave what direction? Why was the \$25 million that was allocated in the budget not spent?

Mr Murray: As the minister mentioned, the \$25 million would be a component of the overall funding requirement for the grandstand. Between government, Racing Queensland and the BRC, we have been having conversations about the best way to be able to fund the entirety of the project. The Racing Queensland board preferred not to proceed with spending \$25 million until there was a pathway to full funding availability.

Ms GRACE: In a way, you are confirming it was postponed and it has now gone back into the Racing Infrastructure Fund?

Mr Murray: That is correct. The \$33 million that the director-general mentioned that is currently in RIF includes the \$25 million that had been notionally allocated to the grandstand.

Ms GRACE: Minister, I asked question on notice No. 852 referring to funding of \$16.8 million in the Racing Infrastructure Fund for 2025-26. Three projects included The Q, lighting of the Redcliffe harness club and stables at the Townsville Turf Club. What amounts are dedicated to each of these projects? I was at one of the openings and I am sure you have opened the other two, so I am curious as to how much of the \$16.8 million is going to be spent on these three venues that were started under Labor and you have already opened. They are still in the budget so could you explain that, please?

Mr MANDER: Through you, Mr Speaker, I will refer to the director-general to give us some detail on that in the first instance.

Mr Hopper: The current RIF projects, as I understand it, with funding in 2025-26 include a payment of \$974,125 from the \$44.15 million allocation towards the \$90 million greyhound racing venue, The Q, previously called the Greater Brisbane Greyhound Centre, which officially opened on 7 June 2025. We are awaiting final acquittal and funding payment pending. There is a payment of \$150,000 for the \$6 million funding for a lighting upgrade at the Redcliffe Harness Racing and Sporting Club. Construction was completed in March 2025 with final acquittal and funding payment pending. There is a payment of \$390,000 from the \$7.8 million towards the \$10 million Townsville Turf Club stables project. Construction was completed in May 2025, with final acquittal and funding payment pending. There is also delivery of a new sand track to secure the future of greyhound racing in Bundaberg which was announced on 13 May 2025.

Ms GRACE: So it appears we are just mopping up. They are small amounts that are still owing out of some fairly chunky amounts that made the budget. It is just mopping those up. Mr Murray, will you provide an update on the safety issues reported regarding the new greyhound track at The Q?

Mr Murray: Racing Queensland places the welfare of its animals at the heart of all decision-making. In collaboration with the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission, RQ continues to explore and adopt new strategies to reduce the incidence of injuries of greyhounds at race meetings in Queensland. This includes analysis of injury data and research into risk factors for injury and strategies to optimise track curation processes. The management of oncourse injuries and the adoption of the Race Meeting Injury Scheme supports industry participants to treat and rehabilitate greyhounds that have sustained serious injuries at race meetings, ensuring that—

Ms GRACE: Excuse me, Speaker: I am directly referring to the new greyhound track at The Q. Mr Murray, I am well aware of all the greyhound issues, but could you please update on the safety issues there?

Mr McDONALD: Mr Speaker, point of order: the acting CEO is being directly relevant to the original question that was asked. He is providing a fulsome answer and he has got plenty of time to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: I think there was another aspect to the question which the member for McConnel was asking.

Ms GRACE: Yes. There is no disrespect, Mr Speaker. I just want to narrow in on The Q.

Mr SPEAKER: I am with you, member for McConnel.

Mr Murray: What I will do is go straight to the Q2 Parklands closure. I think that is what you are referring to.

Ms GRACE: Yes.

Mr Murray: On 9 July 2025, QRIC stewards inspected the Q2 Parklands track, deeming it unsuitable for trialling or racing. As a result, the upcoming meetings and trials on the Q2 were cancelled until further notice so that further remediation works could take place. During this time the Q1 Lakeside and Q Straight were to accommodate the eight meetings at The Q each week. As a matter of priority,

RQ and the Queensland Greyhound Racing Club focused on delivering a consistent and suitable racing surface before the meetings are rescheduled on the Q2 Parklands. The QGRC, in conjunction with RQ, have commenced those remediation works following the concerns identified by the QRIC stewards. As I mentioned, they included the variation in track racing surface consistency, noticeable corrugation and humps in both the front and back straights and variation in the consistency of the surface—all meaning the stewards were not comfortable with racing on that track.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Murray. What was the watering issue that was identified prior to the disastrous Brisbane Cup? What further costs have been spent on upgrading a track that has only just opened?

Mr Murray: On 8 May 2025 we had the first Q2 race meeting and following that we had the grand opening of The Q on 7 June 2025. By all accounts from trainers and participants, the track was in world-class condition and raced spectacularly. Approximately a month later, the Brisbane Cup meeting was scheduled on 5 July and, as I mentioned before, that is when QRIC stewards found the inconsistencies in the track. There is an investigation underway into the root cause of why the condition of the surface of the track deteriorated so much. In terms of what has occurred since 5 July when the Brisbane Cup was abandoned through until now, a number of initiatives have been carried out, such as power harrowing and grading the track to a depth of 150 millimetres. This was completed on 7 July. QRIC stewards have been involved throughout the whole process and they have provided feedback that the track was improving. We have also seconded our greyhound track specialist, David Meier, to the club to assist with track preparation. The club have also employed Scott Higgins—

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I do not mean to be disrespectful but I know I only have a short amount of time. What is the cost for doing all of this? This was a world-class track and we are now doing all of this work that you have just outlined. What is the cost?

Mr Murray: There is no additional cost.

Ms GRACE: So it is all being done for free?

Mr Murray: It is all being done by the club and within their current resources.

Ms GRACE: Minister, was it opened too soon? Do we have enough trained staff? This was a significant investment by the previous government and it was then opened by your government, and I give due regard. We had a disastrous Brisbane Cup. Was it opened too soon? Are you comfortable with where we are? What happened to the prize money from the cancelled Brisbane Cup?

Mr MANDER: Obviously, what has happened at The Q in recent times is not something that I am satisfied with. I want to use this to stress how important we regard animal welfare. This was the biggest race meet of the year for greyhounds, and the concern for the welfare of the animals was so great that the stewards cancelled the meeting after the first couple of races. That is a huge call, and of course there are negatives associated with that.

The positive side is that that is how seriously we take animal welfare. Mr Murray has referred to this, but, basically, there have been two inquiries underway—one inquiry into that particular night or the preparation that day and what went wrong for QRIC to come to that conclusion, and that was something done by the Department of Primary Industries because, in a quirky way that things are organised, QRIC is under DPI, or the CEO reports to me—does she? No. Anyhow, it is under DPI. Secondly, with respect to the question that the shadow minister is asking, we have done a wider inquiry into, recognising the massive investment, whether things were built to specification and built to scope and whether there is some fundamental flaw that needs to be addressed. We are doing that because we want to be doubly and triply sure of things. Those two investigations have been happening—one on the incident that night; one more fundamentally about the venue itself—so that we can make sure it is not some systemic issue that needs to be addressed and it was a one-off incident. I am expecting the results of those in the not-too-distant future.

With regard to the prize money, I will hand over to the Acting CEO of Racing Queensland to mention what happened with that.

Mr Murray: As the meeting was abandoned on 5 July, Racing Queensland attempted to reschedule that meeting seven days later, on 12 July, giving a week for the club to prepare the track and have it suitable for racing. Unfortunately, the club was not able to do that in time, so the decision was made to allocate the million dollars of prize money that the Brisbane Cup offers in accordance with the greyhound racing rules, and that was split evenly across each of the runners.

Ms GRACE: So it was paid out but there was no race.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go now to government members.

Mr McDONALD: Acting CEO of Racing Queensland, Mr Murray, latest data suggests the racing industry is worth more than \$2.5 billion to the Queensland economy, with more than half of that realised in regional areas. Could you give the committee an update on the performance of this year's Winter Racing Carnival?

Mr Murray: If I may, I will answer it through three lenses, the first being crowds, the second being wagering and the third being racing results. Some 57,000 people turned out to see spectacular racing across the winter carnival, which spanned from the Victory Stakes meeting in Eagle Farm through to the Caloundra Cup held at the Sunshine Coast. The overall crowd numbers were down four per cent year on year and, of course, those crowd numbers are impacted by the weather conditions.

At the Hollindale meeting at the Gold Coast, the crowd numbers, pleasingly, were up 49 per cent from the year prior; however, grey skies saw the attendance numbers dip each weekend from the Doomben 10000 Day and, ultimately, a deluge saw the Derby Day meeting abandoned partway through. A number of those races had to be reprogrammed for the next week, which the media labelled Super Saturday. It effectively saw three Group Ones on the bounce for Oaks Day. Those three Group Ones were the Kingsford-Smith Cup, Queensland Oaks and Queensland Derby.

The Stradbroke Handicap meeting is the jewel in the carnival crown, and that saw over 9,000 attendees at Eagle Farm. The Ipswich Cup again had the highest crowd of the carnival, with over 12,000 people in attendance, which was up year on year. Rounding out the crowd numbers, the Caloundra Cup was the first non-rain-affected meeting in a decade which saw an extra 2,000 racegoers attend, and that was actually 49 per cent up year on year.

With regard to racing, whilst the ratings of the races will not be released for some time, we did see some tremendous racing. The Hayes brothers etched the Hayes name into the history books—something that their father, David Hayes, and grandfather, Colin Hayes, were unable to achieve—when War Machine lived up to the hype and won convincingly in the Stradbroke Handicap. War Machine is actually now looking at a tilt at the Everest.

The Inflictor was a true Charlie Bucket golden-ticket story. Part-time trainer/full-time truck driver Craig Cousins secured a slot in the Stradbroke after winning the Gateway race in summer. Whilst The Inflictor was in the betting, unfortunately it was out of the prize money, coming seventh, but he did redeem himself two weeks later to with the Tattersall's Mile with Rachel King on board.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, the Racing Review promises to ensure the ongoing support of country racing. Could you advise what the government has done recently to support it?

Mr MANDER: As I mentioned earlier, one of the great joys of this job is going to country race meetings. For many towns it is either the No. 1 or No. 2 social event of the year. That is why it is so important that we keep country racing healthy—not just surviving but thriving. Just yesterday I was pleased to announce \$3 million in funding for country racing clubs across the state through the Country Club Asset Funding program. A total of 51 projects across 43 clubs were announced. Some of the highlights include: judge facility upgrades at Hughenden and Mount Isa; new barrier stalls at Bedourie and Gympie; new jockey and steward facilities at Charleville and Cloncurry; running rails at 15 clubs including Aramac, Betoota, Herbert River, Yeppoon and Monto; animal ambulances at Allora, Innisfail and Wondai; tie-up stalls for Eidsvold, Cunnamulla and Prairie; and many more. The projects will be delivered by either Racing Queensland or the clubs themselves, with \$600,000 in co-contributions made by clubs towards these projects.

Racing runs through the veins of regional towns, and the Crisafulli government is steadfast in its commitment to ensure its ongoing viability and success. The Racing Review is still in full swing; however, we have not stopped working to deliver for the Queensland racing industry, an industry that supports almost 50,000 participants from Birdsville to Cooktown and everywhere in between. One of the great things about the Racing Review and the reviewer, a man named Matt McGrath, is that he has, right throughout Queensland, got out to many of these country racing venues. He has been very well received, and I am very confident as well that he has some innovative ideas that we will hopefully be able to implement once the Racing Review is complete.

Mr JAMES: Acting CEO, following on from the member for Lockyer's question, could you tell the committee the economic importance of racing in regional Queensland?

Mr Murray: As the racing minister touched on earlier, the racing industry's impact to the economic contribution borders on \$2.5 billion, which represents a 4.2 per cent increase year on year

and an over 100 per cent increase when compared to 2016. Over those eight years since 2016, all codes have increased their contribution, with thoroughbreds up 97 per cent to \$1.9 billion; greyhounds up 193 per cent to \$331 million; and harness up 65 per cent to \$233 million. Pleasingly, that has also carried over to employment, with thoroughbreds generating over 11,000 jobs, greyhounds supporting over 1,900 jobs and harness supporting close to 1,400 jobs.

With regard to the question about how important it is to regional areas, pleasingly, over half of those full-time jobs are regionally based and half the economic contribution is regional as well. Across the state, we have had over 800,000 in attendance coming to race meetings across the 2024 year.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, given the current comprehensive racing review is a significant undertaking for the industry, could you provide an update on the progress?

Mr SPEAKER: Provide that update in one minute.

Mr MANDER: I am confident that this review will be the most comprehensive review done into racing for the last 25 years. It has not been something that we have reacted to—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr MANDER: I am not sure what the shadow minister said but, unlike the QRIC review that she initiated that cost \$500,000 and we never saw the result—I still have not seen the public version of that review—this review will be open and transparent and people will see the result. Mr McGrath has been inspirational—very knowledgeable, very personable. He is joined by a three-person steering committee with a wealth of experience over three different codes. It is going really well.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. We have now reached the end of time allocated for the consideration of the proposed expenditure for the racing portfolio area. Thank you, Minister, officials and departmental officers.

The committee will now examine the estimates for the Olympic and Paralympic Games portfolio area. Minister, if you wish you may make an opening statement regarding the Olympic and Paralympic Games portfolio of no more than five minutes.

Mr MANDER: Thank you, once again, Mr Speaker. Throughout the last nine months, my portfolio has been working hard to get Queensland on track to deliver an Olympic and Paralympic Games which Queenslanders can be proud of. This is what delivery looks like—a stark contrast to the indecision and delays we inherited. My portfolio was a key contributor to the 100-day review and a launch of the 2032 Delivery Plan. This is a critical road map that, frankly, should have been in place far sooner. We wasted no time in getting to work to rectify the previous government's lack of clear direction. As I mentioned earlier we are still getting on with the Games On! program which will provide positive and long-term lasting benefits for communities and encourage more Queensland kids to take up sport. This is about building a lasting legacy and not just hosting an event—something that was clearly an afterthought under the previous government.

In May, I met with the International Olympic Committee Coordination Commission Brisbane 2032 as part of their three-day inspection to review our preparation to date. The IOC president Kirsty Coventry said the development of the delivery plan gives the IOC great confidence and 'sets out a clear pathway to deliver a truly impactful Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032'. This confidence, members, is a direct result of our proactive approach and decisive leadership—a refreshing change from the uncertainty that clouded the initial planning of the games.

Over the last few months we have strengthened and reconstituted governance arrangements for more efficient decision-making. The amendments made to the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021 have seen the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee Board reduce from 24 to 15 members. This will streamline processes to deliver a successful games. Last week I joined the Deputy Premier and met with representatives from the organising committee, the Australian Olympic Committee as well as Paralympics Australia to celebrate seven years to go until the games. We were also joined by very important guests from seven neighbouring Queensland state schools to have a go at seven different sports. This showed the enthusiasm for the games is coming back.

My department is taking on a whole-of-games coordination role, with Stadiums Queensland and the Queensland Academy of Sport also leaning in to support and provide their expertise. This unified approach is precisely what was missing and what we have now put in place to ensure every dollar of taxpayers' money is maximised for the benefit of Queensland. The expedited transition of the Queensland Academy of Sport to a statutory body has been another key focus for the portfolio to ensure readiness for LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032. Unlike the previous government who wanted to delay this transition for another 12 months, this swift action shows the Crisafulli government's determination to

get on with the job and our commitment to providing Queensland athletes with the world-class support they need to succeed at the highest level.

In six months, legislation was passed, a board appointed and policies implemented to ensure the academy is well positioned to support elite athletes across the state. I would also like to thank the Queensland Academy of Sport led by Troy Ayres. I appreciate his presence today. I am pleased we are back on track and, more importantly, that we are cleaning up the mess and setting Queensland on a path for a truly successful and legacy rich Olympic and Paralympic Games, something the previous government simply failed to adequately prepare for.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to opposition members for the first question. Member for McConnel.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, in reference to page 5 of the SDS, what is the department's role in providing advice or briefings to the minister regarding the location of sports for the games following the 100-day review? I am just trying to get a feel about the role of the department in advising and briefing the minister.

Mr Hopper: In terms of the role that the department now has following the release of the delivery plan, our very clear role is to lead games-wide coordination, including the preparation of the Games Coordination Plan, ultimately, looking to ensure effective governance and performance at a whole-of-games level. As it relates to sport allocations—I think was the other part to the question—obviously that clearly relates to a final decision on the sports that will make up the games. That decision will be taken in 2026.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, what advice and/or briefing did your department provide to the minister to outline the reasons for changing the games sailing events from Manly to the Whitsundays?

Mr Hopper: The 100-day review undertaken by GIICA and then ultimately, the response which was the 2032 Delivery Plan was the responsibility of state development. In terms of the venues and the response, those questions would be better directed to the Deputy Premier.

Ms GRACE: I am asking specifically what advice or briefings did the department provide to the minister in regard to leading the games-wide coordination, governance and performance in respect of moving sailing from Manly to the Whitsundays?

Mr Hopper: There was no specific briefing provided. We are responsible for whole-of-games governance, among other things, but the point I have tried to make is that the Deputy Premier and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning have the lead on all things infrastructure—whatever that may be—whereas we are looking much more on the side of whole-of-games coordination, budget management and matters such as that.

Ms GRACE: Minister, have you been involved in any of the government discussions and decisions regarding the location of where sports will be held?

Mr MANDER: Shadow minister, through you Mr Speaker, no decisions have been made yet about where the sports will be held. That is a decision that will be made by OCOG over the next 12 months probably as we work out what the final sports are and where their allocations are confirmed.

Ms GRACE: I am sorry, can I just clarify: have we not announced rowing in Rockhampton and sailing in the Whitsundays? Are they not announced venues and sports? You are up there announcing rowing in Rocky—are you now saying that is not locked in?

Mr MANDER: Obviously they are announcements we have made and where we expect those sports to be situated but the official allocation that is done by OCOG is a process that takes place over the next 12 months.

Ms GRACE: I understand that. I am not talking officially, but have you been involved in the decision-making that sailing would take place from Manly to the Whitsundays and that rowing will be in Rockhampton?

Mr MANDER: As the director-general said, the 100-day review made recommendations that then went to the government for a response, and the delivery plan is that response. There were numerous ministers, obviously led by the Deputy Premier and Premier, who had contributions towards where we believed some of the venues should be. We proudly stand behind those decisions, recognising the decentralised nature of our state and the low sentiment for the games in the regions. There was low sentiment in Brisbane, to tell you the truth, but it was even lower in the regions. We knew that this would be an important part of the strategy to increase that enthusiasm, and guess what? It has worked. It has turned a light on in the regions, which are now so enthusiastic about the games. Of course, ultimately,

the delivery plan was a cabinet decision where all members of the cabinet had a role to play and had a say.

Ms GRACE: Minister, can I clarify? Are you one of the numerous ministers who was involved in those deliberations about where you were going to have rowing and sailing and all the other events that you are saying are now all on track? It is a pretty straight question. You are the Olympic and Paralympic—

Mr MANDER: If it is a pretty straight question, I will give you a pretty straight answer. I am obviously a member of cabinet.

Mr SPEAKER: Hold on.

Ms GRACE: Can I finish the question, please?

Mr SPEAKER: Finish the question, but, member for McConnel, your questions are getting longer and longer. Could you get to the question?

Ms GRACE: I am just trying to get a clarification, which I have not had. Are you saying that because you are a member of cabinet you made the decision because it was in cabinet?

Mr SPEAKER: I call the minister.

Ms GRACE: There were no deliberations beforehand that you were involved in?

Mr SPEAKER: I think you have asked the question. The minister has the call.

Mr MANDER: Obviously, I do not talk about the cabinet deliberations. It was a cabinet decision, where the cabinet spoke about these issues and came to the conclusion that you see in the delivery plan.

Ms GRACE: Minister, I notice that you have declared that you have a relationship with the member for Whitsundays. I think there is an article from 17 July that said you let cabinet know on 14 July. When the decision was made to move the sailing from Manly to Whitsunday, did you have your conflict-of-interest plan in place at that time?

Mr MANDER: As I mentioned earlier, I have made all appropriate declarations that I need to make at any appropriate time.

Ms GRACE: I want to seek clarification. This went to cabinet. Did you declare a conflict of interest in cabinet about making that decision based upon any advice from the Integrity Commissioner, and was that advice—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms GRACE:—received at the time, which was around March—this only became public in July. Can you guarantee the committee and under governance that that occurred, because we are spending public money?

Mr SPEAKER: That is another very lengthy question.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker, under standing order 115: there was a lengthy preamble. My other point of order is that this has been answered a number of times by the minister in responses to previous questions that have been asked throughout this session this afternoon. I think the repetitive nature of this needs to be considered with respect to a ruling.

Mr SPEAKER: It is becoming repetitive. Minister, I will let you answer this.

Mr MANDER: All appropriate declarations were made at appropriate times.

Ms GRACE: So there was a conflict management plan in place—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Speaker—

Ms GRACE: I have not even asked the question. This is ridiculous. What protection racket are we having here?

Mr SPEAKER: Excuse me! I am going to ask that you withdraw that.

Ms GRACE: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask you for your next question.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I ask again: was your conflict management plan and advice in place when the decision was made to move sailing from Manly to Whitsunday?

Mr MANDER: I made all appropriate declarations at appropriate times.

Ms GRACE: I am going to take that as a no.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: that is an inaccurate characterisation of the response by the minister.

Mr SPEAKER: And it is the shadow minister's job to ask questions. I would ask you to ask questions and leave the commentary aside, please.

Ms GRACE: Minister, this is the spending of public money. I think the public deserves to know—and I understand when you made the declaration publicly, and it was reported on 17 July—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms GRACE: I have not even finished asking my question.

Mr McDONALD: This is again repetition. The minister has directly answered these questions I think four times and now this is the fifth go. The member is being repetitious and it should be struck out.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, I am listening to the question. I am hoping that there is a difference in this question or it will be repetitive. I have not heard the end of the question, so could you put your question and not be repetitive?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I am trying to get a definitive answer here about the timing, and it is in the public interest. I understand that may have all been in place when the declaration was made. I am asking about the fact that these decisions about moving sailing to the Whitsundays were made around March. Were they all in place in March?

Mr MANDER: I have made all appropriate declarations and I have made them at the appropriate times.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, I understand GICA has commissioned a technical review and assessment of the suitability of the Fitzroy River as a venue for rowing. It has been reported that World Rowing is also carrying out its own separate review. Does the department have any involvement in this work?

Mr Hopper: Other than having representation at the different meetings from an oversight perspective, no, we have no role.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, is the department providing any funding towards this work? I know you have a presence there. Is there any requirement in terms of the budget to have you there and to provide any financial assistance for that review?

Mr Hopper: No, there are no budget implications for the department.

Ms GRACE: Minister, were you involved in any of the discussions around the relocation of rowing to Rockhampton?

Mr MANDER: I repeat the previous answers I have given with regard to cabinet deliberations. The 100-day review made recommendations. The government considered those and put a response together which was discussed and approved by cabinet, the result of which was the delivery plan.

Ms GRACE: Minister, earlier this month you said of moving rowing to Rockhampton that the venue was not plucked out of the air; however, neither the Quirk review nor the 100-day review recommended the Fitzroy River as a preferred games venue. Can I say that I am happy for rowing to be at Fitzroy and I am happy for rowing to be at Wyaralong. I am just talking about process and governance. Neither of those recommended the Fitzroy River as a preferred games venue. Neither World Rowing nor Rowing Australia recommended it either. Who, other than Matt Canavan, has recommended the Fitzroy River as a preferred venue for rowing?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Speaker: at my count that was three questions in that address.

Ms GRACE: No, it is only one.

Mr McDONALD: There were three questions.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, that was another very lengthy question. If you ask any more questions of that length I will be ruling them out of order. Minister, could you answer this one?

Mr MANDER: The quote that the shadow minister refers to relates to the fact that there is regular rowing on the Fitzroy River. I was up there just last week with the Premier, when we were celebrating seven years until the start of the games, and I spoke to the kids who row on that river every morning. Schools have been doing it for decades. Interstate competitions have been staged on the Fitzroy River.

Olympic teams used the Fitzroy River as preparation for the 2000 games. The point that it was not plucked out of the air refers to the fact that rowing has been a regular activity and event on the Fitzroy River and there is no reason to suggest that this is anything but a suitable location for rowing for the games which we are determined to make happen.

Ms GRACE: World Rowing and an ex-Olympian have said it has flow so it is not fair. They have also said there has not been any senior national championships or Australian rowing championship. Is the minister giving false hope to the residents of Rockhampton and can he guarantee that rowing will take place in Rockhampton at any cost?

Mr MANDER: We are a very proud government that recognise the decentralised nature of this state. That is why in the delivery plan we decentralised the staging of events. There will be events in Cairns, in Townsville, in Mackay, in the Whitsundays, in Rockhampton, in Maryborough, in Toowoomba, on the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast and in Brisbane. All of Queensland will have an opportunity to have access to games events and I know that these towns are just going to be so embracing of this opportunity. The athletes who come to this are going to experience something that they have never experienced before. All of those venues that we have mentioned will have events and that will take place. The rest of the state is on board. The shadow minister does not seem to be on board about the decentralised nature of these events. The shadow minister—

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr MANDER:—is not on board about Victoria Park.

Ms GRACE: I take offence at both of those statements and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, the member has taken offence.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. This is something we are proud of and we will sing it from the rooftops that we will have events in regional centres right across this state and it is one of the major reasons that the enthusiasm for the games has now been turned back on. Previously under the former government with the chaotic decisions that were made—the ridiculous decisions that were made—I can only think that the shadow minister still wants to have the games stadium at QSAC because she is against it at Victoria Park. I have heard no other alternative but that and she is out of step with the majority of Queenslanders. They are asking us to get on with it now that we have handed down our delivery plan, and that is what we are doing.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, there will be one more question before we go to the changeover.

Ms GRACE: I did ask about costs, but, Minister, do you have any preliminary costings—anything in the ballpark when GIICA did not recommend it—to get the Fitzroy River from school-rowing venue to an international Olympic and Paralympic standard for rowing? It is a big jump. Do you have any preliminary costings?

Mr MANDER: That question is more appropriate for the Deputy Premier, who is in control of the construction of infrastructure of major venues, so I recommend that the shadow minister tries the Deputy Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: We will now go to government members and the member for Mulgrave for his question.

Mr JAMES: Minister, Queenslanders have seen the exciting infrastructure outlined in the 2032 Delivery Plan as seen on page 5 of the SDS. How will this funding help to deliver the games?

