

THURSDAY, 7 AUGUST 2025

ESTIMATES—EDUCATION, ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE— EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

Mr Speaker (Hon. Pat Weir, Condamine)

Committee Members

Mr NG Hutton MP—Chair

Ms W Bourne MP

Mr N Dametto MP

Miss AS Doolan MP

Ms CP McMillan MP

Mrs R Young MP

Hon. DE Farmer MP

Hon. LM Enoch MP

Ms C Mullen MP

Hon. SM Fentiman MP

Members in Attendance

Dr CAC Rowan MP

Hon. MC de Brenni MP

Hon. LM Enoch MP

In Attendance

Hon. JPH Langbroek, Minister for Education and the Arts

Mr Mitchell Potts, Chief of Staff

Department of Education

Ms Sharon Schimming, Director-General

Mr Duncan Anson, Chief Finance Officer and Assistant Director-General, Finance

Ms Tania Porter, Deputy Director-General, Early Childhood, Regulation and Communication

Ms Stacie Hansel, Deputy Director-General, State Schools Strategy

Mr Phillip Brooks, Acting Deputy Director-General, Corporate and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services

Arts Queensland

Ms Kirsten Herring, Deputy Director-General

State Library of Queensland / Library Board of Queensland

Ms Vicki McDonald AM, State Librarian and Chief Executive Officer

Queensland Performing Arts Centre / Queensland Performing Arts Trust

Ms Rachel Healy, Chief Executive

The committee met at 9.00 am.



Mr SPEAKER: Good morning. I declare this hearing of estimates of the Education, Arts and Communities 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 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 today's hearing. The members of the Education, Arts and Communities Committee are: Nigel Hutton, the member for Keppel and chair; Wendy Bourne, the member for Ipswich West and deputy chair; Nick Dametto, the member for Hinchinbrook; Ariana Doolan, the member for Pumicestone; and Rebecca Young, the member for Redlands, who is substituting for Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim. We have two substitutions in this session for Corrine McMillan, the member for Mansfield: the Hon. Di Farmer, the member for Bulimba, from 9 am to 11.35 am; and the Hon. Leanne Enoch, the member for Algester, from 11.35 am to 2.50 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 or Deputy Speaker's discretion or by the order of the committee. The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat.

Staff who are assisting our witnesses here today are permitted to use personal electronic devices in the chamber. I ask all present to ensure their phones and other electronic devices are switched to silent mode or turned off if not in use. 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 upstairs. 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 Appropriation Bill 2025 for the portfolio areas of education and the arts. 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 first session will examine the proposed expenditure of the education portfolio until 11.30 am. We will suspend proceedings for an intermission from 11.30 am until 11.45 am. I remind everyone that these proceedings are subject to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly. With respect to 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, 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.

I now declare the proposed expenditure of the portfolio area of education 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.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker; it is nice to see you here. I thank the committee for their service. I thank my office and the department for the extensive work they have undertaken in preparation for this budget and estimates process. Welcome to Hansard, our attendants and senior staff from my department.

I count it an honour to be the Minister for Education for a second time, with the addition of the arts to my portfolio. I believe that education changes lives. An effective education system's most valuable asset is its people. In every school I visit and in my department I see people with a strong commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of Queensland children, young people, their families and communities.

I, along with the Premier and my colleagues, take seriously the aspirations of Queenslanders and commit to delivering our promise of More Teachers, Better Education. The Crisafulli government is committed to: lifting educational outcomes; safe and disciplined schools; investing in additional teachers, teacher aides and specialist support staff; reducing red tape so that teachers can focus on classroom teaching; ensuring schools have access to quality educational facilities; and safety in early childhood settings.

We demonstrated that we put Queenslanders first by successfully negotiating a landmark agreement with the federal government to fully fund Queensland state schools. This is an historically significant increase of \$2.8 billion over the next decade which will flow through the Better Fairer Schools Agreement—a deal that the previous Labor government did not achieve.

As this is our first budget in government, I must preface that we inherited a system riddled with concerning matters, funding shortfalls and the consequences of poor management by the previous Labor government. We inherited a mess; however, the Crisafulli LNP government is up to the challenge of cleaning it up. To demonstrate this, the Crisafulli government has uncovered and released Labor's secret report which revealed the significant deterioration of Queensland's state schools infrastructure. Under the former Labor government, one-third of the assets were reaching end of life. This should not be a surprise, as last year's capital expenditure for Labor in state schools was \$341 million less than required—a 16 per cent underinvestment.

Funds were found to be diverted to other programs and projects and prioritised building new facilities, which gave the Labor Party plenty of opportunity to cut ribbons and put up plaques with their names on them. This is history repeating itself. In 2012 I inherited a \$300 million renewal backlog due to Labor's chronic underinvestment in maintenance and renewal. Now the repair bill is more than \$441 million. It is higher because delays and dillydallying have left infrastructure worse than anticipated. Once again the government is up for the challenge of fixing Labor's mess.

After nearly a decade of mismanagement under the previous Labor government, I am proud to deliver the Crisafulli government's first budget for my portfolio with a record \$22.4 billion for education, early childhood and the arts. Whilst we were in opposition we listened attentively and heard about the difficulties that teachers and principals were experiencing. We witnessed declining student attendance rates and learning outcomes. We witnessed teachers and principals burdened with red tape that undermined their capacity to be present in the classroom. We witnessed escalating bullying and violence. We witnessed the previous Labor government fail to responsibly steward one of our state's treasures: our education system. The struggles teachers endured under the previous Labor government are undeniable. They had years of being unheard and matters being unaddressed, which led to escalation and issues getting out of control. That is why teachers were marching this week—because of things that happened under Labor's watch.

However, we have listened to teachers and to the people who elected us. The Crisafulli government has already responded with tangible investments: \$44.47 million in Behaviour Boost to fund nation-leading, anti-bullying initiatives across all state schools; \$33 million to implement additional anti-bullying initiatives, including additional wellbeing officers and chaplains; \$12.7 million to strengthen the regulatory authority in early childhood with an additional 29 full-time regulatory officers; \$1.469 billion of funding to support over 106,000 students with disability through the reasonable adjustments resourcing model; \$12.372 million to expand Queensland Virtual Academy to deliver education facilities to regional Queensland; and \$32.619 million invested in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Mr Speaker, this is just the beginning. I look forward with determination to deliver our promise of More Teachers, Better Education to ensure all Queensland children have the future they deserve.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. I will go to opposition members for the first question.

Ms FARMER: Minister, what representations have you made to the Premier personally to intervene himself in EB negotiations with teachers, in the same way he did with police?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question and I welcome the shadow minister to the committee. An important part of our process with the negotiations to do with the enterprise bargain is that it has been a team effort. The Premier and I recently attended the Queensland Teachers' Union conference—and I know the shadow minister was there—and the Premier was very well received. He has often spoken about his good working relationship with the president of the Teachers' Union. Whilst we have my own industrial relations section of my department which does the specific negotiations in those 18 meetings to which we have referred, the Premier has been part of the discussions both between myself—in answer to the member's question—and with the union when it comes to the enterprise bargaining process. We are quite happy to acknowledge that it is a team effort. I work with the Premier on these issues in terms of the negotiations and then in conjunction with the Teachers' Union and the section of my department that deals with such matters.