Mr MANDER: The Queensland government's 2032 Delivery Plan delivers a clear road map towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and beyond. The 2032 Delivery Plan is designed to benefit the greatest number of Queenslanders possible while keeping within the \$7.1 billion funding envelope agreed between the Queensland and Australian governments. All of Queensland is now set to take centre stage for the reasons that I have mentioned before for the games and to reap the legacy benefits such as improved infrastructure, transport connectivity and tourism for generations to come. The 2032 Delivery Plan will deliver the extraordinary games that Queenslanders deserve and cement our state as the home of Australian sport.

We are investing in infrastructure right across the state. We have already mentioned the Victoria Park stadium accommodating 63,000 people—the third biggest stadium in the country. The National Aquatic Centre will be the best aquatic centre in the world, and what a fantastic legacy and testament to our swimmers who win the majority of gold medals every time we go to the games and the majority of whom come from Queensland. The previous government's alternative was a drop-in pool at an

arena—again, no legacy whatsoever—and so we are very proud of that, and obviously in the same precinct as well. Then there is the upgrade of the Tennis Centre at Tennyson where there will be another showcase court and many more courts as well. Again, the previous plan under the former government can be described as nothing else but a joke in that they could not stage an Australian Open or anything else, let alone the Olympic Games, so it was very important that we did that upgrade. We also have the villages. The central one will be around the RNA, with an upgraded RNA as well. Machinery Hill will finally have a facelift, as will all of the minor—minor by name but not minor by nature—sporting facilities, indoor stadiums, whitewater rafting, equestrian centres. This is going to be a very exciting time for our state—a great economic stimulus for our state—and I cannot think of a more exciting seven years in our history as we head towards the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, I understand the organising committee board has been streamlined. Who suggested the change and why?

Mr MANDER: As part of the 100-day review, the recommendations were that we needed to streamline and do some changes to the governance structure. Previously there were 24 members on the OCOG, which is the Organising Committee of the Games. To be fair, early on maybe that was the right number in the early days of the announcement of the games, but it became very apparent—and GIICA recognised this—that it would be far more efficient if we streamlined that and brought that 24 down to 15. Let us face it: most people would recognise that a board of 24 is not the optimum number. We took on that recommendation and have reduced the number now to 15.

We had our first meeting recently—it was a good first meeting—and we have some quality people on there. I will add that, out of the 15, 12 of those positions are designated positions: the president of the AOC; the president of the Australian Paralympic Committee; representatives of athletes who have been elected, both para-athletes and able-bodied athletes; mayors from different councils; two government reps—one state, one federal; and just three independent people who were nominated. They are president Andrew Liveris plus Greg Norman—a great Queensland sportsperson—and Rebecca Frizelle, a very respected businesswoman and sports administrator in this state. That has been one of the major parts of the governance structure.

One of the other parts of the governance structure which has changed has been the establishment of the Games Leadership Group. So we have two statutory bodies: we have OCOG—and I have just mentioned how that board is made up; and we have GIICA, which is the Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority, of which the chair is Mr Stephen Conry. There is now a Games Leadership Group that sits above those two statutory bodies that is responsible for the overall coordination of the games and to make sure that those two groups plus the whole games organisation is coordinated from a state government perspective. There are several people on that Games Leadership Group: the ministers for infrastructure, both federally and state, so currently Catherine King and obviously the Deputy Premier; the sports and Olympic ministers from federal and state, which is Anika Wells and myself; plus the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, who is a signatory to the host agreement; as well as the head of GIICA; the chairs of GIICA; and the president of OCOG.

That is important. The other important thing that changed in the governance structure was that some responsibilities that did sit with GIICA have now moved into my department. The director-general referred to this in a previous answer. The overall coordination of the games, and the legacy and budget of the games, now comes under the governance of my department, which we are very glad to receive. Lots of changes, but good changes, and I am expecting us now to be far more agile and nimble and able to respond quicker.

Mr KEMPTON: Director-General, what is the Office of the Olympic and Paralympic Games within your department and how does that differ from the work OCOG is doing?

Mr Hopper: We have touched on different components across the course of the afternoon, but maybe picking up on the point that the minister has made, the Games Leadership Group has been formed and the minister talked to that. There is also a games executive group, which has the equivalent chief executives on that, and that enables the whole-of-games governance to be looked after, which our department is responsible for. From our perspective, we have been charged with leading games-wide coordination including the preparation of the games coordination plan, which will be a critical document. That will be a living document that will continue to evolve as we progress through the different planning phases and then move to delivery. The ultimate aim is to ensure we are effectively governing this significant project and the performance across the whole of the games.

I think as it relates to the OCOG, without giving the member chapter and verse from the legislation, they very much are focused on staging the games—the event, if you will—and so their job is very important but very focused, whereas our job is much broader, much more of an oversight perspective. That is really the key differences there, member.

Mr JAMES: Minister, per pages 2 and 9 of the SDS, the Queensland Academy of Sport is transitioning to a statutory body. Can you please tell me what these changes mean for our elite athletes in the lead-up to the 2032 games?

Mr MANDER: I did make some reference to this in the last session on sport, but I do want to elaborate. There was a big push from the high-performance sector in sport that the QAS needed to be more agile and needed to be released from the shackles of government control. Of course, you are not totally released when you become a statutory body, but you do have more flexibility and more freedom to run your own show. The previous government, after being lobbied fairly heavily, agreed to do this but set a timetable that was a couple of years down the track for that transition to take place. We supported the decision to transition and when we came into government we continued that support. As I mentioned previously, I wanted it to be accelerated because I wanted to show the high-performance sector that we could perform like a high-performance sporting sector: quickly and with agility. The department did that and stood up to that challenge. That has taken place now. We appointed an advisory board. They have now transitioned into the board. We have just received some fantastic feedback from different athletes, people like Duncan Armstrong, who said—

How do we improve the QAS ... it is about what we hold in sport dear ... it is about agility, being able to make decisions, being able to adapt and make the changes we need to make to stay on top all the way to 2032 and well beyond.

The QAS has done an incredible job since its inception, years and years of great performance all the way through to what we saw in Paris, where if Queensland was a nation it would have been in the top 10 for medals in both the Paralympic Games and Olympic Games. We want this strong tradition of performance to continue,

Shayna Jack, a two-time Olympian from Paris, said—

Becoming an independent group allows the QAS to have a bit more of an athlete focus—we will actually get the support we need going through to the games in LA, but even more excitingly in Brisbane.

Five-time Olympian Nat Cook said—

Having the Queensland Academy of Sport become a statutory body allows them to make dynamic, nimble decisions to get our athletes at the right events at the right time with the right preparation. The staff here are amazing but they've spent too much time cutting through red tape. So, let's remove that—thanks to Tim Mander and the Crisafulli Government.

That was very nice of Nat. The athletes know the importance of it. We as a government know the importance of it. The QAS is something that we can all be proud of. They are not just Australian leaders; they are world leaders. I recently met a delegation from India. The Indians are very keen to host an Olympic Games in the future. When they were asking around the world who they should visit to help them work out how they can make their athletes better, people advised them to go to the QAS. It was great to meet those people. We are going to help them out a little bit—not too much, because we want to make sure they do not beat us in medals.

Mr KEMPTON: On the issue of QAS and the transition and the YouFor2032 talent search program, could you update the committee on the success of this program?

Mr MANDER: This is particularly relevant for members in regional areas. YouFor2032 is one of our best kept secrets, and it is my job to make sure it is no longer a secret. It is a talent identification program that was run by the QAS. Previously what would happen is that they would basically go on a roadshow around the state. They have travelled tens of thousands of kilometres. I think they have been to approximately 30 locations, where they set themselves up and invite young people to come and have testing to work out whether there are secret talents that people have that have not been identified and how those talents could be used specifically for particular sports. They have had some great success with that. They have tested many people. The number escapes me. They have tested a lot of athletes and it has resulted in those athletes coming to the QAS in person and having further testing. We have athletes now who have gone on to national and international standard events.

The great innovation that has happened is that in recent times we have made YouFor2032 an app using all the latest AI technology. Now young people, no matter where they live, do not have to wait for the travelling roadshow; they can do these tests in their own backyards or in their lounges. This AI can look at their body movements, their muscle movements, their flexibility, their this and their that—that is all quite technical—and the sports scientists at QAS, through that analysis, can work out, 'This person might make a good pole vaulter,' or 'This person would be a good rower,' or 'This person would

be a good gymnast.' That has been very successful. It is world leading. We are the only state that has it.

The other aspect of it which is very exciting is that it is also open for those who have a disability and want to be involved in sport. Recently at the QAS I met some people who have gone through that process. Some young people with disabilities who have always wanted to play sport but have not had the opportunity have already been identified through this process. They are very excited about it. The director-general has given me some figures. Some 6,004 young people across Queensland have done these tests. Of those, 2,084 athletes were identified and progressed to phase 2, which involved a further three-month talent confirmation trial period. Following this, 383—we have gone from 6,000 to 2,084 to 383—athletes progressed to a 12-month development program, and 40 of those have been selected for state and national programs.

It is a brilliant program. A *Current Affair* did a bit of a feature on it, last Saturday night I think. We want to get the message out that maybe some young person who does this test at the moment could be competing in Brisbane 2032.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to non-government members.

Mr BERKMAN: Director-General, you would be well aware that the Olympics host city contract prohibits permanent construction in cultural protected areas and that Victoria Park/Barrambin is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register due to its cultural significance, particularly its significant Aboriginal cultural heritage. How can the department proceed with a proposal that breaches that prohibition in the host city contract and is inconsistent with the IOC's New Norm?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Speaker: that is not a matter for this committee, as was ventilated earlier. It is for the Deputy Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: Have you finished the question, member for Maiwar?

Mr BERKMAN: Might I respond to the point of order, Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: You can.

Mr BERKMAN: I understand that the host city contract, which has been referred to a number of times in this hearing, is in fact a matter for the minister for the Olympics, even if the construction responsibility falls to the Deputy Premier and planning minister.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question.

Mr Hopper: I am not in a position to talk to the planning matters. That is a matter for the Deputy Premier.

Mr BERKMAN: With respect, Director-General, the question was specifically about the obligations under the host city contract and under the IOC's New Norm. How can the department proceed with a proposal that violates the host city contract and—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Speaker: the member just made an imputation but also it is not up to this department. The committee dealt with this under state development. It comes under the state development area.

Mr SPEAKER: Director-General, I will let you answer the question.

Mr Hopper: My answer remains that the matter that you are referring to is a matter that would be better presented to the Deputy Premier.

Mr BERKMAN: Director-General, is your department responsible for compliance with the host city contract?

Mr Hopper: A range of parties are signatories to these documents. It has relevance to them as well.

Mr BERKMAN: As far as the state government's responsibilities are concerned, is your department responsible for the oversight of compliance with the host city contract?

Mr Hopper: As it relates to infrastructure, I do not believe we are, no, member.

Mr BERKMAN: Minister, regarding the Victoria Park Olympic stadium, why is your government prepared to violate the New Norm and the host city contract that prohibits construction on nature areas and cultural protected areas?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Speaker: that question contains an imputation.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the minister to answer.

Mr MANDER: I will give the member a bit of a history lesson about where we are at today. A week or two ago, it was four years since we were awarded the games, which was the biggest lead-in period ever. That four-year period was wasted and it featured chaotic decision-making, with two or three different versions of what might or might not happen at the Gabba and that led to the demise of Premier Palaszczuk.

Mr BERKMAN: Point of order, Speaker: I appreciate the minister's exposition of the history of our involvement with the Olympics, but my question had nothing to do with that history. It is actually about the compliance of this government's plans with our host city obligations under the contract and the New Norm.

Mr SPEAKER: I think the minister is answering the question.

Mr MANDER: Context is important and the member will realise that in a moment when I finish my answer. We wished things had started a couple of years ago. If they had started a couple of years ago, we would not have to do what we are doing at the moment to accelerate the process. We have time but we do not have time to waste. The time of chaotic decision-making or no decision-making is over and that happened once the delivery plan was handed down about 125 days ago. Since that time, we have done nothing but get on with the job.

To go directly to the point that the member is making, the IOC are over the moon about what we are doing to make sure we get things done. They had been worried from afar that we had lost momentum with regard to the games. The Coordination Commission, or CoCom, is a delegation of the IOC that is responsible for the Brisbane games. When they came recently, they could not stop talking about how excited they were that decisions were being made and that we had taken measures to make sure it gets delivered on time. There are non-negotiable deadlines with regard to the construction of this infrastructure.

To answer the member's question, the IOC are more than happy with what we have done and they support the delivery plan 100 per cent. All they want us to do now is to continue what we are doing: getting on with it.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, if World Rowing deems the Fitzroy River unsuitable, what planning work is being done in your role as games-wide lead coordinator and are you ruling out going to Penrith?

Mr Hopper: We have tried to make the point on a couple of occasions that we do not have the responsibility for the carriage of infrastructure, whether that be temporary or permanent. We are not undertaking any studies. It is not our role to undertake any studies. Our role is to make sure that people are undertaking the work that they said they would undertake, in the timeframe that they said they would undertake it and within the budget envelope they have been provided.

Ms GRACE: Can I clarify: there is no plan B? Is it that you get what is given and as a coordinator for the different sports you are not looking at what may or may not be appropriate?

Mr Hopper: We are not coordinating all the sports and we are not responsible for infrastructure.

Ms GRACE: I am not talking about infrastructure. I am talking about one of your main things, which is to lead the games-wide coordination. It is on that basis that I am asking the question.

Mr Hopper: Thank you for the clarification. I think the minister has made it very clear, the Premier has made it very clear, the Deputy Premier has made it very clear and it is very clear to me as we sit here today that rowing will happen at the Fitzroy.

Ms GRACE: Minister, what planning has been done with regard to gymnastics, given the department's role in coordination?

Mr MANDER: When the delivery plan was announced, of course it did not include every sport because the delivery plan would have been a lot thicker. It is our goal, as far as it is possible, to make sure that sports, particularly Olympic sports, have some legacy going forward. Gymnastics have been very vocal in their lobbying about the inadequate facilities that they have at the moment at Chandler. I have met with the gymnastics people at least once or maybe twice—I cannot recall—and my staff have as well, to work out what their requirements are. We have already made public comments with regard to athletics, basketball, gymnastics and football, which all want to have some lasting legacy. The Deputy Premier and I are working through that. They are not small decisions, but that is an ongoing process. We are very cognisant of what gymnastics is looking for and those conversations and deliberations are continuing.

Ms GRACE: Minister, you mentioned football. It is one of the highest participation sports, as you know. I know GIIICA recommended upgrades to Perry Park, which I declare is in my electorate. Are you supporting those upgrades and the planning work for possible soccer at Perry Park, and is your department doing any work on it?

Mr MANDER: Similar to the last comment I made, we are in discussions with football. They are looking for a few things. They would love to have what might be termed a mini stadium, or somewhere that they can play in front of mid-range crowds, and Perry Park could be an option. They are also looking for a home of football, a place to headquarter their operations. We are having very constructive conversations with them. A lot of these things are interconnected. We are looking at ways that we can deliver the most cost-effective infrastructure to these sports that gives the best value for taxpayers' money. Those conversations are happening. I am confident that there will be some positive outcomes in the future.

Ms GRACE: Minister, you did mention Perry Park. Can I just clarify: was GIIICA's recommendation to upgrade Perry Park accepted by the government? It is not so much in infrastructure, but are you doing any planning work to coordinate where those sports will be played? Has it been rejected or is it still in play? Are you supporting that?

Mr MANDER: We have not made any decisions with regard to the comments I made previously. There are a number of options that can be considered and are being considered. It is a bit premature for me to say anything at the moment about that, but we are having ongoing discussions with football.

Ms GRACE: Minister, are sports like football and gymnastics paying the price for these other big venues? You would hate for them to miss out. They are such high-participation sports. Are you conscious that we need to deliver for those? They make up a big part of the Olympic sports calendar. Are they paying the price?

Mr MANDER: They are going to benefit, as are all Queenslanders and all sporting organisations. Can you imagine some of the international football games you could have at Victoria Park and what you could attract? One of the great things about having a stadium of that size is that we will be able to attract content from around the world when in the past we could not. Although it will not be football's headquarters, it will be a stadium that will definitely be used to try to attract bigger games and bigger sports to this state. No, I do not accept that argument. I believe that all these sports will benefit from the games.

One thing that we have shown in the delivery plan and even with the Games On! funding is that legacy is important. The previous government's hockey solution was to have a drop-in pitch at Ballymore. Hockey were beside themselves at that thought. They wanted legacy. They are delighted that we will upgrade the facility down on the Gold Coast which was a legacy from the Commonwealth Games. That is a great example of how you have legacy. I mentioned earlier that swimming were horrified about a drop-in pool in an arena. They wanted legacy. All of these sports are coming out now, which they are quite within their rights to do, and crying out for the same thing—they want something that will benefit them going forward—and I am very confident that we will be able to deliver those things.

Ms GRACE: Minister, you raised the subject of legacy. Can you update the committee on the current status of the legacy committee?

Mr MANDER: There are two things here. The legacy component of the games I mentioned earlier has transferred from GIIICA to my department. It is something that we will be considering in due course. The legacy committee that you mentioned ceased in December last year. We have not renewed it. I am not saying there may not be some sort of equivalent in the future, but until we work out exactly what we are going to do that advisory board concept will be under consideration.

Ms GRACE: With regard to Elevate 2042, what is the status of that legacy committee's strategic report, which was created to ensure there will be lasting legacies? Are you and the department still working off that? It was warmly welcomed by the IOC. Is that still live? Is that document still being used? I just want some clarification.

Mr MANDER: That is a fair question. Elevate 2042's contents and recommendations are permeating everything that we do in the games, whether it is in OCOG, whether it is legacy directly or whether it is different sporting initiatives. That also will be part of the Sport Strategy that I am putting together. It has not gone away. It is still there. It is still respected. It will still have an influence going forward.

Mr SPEAKER: I will now go to the member for Lockyer to ask questions.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, I note your strong commitment to para-athletes and the goal of making 2032 our most successful Paralympics ever. What specific measures is the government taking to increase participation of people with a disability in sport?

Mr MANDER: Thank you for that question. You are right: the investment in para-sport and the participation in para-sport is increasing at a great rate of knots. There is no greater example of that than what is happening at the QAS. I have been out there many times recently. To tell you the truth, most of the time I go out there for a para-sport initiative. The QAS established the Para Sport Unit in February of this year. There are currently about 85 athletes supported by the QAS. Their goal is to increase that to 170 by 2029—to double that number. We have been able to do all of that with a joint investment with the Australian government of \$4.395 million.

I might not have mentioned this earlier, but studies have been done recently that suggest there are about 160 barriers for people with a disability to be involved with sport. This is one of the ways that we can break down those barriers and address those issues. It has been met with great excitement. It is nation leading. In fact, this is a world-leading program and we are going to see some great results from our para-athletes moving forward.

Another part of that is our para coaching program, which is where we have engaged specialist coaches to train them and coach them on how to coach. It is a great program. It is very intense. It is a four-year program. They work both with QAS and with partner organisations to make sure they can sustain themselves over that period of time. There have been some very encouraging signs there as well.

I mentioned earlier the Youfor2032 talent identification program, which has provision for para-athletes. The Imagine School Program has para-athletes going into schools and breaking down the barriers when people think about people with a disability going into sport. Para-athletes talk to students and obviously the students have lots of question. A recommendation of the 100-day review was a para sport facility. That has currently been slated for Chandler. There will be a big investment there. There is plenty happening in the para space.

I mentioned earlier the Play On! vouchers. We have said to anybody with a disability, 'If you apply for this, you will get it.' What we are also hoping is that some of our sporting codes and organisations will start catering more effectively for people with a disability with regard to accessibility and the other things that are normally barriers for people with a disability to be involved in para sports. We are being very active.

When I talk to those from some of the other state institutes they look at Queensland with envy. I was speaking the other day with Grant, the new president of Paralympics Australia, and he said that this state is looked at as the leader with regard to the support we give to para-athletes.

Mr KEMPTON: My question is to the minister. How will the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games elevate the role of sport in Queensland?

Mr MANDER: To have the games here in 2032 is the greatest opportunity this state will have in a generation. Whilst it is going to positively affect all aspects of our state—economically, socially and infrastructure wise—my particular focus is: what does it mean for sport? This is a chance for us to put major investment into sport infrastructure at the elite level and the junior level and provide pathways into elite sport.

The Sport Strategy we are putting together is using the games as the North Star. What are these games going to mean for us? How can we take advantage of that? One of our Sport Strategy consultation processes was titled 'What does 2032 mean for you?' It is a great question to consider, not just for kids but for people of our vintage, may I say. What does 2032 mean for us? How might we be motivated in some way to improve our physical fitness? How can we get more active? How can we get more mobile?

You might remember that very famous promotional strategy many years ago 'Life. Be in it.' with Norm. I see the Clerk is nodding his head furiously and obviously responded to that campaign. It is my understanding that it was the most effective public campaign in Australia's history. I am keen to do something similar. How do we use the games to motivate people of all ages? Is it to play or is it to volunteer? We are going to need over 50,000 volunteers for the games. From a sports lover perspective, it is our great opportunity to elevate sport to a level that it has never been elevated to before so that the whole state can benefit from living an active and healthy lifestyle.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, you mentioned before the success of the Youfor2032 talent program under the QAS. Can you talk to us about the success of the athletes with the QAS?

Mr MANDER: One of the highlights of my week is when I come to the office on Monday morning and the department has prepared a statement of the sporting results over the weekend. I know most of them because I am such a sports lover, but occasionally there is one that I might have missed. They also talk about our successes.

It has been great this week to see some of the results from the world swimming championships in Singapore. There are currently 31 QAS supported athletes in Singapore. That equates to 77.5 per cent of the Australian team. We are punching well above our weight. This is a great example of it. QAS supported athletes have won four gold, one silver and three bronze medals. The most notable is Kaylee McKeown, winning gold in the 100 metres backstroke in a championship record.

Ms GRACE: Hear, hear!

Mr MANDER: Mollie O'Callaghan won gold in the 200 metres freestyle. Both women's and men's 4 x 100 metres freestyle relay teams won gold, with six of the eight relay swimmers in the finals being QAS supported athletes. There are still four days of the championships to go.

We have also had fantastic performances at the diving world championships with Maddison Keeney winning gold in the women's one-metre springboard. She then joined Cassiel Rousseau to win silver in the three-metre mixed synchro.

I am going to ask the CEO of the QAS to come forward to talk about some of the other results. One of the things I want to mention while he is making his way here is that one of the exciting things about the National Aquatic Centre that we are going to build as part of the games is that Swimming Australia are going to base themselves there. They are going to do what probably should have been done years ago—that is, come to where the strength is. One of our aims is make sure that we have more sports headquartered in Queensland. That is a great example. I will hand over to Troy.

Mr Ayres: I am very proud to hear the performances of Queensland athletes on the world stage and to see the performances in Singapore this week with swimming and diving has been phenomenal. If we think back to almost this time last year, we sent 191 Queenslanders to the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games and had some phenomenal results, with Australia having its greatest ever Olympic performances. Queensland athletes brought home 56 medals across both the Olympic and Paralympic Games, which was incredible. We had 191 on the team, which represented 30 per cent of the total Australian team across those two games.

For us it is an incredibly busy end of the year. There are 13 senior world championships on the Olympic side of sports to go and eight on the Paralympic side of sports to go, as well as the myriad athletes we have in under-age programs. Overall, we support 472 athletes across the state from our world champion winners who are there this week through to our developing athletes.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, do you have a question before we wind up?

Ms GRACE: I do, thank you, Mr Speaker. Director-General, could the department update the committee on its role regarding the status of the 2042 legacy document and any work that you are undertaking to ensure its implementation?

Mr Hopper: The Queensland government will work with the games delivery partners to coordinate, measure and communicate the legacy outcomes of the 2032 games. We are picking back up the legacy implementation planning and getting that back on the track to ensure there is a clear plan for legacy outcomes that will be delivered, funded, measured and evaluated under that strategy.

Ms GRACE: Director-General, do you have any date when the plans are anticipated to be released? Is there any funding in this budget towards any of those incredible number of legacy suggestions and plans that are in that document?

Mr Hopper: At this stage I have no firm dates on when the implementation plan will be released. That is because we have had responsibility back with us for literally 30 days. In terms of budget allocations, at this stage there are not any budget allocations put towards an implementation plan because there is not an implementation plan.

Ms GRACE: That leads me to my next question, Director-General. There was a funding allocation of \$300 million to support legacy programs. Is this still in play—maybe I can get some clarification later from the minister if you are unable to answer this—for the delivery of legacy outcomes? Are you aware of any funding envelope out of that \$300 million?

Mr Hopper: There is a \$300 million allocation that is held centrally. That funding still exists. In the main, it has been unallocated.

Ms GRACE: We are now aware of the \$300 million. Minister, do you have any plans, together with the department, to get that money out the door so we can get some legacy programs on the ground? Can you outline to the committee your thoughts and planning around this \$300 million as part of the 2042 legacy document?

Mr MANDER: This is a little similar to the question earlier about legacy committees or advisory boards. The responsibility of legacy has just been transferred to us. We are yet to really set our minds to it, but we will. The money is there. The principle behind having legacy from the games emanating from that document remains. It is one of those issues that we will be addressing in the near future.

Mr SPEAKER: We had better tidy up the questions that were taken on notice. You were coming back with some information, Director-General, before we conclude. Could we go through that, please?

Mr MANDER: With regard to the question that I think the member for Gladstone asked about comparing questions on notice, we are very happy to furnish that information and we will do that. I think the other ones were more relevant to the director-general.

Mr SPEAKER: Are you taking that on notice?

Mr MANDER: Yes. We will take that on notice.

Mr Hopper: One question on notice was in relation to the member furnishing us with a breakdown of his work done on government election commitments and the allocation. What I can confirm is that of the Games On! funding—that is, the money that we are responsible for—the expenditure is broken up 51 per cent government and 49 per cent non-government. In terms of how that relates to projects specifically, it is three per cent to Independent members, 28 per cent to the Labor Party members and 69 per cent to the government members.

I have a couple of points of clarification, if I may, Mr Speaker. The member here previously raised Dayboro Scouts in terms of them being in Games On!. There was painting and timberwork. I misspoke. Whilst it is part of the \$250 million, it is actually listed under the program heading 'Supporting our community'. I just wanted to clarify that.

To the member's final comment around allocations for legacy, there was one that was in the back of my mind but I have just been handed it. To date, \$1 million has been approved for the Jamieson Trauma Institute research project. That is a legacy project that is underway right now.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mulgrave, you have a quick question. We only have two minutes left, so you will have to be quick.

Mr JAMES: My question is to the acting QAS CEO. How will the transition to a statutory body help you achieve your high-performance strategy?

Mr SPEAKER: Mr Ayres, you have about 1½ minutes.

Mr Ayres: For us, becoming a statutory body is a decision for government. We have been able to move incredibly quickly towards standing up as that entity. We now have a full management board with a really experienced board of eight members. We have a very clear strategic plan that we reset for the LA 2028 cycle. To the minister's earlier points around us being more agile and nimble, we are exploring that every single day within our executive team in how we can keep refining our systems and processes to ensure we can spend the most amount of time focusing on athlete performance and development.

Mr SPEAKER: We have now reached the end of the time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the Olympic and Paralympic Games portfolio area. There was one question taken on notice. The committee has resolved that answers to questions taken on notice must be provided to the committee secretariat by 9.30 pm on Monday, 4 August 2025. Thank you, Minister, officials and departmental officers. The committee will now take a break. The hearing will resume at 5.15 pm with examination of estimates for the portfolio area of transport and main roads.

Proceedings suspended from 4.45 pm to 5.15 pm.

ESTIMATES—STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE—TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS

In Attendance

Hon. BA Mickelberg, Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Mr Tony Meredith, Chief of Staff

Mr Kaveesha Samaraweera, Senior Advisor

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Ms Sally Stannard, Director-General

Cross River Rail Delivery Authority

Mr Graeme Newton, Chief Executive Officer

Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited (trading as Ports North)

Mr Richard Stevenson, Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Rail Limited

Ms Kat Stapleton, Chief Executive Officer



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): For the benefit of those who have just joined us, 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 this hearing. The members of the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee are: Mr Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer and chair; Ms Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper and deputy chair; Mr Terry James, the member for Mulgrave; Mr David Kempton, the member for Cook; Mr Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; and Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley. 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 my discretion or by order of the committee. Please note that the first three rows are reserved for departmental and ministerial staff supporting the minister. Members and others who are attending to observe are welcome to sit in the remaining rows or in the gallery.

The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat. 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. That applies to members as well. I also remind everyone that food and drink is not permitted in this chamber.

The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the transport and main roads portfolio area until 9.30 pm. We will suspend proceedings for an intermission from 7.15 pm to 7.30 pm. I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the time specified for this area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, which is available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage. I also remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly.

In respect of government owned corporations and statutory authorities, standing order 180(2) provides that a member may ask any question that the committee determines will assist it in its examination of the relevant appropriation bill or otherwise assist the committee to determine whether public funds are being efficiently spent or appropriate public guarantees are being provided.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, officials and departmental officers and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisers to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister. Please remember to press your microphone on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of transport and main roads open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes and then we will commence questions from the committee.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, committee, for the opportunity to appear before you this evening to discuss how the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland. That is nowhere better demonstrated than in the transport and main roads portfolio, where we are rolling out a record \$41.7 billion Queensland Transport and Infrastructure Program. We are making this investment both to cater for population growth and in preparation for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Earlier this year the Crisafulli government negotiated a new \$9 billion 80-20 funding deal with the federal Labor government for the Bruce Highway Targeted Safety Upgrade Program. The previous Miles-Palaszczuk Labor government had given up on an 80-20 deal, but the Crisafulli government has been able to deliver this agreement and every user of the Bruce Highway will benefit.

One of the most frequently repeated criticisms of the former government was that there was no follow-through. I even had a prominent union leader recently say that to me. That is a mistake the Crisafulli government will not repeat when it comes to the Bruce Highway. That is why we have already begun work on a \$200 million early start construction package consisting of 16 separate projects. These range from the construction of a new rest area in Curra down here in the south right up to pavement strengthening works between Innisfail and Cairns in the north. All of these projects will be completed or underway this year.

In addition, we have started work on a \$100 million design package so this important work can continue. I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the team that is making this important investment happen. The TMR staff and their hard work need to be acknowledged, and I thank them. I would also like to personally thank Catherine King, the federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, for her commitment to the program. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the members of the Bruce Highway Advisory Council. They are individuals who are giving up their time to guide the development of that program, and I look forward to their continued involvement with the council.

Delivering Queensland's infrastructure pipeline is not without its challenges. Declining productivity has been highlighted in the Queensland Productivity Commission's interim report into the construction sector, which was released earlier today. That report includes some sobering information. It states that keeping Best Practice Industry Conditions, BPICs, which were introduced under the former Labor government, would 'increase project costs by between 10 and 25 per cent'. The report goes on to say that that policy is likely to impose net costs on the community of between \$5.7 billion and \$20.6 billion. The majority of that cost would be borne by Queensland taxpayers.

They are not just numbers. For the government, that means less infrastructure and more expenditure. It means building fewer intersection upgrades. It means more potholes because we can do less maintenance. It means we have less to spend on transport services. It is not something we are prepared to countenance. Supporters of BPIC often state that it is about improving worker safety. In response, I would like to quote the Productivity Commission report, which states—

... data suggest there have been no material improvements to safety outcomes across the Queensland construction industry since their introduction.

Last year our government paused BPIC for new government infrastructure. Based on their analysis, the Productivity Commission recommended that BPICs should be permanently removed. I would urge members, when reading the report, to pay particular attention to their comments around improving project selection and sequencing. This is something that we have been cognisant of as we put together this year's QTRIP investment program. I look forward to receiving the QPC's final report later this year.

The Crisafulli government is committed to delivering for Queenslanders. I look forward to sharing more information with the committee this evening. I warmly welcome your questions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We will move to questions from non-government members.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, what was the cost to register a private-use four-cylinder vehicle for 12 months on 1 October 2024?

Ms Stannard: Private motor vehicle use is a very important transport means for many members across our community. It is what they rely on. Obviously in the south-east we also provide public transport and try to ensure there is a good mix of options for people. However, in many parts of

Queensland the only option is private motor vehicle travel so registration is one of the costs for people who use private motor vehicles and rely on them. I do have some registration and licensing figures in front of me. The date I have is 1 July 2025. Were you seeking 1 October 2024?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, 1 October 2024, but I am happy if you have the figure for 1 July 2025.

Ms Stannard: I have 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025. A four-cylinder motor vehicle registration fee at 1 July 2024 was \$360.60, and for 1 July 2025 it was \$288.45.

Mr MELLISH: Are you able to say the difference in those figures, in either a percentage or the overall cost?

Ms Stannard: I can quickly do the maths. If my maths is right it is a difference of \$72.15. I have just done that quickly and I do not have that in front of me. I am happy to check that.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you, that is very good quick maths. Further to that, did your department provide any advice to the minister that modelled an extension of the 20 per cent off rego discount?

Ms Stannard: We did not provide advice on changing registration costs.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, who made the decision not to proceed with the continuation of the 20 per cent off rego discount?

Ms Stannard: The freeze was in place for a set period of time, and on 16 September there is a cessation of the discount.

Mr MELLISH: Onto a broader question to the Director-General: how successful was the 50-cent fares trial in getting more Queenslanders onto public transport?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, that is asking for an opinion. I would ask that you rephrase the question.

Mr MELLISH: On that point of order, I asked how successful it was. I would not say that is asking for an opinion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I consider it does because it asks someone to comment on how successful something was or was not. I am sure there is a way you can ask the question without seeking an opinion.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, on what metrics would you measure the success or otherwise of the 50-cent fares trial in getting more Queenslanders onto public transport?

Ms Stannard: I thank the honourable member for the supplementary question. I think you clarified to ask about getting more people onto public transport. As at 30 June 2025, more than 176 million trips have been taken since the commencement of 50-cent fares in August 2024. That resulted in savings for customers compared to the previous fare structure. Patronage over that period increased by 16.8 per cent compared to the same time period in the prior year. As at 30 June 2025, more than 77 million trips had been taken since 50-cent fares were made permanent in February 2025, resulting in savings of more than \$159 million compared to the previous fare structure. Patronage over this period increased 15.3 per cent compared to the same time period in the prior year. The increases outside South-East Queensland were higher percentages, including in regional Queensland where bus patronage has also increased since February 2025 through to the end of May by more than 39 per cent—including growth of 43 per cent in Cairns, 96 per cent in Townsville, 37 per cent in the Whitsundays, 21 per cent on North Stradbroke Island and seven per cent in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

Mr MELLISH: Are you able to provide those figures for different modes on a percentage basis?

Ms Stannard: As at 30 June 2025, patronage in South-East Queensland for the 2024-25 financial year was 15 per cent higher compared to the previous financial year. Rail was 17.4 per cent higher; bus was 12.2 per cent higher; Gold Coast Light Rail was 23.3 per cent higher; and ferry was 31.4 per cent higher.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I note your extensive experience in the transport sector. Would you consider yourself a transport expert or a transport professional?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Deputy Speaker. The question is seeking an opinion and I would ask whether the question should be rephrased.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a valid point of order, member for Aspley. You can ask that question another way or ask a substantive question.

Mr MELLISH: I am happy to rephrase, Deputy Speaker. Director-General, you would say you have extensive experience in the transport sector; would that be correct?

Ms Stannard: I have worked in transport for nearly 20 years—maybe 13 years now.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I table an image of the Wave. Would you say that is a train or a bus?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just one moment. Do you have a copy for members?

Mr MELLISH: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, what was your question again?

Mr MELLISH: The question was whether that is a bus or a train. It is a pretty straightforward question.

Ms Stannard: When I look at this picture, I can see the rail station in the background where the train will come all the way to Birtinya as part of stages 1 and 2 of the Wave, and I can see the metro vehicle illustrated to show stage 3 of the Wave.

Mr MELLISH: To clarify, referring to the vehicle in the picture—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question was answered, member for Aspley.

Mr MELLISH: As a follow-up to that, Director-General, would you consider this picture to be a bus or a train? I am happy to table those as well.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question was answered, member for Aspley, and in any case, you are, in all likelihood, seeking an opinion with that question.

Mr MELLISH: Sorry, Deputy Speaker, that is—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: A new picture. Sorry, I did not realise. Was that tabled?

Ms BUSH: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could other members of the committee have a look, please? Member, your question was?

Mr MELLISH: Very similar to the last question, Deputy Speaker, whether this one is a train or a bus.

Ms Stannard: This one has tracks shown clearly. This is a train.

Mr MELLISH: As a follow-up to that one, Director-General, can you please advise what portion of the 37-kilometre Sunshine Coast direct corridor will be operated by a bus and how much will be operated by a train under the Wave project?

Ms Stannard: The Wave has multiple stages. It will integrate heavy passenger rail coming directly off the existing rail line at Beerwah and running through to Birtinya, and then a metro-style service, which we saw illustrated in the first picture, running from Birtinya via the Maroochydore town centre and onwards to the Sunshine Coast Airport. Our aim is to make sure there is seamless connectivity for customers who are local to the Sunshine Coast as well as those wishing to travel between the regions and down to Brisbane.

We have procurement underway for stage 1, and that is the heavy passenger rail from Beerwah to Caloundra, and that procurement will continue through into 2026. We are expecting major construction works to commence in late 2026, subject to approvals. That one is funded 50-50 between the Queensland and Australian governments.

Stage 2 has also commenced procurement now. That is also for heavy rail to continue from Caloundra to Birtinya. In March this year, as part of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games delivery plan, stage 3 was announced. The Wave therefore will include that heavy passenger rail for stages 1 and 2, and transition seamlessly to a metro-style service for stage 3. That will connect from Birtinya through Maroochydore and to the Sunshine Coast Airport.

I do not think I have the kilometres on the page that I am referring to. I am happy to get those details during the session.

Mr MELLISH: I am happy for you to come back on that.

Ms Stannard: It was the kilometre length of metro and kilometre length of heavy rail?

Mr MELLISH: Yes. To follow on from that, Director-General, when did you advise the minister that the election commitment to build heavy rail to Maroochydore by 2032 was not deliverable?

Ms Stannard: During the examination of the delivery plan for 2032, the transport department provided advice to GIIICA about various ways to service venues and the transport opportunities. Our transport modelling is something that is very hard to replicate in a short term, and so GIIICA requested input from the transport department about the volumes that could be handled and the deliverability of different aspects of infrastructure. We provided advice as different scenarios were tested in order to inform GIIICA's work.

Mr MELLISH: Following on from the answer before that one, will the cost of the Wave exceed the \$5.5 billion currently budgeted?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker. That is a hypothetical with supposition. I think we could be examining the estimates process better.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lockyer. Member for Aspley, that is a hypothetical question and I would ask you to ask another question, please.

Mr MELLISH: On that point of order, Deputy Speaker, I am asking about the cost of a project that is at \$5.5 billion. Is the Director-General expecting it to be higher than that cost—not an opinion, but based on current information?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, similarly, that is a hypothetical question because you are assuming that it is going to be higher.

Mr MELLISH: I am happy to move on, Deputy Speaker.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker. It might be the former government's opinion that everything was going to go up because it did, but this is hypothetical.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, that is not a point of order. I caution you. Member for Aspley?

Mr MELLISH: This one is pretty clearly not a hypothetical: Director-General, are stages 2 and 3 of the Wave currently budgeted for?

Ms Stannard: The project is committed to in the 2032 Delivery Plan. The government has committed to funding those projects. Some of those projects are still in planning and, as we work through that planning, we will return to government with the cost estimates.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, following on from that, I note heavy rail on the Sunshine Coast is contingent on the Beerburum to Nambour project. However, it appears that is no longer a priority project from the 2032 Olympics plan and other documents. When will the Beerburum to Nambour stage 1 upgrade be complete?

Ms Stannard: The Beerburum to Nambour rail upgrade project is indeed a very important project and will increase the capacity and reliability of the north coast line. That is important to provide both improved passenger and freight services on the rail network. The project contributes to the delivery of the integrated transport network and, as the member pointed out, is a key enabler for the Wave.

The Australian and Queensland governments have committed just over a billion dollars towards the project and early works were completed sometime back in 2023. A joint venture between John Holland and Seymour Whyte was awarded the design and construction contract in September 2024. That stage 1 major rail works will duplicate the section of rail track between Beerburum and Beerwah. It will also address level crossings on the alignment, expand the park-and-ride facility in Beerburum and undertake associated roadworks. It is important for both safety and network efficiency.

The joint venture is working with my department and with Queensland Rail now to finalise the main work designs and is undertaking enabling works to relocate existing rail signalling systems and other utilities. The project is expected to support more than 333 jobs over stage 1 and is very important for the progress of our rail network.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, it has been reported that you have a conflict of interest management plan in place with your brother-in-law and lobbyist Mr Pete Coulson. Given this, why did you allow Mr Coulson to arrange for his client, Gamuda Engineering Australia, to attend your post-budget fundraiser at Parliament House? Does this pass the pub test?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have two points of order. We will go to the member for Moggill first.

Dr ROWAN: There was an imputation in respect to the last part of that question. I ask that the member rephrase the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, did you have a point of order?

Mr McDONALD: The same point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, could you re-ask your question without the imputation at the end.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, it has been reported that you have a conflict of interest management plan in place with your brother-in-law and lobbyist Mr Pete Coulson. Given this, why did you allow Mr Coulson to arrange for his client, Gamuda Engineering Australia, to attend your post-budget fundraiser at Parliament House?

Mr MICKELBERG: I am very pleased to see the government's record investment in road and rail infrastructure. An important part of that is the road and rail infrastructure, as we were just discussing, on the Sunshine Coast—road and rail infrastructure that was not built by the former Labor government. In fact, Labor governments promised that rail would be built to Caloundra by 2015 and to Maroochydore by 2020. I live on the Sunshine Coast and I have to tell you there is no rail to either of them right now. We are committed to fixing that. It is why we have provided certainty through our 2032 Delivery Plan, and we are getting on with funding it through this budget.

To the member's specific question: it is correct that I have a conflict of interest management plan in place to manage conflicts of interest as is appropriate and as is required in relation to the ministerial code of conduct. I have sought advice from the Integrity Commissioner. I follow that advice and I continue to meet with the Integrity Commissioner. I met with the Integrity Commissioner within the first month of coming to office and being sworn in as a minister. I regularly meet with the Integrity Commissioner and I continue to follow her advice.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, I table an article from the *Australian*. I am happy to circulate copies.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you to those across the table and to the members.

Mr MELLISH: The article from the *Australian* says Gamuda Engineering Australia, who is a client of your lobbyist brother-in-law, is preparing to bid for the Wave. Minister, given this conflict, have you excluded yourself from decision-making around the Wave?

Mr MICKELBERG: As I said in my previous answer, I have a conflict of interest management plan in place. It is a comprehensive conflict of interest management plan and I follow that conflict of interest management plan. I have in the past and I will continue to in the future.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, is that a 'yes' or 'no' as to whether you have excluded yourself from decision-making around the Wave?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, a point of order: the minister has been responsive to the previous two questions and has clearly outlined a comprehensive response to those questions as asked and this is a further question. I think it is becoming a little bit repetitive now.

Mr MELLISH: On that point of order, this is an over \$5.5 billion transport project and I want to know which minister is responsible for it. It is pretty straightforward.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the same matter?

Mr McDONALD: On the same matter, yes. Whilst I concur with the member for Moggill, these management plans are complex. They are not simple yes and no answers as the member for Aspley tried to portray.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, you have asked the same question twice already in substance. However, if the minister is willing to answer this question, I will allow it.

Mr MICKELBERG: I am happy to answer. As I said, I have a conflict of interest management plan in place. It is comprehensive and I follow that conflict of interest management plan. I have in the past and I will in the future. To aid the member asking the question, perhaps it would be worthwhile for the director-general to articulate my role in the decision-making process in relation to major government procurement if the director-general would like to.

Ms Stannard: I am happy to do so. When we procure major infrastructure of this kind, it is a complicated evaluation process, as you can imagine. There are technical experts in rail; there are commercial experts who examine contractual departures; there are financial experts who examine

financing. Within the department, we form committees as part of that evaluation so that very few people see the entire offer. Those variety of panels then provide advice to a procurement panel. They provide advice through to me, and even at my level that is blind. I do not know the consortia who are making up each one of those major teams. That is one of the important ways that we protect the probity of the project to ensure influence is not unduly impacted on the project. We maintain that blind process all the way through until the decision is made. That protects people like me—officers of the department. It also protects ministers from being actively involved in those procurement processes. We have followed that process in the down selection that we have done to date and we will continue to take the highest level of probity advice on projects of this scale.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will now proceed to government questions.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, I note from your introductory comments that a number of sections of the Bruce Highway have been prioritised for safety upgrades as part of the early works package. Could you please provide more information in relation to that to the committee?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Cook for his advocacy for a better Bruce Highway. His constituents, the member for Mulgrave's constituents and many Queenslanders—in fact, 62 per cent of Queenslanders—use the Bruce Highway in any given year so it is the backbone of our road network in regional Queensland and it is a priority for our government as a consequence.

As I said at the outset, the Crisafulli government is committed to building a better Bruce Highway. It is unfortunate that the previous Labor government gave up on negotiating an 80-20 funding split with the federal government. Had they been re-elected I suspect that we never would have seen the \$9 billion commitment on an 80-20 basis that we were able to negotiate with the federal government within the first three months of coming to office.

One of my priorities after getting that commitment from the federal government was to fast-track the delivery of that \$900 billion program. We were able to negotiate a \$300 million early works program that is focused on those sections of the Bruce Highway at highest safety risk. As I said in my introductory speech, this includes 16 projects that are being progressively rolled out this year. Work has already started on some of those. Of those 16, one of those projects has been completed; that is a pavement strengthening project in the vicinity of Rollingstone just north of Townsville. A further six have commenced construction and a further four have had a contract awarded. All of those 16 will either commence or have completed construction by the end of this calendar year.

The early start package also includes design for future construction works under the program—a really important aspect of our delivery of this program. We are rolling it out in stages aiming to get this work done as quickly as possible. Within that design package there are a number of sections of the Bruce Highway ranging from Maryborough in the south right through to Innisfail in the north. Work to develop the overall program is progressing in consultation with the Australian government. We had a very productive meeting last week in Gin Gin with the Bruce Highway Advisory Council and their input into forming the priorities in relation to rolling out that Bruce Highway funding program has been invaluable.

The key initiatives under the program will include wide centreline treatment, which includes road widening, importantly, and audio-tactile line marking; pavement strengthening, as I said; overtaking lanes; rest areas; improving intersections and widening narrow structures. That is something that, in particular, the trucking industry advocated for very strongly: to ensure some of those narrow bridges where trucks pass mirror to mirror in the middle of the night can be widened wherever possible.

The \$9 billion Bruce Highway Targeted Safety Program complements our existing commitments on the Bruce Highway—projects like the Rockhampton Ring Road and the Tiara bypass—and it is a big package of work that will deliver safety and productivity benefits up and down the coast. I again want to recognise the contribution of the federal government. We have a very collaborative relationship with the federal government. Despite the fact they are of a different political persuasion, they were working very collaboratively to deliver a better Bruce Highway.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand the member for Mulgrave has a question.

Mr JAMES: Minister, noting the Bruce Highway Advisory Council has been re-established after previously being cut by the former Labor government, could you outline the positive advice and discussions that have occurred as a result?

Mr MICKELBERG: As the member knows, as a part of our first 100 days announcement, the Crisafulli government committed to re-establishing the Bruce Highway Advisory Council by the end of 2024—so within two months of coming to office. We met that commitment when I chaired the first Bruce

Highway Advisory Council meeting in Townsville in December last year. The Bruce Highway Advisory Council brings together key stakeholders—senior government officials from both the state and federal governments, Local Government Association of Queensland and industry. It also contains six regional representatives who span everywhere from the Sunshine Coast right through to the far north in your part of the world, member for Mulgrave. Industry experts and peak bodies on the Bruce Highway Advisory Council include the RACQ, the Queensland Trucking Association, the Queensland Farmers' Federation, the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and the LGAQ. We feel it is really important that the people who live and work along the corridor have a real say in how it is improved.

We have already seen the impact of the council's advice: more overtaking lanes going in intersection upgrades and rest areas being prioritised in response to what we have heard from the members of the Bruce Highway Advisory Council. Since its re-establishment, the Bruce Highway Advisory Council has already seen positive impacts from its work. We did not have a commitment from the federal government before the first Bruce Highway Advisory Council meeting. It was something we indicated we were going to strive for and seek to negotiate, and we were able to deliver that within a month of that first Bruce Highway Advisory Council meeting. There is a \$7.2 billion commitment from the federal government partnered with our \$1.8 billion commitment to roll out an 80-20 funding split to deliver a better Bruce Highway.

In March this year the Bruce Highway Advisory Council met for a second time in Rockhampton. That meeting was largely focused on development of the \$9 billion Bruce Highway Targeted Safety Program. As I mentioned before, just last week the Bruce Highway Advisory Council met for the third time in Gin Gin. I was very pleased to have the member for Callide attend for the whole day. I should make the observation that for each of those Bruce Highway Advisory Council meetings our local members have attended for the duration of those meetings and had valuable input and heard valuable contributions from the members of the council. Our discussion last week focused on how the feedback from previous Bruce Highway Advisory Council meetings have directly shaped that \$9 billion program: the priorities, the strategy and in particular how we are rolling out that program to, one, ensure we meet the needs of local communities, but also ensure as much as possible we reduce the impact on those who use the Bruce Highway because there will be interruption as we do this considerable amount of work over coming years.

We also worked on the development of a fatigue management strategy for the Bruce Highway. It is an incredibly important part of managing a road network and in particular a long highway like the Bruce Highway. I am confident that with the work we are doing with the Bruce Highway Advisory Council, partnering with the federal government, we will deliver a safer Bruce Highway for all Queenslanders.

Mr McDONALD: Can the minister provide an update on the Rockhampton Ring Road project?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Lockyer for his question and for the opportunity to talk about a vital infrastructure project in Central Queensland, and it is a key priority for the Crisafulli government. I want to begin by reaffirming our commitment. The Rockhampton Ring Road will be built. Despite the delays, the uncertainty and the cost overruns that we inherited from the former Labor government, our government is committed to getting on with the job of delivering this vital project for the people of Rockhampton and the broader region. I understand how important the Rockhampton Ring Road is for the people of Central Queensland. It is why I stood with them in the last term advocating for the federal government and the then state government to commit to this project when they would not and they were dragged—I would say—kicking and screaming to fund it. I am pleased they were finally dragged. Now we are getting on with the job of delivering it.

I want to stress, though, that it is not going to come easily. That is because, as I recently announced, that total project is \$1.98 billion, nearly double the \$1.065 billion that was promised under the former government. That increase reflects the reality of inadequate planning and mismanagement in previous years under a Labor government that did not adequately manage the risks of such a major infrastructure project. Rather than dwell on the past, we are focused on delivering the infrastructure that Central Queensland needs. Rockhampton is going to host rowing events during the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the ring-road will play a critical role in ensuring the city is ready to welcome the world and to leave a lasting legacy for locals well beyond the games as well.

We have already made significant progress. A \$280 million early work package is well underway and on track. That phase includes the construction of 18 bridges. I am pleased to report that the first of these bridges, the Lion Creek bridge, was completed in late May 2025. I was out there alongside the members for Rockhampton and Mirani as well as our funding partner in the Australian government to

announce that we will be jointly funding the cost blowout left behind by the former Labor state government. The funding for that blowout is in this budget and it reflects our commitment to getting the job done. It is a blowout which we announced of \$250 million. As I said, we are getting on with the job of delivering this project despite the failures of those in the former state government last term.

Traffic has now transitioned onto the new Lion Creek bridge at Rockhampton on the Rockhampton Ridgeland Road and through the upgraded intersection of Canoona Road and Lion Creek Road, improving safety and traffic flow for local residents. Finalisation works to remove the temporary sidetracks are expected to begin in June and they will continue through late July, allowing for creek rehabilitation to commence. That work is ongoing. In addition, the Limestone Creek bridge in Parkhurst is progressing well and is on track for completion in the coming months. These milestones demonstrate our commitment to delivering tangible outcomes for Central Queensland.

Negotiations on the remaining scope of work have now been finalised. I can confirm that contractors are transitioning now from early works into the main construction program. This marks a major step forward in delivering the full ring-road alignment. We have also seen immediate benefits from the new roundabout at Rockhampton Ridgeland Road, which became operational in February this year. It has already improved local traffic flow and road safety and it will serve as a pivotal access point once the ring-road is complete.