Ms FARMER: Minister, you have just talked about the government having had 18 meetings with the QTU, yet your ministerial diaries show you had two meetings with the QTU between November and 1 July. Minister, has anyone in the meetings with the QTU had the authority to increase the pay rate offered to Queensland teachers?

Mr LANGBROEK: Sorry, can you repeat the last part?

Ms FARMER: Has anyone in the meetings with the QTU had the authority to increase the pay rate offered to Queensland teachers?

Mr LANGBROEK: Those meetings are ones that I have—as I know the shadow minister would have had when she was minister—which are regular meetings, quarterly meetings, with stakeholders, as most ministers do. I think there was one meeting that was cancelled due to the ill health of one of the members of the QTU, so we would have had three meetings. At those meetings—as I am sure the shadow minister would attest to in her time, even though I do not think she oversaw an enterprise bargaining process—there are generally general discussions. They are discussions of not necessarily specific matters. To the best of my knowledge and my memory of my last meeting, we did not actually discuss specific matters to do with the enterprise bargain.

Ms FARMER: Minister, if I could take you back to that question—and thank you for your response so far—I am talking about the 18 meetings that you referred to with the Queensland Teachers' Union over the enterprise bargaining, and I am asking if anyone in the meetings with the QTU had the authority to increase the pay rate offered to Queensland teachers, as it appears you were only at two meetings.

Mr LANGBROEK: I see. I think we are actually talking about different types of meetings here. The specific meetings are ones that happen between the section of my department that deals with that—and with the permission of the Speaker I am going to call my deputy director-general, Phillip Brooks, to the table to expand—and the meetings that I have are quarterly meetings with the Teachers' Union. The negotiations to do with the enterprise bargain—the 18 to which you have referred—are ones that are dealt with by my department. I am going to pass to Mr Brooks—

Ms FARMER: No, thank you, Minister. I do not need any further information about the meetings.

Mr LANGBROEK: Okay, sure.

Ms FARMER: Could I clarify: neither you nor the Premier have been in meetings specifically with the QTU to discuss the enterprise bargaining? Am I to understand that that is what you are saying

Mr LANGBROEK: No, we have had meetings. I am not sure if we are at cross-purposes here. What happens is: the Premier and minister will sit down, and we have had discussions which will appear in our ministerial diaries about meetings with the union representatives that are not yet diarised at which elements of the enterprise bargain will be discussed. So, yes, we have had another meeting. The 18 meetings are ones where our department will take forward what is the public sector wage policy—that is what has been offered—yet there are other negotiations that happen between the Premier and myself and the union representatives at meetings with them as well.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, is it correct that this is the first teachers strike in 16 years?

Ms Schimming: Obviously, this is an interesting time for us as teachers and as a profession because there have been a lot of conversations around what it is that we can offer to teachers to make sure we are meeting those needs. We continue to sit at the table and we are really optimistic that we will have an outcome—but, yes, in answer to your question.

Ms FARMER: Minister, do you take responsibility for being the first education minister in 16 years to have strike action taken against them because of your failure to act?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: in the question as asked by the member for Bulimba there is an inference and imputation and I would ask that it be rephrased.

Mr SPEAKER: There are imputations in the question and it is borderline argumentative so I will ask the member for Bulimba to rephrase the question.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to move on. Minister, last week on the ABC you said, 'We've made a couple of offers to the teachers' union, and they of course have been rejected.' I table those documents. What do you mean by 'of course'? Are you implying that teachers are being money hungry, or do you acknowledge they have a real case?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, just wait until you get that document. I will take the point of order in the meantime.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order is in relation to some of the language that was contained within the question. I would submit to you that that should be rephrased.

Mr de BRENNI: Point of order, Mr Speaker: in response to the Leader of the House's point of order, it is very difficult to rephrase a matter if it is a direct quote of the minister. I would submit to you that that correction cannot be made in a way that maintains faith in what was actually said and what we are seeking to examine.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, there was one section of that—

Ms FARMER: I am happy to rephrase.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, please.

Ms FARMER: When you said 'of course', is that you acknowledging that you knew those offers were not acceptable conditions for our hardworking teachers?

Mr LANGBROEK: I do not accept the premise of the question. The shadow minister is trying to suggest what I might have been thinking or what I might have been suggesting and that is inappropriate. When I was speaking in the press conference and I said 'of course', that was a statement of fact: they had been rejected. One offer was rejected within a day and one was rejected a week later. It was just a statement of fact. There was no particular reflection on anyone. I do note, by the way, in answer to the shadow minister's previous question, that the last two teacher strikes actually happened under Labor governments—one in 2009 when I was here and one in 2000 when neither of us were here.

Ms FARMER: Minister, I table a copy of a media clip from another interview which you did on ABC Radio on 31 July. In response to a question about QTU claims that if teachers accepted the LNP's wages offer they would be among the lowest paid in Australia, you said, 'It's the ... story of lies, lies and damn statistics.' Do you stand by that statement?

Mr LANGBROEK: It is something that I repeated in a press conference this morning. Someone makes a statement saying that teachers after an enterprise bargain may be amongst a particular level of payment, whether they are amongst the highest paid or the lowest paid. The point that I was making and that I will continue to make is that, depending on the negotiations that are occurring in different states as they are doing their enterprise bargaining at different times, their teachers—or any other profession that may be undergoing enterprise bargains in different states at different times—will be at different levels of pay compared to other states. In other words, if a state negotiates an enterprise bargain with teachers and brings in a pay rise, for a while that will make them amongst the highest paid in the country compared to other states that have not yet completed their enterprise bargaining. That is just a statement of fact.

I did make the point again this morning that, in other words, if we are going to cherrypick statistics, one of the offers we made in the second offer for an experienced senior teacher who would be paid \$134,000. I am advised that under the current agreement that would make them amongst the highest paid experienced senior teachers in the country—that was my point about 'lies, lies and damn statistics'. All of us who are here as members of the committee will be aware that we choose statistics to suit the narrative that we want to achieve. I noticed even the Queensland Teachers' Union in their comments yesterday have been loath—

Ms FARMER: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I take personal offence and I ask the minister to withdraw.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I did not hear a personal reflection offered against the member for Bulimba, so I would ask you to consider that with respect to the ruling.

Ms FARMER: Could I clarify what I took offence to?

Mr SPEAKER: I would be interested, yes.

Ms FARMER: The minister said all of us in this room would use statistics to suit our narrative. I am sorry; I dispute that.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not a personal reflection. Can you round out your response, thank you, Minister?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, certainly, Mr Speaker. I was referring to the issue of cherry-picking statistics—I am not trying to reflect on anyone particularly. When we talk about the Teachers' Union, I was completing the fact that I said that the teachers' union yesterday seemed to be quite careful in some of their statements about whether they would, as a result of the enterprise bargain that we are currently negotiating—they were loath to say as the 'lowest paid'. They said 'amongst the lowest paid'. It just shows that everyone should be careful about the things they suggest about pay rates and where we fit on the national scale.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, last week the minister said 'it's not as though you can sit down and make a deal in five minutes'. Could you advise how long EB negotiations have been going under the Crisafulli government without an acceptable deal for teachers?