The Rockhampton Ring Road needs to be seen as a project of national significance. It will improve freight efficiency, reduce congestion and enhance safety for all of those in Central Queensland who will come to rely on it day in, day out. Our government, the Crisafulli government, alongside the three fantastic new local members in the member for Rockhampton, Donna Kirkland; the member for Mirani, Glen Kelly; and the member for Keppel, Nigel Hutton, is proud to be delivering it responsibly, transparently and with the community at front of mind at all times.

Mr McDONALD: Can the minister provide an update on the Tiaro Bypass project?

Mr MICKELBERG: As I said—I have said it many times and I will keep saying it—our government is committed to the Bruce Highway. It is a shame that some of those in the previous Labor government thought that the Bruce Highway finished at Noosa, but we understand the Bruce Highway goes all the way to Cairns.

The Australian government and the Queensland government are planning to jointly fund the Tiaro Bypass project to construct a four-lane bypass to the east of Tiaro. That bypass will improve safety, traffic efficiency and flood immunity on the national highway network. Anyone who has tried to drive through Tiaro around Christmas time knows how congested it gets. The director-general had that experience herself at Christmas time. Anyone who travels through that part of the world understands that it does get quite congested. Particularly for a relatively small town, it is quite surprising the degree of congestion that exists at Tiaro and we need to address that.

The design allows for connectivity with any future four-lane upgrades along the Bruce Highway and it includes eight kilometres of new highway with connections to Tiaro north and south of the town. The construction timeframes will be confirmed once design and preconstruction activities are complete, and that will include land acquisitions and the relocation of services and utilities from within the bypass corridor, but we are really pleased to be able to move on and get the job started on delivering the Tiaro bypass.

Mr JAMES: Minister, can you update the committee on how the Crisafulli government is taking a considered and methodical approach to building the Cairns Marine Precinct Common User Facility in its first budget, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr MICKELBERG: I know how strong of an advocate the member for Mulgrave has been in his part of the world since he was elected last year and long before that as the mayor and local councillor and I want to acknowledge his advocacy on behalf of his community. The Cairns Common User Facility is an important project to the marine industry in the Far North in terms of economic growth as well as employment outcomes. My priority as the minister is to ensure that we bring the project in line with its original intent and deliver a meaningful outcome for key industry stakeholders as well as locals—an outcome that is aligned to their expectations.

I can advise the member for Mulgrave and the committee that both the Commonwealth government and the Queensland government have committed \$180 million each to the delivery of the project and a further \$27 million has been allocated since, bringing the total committed budget to \$387 million. I note that the original \$360 million cost was undertaken and signed off by the member for Murrumba and the Leader of the Opposition when he was the minister for state development. We know

now that the project could never be delivered for that cost, and the former Labor government knew it as well. They chose, however, to keep that information from Queenslanders prior to the election. When the project was transferred to Ports North towards the end of the last term of government, Ports North undertook a comprehensive review of the project—the costs—and they have determined that the cost to deliver the scope of the original project was over \$800 million.

The Cairns Common User Facility is a significant project for the Far North and we are committed to ensuring its success through careful planning, transparent governance and responsible investment. That is to say we will not be rushing into announcements without knowing the substance and the detail and we will not be writing a blank cheque without knowing the risks. In the 2025-26 financial year our government has allocated \$38.4 million to the project and it is an important step in the right direction towards building a world-class marine infrastructure hub in Cairns after years of delay under the former government.

The member for Mulgrave asked me about alternative approaches. Frankly, the alternative approach taken by the former Labor government would not have seen this project get built. The approaches that lacked the rigour and the consideration that the Crisafulli government is applying were a hallmark of the former government. I want to take a second to commend the CEO of Ports North, Richard Stevenson, as well as the newly appointed Ports North board for engaging constructively with myself and with the government over the last few months and for working diligently to rescue this project from the abyss. Some have suggested pushing ahead without reassessing costs—the shadow treasurer, for example. Some have suggested that we ignore the need for staged delivery. That is not leadership; that is recklessness. The people of Cairns deserve better and now they have a government that will responsibly get this project back on track. I look forward to working collaboratively with the member for Mulgrave and his colleagues the member for Barron River and the member for Cook to get this project back on track and delivered for the Far North.

Mr McDONALD: Can the minister advise the committee if he has met with the CFMEU about TMR projects and if this differs to his predecessor?

Mr MICKELBERG: I think it is fair to say that most Queenslanders have been very disturbed about the actions of the CFMEU which have come to light since the appointment of the administrator. I say 'most' because those within the construction industry knew all about the disruption, the threats, the intimidation and all of the other behaviour that made our worksites unsafe and drove up the cost of construction. Then we have the Australian Labor Party and the Queensland Labor Party who claim to this day that they knew nothing about any of this. You have to ask: frankly, what rock were they living under? Claims of the former minister responsible for industrial relations that she was shocked about these revelations are nothing short of a joke. I put to you that the previous Labor government did not just turn a blind eye; they empowered the CFMEU and all Queensland taxpayers were the financial victims.

I think it is important to recognise the efforts of the member for Kawana, the now Deputy Premier, who is like a dog with a bone when it comes to highlighting the CFMEU's tactics of intimidation, their infiltration of government agencies and the impacts on the government's own enforcement officers. Knowing what we know now, the CFMEU storming the offices of TMR in August 2022 should not have come as a surprise. TMR employees still talk to me about the impact that this had on them and it was, as I understand it, genuinely frightening.

When the then premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said that she would not meet with the CFMEU we had hoped that the Labor Party had finally understood the danger of this militant union, but the front door might have been shut but the back door was wide open. Ministerial diaries show that the then minister and now shadow minister, the member for Aspley, met with the CFMEU on both 31 January 2024—just days after he became a minister—and again on 6 June 2024. The member for Aspley was asked about these meetings during estimates last year and he was happy to advise that those meetings did occur. He, however, was not so happy to advise what was discussed in those meetings. He refused to say if the storming of the TMR building was discussed. He refused to say if the bullying and the intimidation we have seen on a number of job sites such as on Cross River Rail or the Centenary Bridge were discussed. We still do not know what was discussed. All we know is that the member for Aspley made them welcome in his office.

I am happy to provide an update to the committee of a full account of my conversations with the CFMEU, and I commit to providing a full account but it will be pretty brief because I have had zero discussions with the CFMEU. I have not and I will not meet with the CFMEU, and that is because the CFMEU are no longer welcome in the office of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and they will

not darken my doorstep while ever their conduct is illegal and reckless. I will not meet with any organisation that has behaved in the manner that we see from the CFMEU. I am more than happy to meet with unions. I have met with quite a few in my time as a minister and I will continue to meet with any union that behaves lawfully and has the genuine interests of the welfare of their members, but I will not work with and collaborate with unions that break the law and threaten and intimidate our construction workforce here in Queensland. I think that is what Queenslanders expect. In delivering this budget, we hope that in cracking down on the CFMEU's lawlessness we will restore productivity to Queensland construction sites and deliver better value for money for all Queenslanders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will return to the non-government side for a period to the member for Cooper or member for Aspley.

Ms BUSH: We were happy to go to the member for Maiwar for his question.

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

Mr BERKMAN: Yes, I have—perhaps too many, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I will start if I can with a hyperlocal question to the director-general. I am just interested in the proposed Witton Road-Twig Street bikeway connecting the Indro Riverwalk and the Western Freeway in my electorate. Can you just confirm that the \$300,000 in TMR funding to BCC has been spent and acquitted on that project?

Ms Stannard: I will just clarify—the Lytton Road bikeway from the western—

Mr BERKMAN: Sorry, Witton—W-I-T-T-O-N.

Ms Stannard: Witton—thank you—from the end of the Western Freeway then?

Mr BERKMAN: That is right—Western Freeway to the Twig Street bikeway connecting the Indro Riverwalk to the Western Freeway.

Ms Stannard: I do not have the details in front of me. I will just check if my team do, otherwise we will seek some information and come back to you during the course of the session.

Mr BERKMAN: That would be great if you could. The only other issue I was interested in there was that we have not seen a design from council despite years of planning—I understand partially funded by state government—so are you able to confirm whether you have seen a concept plan for that project?

Ms Stannard: I thank the member for the supplementary question. I will take a note of that and we will seek to come back to you during the course of the evening.

Mr BERKMAN: Thanks kindly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that okay, Minister? Thank you, Director-General.

Mr BERKMAN: Might I follow up with a further question for the director-general regarding advertising on state government owned transport assets, including things like trains, station signage, roadside billboards and buses. Are you able to tell the committee how much revenue the government received in the 2024-25 financial year from advertising contracts with gambling companies specifically and, if so, what proportion of total advertising revenue does that represent for the department?

Ms Stannard: I can just make a couple of comments about how advertising is done on public transport. For example, through the contracts that we hold with private bus companies who run a number of the bus networks outside of Brisbane, those bus companies manage advertising on board those vehicles and then they net that off the cost that they charge to the state to operate the service. So it is unlikely that I will have visibility, even when we go and seek the data, as to what each of the different components of advertising would be on board those vehicles. Separately we have contracts with the people who build bus shelters for us. You would know the rolling advertising on bus stops. For some of those, Brisbane City Council will provide the stops and so they will hold that advertising contract, for others the state will be a provider. I just wanted to give that context because I do not think that we will have a lot of visibility because many of those contracts are managed by those providers, either the bus operators or the providers of the bus stops. Queensland Rail may be able to give some advice about onboard advertising on the rail stops and stations. I will just understand: your question is about the proportion from gambling as compared to other forms of advertising?

Mr BERKMAN: Yes, I guess I am interested in a total amount that is received through gambling advertising and as a proportion of total advertising revenue to the extent that is possible. I realise it may not be though.

Ms Stannard: I think I understand the question. I think you have heard some of the constraints for us, that we might not have visibility through to that. I just want to make one further note if I may, for

the committee's benefit: there is a review process. If someone finds advertising distasteful, something that they see, we do occasionally receive feedback on that and we do have processes to review whether advertising is suitable. I have had a couple of pieces of feedback this year which we have referred for appropriate review.

Mr BERKMAN: I understand the constraints.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you okay for those details to be sought and brought back?

Mr MICKELBERG: Noting the constraints articulated by the DG, we will aim to get that information. It is quite detailed information. I do not know if we have it, as the DG has just articulated, but if we can get it by the end of the session we will.

Mr BERKMAN: Just a follow-up on the same topic, if I could. I am interested, Minister, and can you advise, whether you or the government is considering a ban on gambling advertising on public transport assets, as we have seen our southern counterparts in New South Wales and Victoria have done recently?

Mr MICKELBERG: We have been really pleased to be able to deliver record investment in public transport here by making 50-cent fares permanent. I make the observation, speaking about advertising, that the former government spent more on advertising 50-cent fares than they did making them permanent. We are not going to make that mistake. We are very pleased to be able to deliver permanent 50-cent fares. It is a great LNP initiative and we will continue to talk about it. I love talking about it in parliament and I will continue to talk about it. In relation to the feedback I get, I was at Roma Street Station celebrating 160 years of Queensland Rail operating in Queensland today with the CEO and hundreds of rail enthusiasts very enthusiastic about the government's investment in making 50-cent fares permanent. As I said, the former government spent more on advertising 50-cent fares than they did making them permanent.

To the specifics of the member's question, as the director-general noted, there are existing frameworks in place to ensure that advertising is appropriate and there are appropriate safeguards in place as well to ensure that where members of the public find advertising offensive or inappropriate they can report that. I think that is an appropriate arrangement that is currently in place.

Mr BERKMAN: I understand that the shadow minister is happy for me to ask one more, if I might.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Go ahead, member for Maiwar.

Mr BERKMAN: This one will be to the director-general in relation to plans for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. Can you advise the committee what is the status of the \$318 million over three years that was committed in the last budget under the previous government for 'further work to undertake approvals and pre-construction investigations on the proposed Gympie Road tunnel'? I suppose, effectively, where in QTRIP is it, is the money still committed, how much has been spent, that sort of stuff.

Mr MICKELBERG: Can I seek clarification? That funding was previously allocated to Treasury. The director-general no doubt has an answer to this question, however, I make the point that that funding was with QIC under the former government.

Ms Stannard: There is a project in QTRIP which you will be able to see which is the Gympie Road Planning Program. That includes detailed planning for the Gympie Road corridor. It will consider improvements to congestion hotspots, including enhancements to road, public transport and active transport and it will consider short-, medium- and long-term solutions for that corridor.

In addition, my department will undertake a review of the planning that has been completed to date by the Queensland Investment Corporation for the Gympie Road bypass tunnel. What we are aiming to do is ensure we get an integrated network program by ensuring we consider that planning that has already been done together with planning at a multimodal level for the whole corridor. Our review will be able to provide the Queensland government with advice on the next steps and appropriate timing for infrastructure works in that corridor. In QTRIP there is a planning project called Gympie Road Planning Program.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I table the 2032 Delivery Plan. It lists the 'Coomera Connector future stages' in the document. Will the Coomera Connector be delivered in full between Loganholme and Nerang by the 2032 Olympics?

Ms Stannard: I am just looking at exactly what is in the plan. Do you have a page number?

Mr MELLISH: It is the bottom of page 20.

Ms Stannard: I can see the line item you are referring to. The Coomera Connector future stages are identified in the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic delivery plan. The plan refers to delivering stage 1 and a commitment to deliver a future stage ahead of 2032. The ultimate plan is for 45 kilometres of north-south high-speed motorway that will support the future transport needs of the Northern Gold Coast and Logan areas and give a parallel corridor to the M1.

I was lucky enough to do a site visit there on the first stage the other day and it is looking very impressive in terms of being nearing completion. There is some great engineering bridgework there. Future stages will deliver the remaining 29 kilometres between Loganholme and Coomera. We did consultation on the business case in late 2023 and a summary of those outcomes is on our website. That business case is finalised and being progressed to Infrastructure Australia for their assessment. We will also need to do an environmental referral and that is in the process of being finalised and will be submitted to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in order to progress those environmental approvals. We know that Coomera Connector stage 2, between Shipper Drive and Yawalpah Road, is the next priority to relieve the congestion in the growing areas of Coomera and Pimpama. Detailed design and site investigation for stage 2 is anticipated to commence in early 2026.

Mr MELLISH: Just to clarify that, when it says 'Coomera Connector future stages', is that referring to all future stages or just the next part of the future stages?

Mr MICKELBERG: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I make the observation that the document that the shadow minister refers to is a document that was released by another department. We did have input to that document, obviously transport infrastructure is an important part of delivering the games in 2032, but to suggest that the director-general can talk to the content of that particular sentence I think is a stretch.

Mr BERKMAN: Might I follow up with a further question for the director-general regarding advertising on state government owned transport assets, including things like trains, station signage, roadside billboards and buses. Are you able to tell the committee how much revenue the government received in the 2024-25 financial year from advertising contracts with gambling companies specifically and, if so, what proportion of total advertising revenue does that represent for the department?

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We will also need to do an environmental referral and that is in the process of being finalised and will be submitted to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in order to progress those environmental approvals. We know that Coomera Connector stage 2, between Shipper Drive and Yawalpah Road, is the next priority to relieve the congestion in the growing areas of Coomera and Pimpama. Detailed design and site investigation for stage 2 is anticipated to commence in early 2026.

Mr MELLISH: Just to clarify that, when it says 'Coomera Connector future stages', is that referring to all future stages or just the next part of the future stages?

Mr MICKELBERG: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I make the observation that the document that the shadow minister refers to is a document that was released by another department. We did have input to that document, obviously transport infrastructure is an important part of delivering the games in 2032, but to suggest that the director-general can talk to the content of that particular sentence I think is a stretch.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is quite correct, I believe, Minister. Member for Aspley, it is a document that belongs to another department. I would add that, while I am not saying this is a certainty, you may be speaking about a project that may not be funded in this budget or perhaps even beyond the forwards. Could you rephrase your question? Ask it in a different way, please.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, as a follow-up to your response, are you saying that you cannot vouch for every transport project in the 2032 Olympics plan?

Mr MICKELBERG: I like the way the member verbalised me there. What I said was that I am not sure that the director-general can speak to the intent behind that sentence when it was written by another government department. To be clear, the government are committed to delivering on the 2032 Delivery Plan and a record investment in road and rail infrastructure right across Queensland, not just here in the south-east, is a big part of that plan. We are committed to delivering future stages of the Coomera Connector just as we are committed to delivering game-changing projects like the Wave and the Logan to Gold Coast Faster Rail project, which those opposite championed for a long time but could not get built. In fact, it is the Crisafulli government that awarded contracts and got on with the job of delivering the Logan to Gold Coast Faster Rail project. That project will deliver a game-changing legacy for Gold Coast commuters, in particular. It will see the number of express trains running back and forth from the Gold Coast to the Brisbane CBD increase to 12 per hour.

Mr MELLISH: Deputy Speaker, I am happy to take that as answered and move on.

Mr MICKELBERG: I am happy to keep going, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, you asked the minister whether he can vouch for the 2032 Delivery Plan and the minister is being relevant to your question.

Mr MICKELBERG: As I said, we are very pleased to be able to provide the certainty that industry and Queenslanders were crying out for in relation to delivering the 2032 games. It is not just about sporting infrastructure; it is about the transport infrastructure to support those games. We are working very closely with the Deputy Premier and Minister Mander to ensure that, through my role as the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, we are delivering the projects that we need for a successful games. I am told that in the games period we will see the number of people moving from the Gold Coast to Brisbane shift from about 20,000 per day to 200,000. That is a massive shift in the demand that is going to be placed on our network and that is why we are investing in major projects like Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail.

This is also about delivering a legacy for all Queenslanders. Our \$9 billion investment in the Bruce Highway is cited in the 2032 Delivery Plan as well. We will deliver a games that is both successful and, perhaps even more importantly, delivers on the rationale for bidding on the games in the first place, which was to deliver the infrastructure legacy that Queenslanders wanted and deserved. For far too long, Queensland has not got its fair share when it comes to transport investment. Unfortunately, those opposite chose to abandon the field when it came to fighting for Queensland's fair share of federal funding. We will not do that. We are working collaboratively and constructively whether on the 2032 Delivery Plan or any projects across my portfolio. We will continue to work to deliver all of those projects, not just the ones that are identified in the 2032 Delivery Plan. They are important projects but so too are the smaller projects that need to be delivered in each of our suburbs and towns across Queensland.

Going to the member's question, I reaffirm our commitment to delivering the transport and road infrastructure required to deliver a successful games in 2032. I think the 2032 Delivery Plan is an excellent document that highlights the vision needed to deliver a successful games in 2032. It highlights

the transport infrastructure needed to support those games. It demonstrates a legacy that Queenslanders can be proud of: not just a successful games but also a road and rail network that supports us now and supports us into the future.

Mr MELLISH: I am happy to move on from that Olympics document because it sounds like the minister is already walking away from it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is an argumentative statement.

Mr MELLISH: I will try that one again, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ask a question, please.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Deputy Speaker: I think the commentary should be withdrawn because this is not an opportunity for members to state commentary as opposed to asking questions with respect to the estimates.

Mr MELLISH: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Moggill. Thank you, member for Aspley, for your withdrawal. Ask your next question, please.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, is the department modelling, examining or considering any proposal to toll any section of the future stages of the Coomera Connector, including at the interface with the Logan Motorway?

Ms Stannard: No, we are not. The value-for-money assessment about private involvement in tollways is completed through Treasury.

Mr MELLISH: I call to the table the Queensland Rail CEO. Ms Stapleton, Cross River Rail stands as the biggest ever integration and expansion of the South-East Queensland rail network. Can you please outline when Queensland Rail is anticipated to accept handover of the new Cross River Rail line?

Ms Stapleton: In terms of the timing of the Cross River Rail opening, the minister had previously stated a date of 2029. Obviously, Queensland Rail is actively involved with both the department of transport as well as the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority in terms of preparations for opening. This is a very complex undertaking in terms of not just infrastructure building but also very extensive testing. We are very committed to ensuring that this project comes on line as it will unblock a lot of capacity for Queensland Rail through the network here in South-East Queensland.

In terms of timing, there is a lot of work underway in preparation for testing. As you can imagine, it is about not just building the infrastructure but also making sure the European Train Control System signalling will work and making sure that various levels of testing are undertaken. We recently met with the regulator, I think it was Friday a week ago. We had a very lengthy discussion as to what it is that Queensland Rail can learn from projects in Sydney as well as in Melbourne. In Queensland, we like to be first everywhere. However, as the regulator said, we have the benefit of being a follower and there are quite a few learnings from down south as to how to undertake testing and make sure that all the necessary steps are in place before the network is deemed to be ready to carry passengers.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator previously said that it does not undertake testing or commissioning of any major rail projects. Is that your understanding?

Ms Stapleton: Certainly the testing would be undertaken by Queensland Rail and not the regulator. We are the accredited entity and the regulator will rely on us to provide confirmation that we are good to go.

Mr MELLISH: We might be getting a bit technical here, but can you advise how long it took the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator to assess and assure the most recent significant rail expansion, the Redcliffe Peninsula line?

Ms Stapleton: Unfortunately, that was well before my time so I am not able to comment on that.

Mr MELLISH: Are you able to come back to the committee with that response?

Ms Stapleton: I will seek guidance on that. It was probably from quite a few years ago—I think 2016. We will attempt, subject to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, for the committee's benefit, can you explain how that is relevant to the examination of this appropriation?

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, it is relevant in terms of the commissioning of the largest infrastructure project in the transport portfolio and the date on which that will commence operations.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was some time ago that the Redcliffe line was commissioned. If a question is to be taken on notice, it needs to go with the minister anyway.

Mr MICKELBERG: I am not adding to the answer, just to the request.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am happy to give the call to the minister because the CEO had indicated in any case that they would need to go back and seek further details. Minister, is that something you are prepared to do?

Mr MICKELBERG: I was just going to make the observation that the CEO of Queensland Rail was not the CEO at that time. We will endeavour to get that information. Given the CEO is answering these questions right now, it is tenuous to try to draw a link between an opening in 2016 and an opening in 2029.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, I did think that myself.

Mr MICKELBERG: We will aim to get that information by the close of the session, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr MELLISH: CEO, following on from an earlier response, can you confirm that the 2029 timeframe for the opening of Cross River Rail did not come from Queensland Rail?

Ms Stapleton: I am not aware that this date came from Queensland Rail.

Mr MELLISH: I would like to call the Cross River Rail CEO, if I may. Mr Newton, for the record, has the Cross River Rail project at any point been covered by Best Practice Industry Conditions?

Mr Newton: The Cross River Rail Delivery Authority took responsibility for the Cross River Rail project in 2016 when it was first established as a statutory body. The authority was first set up in 2017. At that stage, the Best Practice Industry Conditions policy was not in place; however, there was the BPP policy, which was a precursor to the BPIC policy. There were a lot of similarities in the BPP policy to the BPIC policy.

That policy came into effect in mid-2018, if my recollection is correct. It was applied during the procurement process of the Cross River Rail project to both the RIS and the TSD contracts and also to the ETCS contract. It was written into the contract documentation and it provided a range of obligations for those contractors, and those obligations continue to be applied. They relate to safety, local content, industrial relations, apprentices and so forth.

Since the suspension of the BPIC policy, it is my understanding that the industrial relations element of the BPP has been suspended as well. To answer the question: the procurement of the Cross River Rail was prior to BPIC being a policy, but the precursor to BPIC was applied to this project.

Mr MELLISH: Mr Newton, I table an extract from last year's estimates. Can I ask you to read the highlighted section, please?

Mr Newton: This relates to 30 July 2024 and is on page 83. There is a quote attributed to me.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just one moment, Mr Newton. Minister, are you seeking a copy of the document?

Mr MICKELBERG: Yes, please. Mr Newton has one but neither the director-general nor I do.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We can grab one for you. Thank you, Mr Newton.

Mr Newton: Are you referring to the highlighted section? I can read the whole lot. It says—

On the program as we are working at the moment, the majority of the construction will be completed in 2025 with the plan for opening to passenger services in 2026. The precise date of the opening, as has been said several times publicly ...

Mr MELLISH: I am happy with that part. Following that, Mr Newton, when were you aware that the program timeframe had slipped by three years?

Mr Newton: I note the quote that was referred to there, but I did also point out during that same estimates hearing that we were encountering disruptions as a result of protected industrial action. I think at that stage there had been 21 days of protected action. We did foreshadow that the program had been impacted. At the time of estimates I was quite conscious of saying that that was the program, but we were foreshadowing that it was being impacted. Could I get you to restate the question?

Mr MELLISH: When were you aware that the program timeframe had slipped by three years?

Mr Newton: This is something that happened over time. The member was the minister at the time, so we were providing briefings. In the period leading up to September 2024, we had entered a stage where quite significant industrial activity was happening. By September we had moved from 21

days of protected industrial action to 54 days. At that stage, it was becoming quite evident—and I briefed the government at the time—that the project was under threat and that the contractor was experiencing financial distress. We briefed the government at that time that the construction timeframe for delivery was slipping and that there was an expectation that construction may not be completed. Again, I point out this was after 54 days of protected action and completion of construction could have been as late as 2027.

We continued to monitor the program. The issue that we had during the protected industrial action is that there was some unprotected action occurring as well with subcontractors not attending site. The works were being disrupted. We had circumstances where subcontractors were not able to get access to site. They were finding themselves in a situation where they were not able to provide complete workforces to site, which would then create a consequential program impact. We saw that tilers needed to turn up in a group to be able to go and do a mass amount of work. If they did not turn up, if they could not get access or if they could not get continuity of work, it was having a detrimental impact on the program. They would go off and work on other sites and they would not be able to come back. For example, the Ekka station had this happen with the handrails—the workers would go off and work on Queen's Wharf and they would be gone for two weeks. It was the same with lifts, escalators and other specialist skills.

That went on for some time. Prior to that, when we flagged to the government that that was an issue, the contractors had approached us and said that the program was in distress. We put a briefing to government at that time and it was identified that the full extent of the disruption was not clear. In consultation with government, we decided to get approval for a part A and part B approach to the delivery, which would allow continuity of work to happen on site to the extent possible until we had resolution of the industrial situation and a greater insight into the program. It was not really until we had a resolution that we were able to start to quantify what the consequential impacts were.

With the incoming government, I gave regular briefings about the situation, and we monitored that through. As is publicly known, 148 days of protected industrial action took place right through until the enterprise agreement was achieved in December 2024. During that time, the administrator was appointed in August and there was a range of issues. Because we were in protected action at that stage, we saw a ramping up of hostilities at the site itself. That went on for some time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Newton, you referred to an administrator.

Mr Newton: I am referring to the federal administrator for the CFMEU. That went on for some time. During that period we were engaged in dialogue with the contractors and we were able to maintain some degree of continuity on site. Once agreement was struck with the workforce directly rather than via the CFMEU, we started to see stabilisation on site, which then allowed us to sit down and speak with the contractors to start to get a better understanding of what the integrated program would look like. Once we had that, we were able to start to get a better assessment. This then allowed us to start looking at what the balance of the program looked like and what the testing phase that you were referring to before—

Mr MELLISH: I am happy with that answer. If I can ask a follow-up to that—

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Chair: Mr Newton was still speaking. The member for Aspley said he was happy with that, but I want to know if Mr Newton is finished.

Mr KEMPTON: So does the rest of the committee.

Mr McDONALD: He is being very complete in his response. It is not up to the member for Aspley to decide.

Ms BUSH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: we have a very limited time on the opposition side to ask questions. If the member for Lockyer would like an answer to that, perhaps he can include that as one of his questions to the officer.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Newton, you were being relevant to the question asked. I am conscious of the time it was taking for you to get there, but I understand it is a complex issue. Could you perhaps finish your answer very briefly?

Mr Newton: There is really just one final point I want to make. As the CEO of Queensland Rail mentioned before, we have been engaging with other projects interstate. The complexity of the testing phase has now become very relevant. What we saw in Sydney and what we are seeing in Melbourne at the moment is that complexity coming to bear that. That was expressed also by the regulator. That is what has put us in a position to have a better understanding of what the program is.

Mr MELLISH: Has the delivery authority finalised negotiations with contractor CPB and, if not, what impact are those negotiations having on project timeframes?

Mr Newton: As I referred to before, we did implement a part A and part B approach to the negotiations. That approach has been successful in order to maintain momentum on the project. Since the enterprise agreement has been put in place, we have seen productivity increases on site, and it ramped up through to April. We have seen a higher level of productivity. We are in detailed commercial negotiations with the contractor, so they are ongoing. It would be inappropriate to go into specific details around those. What I would say is that they are at an advanced stage.

Mr MELLISH: Are there any other ongoing legal proceedings underway involving the delivery authority, and what do those matters relate to?

Mr Newton: As far as I am aware, there are no legal proceedings in relation to the contract negotiations. We are dealing with some lesser matters in the Land Court which relate to land acquisition. We are seeking a clarification from the Land Court, so it is not related to the commercial elements.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to government questions.

Mr KEMPTON: Can the director-general advise how Cyclone Alfred impacted TMR's transport network and provide some details about the department's response and any ongoing recovery actions?

Ms Stannard: Certainly this has been a year of a number of major weather events. I would just like to put on record how proud I am of how the department responded. They are always a department who comes to the aid of the community when events like this occur. I think both sides of government have seen that over the years. This year was no exception—torrential rainfall, intense winds and ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred here in South-East Queensland. It was certainly an unprecedented event in my lifetime. Apparently it has been about 50 years since we have seen something like that occur in the south-east.

One of the very direct and immediate impacts was the loss of traffic signals. We lost up to 450 of 1,200 signalised intersections on the state controlled road network in South-East Queensland. They were offline. All of those signals were back up and operational by late March. It was a result of extensive riverine and flash flooding. As part of that, 693 kilometres of state controlled roads were closed or under restricted access during the event. That is just in South-East Queensland. In fact, during the course of this year, more than half of the state controlled road network was underwater at any time. Those events were severe in South-East Queensland, they were severe on the north coast, and certainly in Western Queensland we saw that as well.

The department has undertaken very significant and substantial work to quickly clear landslip and vegetation debris on the road network—in the Gold Coast and the hinterland of the Gold Coast in particular it was most severe—and they reopened roads as quickly as they were able to do so safely. Landslips are complex when they occur in events like this because often it is not evident what is happening underneath the surface, I am no geotechnical engineer but I have had a few lessons from my geotechnical engineers this year about what is happening below the surface and what we cannot see. Not only do we need to clear and open the road again; we need to examine what damage has occurred. That work and the full extent of that damage often takes months or years to get to the bottom of.

Recovery works like that are jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, and that goes a great deal of the way. In fact, just today I saw some images of repair works we had done after a previous tropical cyclone up in the Far North where the Palmerston Highway was impacted. The design of that repair work is complete. That has taken a number of years because it is complex geotechnical work.

Obviously the impacts in the south-east were more than just the road network. We also saw very significant impacts to the public transport network in South-East Queensland. My colleague the CEO of Queensland Rail was here with me. We had to examine the risk framework for handling a cyclone in South-East Queensland. Neither she nor I had overseen such an event before. Excellent risk management meant we had a framework that said when winds reach a certain level the rail network needs to be completely shut down. Obviously those overhead powerlines can be impacted in high winds. We were then monitoring for a number of hours the cyclone's progress towards the coast to ensure we shut the rail network down when it was safe to do so.

Previous experience also tells us that some of the places where we store trains are flood liable. We have seen that at the Mayne railway yards in the 2011 floods. The value of an asset like a train is something we do not want to have on a flood liable piece of land. Not only did we need to shut the

entire rail network down; the Queensland Rail train crew also had to stow those assets safely. Some of that meant stowing them out on the network on higher parts of the network where they were safe from floodwaters. It was a well-planned logistical exercise. I acknowledge Queensland Rail's operational staff who did that work, whilst they were also thinking about their own families and a cyclone off the coast. Tremendous work was done.

In the bus network as well, we worked very closely with a range of operators throughout South-East Queensland. South-East Queensland is a big area of itself. The effects on the Gold Coast were very different to those on the Sunshine Coast. I recall on the eve of the cyclone talking to a bus operator in Ipswich. The event had not really reached them yet, and they were trying to work out what they were going to do the next day to service schools that were going to try to open. That bus operator had staff in the office at 10 o'clock at night trying to work out what they could service the next day. The commitment of operators of public transport across the state was absolutely evident. They did everything they could to get that network up as fast as they were able to do so.

It was actually a really proud moment for me to hear the retail sector acknowledge just how important public transport is to get people to work because a lot of people who work in those retail stores come by public transport to work. We wanted to make sure they were able to get there as soon as possible so those stores could reopen.

I would also like to acknowledge Brisbane City Council. They did a tremendous job to try to get buses back out safely on the network. We were talking to managers of depots early in the morning. The visibility simply was not safe to put those buses on the network, so they did not run the early morning service but they tried again at 7 am when the sun was up. They put those buses out on the network and when it was not safe to do so they brought them back to the depot. Right across the network we saw people working very hard to try to restore services and to do that safely—safe for drivers, operators and customers.

In the maritime sector—and my head of maritime is here this evening—they were working well before the rest of us when the seas were experiencing those high winds. To make sure those port operations were safe is also a very technical and detailed piece of work. Maritime Safety Queensland issues that alert through the harbourmasters to make sure that vessels are stowed safely. They give advice to operators of yachts and big ships about where and when it is safe to operate.

One thing that is often not known to the community is how much work we do to ensure vessels can safely track through the Great Barrier Reef and down to the ports of the coast. As you can imagine, in the cyclone season that becomes even more important. The last thing we want is a ship run aground on a reef. I commend those harbourmasters up and down the coast who were giving that very experienced and professional advice about what is safe and unsafe to do.

Similarly, in the Brisbane River there were times when the river was unsafe and when the ferries needed to be stowed. Again, in Brisbane we were able to provide advice by having experts in our team being able to provide that advice.

I think you also asked me about works that are ongoing. It is fair to say that landslips in the Gold Coast hinterland are some of the hardest for us to repair because it is unclear exactly what the right geotechnical responses are.

One other thing I would like to put on record for the committee is that roads work best when they are dry, and it is very important to keep the seal at the top of roads dry. When roads become saturated with floodwaters there is damage that occurs below the pavement we cannot see, and we may not know for years to come because the earth that holds the road is saturated. We are working with the National Transport Research Organisation to quantify the years of pavement life lost that occurs when roads are saturated. There is some experience nationally, but we are not very good at estimating it. We will continue to work on that, because I think it is important that that damage to the asset is acknowledged.

Mr JAMES: Minister, can you provide additional information on public transport patronage following the Crisafulli government's making 50-cent fares permanent?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for his question about that great LNP initiative: permanent 50-cent fares. Fifty-cent flat fares are now permanent on all Translink public transport services across Queensland and they provide significant cost-of-living relief. We said before the election that we would make 50-cent fares permanent, and that is exactly what we have done. In this budget \$322.32 million has been allocated to make 50-cent fares permanent for this year. Under the former Labor government, 50-cent fares would have ended in February 2025 because there was no funding allocated in the budget beyond the six-month trial. Despite the rhetoric of those opposite, there were zero dollars in their

budget—they had 10 years to deliver budgets—but they had zero dollars to make 50-cent fares permanent. They are the facts.

I do note that the Leader of the Opposition is still out there trying to get people to forget he had the opportunity in his last budget to make 50-cent fares permanent, but he failed to do so. Just last week on 26 July the Leader of the Opposition held a sausage sizzle out here celebrating the one-year anniversary of the start of his six-month trial. I get it; I have been in opposition since I came to this place. I know how hard it is in opposition. You do not have the resources of government, but I would have thought someone could have given him a calendar—26 July is not the anniversary of the six-month trial starting: it is 10 August. His leadership is clearly under a bit of pressure. I can understand he might have got a day or two wrong either way, but it is a month. Queenslanders deserve better than that.

What is not sad is the increased patronage we have seen since we made 50-cent fares permanent. As at 30 June 2025 more than 77 million trips have been taken, resulting in savings of more than \$159 million compared to the previous fare structure. That is real cost-of-living relief delivered by the Crisafulli government for Queenslanders. Patronage over this period increased by 15.3 per cent, as the director-general noted earlier in her answer, compared to the same period last year. Keep in mind that those numbers were impacted by a once-in-a-lifetime weather event here in the south-east with Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. As the director-general just said, we had to take public transport offline for a number of days.

It is not just about the south-east. The member for Mulgrave asked me about patronage. Regional Queenslanders have also greatly benefitted from 50-cent fares. Bus patronage in regional Queensland increased in February 2025 through to the end of May 2025 by more than 39 per cent. We have had growth of 43 per cent in Cairns, 96 per cent in Townsville, 37 per cent in the Whitsundays, 21 per cent on North Stradbroke Island and seven per cent in the Sunshine Coast hinterland since 50-cent fares were made permanent by the LNP Crisafulli government. Permanent 50-cent fares are a great LNP initiative. I am very proud to deliver on our commitment to make them permanent. We said we would do it before the election. We have done it through this budget. Unlike those opposite, we do what we say we will do. It is funded through this budget.

Mr JAMES: Can you advise what the Crisafulli government is doing to improve bus driver safety?

Mr MICKELBERG: That is an important question. We have seen some disturbing incidents on buses in recent times over recent years. I am not going to go into the details of those cases that may be before the courts for obvious reasons under the standing orders. I want to place on record that my thoughts—and I am sure the thoughts of all members of parliament—go to those drivers involved.

Our government is serious about providing a safe work environment for bus drivers and other frontline workers. We know that the crime crisis developed under the former Labor government and we are committed to implementing measures to address that. It will take time. We are taking tangible steps and we are making progress, but it will take time. I was shocked to find out that the former minister did not turn up to the bus driver safety forums held when he was the minister for transport and main roads—

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: I take personal offence at this minister politicising bus driver safety and people who have been attacked and his own scrapping of a bus driver—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment, please. Member for Aspley, are you taking personal offence?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, I am taking personal offence. I was named by the minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, could you withdraw, please.

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw, Deputy Speaker. As I said, I was shocked to find out the former minister did not turn up to the bus driver safety forums when he was—

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: he just said the exact same sentence.

Mr MICKELBERG: Perhaps he can correct the record if I am misleading the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, are you taking personal offence at that particular statement?

Mr MELLISH: I am taking personal offence at the exact same statement the minister just repeated.

Mr MICKELBERG: It is factually correct.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, as is the rule, under the standing orders if a member takes personal offence I request you to withdraw—

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:—and carry on with other parts of your statement.

Mr MICKELBERG: I can assure bus drivers that I am focused on their safety. Next week I will convene a roundtable with key stakeholders, including unions, operators and bus drivers, to tackle their concerns around safety for Queensland bus drivers. I will be there for the entirety of the roundtable and so will the director-general, because it is a serious issue and we are committed to addressing it. I do not want this to be another talkfest. I want this to be a meeting to deliver concrete actions and tangible outcomes. Following conversations that I have had with stakeholders such as unions and operators, the issues that we have committed to discuss at the roundtable include driver safety barriers, the provision of rest areas and any potential legislative changes.

I thank the unions, bus operators and the Queensland Bus Industry Council for their collaboration to date. We remain committed to addressing their concerns. Every worker in Queensland deserves to come home safe at the end of their shift. That includes bus drivers. I look forward to convening with them at our bus driver safety roundtable. As I said, I will be attending for the entirety of it. I look forward to hearing solutions that we can deliver together to address their concerns.

Mr JAMES: Minister, please outline if any works have been done at Altandi station to improve park-and-ride facilities.

Mr MICKELBERG: The Crisafulli government recognises the vital role that public transport plays in creating a connected, integrated and accessible network for Queensland. Early planning has been completed for the Altandi park-and-ride project, which incorporates vacant state owned land in the vicinity of the station. Public consultation on the preferred option was undertaken in late 2020. The previous Labor government, however, failed to act and construction did not proceed despite that work being undertaken in late 2020.

Just before the last state election work suddenly started to construct a driveway on a vacant grass block next door to the station. The cost of the driveway was \$23,000. Although it made it look like something was happening, it provided no additional parking. It was just a driveway to a vacant block of land. I can only conclude that the new driveway was a last-ditch effort to make it look like the local member was doing something when in fact he had done nothing for the entirety of the term.

We cannot use a grass block as a car park. It was never a long-term solution designed to last beyond the date of the last election. The block of land remains locked to this date. There are many stations across our network requiring more parking due to the inaction of the previous Labor government. The area at Altandi will be considered when we are determining priorities going forward. My commitment to Queensland is to deliver real solutions, not bandaid solutions on the eve of an election designed to make it look like they were doing something when they had failed to act and deliver on their commitments.

Mr JAMES: Minister, with reference to the budget allocation for the smart ticketing project, could you outline how this additional funding will continue to support public transport users?

Mr MICKELBERG: I am pleased to inform the committee that the smart ticketing rollout across South-East Queensland has now been successfully completed and is delivering a modern, flexible and convenient way for Queenslanders to access public transport. It is a major milestone for our state. Under the Crisafulli government, commuters across the Translink network can now use a credit card, debit card, smart phone, smart watch or go card to pay for their journey. Whether they are hopping on a bus, train, ferry or tram, smart ticketing is now fully operational, making travel easier than ever before.

The final stage of the rollout was completed earlier this year with the activation of Brisbane City Council's fleet of around 1,300 buses—the last of 18 operators to join the smart ticketing network. It means that every public transport mode in South-East Queensland is now equipped with this technology. Importantly, this rollout supports that great LNP initiative of permanent 50-cent fares, ensuring that Queenslanders travel not only smarter but also more affordably. Under the former Labor government, 50-cent fares would have ended in February 2025 and that would have cost families considerably more. Thanks to our government, low fares are here to stay. We are very proud to be able to deliver that, along with ending Labor's mismanagement of the smart ticketing program.

I want to be clear though that that achievement did not come easily. The smart ticketing project has been plagued by two years of delay and a \$60 million cost blowout under Labor. It is just another example—one of a long list—of mismanagement and missed opportunities, but our government stepped in and took responsibility and is delivering the system that Queenslanders were promised.

The original budget of \$371 million blew out due to delays in the rollout and further development testing and acceptance of that system. We have been able to rescope to reduce Labor's blowout, and the total project cost is now \$407.3 million. As I said, thanks to our government, smart ticketing is now available to customers on all South-East Queensland trains, Brisbane River and Southern Moreton Bay Island ferries, Gold Coast tram services and nine bus operators covering the Sunshine Coast, Ipswich, Moreton Bay and Redlands areas.

Already, we are seeing strong uptake. As at 25 June 2025 around one in three trips on activated services are using smart ticketing, and that number is expected to grow as more people experience the convenience of tapping on with their everyday devices. For those who prefer the traditional method, the go card remains available. We are also developing a new reloadable card tailored to the smart ticketing system, ensuring that all commuters, regardless of their preferences or circumstances, have access to a reliable payment option. This rollout is making public transport work for everyone—whether they are a daily commuter, a student, a senior or a visitor to our great state. I want to thank the teams across Translink, Brisbane City Council and our transport operators for their hard work in delivering this project. I also want to thank the Queenslanders who have embraced this new system and helped to make it a success.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, I note the total committed budget for the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail in this year's QTRIP is \$5.75 billion, with \$603 million this year. Could the minister outline why this value has increased from \$2.6 billion in QTRIP in 2023?

Mr MICKELBERG: As I spoke about earlier, the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project is essential infrastructure that will unlock additional train services to meet the growing demand between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. They are Australia's third and sixth largest cities. The Australian government and the Queensland government have committed \$5.75 billion on a 50-50 basis to double the tracks from two to four along the 20-kilometre project corridor between Kuraby and Beenleigh, increasing rail network capacity, improving train service reliability and reducing wait times at stations.

The Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project will also make it easier for customers to access high-frequency train services through modern station upgrades and improved walking and cycling connections between Kuraby and Beenleigh. Five existing level crossings along the 20-kilometre project corridor will be removed to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion and improve cross-corridor connections for local communities. Expenditure of \$603 million is forecast in 2025-26 as my department continues design development and commences construction works. The design and preconstruction contract for the LGC Rail Alliance was awarded in March 2025 by our government. This project is a key investment to support the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Going to the member's question, the cost to deliver this project has increased so significantly because of the former Labor government's mismanagement of the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project. They so badly estimated the cost that it blew out from \$2.6 billion to \$5.7 billion before a single track was even laid. We know that, although the blowout occurred under the previous government, Queenslanders did not find out from the former government. That blowout was kept under wraps, like so many others, and it was the federal government's 2023 infrastructure review that finally let the cat out of the bag.

Our government has wasted no time in delivering on our election commitments to create better connectivity across South-East Queensland, including Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail, catering for our growing population and ensuring that we have the legacy infrastructure in place for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This was in contrast to the substantial cost blowouts and the complete mismanagement we saw under the former Labor government. As I announced earlier this year, the QTRIP program under those opposites had a staggering \$6.7 billion in project blowouts. That was the record of project blowouts when we came to office. We are committed to ending those blowouts and delivering projects on time and on budget.

Mr JAMES: Minister, can you provide an update on how the Crisafulli government is making good on its election commitment to deliver a new Bribie Island bridge?

Mr MICKELBERG: We are delivering on our commitment to build a new Bribie Island bridge and fix the Barron River bridge in the member for Mulgrave's part of the world as well. I am pleased to provide an update on our commitment to deliver a new Bribie Island bridge, which is a vital piece of infrastructure that will improve reliability and connectivity for the Bribie Island community and the broader region. Residents of Bribie Island are lucky to have a fantastic local member in the now member for Pumicestone, Ariana Doolan. In her first eight months, the current member for Pumicestone, Ariana, has been influential and unwavering in her advocacy for a new Bribie Island bridge.

In May this year we released the business case for the future duplication of the Bribie Island bridge, marking a significant step forward in fulfilling our election promise. This business case outlines a clear and strategic plan to upgrade the aging infrastructure and to ensure the bridge continues to serve the community well into the future. The recommended option includes the construction of a new two-lane bridge for eastbound traffic alongside a dedicated active transport path for pedestrians and cyclists. The existing bridge, which was built in 1963, will be repurposed to carry two lanes of westbound traffic, significantly improving traffic flow and reducing the risks associated with the current two-way configuration that can be prone to significant delays if an incident occurs on the bridge.

Importantly, the business case confirms that the existing bridge is structurally suitable for continued use providing that targeted maintenance is undertaken. This approach allows us to maximise the value of existing infrastructure while delivering a safer and more efficient transport solution for the future. The new bridge will also include the ability to transfer traffic between the two structures if required which will add resilience and flexibility into the network. This is a smart, futureproof design that reflects the needs of a growing population and a busy transport corridor. Funding is in our first budget to progress the project into the design phase and to obtain the necessary environmental approvals.

Backed in by funding, this will ensure work can commence on site during this term of government, as promised. The project is currently listed as a planning project in QTRIP and we are moving forward with the detailed investigations needed to inform final designs and to prepare for construction. We acknowledge that this project comes with some risks, including environmental approvals, constructability challenges and coordination with public utilities and stakeholders. These are being carefully managed through our planning processes to ensure the project remains on track and delivers value for money.

I want to be clear: we are not just replacing an old bridge; we are delivering a modern, safe and accessible connection that supports the Bribie Island community. It will boost local tourism and it will strengthen regional transport links. It is about making good on our commitment to Bribie Island residents and ensuring they have the infrastructure they deserve. The Crisafulli government is committed to getting on with the job. We are delivering the planning, the funding and the approvals needed to make the new Bribie Island bridge a reality. We are restoring confidence in infrastructure delivery and building a better for all Queenslanders.

Mr JAMES: To the Queensland Rail CEO, I note that today is the 160th birthday of Queensland Rail. Happy birthday. Can the CEO of Queensland Rail provide an outline of the activities that have been undertaken to celebrate this milestone?

Ms Stapleton: Thank you, honourable member, for wishing us a happy birthday. We had the opportunity this morning to celebrate with, I would say, quite a few hundred people, *Betty*, our steam loco, arriving at Roma Street and taking a number of people on a wonderful journey from Roma Street across to Pinkenba and then back. This was on top of a trip which was certainly—I am not quite sure how to call it—a repeat of what our predecessors did back on 31 July 1865 where the loco—a different one, of course—went from Ipswich to Grandchester, the very first trip.

In addition to activities here in Brisbane, we also had the opportunity to say thank you to a number of our customers on the Kuranda Scenic Railway at the Freshwater Station. It is a beautiful part of Queensland. We were delighted to have over 400,000 customers there to take the Kuranda Scenic Railway and visit the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage listed area. Today was a special celebration as well with cupcakes and people receiving pins for the 160th anniversary.

We are delighted to announce that for Ekka People's Day, which will be on Wednesday the 13th, *Betty*, the loco, will be back and will be providing services—circuits going from Roma Street to Central through to Fortitude Valley and arriving at the Exhibition. I am promised that assuming that *Betty* is still able to do that, because she was born in 1958, I believe, at Maryborough, she will be doing eight tours of that. People will have a wonderful opportunity to enjoy that.

In addition to that, of course, there is more and that relates to the beautiful Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers where there will be more services provided as well so people can enjoy the beautiful location. I am told by my team there is a surprise as well for the end of the year which I am not allowed to reveal, but it will relate to kids and will provide them with a very special opportunity to celebrate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms Stapleton, for that answer. Given the time—and I am going to give the member for Aspley a small opportunity as well—I would like to acknowledge the 160th birthday of Queensland Rail and acknowledge that on the weekend I represented the minister on that historic re-enactment from Ipswich to Grandchester. It was a great day for everyone, even though a storm cut it short. Given the time—we have one minute until the designated break—member for Aspley,

I will give you a very short leash to add something to say happy birthday to Queensland Rail and then we will take a break.

Mr MELLISH: I will be very quick, Deputy Speaker. Happy birthday to Queensland Rail. It was great also recently to be at the celebration of the last EMU trains that were travelling on the network. It was a really good day and QR put on a really good event. It was fantastic to see. It would have been great to see the minister there. He could not make it, unfortunately, but it was a really fantastic event celebrating the last of the EMU trains. Happy birthday to Queensland Rail as we go off to the break.

Ms Stapleton: Thank you, honourable member.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not quite 7.15, but we will make up that time by resuming proceedings at 7.29 pm. The committee will suspend its proceedings for 15 minutes.

Proceedings suspended from 7.14 pm to 7.29 pm.

 **Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** We will resume our proceedings now with the examination of the estimates for the portfolio of transport and main roads. At the break, we finished with the government members' questions, so I will turn to the non-government side.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, in relation to workers at Downer's Maryborough manufacturing facility, has the department developed a package to save the workers at Downer's Maryborough facility who were told earlier this year their roles could be made redundant by the end of the year?

Ms Stannard: Downer undertake a range of heavy maintenance, overhaul and manufacturing activities at their existing Maryborough service delivery centre. It has been the centre of train manufacturing for many decades. It is a very large facility. Downer currently undertake work for many clients at that site, both private and government clients. Workforce matters at that site are really matters for Downer to work through. Certainly we are exploring what work we need done across the rail program, and it is a growing rail program, but workforce matters are really for Downer with their employees.

Mr MELLISH: I have a couple of questions for the Queensland Rail CEO. Welcome back, Ms Stapleton. You said last year at estimates that 12 EMU three-car sets would be overhauled to continue their operations, and I note that Queensland Rail recently retired the last EMU from service. I am happy to table a transcript from last year's estimates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let's circulate that transcript, please, to all parties.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, who made the decision not to proceed with the overhaul of 12 EMU trains?

Ms Stapleton: Yes, I do reconfirm that at the time of the estimates last year the intent was to overhaul 12 three-car sets. Subsequent to that, a number of factors have come to light. The first one is that the opening of Cross River Rail was delayed from the planned date at the time to the date of 2029. In addition, Queensland Rail identified there was asbestos containing material inside the EMUs—not something for staff or customers to worry about but obviously something which would have impacted the cost of overhauling those 12 EMUs. As a result of these changes, subsequent to estimates last year, Queensland Rail has considered its current fleet. Now the fleet includes NGRs. Queensland Rail has access to a fleet of 75 NGRs as well as its own fleet which includes: 100 of the 200s; 120 of the 220s; as well as 160 of the 260s. The total of that is 123 car sets, or 60 six-car sets, so if you add the two—135. Our requirements to provide a timetable have reduced from 114.5 to 111.5 and, therefore, we have more than sufficient fleet to provide the timetable. As a result of that—noting that there is a delay in the opening of Cross River Rail—the view from Queensland Rail management was that the EMU refurbishment overhaul was no longer required.

Mr MELLISH: If Queensland Rail proceeded with these overhaul works, would that overhaul have been undertaken at Downer's Maryborough facility?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, that is a hypothetical question.