Ms Schimming: I thank the member for the question. On 14 February this year, the Queensland Teachers' Union commenced negotiations for the replacement agreement. On 19 June, we provided an offer to the QTU to settle the negotiations for its consideration. The offer included a three-year term for a replacement agreement, increases to wages and existing allowances and also the Consumer Price Index uplift adjustment. It is not easy to navigate a new agreement. There are obviously lots of things that are part of the conversation.

The other part that is important to consider in this is that it is not just the things in the agreement that we talk about at these particular meetings; many of the things that the union consider that they need are outside of the agreement. As a department of education we have been talking about a lot of those things—about reducing red tape, about the occupational violence—many of those things are outside. We have got some very strong plans in place. In fact, the Queensland Teachers' Union have been very complimentary around those things that are sitting outside of the agreement.

Ms FARMER: You certainly would not say if those negotiations died in February and there had been 18 meetings, you certainly would not refer to it as 'five minutes' or a 'short period of time' that negotiations occurred?

Ms Schimming: I am not aware of any agreements that have gone really quickly. I would say it is probably a normal process that we have been going through with the Queensland Teachers' Union. In fact, I would have to get clarification around this, but I think that these offers have actually been put on the table far earlier in this particular arrangement than what we have done in the past.

Ms FARMER: Minister, did the member for Keppel as a registered teacher and member of the QTU ask you to reconsider the government wages offer?

Mr LANGBROEK: I am not aware of any such request.

Ms FARMER: Minister, the EBA for teacher aides expires on 31 August 2025. Going into their EBA negotiations, can teacher aides expect the same treatment teachers have received from the Crisafulli LNP government?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: within the question, I submit there appeared to be an imputation with respect to the language. I ask that the question be rephrased.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to rephrase.

Mr SPEAKER: That would be helpful, thank you.

Ms FARMER: Minister, will you commit to ensuring all teacher aides receive the pay and conditions they deserve?

Mr LANGBROEK: The Department of Education has five certified agreements; the honourable member is referring to another one. These are the industrial instruments providing terms and conditions for all the staff of the Department of Education. All five certified agreements require us to renegotiate agreements in 2025. We will negotiate with unions in good faith. Negotiations are required to be conducted in accordance with the Industrial Relations Act 2016. The current certified agreements will continue to operate until they are replaced. The status of enterprise bargaining negotiations when it comes to the teacher aides: as you mentioned, the nominal expiry is 31 August 2025. Negotiations can commence from 1 March 2025. That is the catalyst in respect of the Teachers' Union agreement, for

there to have been 18 meetings because negotiations will have started some time ago. As at 31 July 2025, negotiations have been in progress for teachers, nurses, teacher aides, cleaners and the Department of Education Certified Agreement.

Ms FARMER: Minister, is your department currently considering the log of claims from the Red Union—the Teachers' Professional Association of Queensland?

Mr LANGBROEK: Of course, that particular union is not part of the legal process when it comes to negotiating an enterprise bargain. Having said that, we believe—as we said in the last term of parliament—that they are a representative body of workers and we have put them on the red tape reduction taskforce. I have been happy to also have meetings with them as stakeholders. I have already mentioned to this committee that I meet stakeholders regularly. I think they are appreciative and their members are appreciative of the fact that they have been included because we do believe that they represent particular teachers who have chosen them as their overarching body. But when it comes to negotiating the enterprise bargain, they are not part of the enterprise bargain process. I have seen their log of claims which came out just the other day and they are not a part of either the official or unofficial process.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, did you or the department direct principals that they were only allowed to issue communications regarding the strike day yesterday to their school communities with department-provided correspondence?

Ms Schimming: As you can imagine, there is a lot of work for our principals to do prior to protected industrial action. The department team supported our leaders with a lot of information, frequently asked questions, as well as template letters that they could send out to their school communities. The principals feel as though they are really the meat in the sandwich when it comes to this because they know that they have a duty of care to their community. They also know that we support them to take that protected industrial action if they so choose. Part of that communication pack and frequently asked questions was actually a template letter that they sent out to their school community. It is important that we as the employer are the people who are legally responsible to communicate to our communities and as such, yes, that was the communication that they needed to send out.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, one more question before we swap over.

Ms FARMER: Thank you. I table a letter which I understand was provided to principals. When you get a copy of that, Director-General, I will ask you to read out the paragraph that is highlighted.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speak, point of order: we have not been distributed a copy yet to the committee, so I would ask that we have a copy before the questions are asked.

Ms FARMER: There were 10 copies provided. I am sorry Mr Speaker, we provided 10 copies.

Mr SPEAKER: Okay. Director-General?

Ms Schimming: Just clarifying, you would like me to read out that sentence?

Ms FARMER: Just read out the highlighted paragraph, please, for everyone's understanding.

Ms Schimming: 'While attendance will still be marked, if your child is absent tomorrow, they will not have this recorded as an absence on their attendance record.'

Mr SPEAKER: We will turn to government members for their questions.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, will you please outline what the recently released information in the asset lifestyle condition assessment, ALCA, means for the school infrastructure of Queensland teachers and students, and why has the condition of Queensland state schools deteriorated?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, it is very concerning. It was the subject of a press conference I did today. This is a report that we have called the *Comprehensive review of infrastructure renewal*. Unfortunately, it shows that a third of our state school infrastructure had been crumbling under the watch of the former Labor government. I referred to this in my opening statement. We have a repair bill of more than \$441 million that is now required to repair and replace the assets that are reaching end of life. We have commenced the extensive repair process, but it will take over several years because our maintenance budget does not allow us, at over \$200 million, to deal with a maintenance backlog of over \$441 million we have inherited. We inherited it the last time we were in government, between 2012 and 2015.

I want to give the committee some of the details of this comprehensive review of infrastructure renewal. It was commissioned by Labor in 2022, so clearly it was obvious that there must be some problem for them to commission a report about it. It reveals that more than 33 per cent of assets in

state schools are rated as poor or very poor by an independent assessor and that a significant repair bill of \$441 million is now required to restore them to a suitable condition. I believe that is due to this chronic underinvestment in maintenance and renewal. I know that extensive repairs are required at schools across the state to fix damage including leaking roofs, exposed ceiling trusses, crumbling retaining walls and rusted gutters.

Recently I was in Winton, where I saw schools with issues with their ovals. Importantly, wherever I go there are issues to do with infrastructure that I believe were leading to the frustration of our teachers, as expressed yesterday in that industrial action that was taken, where they are very concerned about a number of issues that we have taken as a priority since coming to government, and ones that I will expand on later, to do with behaviour, bullying and red tape. They are all things we have made specific announcements about, to work with our teachers and work with our school communities.

However, when it comes to the infrastructure backlog, it is clear in this report that the Labor government was kicking the can down the road and was diverting money from much needed asset renewal and maintenance to do things that would enable them to cut ribbons—things that are nice to have but not necessarily have to have. The member for Keppel, as a teacher, knows that working in poor conditions is something that is very demoralising. We saw that evidenced yesterday in the industrial action that was taken, with teachers very concerned about issues that are happening in their classrooms.

We have 1,266 schools, 178 early childhood centres and 27 outdoor and environment education centres, worth a combined total of \$40 billion. We have delivered an expansive \$21.9 billion budget which includes 15 new schools, but we have to maintain the schools that are there, because in some areas of the state that I visit the state of teacher resources and what they have to work in, compared to the new schools and school halls, which are certainly immaculate and very nice, really can lead to frustration amongst principals and teachers.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, can you outline how the Crisafulli government is delivering on its budget election commitments from Budget Paper 4, Budget Measures, in relation to school infrastructure in this budget?