Mr MELLISH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: these were planned works as we have established from last year's estimates transcript. This was not hypothetical; this was a program that was underway.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you can ask that question without it being a hypothetical question.

Mr MELLISH: If I can rephrase: were these works planned to be undertaken at Downer's Maryborough facility?

Ms Stapleton: At the time the asbestos-containing material was actually identified, the work was being undertaken at the main yard facility by Queensland Rail related employees.

Mr MELLISH: I am happy to table a Queensland Rail media release from March last year which states that asbestos was a known issue in March last year, so prior to last year's estimates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will circulate that for members, as well.

Mr MELLISH: My question is: is it, in fact, the delayed Cross River Rail that is the main driver behind the EMU refurbishment works not being undertaken?

Ms Stapleton: That is correct; that is the main reason.

Mr MELLISH: Since the retirement of the last EMU, has Queensland Rail had to operate any three-car services due to limited rolling stock availability.

Ms Stapleton: I have not checked the latest three-car set statistics for the last three or four weeks, so if you can just give me a moment. It is something that I would have to check with the operational team in terms of the last four weeks, but it is not something that I am aware has been an issue. We typically operate a three-car service anyway between Rosewood and Ipswich. It would be quite a rare occasion that we would be using three-car sets anywhere else so at this stage I am not aware of any other issues impacting six-car services as a result of EMU retirement.

Mr MELLISH: Are you able to take that question on notice or come back to the committee by the end of the session?

Ms Stapleton: I certainly hope that I will be able to receive that information very rapidly. I certainly intend to do so before the end of the session.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the minister is in agreement—as I see he is—we will try to seek that information.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, do you have enough rolling stock at present to operate Cross River Rail services without the addition of 65 new train sets to be built at Torbanlea as part of QTMP?

Ms Stapleton: I do not have the exact numbers in front of me but from recollection for the preparation timetable, the soft opening timetable and then three-car operations the required rolling stock was going to increase from 114.5 to 119.5 to 122, roughly. Now, Queensland Rail, as I mentioned, has access to 75 NGIs as well as 60 six-car sets or 120 three-car sets of its own fleet so that is 135 to operate the required timetable.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I understand QTMP falls under the Department of Transport and Main Roads and this minister has oversight in relation to network operations. Are you aware of any delays to the QTMP rolling stock timeframe?

Mr MICKELBERG: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I do not have ministerial responsibility in relation to QTMP; that sits with Minister Last. Given there are no trains to run operationally right now, I would suggest to you I do not have ministerial responsibility for QTMP. Hence, this question should be asked of Minister Last.

Mr MELLISH: If I can add to that point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can contribute to that point of order.

Mr MELLISH: Whilst the minister is correct in the sense that he does not have responsibility for a QTMP as it is being constructed, he is the minister responsible for the train sets when they come into service.

Mr MICKELBERG: That would be a hypothetical, I would suggest.

Mr MELLISH: Are you saying that that QTMP is hypothetical?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Don't quarrel across the table, member for Aspley and member for Buderim. We do not need to have that. Member for Aspley, it is a valid point of order because you are asking about delays, as I heard, in the production process, which sits outside the responsibility of the minister. Perhaps ask another question.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am happy to move on. Director-General, I table an email sent in relation to the bus driver safety forum. I circulate that now. Director-General, who advised that the bus driver safety forum should come to an end, your department or the minister's office?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, if you need to take a moment to read what is before you, please do.

Ms Stannard: I am skimming through the email. I can see that it originated in the department. To the best of my knowledge that is a decision that the department has taken. I am not aware of any direction from the minister regarding that forum. As I skim through that quickly, I can see that the officer has identified the actions that were raised in the forum, our completion of those actions, our responses to feedback and one outstanding item that related to another department. I think my quick read would be that the advice from the department to the members of the forum has been that the work program of that forum has been completed and I note that the department 'appreciated the collaborative approach taken and looks forward to continuing to work with you on improving bus safety through other avenues and your usual contacts in the agency'.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, were you aware of a letter sent from the Transport Workers' Union to the minister raising concerns about bus driver safety a month before a bus driver was stabbed on the Sunshine Coast?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think considering the specifics of that question, the member should be able to validate that question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you mean 'authenticate'?

Mr McDONALD: Sorry, 'authenticate' is the right word, thank you.

Mr MICKELBERG: I have a further point of order, I would also suggest that sub judice is an issue with respect to the manner in which that question was asked. I think in a general sense that question could be asked, but the individual he refers to who is alleged to have been the offender is actually on remand right now.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two things: member for Aspley, are you able to authenticate the sending of that email? Actually, before I speak any further, let me seek some advice. Member for Aspley, can you authenticate the email?

Mr MELLISH: I am happy to ask it in another way without reference to the letter if that helps, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Also, can you assure the committee that in asking this question you will not offend the sub judice rules in the standing orders?

Mr MELLISH: Absolutely. Director-General, why was it only after the fifth attack on a bus driver in four months that the bus driver safety forum was reinstated?

Ms Stannard: I would like to put on record that any safety incident causes great distress to the department and obviously to bus operators who are out there on the network doing their job. It is horrifying to see those kinds of incidents occur on a network that you are responsible for. I can assure you that when that occurs we respond as quickly as we are able to.

We have done a number of things through the department to improve the safety of bus drivers, and I will note for the record that millions of trips happen each year without incident. So when tragic circumstances like this occur, it is horrific for all parties involved. I particularly think of the driver who was involved in the most recent incident. I also note that the vast majority of trips occur without incident, and that is what we are working towards. We have enacted a number of activities through engagement with unions, drivers, operators, our own staff, our interstate colleagues and researchers about what works to improve network safety. What I will say is we are not finished. The work that we and the commitment the minister spoke to earlier about hosting a round table is to say: given all the things we have done, what else can we do?

I will acknowledge for the record that some of the things that we have already undertaken include the requirement for all new buses funded by the department to be fitted with full driver safety screens. We are in the process of retrofitting, through some funding that continues in the budget for the retrofitting of full driver barriers. We have also done significant work with our network officer workforce to ensure that network officers are available in the depots of bus operators so they can be dispatched quickly using the intelligence that bus drivers are able to provide about what they have seen on the network. It is an important round table that is coming up and I will be all ears for anything else that we can do to reduce these incidents on the network.

Mr MELLISH: I have a question on a different matter related to buses, zero-emission buses. The EIO, expression of interest, went to market on this project in August 2024, but there has been little update since then. Is the government still proceeding with the zero-emission bus tender process?

Ms Stannard: The Zero Emission Bus Program has taken a staged approach, as is sensible to do with any new technology to the network and particularly with something that is about transitioning our bus fleet progressively over time. We are committed to ensuring that the transition to cleaner public transport is done in a practical, achievable and fiscally responsible way and that is why industry engagement was such a critical part of our work, both with operators and with those who provide buses.

Much work has been done to trial zero-emission buses and to progress the program. There is money allocated to the program in the 2025-26 Queensland state budget and that has been committed to further develop depot space required to support essential services on the network. The member would be aware that it is critical we have sufficient depot capacity available for any new buses we bring to the network, particularly battery electric buses where charging infrastructure is required. The depot will provide capacity for low-emission diesel buses, which can ensure services can be accessed by the community and for transition to zero-emission buses when appropriate to do so.

The department is working on a holistic policy on emission reductions for the public transport fleet. This work will support the whole-of-government work being undertaken. We do have an expression of interest, and the member was correct that that is in market and that we are currently assessing the responses to that process.

Mr MELLISH: I would like to call the Ports North CEO. Welcome to the committee, Mr Stevenson. Was it Ports North that provided advice to government around the \$826 million figure that the minister has quoted tonight in relation to the common user facility zone?

Mr Stevenson: My apologies—and I thank you for the question—do you mind repeating it? It is a little bit difficult to hear whilst this is printing.

Mr MELLISH: It is a loud printer. In relation to the Cairns Marine Precinct common user facility, was it Ports North that provided advice to the government around the \$826 million revised figure?

Mr Stevenson: The CMP CUF is a major infrastructure project at the port of Cairns which will involve the delivery of increased marine repair and overhaul infrastructure along with the relocation of several existing facilities within the port to facilitate the development. The project is jointly funded between the state and federal governments with an existing total commitment of \$387 million.

In June 2024 the then shareholding ministers approved the transition of the project from the department of state development to Ports North with a supporting ministerial direction which was issued on 17 July 2024. The transition of the project was completed in accordance with this ministerial direction on 25 September 2024. As part of the transition process, Ports North undertook a comprehensive internal project due diligence review. This review identified construction market escalation, insufficient design detail as well as questionable assumptions in previous estimations.

The recast of the estimate resulted in an overall program cost estimate exceeding \$800 million. Given the significance of the increased project estimate, Ports North are currently working with our shareholding departments and stakeholders on potential scoping or staging options with the aim of identifying a pathway forward to deliver a commercially and operationally viable facility within the existing \$387 million. Ports North are also continuing with the critical planning and design of the early works required regardless of the final scope and staging of the project, noting this is a very complex and challenging process that we are currently undertaking.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you, Mr Stevenson. Just a follow-up, the member for Barron River, Bree James, has said that private investment is required to progress the CUF project. Are you aware of any discussions around privatisation of the common user facility or delivery through a public-private partnership?

Mr Stevenson: Ports North are exploring all opportunities to maximise the best opportunity for the delivery of that project and we are not restricting that to any certain path. We are looking at the best option that can be delivered for the project.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you; that is all, Mr Stevenson. Minister, you have described the proposed Wave on the Sunshine Coast as having seamless transfer between rail and bus. Minister, when was the last time you have had to transfer from a train to a bus and when was the last time you caught a train?

Mr MICKELBERG: I will deal with the second part of the question first—yesterday. I was very pleased yesterday and today I was at Roma Street as well. It is always good to be out and around our network. I think it is important to get firsthand experience on all modes of transport—whether that is driving north of Noosa on the Bruce Highway, whether that is on our rail network or whether it is on our local bus network or our ferries. Indeed, I think travelling in and around our state is an important role

for the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, and occasionally I do fly as well. I have been out a couple of times with MSQ in the port of Townsville and others and I will continue to get out and around the state. I think it is important.

I note that the member's question references the seamless approach we are taking to the Wave. Indeed, the member's picture that he tabled with the theatrics at the start of the session today showed the proposed interchange, which will be a seamless interchange between the heavy rail section and the metro section of the Wave. We are very pleased to be able to deliver on our commitment—something that Labor have been unable to do. As a Sunshine Coast member, I think the Wave will be a game changer for the Sunshine Coast. We will deliver seamless public transport all the way to the Sunshine Coast Airport. This is something that has not even been spoken about before our government came to office.

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: the minister has not answered the first part of the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just hang on, member for Aspley, until I give you the call. I always take your points of order, but I would like you to just wait until I refer to you. Pause, Minister. Yes, you were saying?

Mr MELLISH: My apologies, Mr Deputy Speaker. The minister has not answered the first part of the question, so just on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What was the first part again?

Mr MELLISH: When was the last time he transferred from a train to a bus?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, continue your answer with that in mind.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is up to you how you answer your question, as long as you are relevant to the question.

Mr MICKELBERG: Indeed; thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am talking to the premise—the scare campaign, if you will—that the member seeks to peddle, which is that we are not able to deliver seamless public transport on the Sunshine Coast. What I would suggest to the member is that if he were genuinely committed to delivering better public transport for the Sunshine Coast they would have built rail to Maroochydore by 2020 as Labor said they would or to Caloundra by 2015. Here we are in 2025 and there is still no rail laid between Beerwah and Caloundra and it is the Crisafulli government that are getting on with the job of delivering better public transport for my community of the Sunshine Coast. I think the Wave will be a game changer for the Sunshine Coast. It will enable connections that service the Sunshine Coast in particular as a relatively dispersed community—

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr MELLISH: If the minister cannot recall the last time he transferred from a train to a bus, I am happy for him to come back to the committee by the end of the hearing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Aspley, for your point of order. The minister is being relevant to the question you asked. In speaking about connections, I heard him reference the heavy rail to metro connectivity. He may not be answering the question exactly as you would choose, but he is relevant, so the minister may continue.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I said, what the Wave will deliver for the Sunshine Coast is the public transport system that we have deserved for so long. We have a rapidly growing population on the Sunshine Coast and the failure of successive Labor governments—not just the most recent one but their many forebears—has sold the Sunshine Coast short, and the Wave will address that. What we are committed to with the Wave is delivering a connection to Brisbane, and that is an important part of the public transport solution for the Sunshine Coast—that is, a better connection to Brisbane than we currently have in the single-track section of the Nambour line. What we will deliver with the Wave is a better connection to Brisbane but importantly better connections for local residents on the Sunshine Coast.

Our Wave solution, which delivers high-frequency public transport on a dedicated corridor, is something that those opposite have not even spoken about, to be frank. At no stage have I ever heard the former government or the former minister for transport and main roads talk about delivering a solution for public transport to the Sunshine Coast Airport, and we have done that. Through our 2032

Delivery Plan, we are getting on with the job of delivering better public transport for the Sunshine Coast and it will be a seamless experience for those who are interchanging at the Birtinya station. We have been very clear about what that looks like. In fact, the member came in here himself and produced a picture that we have circulated. To be clear: that has come from the Department of Transport and Main Roads. We think it is something that we should be proud of to deliver a better solution for the Sunshine Coast—

Mr MELLISH: In theory.

Mr MICKELBERG:—and I am not going to step back for a second from our commitment to the Wave.

Mr MELLISH: Is the minister taking that on notice? Is he going to get back to us about when he last transferred from a train to a bus, because I did not hear that in the response?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, that is up to you.

Mr MICKELBERG: I am happy to keep going, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is up to the minister as to whether he takes something on notice or if he has concluded his answer.

Mr MICKELBERG: I am happy to keep speaking if the member for Aspley would like me to, or otherwise he can move on. Either way I am fine.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next question please, member for Aspley.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, you have just kicked off a yearlong e-scooter inquiry. When was the last time you rode an e-scooter?

Mr MICKELBERG: It is a tenuous question to the budget, but I am happy to answer it. I thank the member for his new-found interests in e-mobility and e-scooters—something that he ignored when he was the minister—and tragically last year we saw eight Queenslanders lose their lives using e-mobility devices like e-scooters and e-bikes here in Queensland. The former government's approach to dealing with this new technology and these challenges was to ignore the solution and put in place—and I have to be a little bit careful because I suspect I am anticipating some of the debate and the outcomes of the inquiry, so feel free to pull me up, Mr Deputy Speaker, but it will be difficult to answer this question without countenancing some of the challenges. The reality is that we have seen increasing use of e-scooters and e-bikes and other e-mobility devices and we are increasingly seeing a growing number of young people using those devices in particular. Used correctly, they play an important role but, similarly, we are seeing a significant increase in serious injuries and deaths, and not just amongst users but also amongst pedestrians, and it is not something that this government was prepared to ignore. It is why we have initiated the e-scooter inquiry—

Mr MELLISH: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: it is a pretty simple question here. If the minister cannot answer it, we are happy to move on.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Aspley. Member for Moggill, what is your point of order?

Dr ROWAN: As the question was asked, the minister is being responsive to the broad nature of this public policy area and his response is very important for the committee to hear.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Moggill.

Mr KING: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order: the question I heard was when did the minister last ride an e-scooter. That is what I heard and I do not hear any relevance to that. This committee is undertaking this inquiry that we are talking about and we will deliberate on that. We do not need to hear the minister's view of it at this stage; we just need an answer to the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kurwongbah and member for Moggill: member for Kurwongbah in particular to your point of order, the member for Aspley prefaced his question by saying, if I am correct, 'You've just kicked off a yearlong inquiry into e-scooters,' and the minister is addressing that part of the question. I will give the minister the call. He is being relevant, especially to that part of the question, and still has the ability to answer the question.

Mr MICKELBERG: I make the observation that I would love to see where it is in the budget papers, the e-scooter inquiry, or e-scooters for that matter, but nonetheless I am happy to move on and answer the member for Aspley's question in some more detail after I give some context as to the government's rationale for stepping in to address this concern through the parliamentary inquiry. It is clear that there

is widespread community concern in relation to the use of e-mobility devices like e-scooters and e-bikes. I think it is fair to say that is widespread across Queensland. It is why we have initiated the parliamentary inquiry. Our view is that that is an appropriate mechanism to be able to, one, listen to the views of community and, two, make substantive recommendations that will then consider the second-order effects of some of those recommendations. I think it is fair to say the member for Aspley's predecessor did take some steps to try to address some of these challenges, but they have not worked—at least they have not worked well enough, in my view, and that is why we need to do more.

To answer the member's question directly, I reckon the last time I rode an e-scooter—and I will admit that I am not a big e-scooter or e-bike aficionado—would have been in around July last year, a Beam scooter, from Fortitude Valley back here to the parliamentary precinct.

Mr MELLISH: It took us long enough, but we got there. Director-General, I table extracts from the 2024 *Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta public transport project—preliminary evaluation*. I will allow those to be circulated. Bearing in mind that is a summary and not the full report, is it correct that a dedicated light rail corridor to Coolangatta would result in 78 full resumptions to property, 157 partial resumptions to property and over 1,000 car parks lost?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-general, if you need to take time to look at that please do, but I will give you the call.

Ms Stannard: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. As I think all members would be aware, there is a review underway at the moment into the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 4 project and it is being conducted by the department of state development so I would not want to cross over that inquiry at this stage. Certainly the work that has been tabled is a preliminary evaluation which the department was responsible for, but I do know that State Development have now commenced that planning review and that the outcome that they give from that review will determine the next steps for the project. The member referred perhaps to some content that maybe is in this preliminary evaluation. I am not familiar with it in detail. I am happy to look through it, perhaps not at the time the committee wants to hear the answer, unless you want to point me to a particular page.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We might go to government members' questions for a period. There will be time for further questions. Member for Cook?

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, the member for Aspley claimed in parliament on 12 June 2025 that this budget would include cuts to regional rail services. Can the minister identify where in the budget these apparent cuts are contained?

Mr MICKELBERG: I think the member is referring to a comment where the member for Aspley said—

There are concerns that these connections to the Outback could be cut in the upcoming budget. This morning I asked the transport minister to guarantee that *Spirit of the Outback*, *Inlander*, *Westlander* and tilt train services will not be scaled back.

What concerns? The only people who are talking about reducing regional rail services are from the Labor Party. To get to the point of the member for Cook's question, this budget does not contain any reduction in funding for regional rail services. This is just another made-up scare campaign from the Labor Party. I want to be really clear that they have got form. We have seen it in Maryborough, we are seeing it here. We see it again and again. We are all far too familiar with the scare campaigns that are run by Labor. We saw it through the election period last year where a scare campaign was run on women's rights. That was shown to be a hoax. Without getting this crystal ball out, I reckon this one will be as well, member for Cook.

Having said that, it is important to acknowledge that these services have some challenges. They did not get a whole lot of love under the former Labor government and the required investment did not occur so we have a situation where some of the rolling stock is reaching end of life. On the north coast line, where I understand we have tilt trains that were supposed to be overhauled in 2018 but that work was never carried out, it is little wonder that we have seen declining patronage using some of these services because they were left to waste under the former Labor government. It is just another mess that we in the Crisafulli government have been left to deal with.

I want to make it crystal clear, in response to your question, that the Crisafulli government is committed to regional rail travel and regional travel. For people in your community, member for Cook, I know these services are important services, whether it is rail or regional air. I understand they are the lifeblood of communities in regional and remote Queensland. I know the member for Cook understands, but for all those who may not, I want to make it really clear that regions are not an afterthought for our government. Regional communities rely on good transport. Whether it is air services, whether it is bus,

whether it is rail, whether it is a road network, we are committed to delivering for every community in Queensland. Whether that is the member for Cook's communities or any other community up and down the Queensland coast and through the inland we are going to deliver and we are going to deliver on the mandate that they gave us in October.

I want to take this opportunity, however, to urge the opposition to abandon the politics of fear. Stop the fear campaigns. Get out there and talk to regional communities because they have got a great future. They also may want to, while they are out there listening to those regional communities, take the opportunity to apologise for ignoring those regional communities for the decade that they were in office. We will not ignore those communities. We will continue to invest in regional and rural Queensland because they deserve it and we understand how important those communities are to Queensland.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, with reference to the 2025-26 budget Capital Statement and funding allocation to the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority, can the minister provide an update on the project?

Mr MICKELBERG: It might be worthwhile for me to start by setting some context for the committee's benefit. The Cross River Rail project will increase the capacity of inner city rail services of the network and it will provide another river crossing. Contrary to what some of those in the Labor Party have peddled in the past, this is a project that the LNP support. But the reality is what we face today is not what we were promised. The previous Labor government said the project will cost \$5.4 billion and be open to the public by 2024. The only time that this project was ever going to cost \$5.4 billion was in the project business case. It could never be delivered at that price and Labor knew it. They tried to conceal the real price through a complex PPP arrangement, but when we came to government we made a commitment to be open and transparent and reveal that cost. Including all of the ancillary works the final price is going to be above \$17 billion—not \$5.4 billion; above \$17 billion. We will not know the final price until we have completed the negotiations with the contractors, but the real cost will be more than \$17 billion. That is without the trains or the new Gold Coast stations, to be very clear.

It is also unlikely that the project will be open prior to 2029. Mr Newton spoke earlier about some of the challenges that he has had to deal with over recent years. We are trying to get the project back on track by providing some certainty and some clear guidance in relation to addressing productivity across the state. Under Labor we heard that Cross River Rail was going to be open to the public in 2024, then it was 2025, then it was 2026—constantly slipping. I have been onsite and I cannot understand where the minister has got those dates from, to be frank. Major parts of the project, like the stations, are not nearing completion yet. I have been to Albert Street station and I can tell you there is no way it was going to be completed by 2025. Construction is an important part of the process and it is an important milestone, but even post that date we are going to need to undergo an extensive period of testing and accreditation and compliance, as the Queensland Rail CEO spoke about earlier.

Only after sign-off has been received from the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator will it open to the public. Post completion, we will also need to do a full post-mortem into the reasons for the delays, but certainly there are some aspects that I can touch on tonight. My observation is that the previous government's conduct in enabling, aiding and abetting the CFMEU impacted construction. There are no two ways about that and the 148 days of lost productivity due to protected industrial action is the most visible part of it. Mr Newton spoke about that earlier. I can advise that the contractor has agreed to a new EBA and following the CFMEU being put into administration we are seeing an improvement in productivity.

Following this government's approach to addressing the thuggery of the CFMEU we are seeing a better approach on site, not just on Cross River Rail but right across the state. We have seen a reduction in the CFMEU thuggery and intimidation that previously occurred on sites. The subcontractors I talk to just want to get on with the job so that they can feed their families. They do not want to be intimidated by CFMEU picket lines, as we saw under Labor governments. While it goes without saying, the government expects the full cooperation of the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and all contractors on the project as a part of the commission of inquiry into the CFMEU and the building sector.

As I have previously stated, negotiations with the contractors are ongoing and we will update Queenslanders on any significant developments as they occur. We are committed to delivering Cross River Rail. It will be an important project that will boost capability for the South-East Queensland rail network. We are committed to ensuring that we end the thuggery and intimidation of the CFMEU and the destruction of productivity across the state by a union hell-bent on using a business model that relies on destroying productivity. That ends.

Cross River Rail is going to be delivered by this government. We will continue to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to deliver Cross River Rail. I am really pleased to be able to provide

that update tonight. We are getting on with the job of delivering Cross River Rail and ending the destructive approach of the former government in relation to productivity on building sites in Queensland.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, I note the release of the Queensland Productivity Commission interim report into the opportunities to improve the productivity of the construction industry, which was released today. Can you provide some advice on the implications for your portfolio?

Mr MICKELBERG: As I said in my opening remarks, the report the member's question relates to provides some sobering detail on the impacts of the Best Practice Industry Conditions on the construction sector and on Queensland taxpayers. As I have stated, it has the potential to increase project costs by between 10 and 15 per cent. If we are talking about the \$41.7 billion QTRIP program, that is not an insignificant amount of money.

I want to touch on a couple of other recommendations regarding project sequencing and rationalisation. Under the previous government, we saw a range of promises that were made regarding infrastructure but there was never any ability and I would suggest never any desire to meet or deliver on those promises. We also saw project costs plucked out of thin air without the required planning. Of course, the Gabba is the best example of that but we saw it time and time again. The Gabba's \$1 billion cost was made up on the eve of issuing a media release only to see the project blow out to \$2 billion and then to \$3 billion.

The QPC report talks about the need to consider market capacity during project planning to ensure they are staged and prioritised accordingly. As part of our improvements to project planning, my department is considering market capacity to determine the appropriate scale of the program. The best example of that is our Bruce Highway Targeted Safety Program. Overall, we see this program as a great way to build capacity in our regions. In the meantime, we are looking at the ability in various markets to absorb additional work. We may focus on those areas with the latent capacity to drive the \$9 billion as far as we can for the benefit of road users and taxpayers. I acknowledge that this degree of flexibility has not been the way we have traditionally done things. Thankfully, our collaborative relationship with the federal government is allowing us to have those conversations about ways to drive our taxpayer dollars further.

The Productivity Commission interim report also talks about the need to ensure that the forward work program reflects the key priorities and ensures the scope does not include any features that add unnecessary risk and cost. This mirrors a recommendation of the Rodd Staples review into QTRIP. That review recommended prioritising QTRIP investments that align with the core government priorities. We are doing this because the Crisafulli government is committed to delivering for Queensland and we are committed to respecting every single taxpayer dollar.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, can you outline how the Wave and any other measures in the budget will improve connectivity on the Sunshine Coast?

Mr MICKELBERG: If I was sitting on that side, I would be asking this question so I am very happy to hear it from the member for Cook and I am happy to reinforce some of the points I made earlier. The Sunshine Coast has been let down by decades of inaction under Labor. I want to read a quote from the then minister, Paul Lucas, in a media release dated 29 August 2005 about heavy rail on the Sunshine Coast. He said—

We will establish the line from Beerwah to Caloundra by 2015, and up the coast to Maroochydore by 2020, bringing rail to the Sunshine Coast.

As I said earlier, it is 2025 and there is no rail to Maroochydore as promised. Labor did not even start construction to Caloundra, which was supposed to be operational a full decade ago. It is no wonder that the people of my community on the Sunshine Coast passed their judgement on Labor at the last election. The Sunshine Coast now has hardworking LNP members of parliament like Marty Hunt in Nicklin and Kendall Morton in Caloundra. We understand that the Sunshine Coast needs better public transport solutions and we will deliver a transport network that supports our growing region.