Mr LANGBROEK: More than \$265.7 million over four years will be invested in upgrading and building new infrastructure across 50 existing state and non-state schools, establishing two new state schools and developing a business case for a third. The fresh funding package includes: \$100 million to deliver stage 1 of a new high school in Gracemere, something I know the honourable member will be very interested in because it is in his region; \$95 million for a new health sciences academy in Rockhampton; and a \$70.7 million schools and education boost. These education infrastructure commitments will deliver much needed upgrades to existing facilities and new equipment, boost security infrastructure, improve outdoor learning centres, develop business cases to position schools for the future, build new halls and performing arts centres, and establish new schools.

The Department of Education is working closely with schools in the scoping and planning phase to ensure the needs of the schools are met, minimise disruption where other works are taking place and provide the best outcome for the school communities. A total of 54 infrastructure related projects are scheduled to be delivered across the next four years. As at 30 June 2025, I can advise the committee, 22 projects are due for completion by the end of 2025, and 32 are due for completion in 2026 and beyond.

As I mentioned, we are establishing a new academy for health sciences in Rockhampton, catering for students in years 10 to 12. The honourable member for Keppel has been at some of those early meetings with the university we have been discussing it with. The academy will boost the pipeline of health workers in regional Queensland by helping to fast-track high-achieving local students into careers as doctors, nurses, paramedics and allied health professionals. I was pleased to attend North Rockhampton State High School, where we saw the training facility they currently have. We know that that region is in need of these health professionals over 30 professions, and we are looking forward to developing that through this term.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, can you outline how the Crisafulli government is delivering on its promise of More Teachers, Better Education in this budget?

Mr LANGBROEK: As I have already mentioned, when we were in opposition we heard about the difficulties that teachers and principals were experiencing: we saw attendance rates and learning outcomes decline, we saw teachers and principals burdened with red tape, and we saw behavioural

issues and violence escalating under the previous Labor government. Our election commitment of \$222.1 million has been provided to focus on safe classrooms, more teachers and getting back to basics to lift education standards as part of More Teachers, Better Education. Work is well underway to reduce the red-tape and administrative burden on our teachers and principals.

Extensive consultation has occurred through term 1 and 2 of 2025, with teachers and school leaders from across the state being invited to participate in a consultation near them, with almost 900 participants attending face-to-face and virtual workshops, 88 written submissions and over 14,000 online survey responses received in term 1, and 1,572 participants, 85 teachers and 1,487 school leaders attending workshops, 683 survey responses and nine written submissions received in term 2.

The department is already streamlining purchasing processes, establishing statewide expectations for communication between parents, guardians and their children's school and there is the delivery of a small school support plan. We have also announced a behaviour boost resource of \$44.7 million. In some of the examples I have heard schools have engaged a school-based behaviour specialist who will assist schools to respond to student needs and support student behaviour. Behaviour specialists may provide practical assistance to teachers, teacher aides and other staff in implementing evidence-based behaviour support practices for individual students or groups of students.

We have also committed \$33 million to new anti-bullying initiatives. That is a five-point plan that includes Rapid Support Squads; an anti-bullying stakeholder reference group led by psychologists and university experts; extra chaplains and student wellbeing officers in schools; a seven-day crisis line, Parentline, to offer free, confidential and immediate support to parents and carers; and, importantly at the local level, new and updated professional development resources to upskill teachers, teacher aides and support staff. As well as that we are providing 550 more school-based teachers and teacher aides over four years and have grown speech pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy by 59.1 full-time-equivalent positions to help students with specific learning difficulties. We are boosting professional development with an additional 200 teachers to be trained in STEM or inclusive education as well as providing more opportunities to upskill with mentoring and other professional development.

Importantly, we have funding programs to boost education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. I was at the early childhood section of my department yesterday where I saw those dedicated workers. In education we are continuing the delivery of attendance and engagement programs in 58 state schools with an expansion of new programs at Cherbourg, Murgon State High School and Beaudesert State High School from 2 September 2025 as well as funding provided to organisations such as the VIRB Education Hub in Caloundra to support the important work they do in keeping at-risk young people engaged in learning.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, something that is really important in my electorate of Redlands and to Redlands parents is our announcement of the \$100 Back to School Boost program. Can you explain to those parents of Redlands and Queensland how that works and how it will be implemented?

Mr LANGBROEK: I know this has been a signature policy of the government and I am very appreciative to the Treasurer, the Hon. David Janetzki, for the amount of \$188 million that has been allocated to our department. The Back to School Boost is a \$100 contribution for every Queensland primary school student from prep to year 6. I know the member for Redlands acknowledges that in her electorate and across all electorates, including my electorate of Surfers Paradise, people will be very appreciative of receiving this Back to School Boost. It will help parents, families and carers with meeting the cost of schooling. There is no doubt that in the cost-of-living crisis that we have been experiencing any assistance is appreciated.

The Back to School Boost contributions will commence in term 1, 2026. For state schools the \$100 Back to School Boost will be applied at a credit. In answer to the question from the honourable member about how it is going to work, it will be applied as a credit to enrolled student accounts at the start of the year. The credit will be used to offset school related costs that are generally passed on to families including books, stationery, devices, camps and excursions. I know, Mr Speaker, your electorate of Condamine is also a place where this will be appreciated. The non-state school sector will be responsible for administration of the Back to School Boost, including demonstrating how it is applied to reduce school related costs for its primary school students. The boost complements other measures that schools have in place to assist parents and carers. These include repayment plan options, fee discounts, fee waivers, devices for disadvantaged students, school food programs and the textbook and resource allowance in secondary schools.

I also say to the committee that we receive letters and emails every week from people, often parents, who feel they need some more assistance, whether it is with getting a laptop or adhering to the school uniform policy—and we are always at great pains to point out that principals have the

discretion and the resources, often in their school bank accounts, to provide assistance to students who are in need of support. It has happened over a long time, but we do not want anyone suffering the embarrassment of feeling they are left out or made an example of because of their inability to pay. I know that as local members we are all aware of these situations where family circumstances mean more assistance is needed, and we are at great pains to make sure that students do not miss out. Parents just have to make the approach to their principals, a chaplain or a student support officer and those things can be given attention to. That is something I really think we should be promoting in our communications with schools and parents. I thank the honourable member for the question.

Miss DOOLAN: I know that bullying is a huge issue in Queensland schools and it is something I have had personal experience with, so I am glad our government is taking action. With reference to page 1 of the SDS, will the minister please outline the Crisafulli government's \$33 million anti-bullying commitment and what action has been taken to date as well as any alternative approaches?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am sorry to hear of her experience, whether it was with bullying at school or the disgraceful actions we saw during the campaign in the seat of Pumicestone that led to her being the youngest woman ever elected to our parliament as a standard-bearer for young women for which we are all very proud. Some of the issues that happened—and I know I communicated with the honourable member during that campaign—were an indictment on the Labor Party in terms of the things they were suggesting.

I welcome the question because it has been a significant issue and, in fact, one of the major announcements we have made since we became the government was the five-point anti-bullying plan that I am going to outline. Having met with the university expert panel that is chaired by Professor Donna Pendergast, whom I want to thank for chairing this, one of the experts on that panel has pointed out that bullying is no longer straightforward. It is not what some of us who are older would designate as bullying and it is not confined to the schoolyard.

Unfortunately, over the last 10 years behaviour and violence under Labor was out of control. We know that bullying is a serious issue that can have long-lasting effects on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Modern bullying, as one of the experts called it, can be covert, psychologically damaging and difficult to recognise. It is hurtful insults hidden in jokes, it is the deliberate exclusion of an individual in a friendship group and it includes cyberbullying and miscommunication online. I am prepared to acknowledge that some of these issues are also things that happen outside school hours, which is why we have encouraged parents to have more awareness. I know the federal government is also doing this with their social media policies and we are looking forward to how they are going to be implemented.

The Crisafulli government have committed an additional \$33 million to implement this comprehensive five-point plan aimed at addressing bullying in schools. The investment marked the beginning of a broader long-term strategy focused on prevention, early intervention and support for students, families and educators. I have mentioned the anti-bullying stakeholder advisory group; the Rapid Support Squads; Parentline, a seven-day-a-week hotline with trained counsellors; and more chaplains and wellbeing staff, which was \$12.7 million.

I also mentioned for teaching staff in schools there is staff training and professional development as well as evidence-based training modules being rolled out to build the capability of teachers, teacher aides and school support staff to identify, prevent and respond to bullying behaviour. The Crisafulli government is also commencing statewide community consultations to engage parents, carers, educators and students in shaping future directions. The process will help ensure that responses to bullying reflect the experiences and expectations of the wider community.

It is important to point out to the committee that, as these things progressed over the last decade, the former government had 10 years to stamp out these behavioural issues and provide teachers with the support they deserve, but, remarkably, they failed at both. It is clear that the behavioural issues we are seeing in Queensland classrooms are a direct result of Labor's failure to provide teachers with the support and critical resources they need. That is why we made this significant commitment of \$33 million. We have already had the rapid support squads, as I am advised, go to about eight schools and we have had senior guidance officers in each region from term 2 go into schools where they are needed to provide urgent on-the-ground support directly to schools managing high-impact and high-intensity bullying incidents. However, there is more to be done in this space. We need families to be part of this as well, but it is really a society-wide issue.

Since COVID we have seen a change in attitudes of everyone in terms of interactions—interactions with us as MPs and interactions at supermarkets. That is one of the reasons we also brought in parent communication guidelines. I have been advised by teachers—and we also receive

various forms of messages across different platforms—that people seemingly think they can say things online via direct messages to us to which they want a response, but those things can also be interpreted, I believe, as bullying and need to be called out. That is why it is a society-wide issue, but it is something that we are determined to do more about in our schools.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We will now go to non-government member questions. We will go to the member for Hinchinbrook.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Firstly, I want to thank the minister for preparing today for his first estimates hearing. It is good to see you in the chair, Minister. I also want to put on the record the support of the KAP for our Queensland teachers.

I will change the pace here and turn to early childhood education for my first question. Minister, according to the SDS, \$12.7 million will be spent over four years and \$4.2 million ongoing for the Queensland Early Childhood Regulatory Authority to effectively regulate early childhood education in Queensland. Minister, there have been some harrowing and concerning cases of child abuse in early learning centres over recent months. Can you outline what additional steps will be taken by the department to ensure vulnerable children do not become victims of predators who obtain work in these centres?

Mr LANGBROEK: This is something that has become a very significant issue over the last medium and short period of time. We have had a significant case identified in Queensland over the last year, but most recently issues in Victoria and then at Tingalpa here in Queensland have really made it more obvious that parents across the state, educators and people who operate the centres realise that we needed to do more. I am going to outline to the committee the various things we have done lately—and there are significant things across government—but I share the concerns of the member and, I am sure, all members of the committee.

The majority of our 3,300 early childhood centres are doing a great job. We know that there is nothing more important than the safety of our children, whether they are in schools or early childhood services, but our very youngest children in early childhood services are particularly potentially vulnerable. Across government we have a number of ministers working together. We have a commission of inquiry into the child safety system. We have Luke Twyford from the Family and Child Commission doing a review into the blue card system—this is really important—together with the round tables that I have initiated following the recent issue in Victoria.

We had two round tables—one was in Cairns and one was here in Brisbane—and I want to thank all of the various parts of the sectors that participated. The peak bodies came because they are concerned for their own services in that there should be confidence in the services they provide. We are also working with the federal government, which has asked us to progress work so that our early childhood teachers are registered. About 60 per cent or 70 per cent of our early childhood teachers are registered with the Queensland College of Teachers, but there are a number of educators in our system who are not early childhood teachers.

We have also brought in mandatory child safety training. We had already funded over a million dollars, I am advised, for management in those centres to engage in child safety training, but now, as a result of Luke Twyford's reportable conduct scheme being brought forward, we are also working with the Australian Centre for Child Protection to develop a suite of resources so that early childhood workers will undergo mandatory child safety training every year. The Australian Centre for Child Protection was at the second round table and briefed us about some of the work it is doing.

It really has been a significant amount of work. My deputy director-general may care to expand on some of those things, with your indulgence, if you do not mind. However, I just want to reiterate to all of the committee that all of us have early childhood centres in our electorates and we are all concerned. One thing I want to say before I hand over is that there is no simple fix for this. Some of the solutions that were being proposed were phone bans. That is not going to work in family day care. Banning men was not something that has been considered and CCTV has been promoted as a cure-all. Those are very complex in out-of-school-hours care programs which share school facilities. I will hand over to the deputy director-general and then you might like to speak about the regulatory position, which I had forgotten to mention.

Mr SPEAKER: A couple of these issues are before the courts, so obviously just be careful.

Ms Porter: Correct; absolutely. As the minister has stated, we take the safety and wellbeing of children in early childhood education and care extremely seriously, and where the health and safety of children is inadequate the regulatory authority does not hesitate to take robust and appropriate action.

In fact, this year the regulatory authority has already prosecuted six approved providers and reinforces the message that the health, safety and wellbeing of all Queensland children and families is paramount. We also make sure that our regulatory data is publicly available and it provides transparency around the regulatory authority's work. It also encourages voluntary compliance and improved service quality within the sector.

In terms of support for our sector, I know that our stakeholders welcome the opportunity to meet with the minister and the director-general at our round tables, but the message has been very clear: child safety is everyone's responsibility. We are certainly taking our commitment to enhancing the skills and capability of our early childhood educators extremely seriously, and that is why we are providing those educators with access to tools, strategies and information necessary to prioritise safety and wellbeing. This includes a range of education, including videos that support compulsory regulation and compliance. It also provides protective behaviour delivered by the national association for the prevention of child abuse to over 555 educators just this year alone.

We have also had behaviour guidance training by Autism Queensland to over 448 educators which further strengthens our capability for positive behaviour support practices. This work has also been expanded to include an additional \$9.15 million over three years to provide services with access to intensive face-to-face coaching, because we know that these educators need that additional support. We have also invested an additional million dollars in reforming the early childhood safety program, an education and training reform program supported by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. This will design and develop support and, again, guidance for our services to be able to work and deliver safe and quality programs for our early childhood educators. These programs have all been informed by leading child safety experts who will be working with us over the next 12 months to make sure our early childhood professionals have the support that they need.