As a part of our 2032 Delivery Plan, the Crisafulli government announced a commitment to deliver the Wave, which is a generational piece of infrastructure that will keep the Sunshine Coast moving with a seamless public transport network across our region and I spoke about that earlier. We are getting on with the job. We are delivering; we are not just talking about it through press releases. We are getting on with the job and delivering.

We have the provisional and additional funding for the Wave stages 2 and 3 for accelerated planning in this year's budget. The Wave will deliver heavy passenger rail from Beerwah to Birtinya and

metro services from Birtinya and the Sunshine Coast Airport via Mountain Creek and Maroochydore. This goes somewhat towards addressing the earlier question of the member for Aspley: the first stage of the Wave will deliver 19 kilometres of new dual-track rail line from Beerwah to Caloundra, including the upgrade of Beerwah station and the delivery of Bells Creek station and Caloundra station. It also includes the delivery of supporting infrastructure such as stabling, park-and-rides at all stations, bus interchanges at all stations and new or upgraded active transport facilities around each station.

The Wave stage 2 will see rail extended from Caloundra to Birtinya, with additional stations at Aroona and Birtinya. Birtinya station will include an interchange, which we saw a picture of earlier, with the metro service connecting people to the Sunshine Coast Airport via Mountain Creek and the Maroochydore CBD, where we will deliver the arena for the games as well. The Wave stages 1 and 2 will be able to move 6,000 customers during its peak, with bio-directional frequency allowing for travel demand to and from the Sunshine Coast during each peak.

The Wave also includes the delivery of the Mooloolah River Interchange upgrade. The community in my electorate is sick of hearing about the MRI project, to be frank, because it has been ignored. In fact, it was cut by the federal Labor government with the endorsement of the then minister for transport and main roads. The MRI is an important project that will address well-known safety and congestion issues and improve north-south connectivity on the Sunshine Coast, particularly in my electorate, the member for Maroochydore's electorate and the member for Kawana's electorate. As I said, federal Labor pulled the rug out from under that project when they withdrew funding that had previously been committed and allocated by the then Morrison government. It was withdrawn by the federal Labor government as a part of their 2032 infrastructure review and, to be clear, it was a decision that state Labor accepted. The then minister accepted it. As I said, the MRI has been talked about for years. We will ensure that that vital upgrade is delivered in time for 2032.

In Caloundra we are spearheading an infrastructure upgrade program to futureproof the Caloundra traffic network and accommodate growth. This year's QTRIP includes funding for the Caloundra congestion busting plan, focusing on the pinch points on the Caloundra Road corridor. Works will divert traffic from congestion hotspots, boost capacity at key intersections and create additional connections. The Crisafulli government is delivering for the Sunshine Coast because Labor never did, and I am very proud to be a member an LNP government that understands the Sunshine Coast and delivers for the Sunshine Coast.

Mr KEMPTON: Minister, can you provide details on the government's approach to reducing emissions from the Translink bus fleet, and how does this differ from the approach of the former Labor government?

Mr MICKELBERG: The Crisafulli government is committed to the ongoing journey to reduce emissions from Queensland's transport sector, but we will not commit to actions that sound good in a media release but are completely unachievable. It is my view that that is not how you deliver for Queensland.

I am referring specifically to the previous Labor government's commitment that all new buses added to South-East Queensland's Translink network from this year would be zero-emission electric vehicles. In 2023 the feedback from the bus manufacturing industry to the then minister for transport and main roads—the member for Miller—was that the government's timeline was seen as being overly ambitious. Even if you were to ignore the industry experts, there was a rather large fly in the ointment that was Labor's plans. When you have electric buses, you need bus depots with recharging facilities. Labor never planned for the new electrified depots to be ready to accept responsibility for the approximately 130 electric buses that were due to enter the fleet every year from this year onwards. There were to be electric buses but there were no depots to charge them—that was the utopian vision that was sold by those opposite. It is the mess that we have now inherited and have to fix.

Upgrading a bus depot to cater for electric buses is not as simple as going down to Bunnings and filling your trailer up with as many extension cords and power boards as you can. As well as dedicated charging stations, the electricity demands from simultaneously charging multiple buses often requires significant grid upgrades, and I know the member for Cook understands that. It is costly, and these things take years to plan and implement. Labor knew this. Industry told them in 2023, yet they stuck to a goal—which I suggest was more of a narrative—that was unachievable. They knew it was unachievable but they held the line, nonetheless.

Buses are typically retired when they are about 20 years old, and retirements cannot be delayed for the years it takes to build an electric bus depot. If we were to stick with Labor's plan to replace old buses with new electric buses only that could not be recharged, we would potentially be looking at

hundreds of bus services being cancelled each day, leaving thousands of bus users stuck on the side of the road. That is not acceptable to me or to Queenslanders. That is why the Crisafulli government will implement a pragmatic plan to reduce emissions from Translink's bus fleet. We will not be locking the government into one technology. We will look at hybrids, at biofuels and at modern Euro 6 technology that will allow a genuine reduction in emissions and deliver environmental benefits without leaving thousands of bus users stranded. That was the inevitable outcome of the flawed policies of the former Labor government. We will not repeat those mistakes, and we are committed to delivering for all Queenslanders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to non-government questions. Do I go to the member for Aspley or to the crossbencher? Member for Noosa, welcome to proceedings. The member for Noosa is a participating member of the committee this evening. Welcome. You have the call.

Ms BOLTON: Good evening, everyone. Minister, my question is regarding the proposed Sunshine Coast waterways authority and the response to question on notice No. 840 that timeframes and stakeholder consultation will be considered during establishment. Can the minister clarify why Noosa is being considered for inclusion, given there has not been a community need or requests for consultation?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Noosa for the constructive approach that she has always taken in dealing with me both in opposition and in government. I acknowledge the member's ongoing work with Maritime Safety Queensland to address some of the challenges in and around the Noosa waterways. We made a very clear commitment before the last election to deliver a Sunshine Coast waterways authority to not just tackle some of the challenges in Noosa but also tackle some of the challenges that exist elsewhere on the Sunshine Coast in places like the Pumicestone Passage, the Mooloolah River and the Maroochy River. It is very clear that the community wanted to see different outcomes and better outcomes in these areas.

This budget allocates \$35.61 million to the Sunshine Coast waterways authority over the next three years. This was a commitment we made. We were very clear and transparent with Queenslanders prior to the last state election. This year we have allocated \$11.58 million to establish the Sunshine Coast waterways authority. We are working closely with Maritime Safety Queensland and the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, examining options for the roles and the responsibilities of the new Sunshine Coast waterways authority. The intent of that authority is to ensure we are better listening to the needs and concerns of community. We want the community to feel like they have a voice in the process of establishing the Sunshine Coast waterways authority and to have input into creating a management plan for the waterways that best reflects the unique needs and requirements of the Sunshine Coast. I hope that answers the member's question.

Ms BOLTON: As a follow-on, can you provide assurances that any proposed waterways authority will not override the determinations of local governments and communities in relation to their waterways and foreshores, nor use MSQ operational funds and resources?

Mr MICKELBERG: I have just spoken about the budget allocation in relation to the creation of the Sunshine Coast waterways authority. I will not go over that again. These are additional funds. These are not funds that have been repurposed from Maritime Safety Queensland or anywhere else. This is a commitment to establish a new Sunshine Coast waterways authority.

In relation to the first part of the member's question, as I said the intent of our commitment to establish a Sunshine Coast waterways authority is to better listen to the needs of communities. I would note that in the existing Gold Coast Waterways Authority framework the local government has a seat at the table. I am confident that local government and local communities will be well represented in the design of the Sunshine Coast waterways authority. Our intent is for them to have a better voice at the table to ensure the outcomes that are delivered for the member for Noosa's community and my community on the Sunshine Coast better reflect the diverse and unique needs of our communities. That is our intent for the establishment of the Sunshine Coast waterways authority.

Maritime Safety Queensland do tremendous work in ensuring our waterways are safe and well managed. I know the member for Noosa has a good working relationship with Maritime Safety Queensland, and we want to ensure that deepens over time. We want to keep our waterways safe, but we also want to manage the entirety of the Sunshine Coast waterway in a way that reflects community expectation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Noosa, do you have another question?

Ms BOLTON: Yes, I do. Thank you. Minister, can you advise where the \$30 million for the future stages of the Tewantin Bypass is currently sitting and why such short notice was given on how the QTRIP reporting format had changed?

Mr MICKELBERG: I will deal with those two questions separately. I will deal with the issue in relation to the Tewantin Bypass. We are committed to solving this longstanding issue. We have seen a decade of Labor inaction on it, which is why we made an election commitment and backed it with \$30 million. We are focused on trying to progress this project into delivery. We know how important this project is for the northern Sunshine Coast. Planning is continuing so we can deliver a long-term solution aimed at improving safety and traffic flow between Cooroy-Noosa Road and Eumundi-Noosa Road within the Beckmans Road corridor. Funding has been allocated to support the planning phase for the Tewantin Bypass-Beckmans Road project, and additional funding has been committed in this year's QTRIP to commence early works for the project.

As planning progresses, a concept layout for the upgrade will be finalised that will consider the long-term solution for solving this peak-hour traffic congestion, which I know is a considerable concern. My department has been actively engaging with Noosa council to ensure local input is incorporated into the planning process. Planning for the entire project is expected to be completed in 2028. Future stages of construction will be determined as the project progresses. My department will investigate opportunities to advance early works in line with the planning milestones. A further investment is committed to prepare a business case that considers future upgrades at the intersections of Diamond and Elm streets and Myall and Elm streets in Cooroy, and investigations will build on the preliminary planning conducted in 2019. That deals with half of the member's question.

In relation to the changes we have made to the reporting of QTRIP, on coming to government—and I am on the public record in stating this—I was advised that there were no projects within the QTRIP program that were under budget. The cumulative cost overrun on the QTRIP program was \$6.7 billion. That told me—not that I needed reminding—that something needed to change. The former government asked a gentleman by the name of Rodd Staples to look at the capital program. The advice that I received was that he was best placed to continue that work and look at how we roll out improvements to driving better value for money for the taxpayer. We asked Mr Staples to report on the capital program but also in relation to QTRIP.

What became very clear—and it is reflected in the Productivity Commission report today—is that we need to better manage the planning phase of projects, provide greater certainty to industry in relation to the timeframe and the funnel of work that is coming to market. The member may see that we have now included information in QTRIP that has never been provided in relation to the timeframe in which we expect planned investments to be made. Similarly, we have split QTRIP into separate sections—planned investments and contracted work. This is about driving better value for money for the taxpayer.

The simplest analogy that was put to me is that you never walk into a negotiation telling someone what you are prepared to pay. It is better that you say what you want built and then they give you a price and you go from there. The process we were taking previously is that we went to the market and said, 'We are prepared to pay X,' and then the market came back and said, 'Okay, we will do it for X.' That strikes me as not a particularly constructive approach. What we have done is try to drive better competition in the market by (1) providing greater visibility of the pipeline of work that is coming and (2) providing greater certainty in relation to when we will be going to market on that work. That will then enable contractors of different sizes to identify work that they want to bid on and prioritise that.

Frequently the feedback I receive from industry is that they do not feel like that is a two-way conversation, and that is something we have committed to addressing. We have re-established the QTRIP industry briefing as well—something those opposite ceased to offer—and we will be doing a face-to-face QTRIP industry briefing because we think that is an important opportunity to inform and to discuss our program with industry.

Our changes to QTRIP are all about driving better value for money for the taxpayer. I look forward to working collaboratively with industry. It has been very well received by industry, by the Civil Contractors Federation and by QMCA. When I talk to local contractors as well, they are pleased to see the timeframes articulated in relation to planned investments. We will continue to work with industry to ensure (1) we develop a pipeline of work that is sustainable and able to be delivered within the constraints that exist and (2) we drive better value for money for the taxpayer.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, can you just answer where that \$30 million actually sits because we cannot find it anywhere?

Mr MICKELBERG: In QTRIP.

Ms BOLTON: Somewhere.

Mr MELLISH: I want to go back to the director-general on the light rail corridor that we were talking about earlier. Is it your understanding based on your department's analysis that light rail is the preferred option for public transport on the southern Gold Coast?

Ms Stannard: At this stage the department is not doing any planning. We have put our planning on hold awaiting the outcome of State Development's review of the planning. I think we need to leave it at that.

Mr MELLISH: When do you expect to receive the outcomes of the review of stage 4 undertaken by the department of state development?

Ms Stannard: I understand the Premier spoke to this last week I think it was. I understand he gave a commitment that there would be advice to the community in the coming weeks or months. I think he might have said weeks, so I think it is quite imminent.

Mr MELLISH: Yesterday the director-general of State Development said different weightings have been given to southern Gold Coasters over central and northern Gold Coasters. Director-General, has your department had any input on what weighting should be given during consideration of the feedback received?

Ms Stannard: No. I can confirm that we have not.

Mr MELLISH: I will move on to a different topic. Director-General, has Maritime Safety Queensland ever provided advice that dredging in the Pumicestone Passage following the Bribie Island breakthrough would be cost prohibitive, of limited value and not recommended due to the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of the sandbanks and channels and, if so, can you please table that advice?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Chair: I do not believe that is under this department.

Mr MELLISH: If I can help on that, Mr Deputy Speaker, Maritime Safety Queensland is within the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, you heard and understand the question?

Ms Stannard: Yes. I understood the question is: have Maritime Safety Queensland through the department provided advice to the government with regard to the dredging of Pumicestone Passage? I will need to check on that. I do not have anything in front of me, so I could not confirm whether we have provided any advice specifically to that matter. We provide a lot of advice about coastal safety and maintaining navigable channels. That is really where our focus is. It is about the safety of vessels on the coast and in waterways. I would need to confer. We can come back during the session. The head of Maritime Safety Queensland is here, so I am happy to check.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that okay, Minister?

Mr MICKELBERG: Yes.

Mr MELLISH: I have a few a more questions related to Maritime Safety Queensland, if you are happy to come back on those as well. Is it easiest if I ask those now? If Maritime Safety Queensland is in the room, perhaps—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ask them now and if they can be answered I am sure they will be. If further inquiries need to be made, they will be.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, was Maritime Safety Queensland advice and the hydrodynamic modelling provided to the Premier and the Deputy Premier?

Ms Stannard: Specific to Pumicestone Passage?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, specific to Pumicestone Passage.

Ms Stannard: We will clarify that as well—hydrographic modelling.

Mr MELLISH: What cost estimates, if any, were produced for potential dredging or engineering interventions?

Ms Stannard: To the best of my knowledge we have not done any detailed study of this matter, but I will confer with colleagues.

Mr MELLISH: Have MSQ officers raised concerns internally about the government's public commitment to dredging, contradicting technical advice?

Ms Stannard: It is a large department of nearly 7,000 people. Internal conversations are probably not something I can comment on specifically, but I understand the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, are you happy for further inquiries to be made about each of those matters?

Mr MICKELBERG: Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. I make the observation that the member is correct: MSQ does sit under my portfolio responsibilities. Much of the matters he refers to are currently dealt with by the Deputy Premier's department. In the context of advice being provided by MSQ, we will aim to come back by the end of the session.

Mr MELLISH: Moving on, Director-General, has the department had any formal request from Brisbane City Council regarding financial support for the Story Bridge restoration?

Ms Stannard: I can confirm that we have not received a formal request for funding. I can confirm that the Brisbane City Council shared some of their technical assessment about the bridge, but it was not a request for funding.

Mr MELLISH: So there has been no formal request in writing or in discussions with Brisbane City Council?

Ms Stannard: There has been no formal request made to the department for funding for the Story Bridge.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, what discussions have you or your department had with Airtrain and its owners since November 2024?

Ms Stannard: I note the importance of train travel to the airport. It certainly is a convenient way to get to the airport. It was built and operated by Brisbane Airport Rail Link between Eagle Junction and the airport stations. The line was financed and built by Airtrain. Under the current agreement between Airtrain and the state, Airtrain owns the track and station assets and they purchase train services from Queensland Rail. As a result, they are able to set commercial fares on that part of the network. The agreement—we call it a build, own, operate transfer scheme—is due to expire in 2036, at which time that airport rail link would revert to the state at nil cost.

The department is working with stakeholders on the future transport needs of the airport precinct. It would be no surprise to the committee that airport access to the state is of vital importance when we host an event such as the Olympics and also because of the growing needs of the state. We are continuing to examine the airport precinct and consider value-for-money options for taxpayers in terms of how we best provide transport to and from the airport. Obviously there are a number of employees who work in the precinct as well as visitors. We are continuing to work with Airtrain in relation to the current agreement, but that agreement is commercial-in-confidence.

Mr MELLISH: While on a panel in March at the launch of the government's 2032 Olympics plan, the Lord Mayor said 'the Deputy Premier's got that under control' with reference to an Airtrain exclusivity contract and the metro expansion to the airport. Director-General, what discussions have you had with the Deputy Premier or the department of state development about the Airtrain contract?

Ms Stannard: I do not recall any conversations that I have had or that the department has had with the Deputy Premier on the Airtrain.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, the Deputy Premier, as we have learned over these estimates hearings, has taken charge of the Gold Coast Light Rail project and has been a key driver of the Wave project. Is the Airtrain another project the department of state development is going to take over?

Ms Stannard: The Wave is a project that we are fully responsible for. In fact, it is one of the projects that I am very proud to be involved in. I have watched the team mobilise so quickly to move that: stage 1, straight through procurement and now in the second stage of procurement; stage 2 in market; and stage 3 in planning for the Wave. That project clearly remains the responsibility of the transport department. The team is working as quickly as it can to move through what is a very exciting project for us.

The Airtrain contract is a contract that we hold on behalf of the government with Brisbane Airport Rail Link. Clearly the department of state development are colleagues of ours, and where matters overlap between transport and state development we do engage at officer level and will continue to do so.

Mr MELLISH: I have a couple of questions for the Queensland Rail CEO again. Ms Stapleton, it was reported in the *Courier-Mail* that leaked Queensland Rail documents show planning for a new train station adjacent to Victoria Park. Has Queensland Rail undertaken any work to that effect?

Ms Stapleton: I do recall the article. Also, that the issue was ventilated at the Queensland Media Club, which I believe was about three or four weeks ago. It is quite common for Queensland Rail to

engage with our colleagues in the Department of Transport. From what I understand, we had been requested to provide some technical information, which we did at officer level. These were not official documents. They were not approved by any senior executives like myself and were provided to the department under commercial-in-confidence.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, are you able to release that planning work?

Ms Stapleton: This was a commercial-in-confidence document, therefore, my preference would be not to do so.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, have you received or are you aware of any advice about traffic delays on the Inner City Bypass or delays to the commissioning of Cross River Rail if a new train station was built at Victoria Park?

Ms Stapleton: I have not been personally briefed on such matters. That does not mean there are not works underway at more junior levels, but I have not been updated on any such matters.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will move to government questions.

Mr MELLISH: I just have one more question, if that is all right. It is the exact same question to the director-general, which should be pretty quick. Have you received or are you aware of any advice about traffic delays on the Inner City Bypass or delays to the commissioning of Cross River Rail if a new train station was built at Victoria Park?

Ms Stannard: Obviously transport to the new Brisbane Arena and the aquatic centre is of vital importance. As a public transport professional and transport planner, it is fantastic to see venues in inner city locations where we have the best ability to provide mass public transport to concentrated destinations.

The location where the Brisbane Arena and aquatic stadium will be is within about a 15-minute walk of four of our busiest transport nodes on the transport network. Last year when we did not have Exhibition station in place the Herston busway station, which is just behind where the stadium will be, was a key access point to the Ekka. We know the busway has the capacity to carry 18,000 passengers an hour even before the metro vehicles operated on that network, so we know this area is very well serviced by public transport. The Exhibition station will be open this year for the Ekka. I am looking forward to using that to access that site. Again, it is a very close walk to this area.

One of the things we take into account when servicing major venues for big events is the ability for crowds to disperse as they leave those event stations, so that walking distance to those existing nodes is very important for us in servicing those crowds. Obviously as the master planning for the stadium and aquatic centre proceeds we will be examining the best transport solutions for that location. We will do that in conjunction with state development. We will continue to partner in assessing that location and ensuring it is well serviced.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to government questions. Member for Moggill.

Dr ROWAN: My question is to the minister. Can the minister advise how the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government's first budget is delivering better road infrastructure and enhanced public and active transport for residents of the electorate of Moggill, including upgrading the Kenmore roundabout, delivering an integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs of Brisbane, enabling pedestrian and public transport access to the Moggill District Sports Park. Can the minister also provide an update on the Centenary Motorway to Rafting Ground Reserve active planning transport project.

Mr MICKELBERG: I take this opportunity to thank the member for Moggill for his tireless advocacy for his electorate. After a decade of Labor inaction, I can confirm that safety improvements at the Kenmore roundabout are included in QTRIP this year and planning for the Kenmore roundabout project has commenced and is currently underway. This is a project that the former government gave up on. The Crisafulli government will not be giving up on projects like this in the western suburbs of Brisbane.

I can also confirm that included in this year's QTRIP is planning funding for the Moggill District Sports Park, which is underway. The planning will include a footpath to the Moggill District Sports Park and extension of the 444 bus, which I know is important, particularly in the member for Moggill's electorate. QTRIP also includes planning for active transport on Moggill Road. To remain consistent with the Crisafulli government's approach, we will do the required planning in a calm and methodical way to ensure we get the best outcomes for residents and taxpayers.

I am also pleased to confirm for the member that an integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs of Brisbane will be developed and will include extensive community consultation.

I thank the member for his advocacy to that end. It is anticipated that community engagement will occur early to mid next year, 2026, to provide the community with the opportunity to identify transport issues in western Brisbane. I look forward to working with the member for Moggill on this plan for his community of Moggill and for all residents in western Brisbane.

Mr McDONALD: My question is to the minister. Referring to the 2025-26 budget Capital Statement and planned investments in the Warrego Highway, can the minister provide an update on the Forest Hill Fernvale Road intersection at Glenore Grove?

Mr MICKELBERG: I know that intersection pretty well having lived at Forry Hill in the day. We all know that the Warrego Highway is a vital piece of road infrastructure that, like many other roads in Queensland, had maintenance neglected under the previous Labor government. The Warrego Highway is subject to flooding during major weather events due to the rise of the Laidley Creek at the Forest Hill Fernvale Road intersection at Glenore Grove, and we saw that during the most recent flooding event in March. In addition, the community has voiced safety concerns about the Warrego Highway and the Forest Hill Fernvale Road intersection due to poor visibility and increasing traffic demand. The current signed speed limit at the intersection is 80 kilometres an hour.

The Warrego Highway East master plan was established to inform how improvements to the Warrego Highway between Ipswich and Toowoomba will be delivered over the next 30 years and beyond. The Lockyer Valley Regional Council, which I know the member for Lockyer well understands, is currently undertaking flood modelling. When complete, my department is committed to coordinating with them as appropriate and initiating complementary planning projects on the state controlled roads.

QTRIP 2025-26 through to 2028-29 includes the following key investments on the Warrego Highway between Ipswich and Toowoomba, and I know the Deputy Speaker will be interested in some of these as well: the Warrego Highway, Ipswich to Toowoomba section, Bremer River bridge strengthening project; the Warrego Highway, Ipswich to Toowoomba section, and Mount Crosby Road interchange; and an additional funding allocation for the Warrego Highway more generally. My department is undertaking detailed planning and design on the Bremer River bridge and the Mount Crosby Road interchange projects to confirm the scope, cost and timing. We will continue to work with the federal government to determine and to progress future priority upgrades for the Warrego Highway.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, when will the Gatton to Helidon roadworks be complete so that our Lockyer community can use the improved roads without delays caused by the roadwork controls?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Lockyer for his advocacy in relation to this project and his collaborative approach to addressing some of the challenges we have had in delivering a number of different projects along that section of road. The Gatton Helidon Road is an important rural road connecting agricultural communities in the Lockyer Valley. Construction has been divided into four distinct geographic sections along the Gatton Helidon Road to enable two contractors to work at the same time. This will expedite the overall completion of the project and minimise the duration of disruptions as much as possible.

For section 1, which is between Robinsons Road and Gatton-Clifton Road, works being undertaken include vegetation clearing, pavement widening, guardrail installation, wide centre line treatments and audio tactile line marking, along with culvert installation, new signage and an intersection upgrade at Robinsons Road. For section 2, which is between the Lockyer Creek bridge and Armstrongs Road in the vicinity of Grantham, including the Old Toowoomba Road intersection, works being undertaken include substantial excavation works to the existing cutting to improve sight distances, wide centre line treatments, the installation of audio tactile line marking and an intersection upgrade at Old Toowoomba Road, including additional lighting, culvert installation and new signage.

Sections 1 and 2 remain with single-lane closures and speed reductions in place as works continue. I want to acknowledge the impact on the community and I ask for their patience as we work through delivering a better road for their community. We have worked to minimise that impact on the community as much as possible, with input from the member for Lockyer.

For section 3, which is between Nicholls Street at Grantham and east of the railway underpass at Lawlers Road, works being undertaken include resurfacing of the existing pavement, wide centre line treatments and audio tactile line marking, as well as additional turning lanes for the side roads, wide centre line treatment, culvert installation and new signage. Section 3 has had major work completed and has been opened to traffic in both directions. However, there are some speed restrictions still in place there.

For section 4, which is west of the railway underpass to Lawlers Road and east of the Warrego Highway underpass including the Flagstone Creek Road intersection, works being undertaken include pavement widening, wide centre line treatment, audio tactile line marking, turning lanes for side roads, culvert installation and new signage. Section 4 remains with single-lane closures and speed reductions in place. Major work is expected to be completed in mid-August, with the removal of speed limit restrictions and lane closures at that time.

Following the completion of major works at all sections, crews will return to complete the final seal and then to line mark the road, which is currently scheduled for September this year. That will take approximately one week and traffic control will be in place during that time. Of course all of these plans are dependent on favourable weather, which is good at this time of the year. I look forward to working with the member for Lockyer to keep his community informed as we finalise these works.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I reckon you would make a good regional director one day.

Mr MICKELBERG: No-one can replace Bill Lansbury.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, at the last election, the LNP committed \$20 million for upgrades to the Brisbane Valley Highway. Can the minister advise when the \$20 million Brisbane Valley Highway works are expected to commence?