I want to outline that we have a strong commitment here to the child safety work, which is why we have been leading the national response to the review of child safety arrangements under the National Quality Framework. They are important measures including major new child safety and e-safety guidance for the sector that has already come into place and published this June. Further changes through regulation will come in on 1 September. They include safe use of digital technologies, including CCTV footage and digital devices, as well as a reduction of notification timeframes for reporting allegations and incidents of physical and sexual abuse. As the minister pointed out, all of these collectively will go a long way to ensuring that our educators have the tools they need and that children and families can access safe, quality early childhood education and care.

I know that education ministers are continuing to consider the results of a full national consultation that has just been finalised. This will be done in the coming months. These reforms will drive further critical reforms in the second half of this year. We will be looking at stronger requirements regarding the use of personal devices, as the minister mentioned, child safety training and also responding to inappropriate educator and staff member conduct, as well as improving the safety of the physical environment.

We are actively engaged—I personally have been actively engaged—with other deputy directors-general across government and across the state and senior officials are regularly engaging with their counterparts so that we can progress these really important national reforms. Additional reforms will be agreed by ministers later this year. They will look to do a range of other things to be able to strengthen regulatory responses in response to poor quality service delivery, especially for providers who operate across jurisdictions, the expansion of some joint compliance monitoring and increased availability, transparency and consistency of compliance and safety data.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can I round that out, Mr Speaker? I think the member for Hinchinbrook's question was, apart from those general things, in relation to the regulatory authority. We have added 29 extra staff. They are people who will make inspections. That is on top of the 19 who were there. The funding for those only went to June 30. We have more staff and, importantly, funded all of them. There will be a lot more. We want to make sure that every early childhood centre is examined once a year.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, you just read us out that letter that I tabled regarding children not attending on the day of action yesterday will not have been recorded as an absence on their attendance record. Could you, for the benefit of the committee, tell us what time in the afternoon students usually finish school?

Ms Schimming: Schools have made arrangements, in consultation with their community, at this point in time. There is an average beginning and start time is what I would say to you. Most likely, schools start anywhere between 8.30 and can finish at 3.30. It is a four-hour-and-50-minute engagement of instruction. It is usually a six-hour day, with the appropriate breaks that occur.

Ms FARMER: I table a document which I understand is a set of FAQs that was sent out to principals at 2.30 the day before the strike saying that students would be penalised if parents did not notify the school of the reason for their child's absence on the strike day, which is in contradiction of the letter that the department instructed principals to send out previously. Why is your department penalising students for teachers taking protected industrial action yesterday?

Mr SPEAKER: We will allow the director-general to have a quick look at that.

Dr ROWAN: Can I seek your guidance, Mr Speaker? I understand and respect the member for Bulimba with respect to the question, but it is seeking an opinion. I do understand the question as put, but I would submit to you it appears to be, under standing orders, seeking an opinion.

Mr SPEAKER: I think the director-general can respond to this.

Ms FARMER: It was a question to the minister.

Mr SPEAKER: My mistake. I call the minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: Safety of our students is always our highest priority. We worked closely with regional offices and schools to ensure that adequate supervision was in place for students who attended school on the day of the strike. Roll marking for students occurred as per normal processes. Parents and carers were notified of any unexplained student absence as soon as practicable after morning roll marking. If parents provided an explanation for their child's absence, roll marking records were updated accordingly. Where a parent indicated their child was absent due to strike action, their absence was recorded so as not to impact their attendance record.

Ms FARMER: Do you accept that the second letter sent out half an hour before schools were about to close the day before strike action is in direct conflict with the first letter that principals were instructed to send out about student absences?

Mr LANGBROEK: What I do concede is that it is very important that we make sure we have roll marking. When we talk about semantics around the first letter or the second letter, I do not want anyone to be penalised as a student because of an industrial action that was taken by teachers. Whilst they are able to take it, that was something that we said. The last time there was a strike under a Labor administration three per cent of students turned up. Yesterday I think 13 per cent of students turned up. I think it is really important that the roll be marked with the clear things that I have just read out. If an explanation is provided we have roll marking records being updated. I am not quite sure what it is that the honourable member is suggesting. I am happy if you would like to clarify. I understand that on this side sometimes we are not quite sure where the question is going. I am happy to have it clarified and I will try to provide an answer.

Ms FARMER: Thank you, Minister, no. I am happy to move on. Director-General, did the department instruct principals that they were not to survey parents about whether they would be attending on the day of action?

Ms Schimming: There was a great deal of communication with principals, as I said earlier. Strike action is really very complex for them: to be able to manage the safety of students and to make sure that they have the appropriate staff. What I can say is that as soon as the protected industrial action was public knowledge and schools were notified, the regional directors came together so that they could actually work through the frequently asked questions with the intent of supporting principals to be able to carry out their duties as per their role. Every day there were Teams meetings that occurred with the principals and the regional directors. Any questions that were asked were actually added to those frequently asked questions as we went along. Those surveys for principals to send in were really about us making sure that we had the right amount of supervision for the number of students that we predicted. It was very hard to predict how many students were actually going to be coming to school. In actual fact, we have had lots of really positive feedback from principals around the fact that we were giving them very clear guidance.

Ms FARMER: Thank you, Director-General. With the greatest respect, and I know what a great job you do, could I just take the director-general to the actual question: did the department instruct principals that they were not to survey parents about whether their children would be attending school on Wednesday?

Ms Schimming: I would say that the parents and carers were informed well in advance that schools would remain open.

Ms FARMER: Sorry, Director-General, I am asking a really specific question: did the department instruct principals that they were not to survey parents? I just need a yes-or-no answer.

Mr SPEAKER: It is up to the director-general how she answers the question. You cannot instruct her. Director-General, you have heard the question.

Ms Schimming: It might take a few minutes for us to go through the communication we sent out. I will come back to the minister with that answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Are you happy with that, Minister?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, happy to take that on notice. We will come back by the end of the session to advise on the specifics of what instructions were given to schools as per the member's question.

Ms FARMER: I think the director-general said it would take a couple of minutes, so that would be even better so I can ask some follow-up questions. Director-General, is it correct that the minister was to attend an overseas trip with you, leaving just before the QTU conference, and that he cancelled at the last minute?

Ms Schimming: A lot of planning went into a trip for us to look at our practices and make a comparison to other countries around that. There was a trip planned for us to look at that and, knowing that the portfolio has the arts as well, the Cultural Olympiad was part of that. There were a lot of benefits for us to go on that travel. Yes, that is correct.

Ms FARMER: Minister, the recent QTU conference occurred as the QTU was considering the department's second EB offer and as the previous EBA expired. That conference program lists the Premier as attending; however, your name was not on the program. Is it correct that the Premier insisted you cancel your overseas trip at the very last minute?

Mr LANGBROEK: I think this is the subject of a question on notice asked prior to the hearing and I have provided an answer. I am happy to expand. We heard about the QTU conference after the arrangements had been made for the trip. The trip had to be organised in line with the budget being brought down. There was a fine line then between our budget being brought in June and the UK school terms finishing for their summer holidays, so that is when the trip was planned. The QTU conference notification came to my office sometime after the trip had been arranged.

At the end of the budget week, it was decided that I would not be going on the trip. The director-general went with one of our deputy directors-general and that was with McKinnon, the foundation headed by former premier Mike Baird. That trip had been arranged. It was important for the director-general and the deputy director-general to complete the trip so that we can discover what is happening through the learnings that I think the Victorian department had done and Tasmania has done in the past with this particular method of school bundling that was being done in the UK. They then went on to Paris to discuss aspects of the Cultural Olympiad so that we could start planning our own Cultural Olympiad. As I have mentioned, question on notice No. 3 deals with this issue.

Importantly, I was able to attend the Queensland Teachers' Union conference along with the Premier—as I have already mentioned, I know the honourable member was there in attendance—and he was well received. That is where he announced the 140 workplace health and safety officer positions to be rolled out in 340 schools. I know this will make a difference to many of those teachers who yesterday were expressing their concerns about workplace health and safety issues affecting their schools.

Ms FARMER: To clarify, with the QTU conference coming up and with EB negotiations looking like they were not going very well, which is arguably the biggest issue in your portfolio, you still kept on with your intention to go on an overseas trip instead of the conference so that you could attend a cultural Olympiad. You considered that a greater priority than attending the QTU conference until the very last minute; is that correct?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there were some inferences contained within that question. I would ask that the question be rephrased with respect to some of the content as asked.

Mr SPEAKER: That question definitely was bordering on argumentative. Could you rephrase the question, please, member for Bulimba.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to go to the next question. Minister, I table several Facebook posts by the former shadow education minister and member for Moggill showing he regularly met with the QTU and attended their conferences. Could you advise why, as the minister, you do not see the QTU to be as important as does your colleague, who expected to become the education minister?

Mr SPEAKER: That question is argumentative, member for Bulimba. I will ask you to rephrase.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to move on.

Mr SPEAKER: In that case, we will go to government members.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, my mum was head of behaviour at Caboolture State High School so I saw from her experience the need for behaviour management intervention. With reference to page 1 of the SDS, will you please outline how this budget is investing in behaviour management initiatives to support students and teachers like my mum and why is this so important?

Mr LANGBROEK: Honourable member, can you please pass on the thanks of the government to your mother for her great work in our schools. The Crisafulli government is investing \$44 million over two years to strengthen behaviour support across all state schools. This was one of our first announcements and I was proud to make it with the Premier, the Hon. David Crisafulli, at Sunnybank Hills State School. It is funding that provides school principals with the flexibility to implement tailored strategies that best suit the needs of their students and broader school communities. To the best of my memory, I believe this doubles the amount of behavioural support that can happen through that \$44 million that we are investing.

Over the last 10 years under Labor, student disciplinary absences continued to increase whilst learning outcomes declined and support for teachers was not prioritised. Queensland students and staff have the right to safe and disciplined classrooms. That is why the Behaviour Boost initiative was designed to provide additional support to teachers and school staff, enabling them to manage behavioural challenges more effectively and focus on improving educational outcomes.

I want to point out, in response to a question that I was not able to answer from the shadow minister, that I acknowledge the current Leader of the House and his work in opposition in engaging with stakeholders and the unions. I know how hard he worked. He and I shared a policy adviser. In terms of support, he needed far more in his portfolio of education and the arts. Many of the initiatives are because of his work in opposition. I will go through some of those key features now: direct funding allocations to all Queensland state schools; flexible funding use, allowing schools to employ additional behaviour support staff or expand the hours of existing professionals such as teacher aides, guidance officers, social workers, speech pathologists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists; and support for professional development including opportunities for teachers to participate in mentoring programs, attend targeted face-to-face workshops or access specialist resources to improve classroom management skills.

Mr Speaker, there was targeted assistance even for our smaller schools, many of which you would have in your electorate of Condamine. Schools of seven students or fewer receive \$1,000 to support access to behaviour services or relevant professional learning. This initiative complements existing core school funding streams such as the reasonable adjustment resources, RAR, for students with disability, staffing allocations and curriculum grants. Together these measures aim to foster safe, supportive and high-performing learning environments across Queensland state schools.

One example that I was given recently was from Palm Beach Currumbin State High School. The principal has advised me that he is able to use social workers to engage with families outside of the school setting. Because of the flexibility, he was able to employ social workers to engage with families about these very issues of behaviour. That has made a significant difference because, as he pointed out, if he went to, say, a family's home he may not be received in the same way as if he used this funding to employ a social worker who gets much more positive results with the families with which the social worker is engaging. That was one of our first announcements.

One of the issues that was raised yesterday in the teachers' industrial action is behaviour in schools. It is one of the recurrent themes in all of the clips and articles that we have seen. I know from speaking to teachers that we do not expect anyone to have to put up with bad behaviour, but there are many different ways of dealing with it. I know that teachers in our special schools especially have training and have expressed to me that they understand the complexities of dealing with special school students. That is why this behaviour package is so comprehensive in terms of flexibility as it enables schools to choose what they are going to do. We know of the differentiation between schools in different areas. All of the members of the committee will have their own personal experiences at the schools in their electorates. Across the state we want the behaviour package to be flexible enough for principals and senior staff to be able to work out what it is that they need in their own schools.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, with reference to the SDS and regional delivery plans, can you please outline the financial investments in the local schools within the electorate of Moggill that are part of the state budget?

Mr LANGBROEK: I have known the member for Moggill since he was elected to this place in 2015, and infrastructure issues in his electorate have been quite frustrating for him and his local community. I have met with the P&C president at Kenmore State High School and toured that school. I have opened buildings in Pullenvale and Kenmore South as recently as last week. I can advise the committee that in 2025-26 nearly \$6 million—\$5.998 million—is planned to be invested in building and maintaining education infrastructure in the Moggill electorate. In 2025-26 the combined total annual maintenance and minor works allocation for schools in the Moggill electorate is \$917,216.

I have already mentioned the infrastructure report today. Many of our aging fleet of schools were built as state high schools between 1957 and 1969, and those with the highest scores of being in poor or quite poor condition are in Metro North and Metro South. Kenmore State High School certainly has experienced a lot of success in terms of student outcomes and amazing results, but it is surrounded by some very old and outdated infrastructure. Surrounding high schools seem to have been funded differently, and funding allocations made in the 2022 and 2023 state budgets of \$25.4 million were never delivered. There was \$6.524 million for contemporary specialist spaces—project 1—and \$18.876 million for a new multipurpose hall, but neither of these projects was built. This year I have approved projects 1 and 2 to proceed, based on the scope recommended by the department. Pre-construction activities are now progressing to ensure delivery of these projects for the benefit of the school community as soon as possible.

Further, on 28 July 2025 the school principal and the Kenmore State High School Parents and Citizens Association were informed that funding assistance up to a maximum subsidy of \$100,001 will be made available for the new outdoor learning project under the department's school subsidy scheme. I note the school project value is \$200,002, and the school will contribute \$100,001. This co-contribution approach to investment in infrastructure that enhances learning outcomes for students and the school community is a great outcome.

I also want to refer to another election commitment that the honourable member made in the lead-up to the 2024 election—that is, planning for a new high school for the western suburbs of Brisbane, including Moggill. During the 2024 election the Crisafulli government committed \$2 million in its first budget to complete a comprehensive business case, including the required planning work, to deliver a new high school for the western suburbs of Brisbane, including Moggill. Procurement is underway to commence an options analysis as the first stage of comprehensive planning for this proposed new school.