Mr MICKELBERG: Our government understands that road condition and rideability are key concerns for motorists using the Brisbane Valley Highway. We are continuing to invest in this important link. In QTRIP 2025-26 to 2028-29, the 'Brisbane Valley Highway (Ipswich—Harlin), pavement strengthening' has been published as a planned investment, with funding allocated by our government. I want to take the opportunity to thank the member for Lockyer for his tireless advocacy on this project to improve the Brisbane Valley Highway. I also want to acknowledge the member for Nanango for her advocacy. Both members committed this in the lead-up to the last election. I know the member for Lockyer, as a part of our government, is focused on getting on with the job and delivering for the people of his community.

On the wider QTRIP, our government is restoring respect for taxpayers' money, as I said earlier, and we are returning a competitive tender process for major transport projects as a part of our annual QTRIP update. The new QTRIP framework will bring genuine industry engagement and competition, driving down project costs on projects like the Brisbane Valley Highway and delivering better value for money for Queenslanders. As I said, it follows from the review by independent infrastructure expert Rod Staples—which was commissioned initially by the former government but retained by the new government—trying to address the issue of spiralling infrastructure costs. We have implemented his recommended reforms, including stronger reporting discipline, to reduce the risk of unrealistic expectations and poor project planning.

As recommended by Mr Staples' review, the new QTRIP will ensure industry, funding partners and the wider community have the insight they need into our road investment program, while distinguishing between projects in development and in delivery, preventing premature costings and encouraging genuine market competition, as I spoke about earlier. Within QTRIP, more project planning will be undertaken up-front and projects will be tendered following more detailed planning. Project costs will be disclosed after they are contracted as well as upon final completion.

This is all about ending the waste and restoring fiscal discipline to make every single taxpayer dollar stretch further for Queenslanders. The previous Labor government routinely announced project cost allocations before the market even had a chance to competitively tender. As a consequence, they locked in big prices and they locked out delivering better value for Queensland taxpayers, and that is something we are going to avoid.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I acknowledge the member for Redcliffe as a participating member and give her the call.

Ms DOOLEY: Minister, referring to the role of MSQ in keeping our waterways safe and accessible, can you provide an update on Queensland state boat harbours and the steps this government is taking to ensure these assets are fit for purpose?

Mr MICKELBERG: I want to thank the member for Redcliffe for her question. It is great to have her here at estimates tonight. As I know the member understands, Queensland's state owned boat harbours support the economic, social and recreational needs of our coastal communities, like those in Redcliffe. They provide safe, accessible and well-maintained marine infrastructure. These harbours are strategically located up and down the Queensland coast and are owned by the Queensland government. Under the previous government, these harbours were neglected, unfortunately, and left to

deteriorate and they ran the risk of not being able to meet the needs of our maritime communities and industry.

Our government is revitalising Queensland's marine infrastructure, fast-tracking master planning for the state's eight state government owned and managed boat harbours through a \$13.2 million investment for accelerated master planning. This is all about supporting jobs, tourism and enterprise, and it is about creating opportunities for marinas, slipways, public boat ramps and maritime tourism operations. We want to ensure that our harbours are not only functional but also welcoming and sustainable. I know the member for Redcliffe wants to deliver the same outcome as well. Planning is already underway for Manly and Rosslyn Bay and boat harbours at Bowen, Mooloolaba, Snapper Creek which is at Tin Can Bay and Cabbage Tree Creek at Shorncliffe will follow.

Planning for Scarborough has already been completed and we are now turning our attention to implementation. It was tremendous to stand alongside the member for Redcliffe announcing recently \$3.9 million for the first stage of upgrades to the Scarborough State Boat Harbour. This comes after the Scarborough community and local industry tell me they have been waiting 20 years for a master plan for the Scarborough State Boat Harbour to be finalised. I want to acknowledge the now member for Redcliffe for her strong advocacy and her leadership in delivering for her community. Her support has been instrumental in ensuring this master plan reflects local priorities and aspirations. I want to thank you, member for Redcliffe.

Through the master planning and the implementation process, this government will consult with and will inform the public and industry. As I alluded to, the member for Redcliffe and I were at Scarborough a couple of weeks ago. We held a round table with stakeholders where there was broad agreement reached on how the \$3.9 million should be invested in the state boat harbour at Scarborough. New public facilities, green spaces and parking have been nominated as some of the first priorities, and these important and long overdue master plans will ensure that the state boat harbours continue to serve their strategic purpose, supporting jobs, tourism and industry and connecting communities right up and down our coast.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will move to non-government questions. I acknowledge the member for Cooper.

Ms BUSH: Good evening, Director-General. Have you or your department been asked by any member of the minister's office for data relating to traffic offences committed by women?

Ms Stannard: No, we have not.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I note the Rodd Staples review recommended a deep dive on the Cross River Rail project. Has that deep dive commenced?

Ms Stannard: To confirm, are you referring to the report done at the time when you were in government or the second report?

Mr MELLISH: The initial one, I believe—reference to Cross River Rail.

Ms Stannard: I think I recall the work and certainly Rodd did some work, together with the CEO of Cross River Rail, to give us some advice around the project and particularly at the time we were entering into negotiations with the current contractor. As the CEO reported tonight, those negotiations are ongoing. It was important information, conversations and advice that Mr Staples gave us, but that remains part of what we are using to inform our commercial negotiations.

Mr MELLISH: As a follow-on to that, will that deep dive be made publicly available?

Ms Stannard: On the basis that it is informing commercial negotiations, I think that would be unlikely, just on the basis that it would be commercial-in-confidence.

Mr MELLISH: In relation to the second Rodd Staples review if we can call it that, can you please identify where exactly in the review Mr Staples recommends that QTRIP should be reshaped to remove budgeted funding allocations?

Ms Stannard: I have a copy of the report which is on our website. I will refer particularly to recommendation B2. The recommendations are phased in As, Bs and Cs as different phases of the project.

Mr MELLISH: Could we just get a page reference for that?

Ms Stannard: Page 6, recommendation B2 refers to strengthening discipline in QTRIP reporting and communications for projects under development. The section I have highlighted for myself states—

Reporting should focus on what is known and controllable—strategic intent, expected outcomes and clear next steps, rather than premature cost and schedule estimates. Public reporting should be limited until scope, risks and business case approvals are clearly defined, reducing the risk of unrealistic expectations that can lead to poor planning.

The second part I highlighted states—

Development teams should test a range of benefit cost time options to improve value for money and support more informed government decisions.

We can only test those cost time relationships by working with contractors who will build the projects in order to get that constructability assessment. Sometimes we do that through dual early contractor involvement where we ask multiple teams to give us their views on how the project could best be developed. That occurs in a competitive process during procurement. It is one of the reasons that we would reserve that publication of budgets until after that procurement process had been completed to maintain that competitive tension.

Mr MELLISH: I suppose, Director-General, that recommendation does not talk about existing budget allocations or existing funding allocations; it is more forward-looking, from my reading of it. Has the government gone further in essentially removing the information in QTRIP of existing budgeted funding allocations, not only ones into the future?

Ms Stannard: QTRIP is published each year and it is very normal that we review the entire program. We take advice from all of the parties in the department, from each of the regions, about the capacity of the market in those areas, and it is very normal that we review the timing of projects based on the information we have to hand. A four-year look ahead is good, it gives some indication, but it is clear the third and fourth year of that is dependent on where we are up to in the market and what is going on in each of the regions at the time. Each year we do a program assessment—a very normal part of program management. I would say that is what you see in QTRIP this year, but informed by Mr Staples' work.

Mr MELLISH: Given that advice, Director-General—and thank you for the response—it would be, going forward, not wise for government ministers to say 'on time and on budget' in regards to the forward program of capital works?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Director-General, I think the member is asking for an opinion there. Member, you could rephrase your question or ask another one.

Mr MELLISH: Director-General, I will rephrase it a different way. 'On time and on budget'—is a commitment to deliver projects along those metrics no longer achievable the way QTRIP has been restructured?

Mr McDONALD: Point of order, Deputy Speaker. There is a clear imputation in that question and it is hypothetical.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could you repeat your question, please, member for Aspley?

Mr MELLISH: How can projects be delivered on time and on budget if there are no timeframes and no budget in QTRIP anymore?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think, member, that is perhaps making an assumption around the nature of QTRIP, but I am going to give the call to the director-general. I consider she will be able to answer the question.

Ms Stannard: I will not try to comment on what ministers could say or commit to, but I will note that the QTRIP program now has two sections. We talk about projects that are under development, and in those projects we talk about planning and where we are up to, where we intend to go to procurement and when we intend for construction to start. That is the best indication we have ever given to market about when they could expect to see procurement packages released and when we would hope to then move from procurement into delivery.

Certainly for contractually committed projects, we make a firm commitment there to the committed total budget, to the estimated expenditure in the first year of QTRIP, to the expenditure in the period post that first year of QTRIP and we also note any expenditure that has already occurred. Certainly for contractually committed investments, there will be transparency, and that transparency is published now in QTRIP for what the budgets are for all of those contractually committed investments. I can confirm for the member that certainly I feel very committed to delivering those projects on budget, given that that is displayed in QTRIP in that way.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, how many signal passed at danger events have occurred this year and by how many metres passed was each event? I am happy for you to come back to the committee in the remaining time if you do not have the information at hand.

Ms Stapleton: In terms of SPADs—signals passed at danger—for FY25 our SPAD rate was 1.43 in South-East Queensland and 1.87 in the regional Queensland. In terms of the count itself, we had 23 in South-East Queensland and five in regional Queensland—so a total of 28. The exact metreage may be a little bit more challenging for me to have all the details. I do actually have a whole list of the SPADs from 17 July 2024 and 18 August 2024. I have the list itself, but I do not have the exact metreage. I do have the location, if that is helpful for me to go through it right now.

Mr MELLISH: That is okay. If you have any more information that you can come back on by the end that would be useful.

Mr MICKELBERG: We have 20 minutes. I suggest it would be better we get a fulsome response from the CEO of Queensland Rail, rather than try to work up an answer in the better part of 20 minutes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That comment from the minister does have some validity because we are pushed for time; do you have more detail you can provide? If you would like to hear it, member for Aspley?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, I am happy to.

Ms Stapleton: Certainly. I will go one by one—there are quite a few to go through. On 17 July 2024, the location was Boree and it was a minor SPAD severity. The next one was 11 August 2024 at Exhibition, again classified as minor; 19 September at Gaythorne, again classified as minor. Then on 21 October 2024 at Petrie, again classified as minor. On 20 November 2024 at Bowen Hills, classified as minor. On 26 November at Tennyson, classified as minor. Can I confirm that this is helpful?

Mr MELLISH: Yes, that is right.

Ms Stapleton: Should I continue?

Mr MELLISH: We are happy with that response. I am happy to move onto the next question.

Mr MICKELBERG: I would like to hear it.

Mr MELLISH: As much as the minister would love time to waste the time of the committee—he has done plenty of that tonight—we do have a few more questions to get through.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, there is no need for those comments. You have the call to complete your block of questions.

Mr MELLISH: Ms Stapleton, how many customer service staff at train stations have been the subject of an assault this year?

Ms Stapleton: Certainly the safety of our staff and customers is of the utmost importance. Let me just find the exact location of the statistics. For FY25, we had 36 employee assaults. If it is helpful, I can share the number of customer assaults which was 165. There were an additional 373 graffiti incidents and 4,487 trespassing incidents.

Mr KING: My question is to the Director-General in respect of the park-and-ride program. Some \$6.6 million was previously budgeted for the Narangba station park-and-ride upgrade. I note there is an election commitment of \$6 million from this government towards the project. Can you confirm there is now more than \$12 million committed to the park-and-ride at Narangba station and, for the benefit of my community, when will construction on the park-and-ride commence?

Ms Stannard: As you know, in your electorate and in many across the region, park-and-rides are essential for connecting people to the rail network, particularly for communities where walking to the rail station might be harder so driving is very important. We have seen with the introduction of 50-cent fares that the use of public transport has increased so there is increasing demand across the network for people to access those train stations. In Kurwongbah we have seen increases in usage at locations including Petrie, Dakabin and Mango Hill. Other stations in the area have also seen good travel demand. We are helping to address that through rail services as well as bus services in those areas.

In October 2024, the Queensland government committed an additional funding to accelerate parking upgrades at Narangba station. The Narangba train station park-and-ride project will deliver more than 100 additional spaces. The project is currently finalising design, with early construction works expected to commence in late 2025 ahead of the main construction works in early 2026. The department is also finalising the Caboolture-Dakabin station access study, which is about identifying

service and infrastructure solutions to improve access to and around Caboolture, Morayfield, Burpengary, Narangba and Dakabin stations. I can confirm that is an additional \$6 million.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will go to government questions.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, can you provide an outline of what is being done to address the road toll?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Lockyer for his question. I acknowledge his work as a longstanding police officer who has dealt with some of the tragic consequences of motor vehicle crashes on our roads. Last year there were 302 roads lives lost on Queensland roads. On average, that equates to a shocking six fatalities each week. We are also seeing more than 7,500 serious injuries each year, but the number is likely to be higher because some people with road crash injuries are admitted to hospital without reporting the incident to police. Disturbingly, we have seen a significant increase in the road toll over past years. In 2019, we had 220 fatalities on Queensland roads and last year we saw 302 lives lost. That is a 37 per cent increase in just five years. We are not talking about statistics; they are real people and real families that are torn apart by road trauma. We are all responsible for road safety. This is a problem the government alone cannot fix but it is an area where the government can do more. The fatal five behaviours—drink and drug driving, speeding, fatigue, distraction and not wearing a seatbelt—continue to contribute to more than 60 per cent of lives lost.

Enforcement, of course, will continue to play a large part in our response. That means we need a police force that is adequately resourced. I know the member for Lockyer understands that. Visible deterrence is the best form of deterrence. When we were in opposition we spoke about the decline in police numbers as morale sunk under the weight of a government that did not back our frontline police officers. I note the recent release of the Police Commissioner's 100-day review that looked at ways to return police to their core responsibilities. I am working with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and my cabinet colleagues as we review those recommendations.

My department will also be exploring new technology to improve driver behaviour to assist police in their duties, but we also need a focus on making our roads safer. That is why the \$9 billion investment in safety on the Bruce Highway is so important. The 80-20 agreement with the federal Labor government is already resulting in important safety projects starting work, and this program will be focusing on safety enhancement such as white centre line treatment, overtaking lanes, intersection improvements and the provision of rest areas to improve safety and reduce the number of fatalities on that road and the resulting closures that impact communities up and down the coast. Tragically, we lost 42 lives on the Bruce Highway last year. The Crisafulli government is also developing a new road safety action plan for Queensland that will outline other ways we can put downward pressure on our road trauma and our road toll.

Mr McDONALD: Minister, can you provide an update on any works being done in Bundaberg to improve road safety?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Lockyer again for his question. The Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland. Tonight I can announce that we will be delivering a new intersection upgrade project in Bundaberg. As a part of the targeted safety intervention program, the Crisafulli government are funding an upgrade of the Bundaberg Ring Road and Telegraph Road intersection in Bundaberg East.

We are focusing on this intersection because of an increasing number of incidents. Between May 2019 and May 2024 five serious-injury crashes were reported with motorists struggling to find safe gaps in traffic to turn onto this busy road. Additionally, there were numerous near misses between cane trains and vehicles that have also been reported. With more development occurring in the area, we know that the pressure on this intersection will only grow. Works will include installing traffic signals, upgrading lighting and signage, and coordinating the new signals with the existing rail crossing to improve safety. Construction will start as soon as possible following procurement of a construction contractor.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the advocacy of Mayor Helen Blackburn from the Bundaberg Regional Council for this project. I have spoken to Mayor Blackburn a number of times and I met with her recently to discuss a number of issues of importance to her and to locals of Bundaberg and the broader Burnett area. I met with the mayor alongside our member for Burnett, Stephen Bennett, and I want to acknowledge his advocacy. I want to commend both the member for Burnett and the mayor for their advocacy on behalf of Bundaberg residents. I look forward to working with the Bundaberg Regional Council in coming weeks and months as this project progresses.

Mr KEMPTON: Referring to the 2025-26 budget Capital Statement and the government's planned investment to replace the Barron River bridge at Kuranda, can the minister advise the status and timeframes for this project and how the new bridge will benefit communities in the far north?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Cook for this important question. I know he has been waiting all night to ask this one. I want to acknowledge the member for Cook's advocacy alongside his far northern colleagues, including the member for Barron River, in delivering a commitment before the election to fix the Barron River bridge and getting on with the job post the election of advancing the job of fixing the Barron River bridge. He and I both know the Barron River bridge well. It is a critical transport link in Far North Queensland, and in 2020 inspections identified fatigue cracks in the steel components. We have funding in this budget which will ensure a new Barron River bridge is built to deliver safer, stronger and more reliable connectivity between Cairns and the Tablelands.

In the immediate term our government is continuing with \$40 million of preconstruction activities including dealing with public utilities and the geotechnical and cultural heritage assessments. We will focus on enabling works including critical geotechnical investigations in the Barron River, those environmental assessments, community and stakeholder consultation, and procurement activities including developing project tender documents and briefing industry. This vital project will deliver long-term accessibility for the member for Cook's electorate but also for the entire far north for businesses, freight operators, tourists and local residents. It will address the years of neglect and inaction under previous Labor governments. As I said, I want to acknowledge the advocacy of the members for Cook and Barron River. They have been tremendous advocates on behalf of their communities. It took the hard work of local members like the member for Cook and the member for Barron River to get this project going.

Engagement has already commenced with key stakeholders including local government and public utility providers. A briefing for industry partners to provide further information in relation to the project will be held mid-August this year. An ongoing inspection and maintenance program will continue to ensure that the existing bridge is safe until the replacement is open to traffic. As we said before the election, we are committed to delivering a new Barron River bridge, fixing the mess left by Labor. We are getting on with the job, now that we have been trusted with government, of delivering a new Barron River bridge. I want to thank the member for Cook for his advocacy on behalf of his community. I look forward to working with him over the years ahead to deliver a new Barron River bridge.

Mr JAMES: This is the lucky last question to the minister. Can the minister outline how the Crisafulli government's first budget is delivering road safety upgrades through the Safer Roads Sooner program including in my electorate of Mulgrave?

Mr MICKELBERG: I want to thank the member for Mulgrave for his question. I know the member for Mulgrave is a strong advocate for better roads not just in his electorate, but right across the far north and across Queensland. It is absolutely a top priority of our government to improve safety right across our state controlled road network, and the Targeted Road Safety Program does just that, including the Safer Roads Sooner program.

In February 2025 the Safer Roads Sooner Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the member for Thuringowa, Natalie Marr, convened to review the recommended projects. I want to thank the member for Thuringowa for her contribution as a part of that process. That committee brought together a diverse and knowledgeable group of stakeholders including senior representatives from my department, the Local Government Association of Queensland, Queensland Police Service, Bicycle Queensland, the Queensland Trucking Association, QUT's Road Safety Research Collaboration, the RACQ and Queensland Walks. The endorsement of nominated Safer Roads Sooner projects by those groups with their diverse range of views reflects a consensus across government, industry and community groups. It ensures that selected upgrades are not only technically sound but also align with broader road safety priorities and community needs in key areas. In order to achieve the highest safety benefit outcome, meaning a reduction in future crashes or similarly a reduction in the severity of crashes that may occur, most of the funding for both programs was primarily allocated to treat sites which have an identified crash history. Following this, our government approved all 58 endorsed projects with a total value of just over \$137 million.

The member referred to his electorate of Mulgrave. I can share with the member that the Gillies Range Road at Lamb Range, Little Mulgrave and Danbulla will undergo safety upgrades with funding under this program. I know this section of the Gillies Highway has a significant elevation change of 800 metres. I know the Gillies well having had to backtrack through there in a previous life when the Kuranda Range was shut. The winding terrain, narrow shoulders, sharp bends and frequently slippery conditions

as a result of the high seasonal rainfall are dangerous at times and this investment aims to address that. All of those factors have led to faded line marking, poor visibility at bends and inadequate barriers which are, of course, exacerbated during night-time or in wet conditions. I am pleased to share with the member that the Crisafulli government's first budget will fund new and improved warning signage. It will add new and improved line markings and upgrades to overtaking lanes, particularly in slow vehicle areas with modern design standards and upgrades and extensions to guardrails and rubber rails along that stretch of the road. Importantly, that project is funded and included in QTRIP and it is listed as a pet planning project with procurement to be undertaken this financial year.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, given the time, there were questions with further information being sought earlier; are you in a position to inform the committee about them?

Mr MICKELBERG: I will rattle through them. If I have missed any you can pull me up, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Aspley asked a question in relation to dredging in the Pumicestone Passage. I am advised that any information the department prepared regarding the dredging of the Pumicestone Passage was done so for deliberations of government and, as a consequence, they are not able to be disclosed to the committee.

Mr MELLISH: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. That is just saying they are not going to answer the question because they do not want to. That is pretty ridiculous.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order. In relation to the committee's question for which further information was sought, the minister may answer the question as he sees fit. The answer was relevant and so the answer is as the minister has given. Minister, do you have further information?

Mr MICKELBERG: Yes. In relation to the question concerning the commissioning of the Redcliffe rail line, I am advised that commissioning in relation to the Redcliffe Peninsula line is not comparable with Cross River Rail. One is a surface spur line with processor-based interlocking technology signalling whereas Cross River Rail is a tunnel with ETCS and tunnel ventilation systems which are far more complicated for any comparison between the two. I note that that commissioning was done prior to the current CEO of Queensland Rail's tenure at Queensland Rail as well.

In relation to three-car sets, I am advised there are no three-car sets operating on the Queensland Rail network as a result of the EMU retirement.

In relation to advertising on public transport, the member for Maiwar asked the amount of advertising revenue from public transport and what portion of that comes from advertising in relation to gambling. I am advised that agreements about advertising on buses are held by the bus operator directly. Operator-held advertising would need to be sourced externally from the operator and their advertising agreement provider directly. TMR requires its contracted bus service delivery partners to ensure all advertising complies with relevant legislation and industry standards. TMR also plays a role in setting guidelines for acceptable advertising formats to comply with Translink's livery and accessibility requirements.

Under SEQ service contracts, Translink do not request a breakdown of what type of advertising is on buses. As per the vehicle appearance policy, we ask that delivery partners follow any relevant laws, standards or guidelines. The regional contracts follow the same vehicle appearance policy and do not report on any advertising revenue under that contract type and decisions regarding advertising content are generally managed between the advertising agency or the advertiser and the advertising contract holder, which is generally the bus delivery partner.

Further to that in relation to Queensland Rail, Queensland Rail has policies in place that guide what can and cannot be advertised on its assets, whether that is billboards, trains or wraps. Those policies follow Queensland government guidelines. Gambling advertising is currently legal and allowed on Queensland Rail assets. In the financial year 2025 less than \$345,000 was received from gambling companies which is less than five per cent of revenue—\$6.9 million—and those policies are reviewed regularly.

I would also make the observation that in relation to advertising on public transport, if concerns are raised regarding the content, TMR will refer the customer to lodge a complaint directly with Ad Standards in the first instance via the Ad Standards website. Where a customer provides specific details about an advertisement and the bus service the advertising was displayed on, TMR will also raise the issue with the relevant bus delivery partner for their consideration and action.

In relation to the question asked by the member for Maiwar about the Brisbane City Council cycleway projects, I can advise the committee that there are three Brisbane City Council projects in the

area which are being supported by the Department of Transport and Main Roads through the Cycle Network Local Government Grants Program. I understand the project the member asked about is the Indooroopilly Riverwalk, Twig Street and Centenary Cycleway design shared path project. Brisbane City Council has completed the project and Department of Transport and Main Roads officers have been provided copies of the final designs. I can confirm that the total project cost was initially expected to be \$300,000 but was finalised for \$280,000 and the Department of Transport and Main Roads provided \$140,000 in grant payments to Brisbane City Council.

In response to a question from the member for Mulgrave, I just want to correct the record. I said 10 August. I misspoke. I should have said 5 August, just to correct the record.

In relation to the question asked by the member for Aspley around the portion of rail for the Wave and the portion of metro for the Wave, there is approximately 26 kilometres of new dual-track rail and 11 kilometres of metro to Maroochydore, with an additional nine kilometres from Maroochydore to the Sunshine Coast Airport. I think that is all of them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you—

Ms BUSH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order given that the session has expired?

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. We appreciate the responses to those questions. However, on the MSQ response, given the lateness of this evening and the brevity in the response, I would just like to invite the minister to perhaps consider taking that on notice.

Mr MICKELBERG: No, we will not be taking it on notice.

Ms BUSH: Then in that case, Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has—

Ms BUSH:—I would like to move a motion immediately thank you. I move—

That the committee writes to the minister and director-general regarding the matters that the minister undertook to get back to us about at the end of the session and have not done so adequately.

I am happy to go into private session.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just one moment.

Mr McDONALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, what was your point of order?

Mr McDONALD: My point of order was simply that the session has expired. If a member of this committee wants to deal with matters on another occasion, then that is an opportunity, not to try to do something now. As you said before, the session had finished. We were just getting the feedback from the minister.

Ms BUSH: This meeting has not been adjourned, we have quorum and I am a committee member who is moving a motion in accordance with standing orders.

Mr McDONALD: Under the orders of the House, this committee finished at 9.30. We have just been listening to the questions taken on notice that were outstanding.

Ms BUSH: I had put my motion prior to that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have heard both of your points of order.

Mr McDONALD: Just to assist you further, Mr Deputy Speaker, I did hear you caution the member for Cooper when you asked her, bearing in mind that the session had finished.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Member, the advice I have received from the clerk is that the motion is in order as it is not a question being asked of estimates; it is rather more of a procedural motion for the committee. So what I am going to do is, as I already have, I have declared that the session for estimates has expired. The committee meeting had not been adjourned, but in terms of the questioning of estimates and the consideration of estimates that has ceased. The committee had not been adjourned, so the committee has a motion before it which, in accordance with practice and, I believe, standing orders as well needs to be considered in private, but I want to make it clear to the people assembled here in the estimates session that the session has expired. We have reached the end of time allocated for consideration.

I want to thank the Minister for Main Roads for his presence and departmental officials as well and everyone else who is here in attendance for their work in assisting the committee. There were no questions taken on notice. That concludes the consideration of estimates by this committee at this hearing today. I thank Hansard for their work and I declare the estimates hearing closed. The committee will now move into private session to deliberate the motion moved by the member for Cooper. Good evening, everybody, and thank you for your attendance.

The committee adjourned at 9.37 pm.