There are projects underway in 2025-26 at Chapel Hill State School and Kenmore State High School. I have not referred to Chapel Hill State School, but there is a plan to refurbish and extend the tuckshop, including installing a commercial kitchen, and replace the roof of the teaching block. I also note that Kenmore State High School was badly affected by ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. I believe it is the third time that its playing fields have been badly affected, and I know that is one of the issues the Premier, in his former role as minister for local government, talked about building back better. There are challenging geographical aspects of Kenmore State High School that make things very complicated, but we need to make sure that the infrastructure supports those students who, as I mentioned, are achieving great outcomes at one of our great state high schools.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, the Crisafulli government has successfully negotiated a new federal funding deal for education in Queensland. Can you please share what the new federal funding deal means for education in Queensland?

Mr LANGBROEK: This is a landmark agreement in my time as minister. Many members will be aware of the debate about Gonski funding, which was over a decade ago. We were able to say on 24 March 2025 in the Prime Minister's courtyard that the education wars have finally ended. We signed the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement—Full and Fair Funding 2025-2034 and an associated 10-year bilateral agreement with the Australian government. These agreements secure federal school funding arrangements for Queensland schools for the next 10 years. They ensure Queensland schools will be funded to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard by 2034.

The former government was trying to get the federal government to agree to increase its funding to 25 per cent—it had previously been contributing 20 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard—but when we came to government we were at risk of the old funding agreement expiring with no replacement agreement. There had been no Education Ministers Meeting—EMM—since April 2024. We also had communications from the other sectors—the Catholic and the independent sectors—that they were concerned they would receive no Commonwealth government funding for the 2025 school year. That is the situation I inherited when I became the minister in November last year. By December there were real concerns that both of those sectors did not have funding surety for 2025. The former

government had nine months, but it failed to secure a better funding deal. It was an absolute failure of the former Labor government, which had nine months to secure this new funding agreement. It was seriously concerning that Queensland schools came to receive no Commonwealth funding under Labor's watch.

We were determined to do something about that. The Premier had negotiations with the Prime Minister and the federal minister, the Hon. Jason Clare, and we committed to reach 75 per cent of the SRS—the Schooling Resource Standard—by 2032. Queensland's previous bilateral agreement only committed us to maintaining 69.26 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard. The federal government was basically saying to us, 'If you as a state aren't prepared to put in more, please don't ask the federal government to put in more.' It was increasing from 69.26 per cent to 70.5 per cent under the former government in 2024, which was still short of the 75 per cent the federal government wanted us to get to. Under our new bilateral agreement, we have committed to increasing our funding target for state schools from 70.5 per cent, which we inherited, to 75 per cent of the SRS by 2028—four years earlier than previously agreed. This commitment provides for an estimated injection of \$9.4 billion in state funding for Queensland state schools over 10 years.

In the meantime, we have signed a one-year interim agreement. I said that schools were concerned that they would not have funding for 2025, so we signed an interim agreement with the federal government while we completed the negotiations, which was done on 24 March 2025. As I have said, the Australian government has committed to increase its funding target for state schools from 20 per cent of the SRS in 2025 to 25 per cent of the SRS in 2034. This will provide an estimated \$2.8 billion in additional federal funding over the next 10 years.

We have committed to maintaining in non-state schools 20 per cent of the SRS for the life of these agreements and the Australian government continues to provide at least 80 per cent of the SRS for non-state schools in Queensland. The previous bilateral agreement allowed Queensland to claim four per cent of state school recurrent funding for indirect costs such as capital depreciation. This allowance will be progressively removed under the new bilateral agreement. Queensland will instead be able to count eligible expenses including up to 1.8 per cent of the SRS for direct school transport for state school students.

Under the bilateral agreement there are 25 continuing and 10 new, expanded state-specific actions against 10 national reform directions. Some of those are, for example, the phonics check and the numeracy check that we are going to do for students in the early years. These are things that the Commonwealth has asked us to do. We are planning to do the phonics check this year and the numeracy check will be done next year, after the trial that is going to be carried out early next year.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, acknowledging the now-released asset lifecycle condition assessment, ALCA, and its commentary on the deterioration of schools in Queensland, can you please outline how the Crisafulli government will be investing in maintaining infrastructure across Queensland state schools?

Mr LANGBROEK: It is very obvious—and I have referred to the fact—that we have a very large, aging and deteriorating educational infrastructure asset base, with a replacement cost of over \$40 billion. There are 1,266 schools, 176 early childhood facilities and 27 outdoor and environmental education centres. The *Comprehensive review of infrastructure renewal* report, on which we did a press conference today, indicates that in December 2023 the statewide asset lifecycle condition assessment program was completed, but that was after the original review had been done. As I have already mentioned, we have substantiated that there was a \$441 million maintenance or renewal backlog left by Labor.

We had onsite inspections performed by an independent asset management firm. The ALCA, asset lifecycle condition assessment, to which the honourable member referred, identified asset defects, condition, estimated type and scale or the quantity of works required and the timing to undertake works. ALCAs deliver a condition rating on a scale of one to five, where five indicates that a structure is in very good condition and one indicates that a structure is in very poor condition. Of course, they did not include assessments of relatively new schools and they did not include assessments of relatively new school halls. That is fair enough, as the newer ones would be expected to be in very good condition.

The department aims to ensure that all structures are maintained to an ALCA rating of three or higher. An ALCA is undertaken at each school on a four-year cycle by an external service provider and involves onsite inspections. The condition profile of assets inspected was: very good, 0.03 per cent; good, 6.17 per cent; fair, 60.06 per cent; poor, concerningly, 32.25 per cent; and very poor, 1.5 per cent.

ALCA onsite inspections excluded new schools constructed after 2017 and new buildings constructed after October 2021. It also excluded a number of asset types that are an intrinsic part of our schools. These include some of the service elements such as lifts and air conditioning. There has been significant investment by the former government in air conditioning. The concern for me is whether former opposition leader the Hon. Deb Frecklington making a significant announcement about air conditioning state schools in the term before last led to the then government saying that they were going to prioritise air conditioning. No-one begrudges our schools having air conditioning, but it is excluded from an ALCA.

Other items that are excluded include soft landscaping items such as trees, in-ground elements, sewers, stormwater and electrical elements—they are going to be subject to degeneration over time—internal roof spaces, and pools and pool equipment. I think we have 230 pools. The former minister would know that it can be quite difficult to manage issues related to pools. They deteriorate, as has happened to school pools in my electorate of Surfers Paradise.

The definition of renewal relates to the capital projects for major refurbishment and/or replacement of existing assets or major components of assets that reach the end of their physical life due to deterioration or failure. That leads to declining morale among teachers, as evidenced by their day of industrial action yesterday. When they compare how they work compared to those in other schools, that definitely is of concern to them.

Renewal is focused on the reliability and original functionality of the asset. Renewal decision-making is typically based on consideration of the asset's condition and lifecycle cost. Key drivers include structural or physical deterioration. We have heard about ceilings with exposed joists, termites in window frames and leaking roofs and gutters. This is of real concern. Reduced asset reliability is the risk of significant asset failures that result in major service interruptions and increased maintenance asset costs due to asset age and deterioration.

To that end, the Crisafulli government is investing \$589 million in facility renewal, legislative obligations, safety and upgrade programs. Having inherited a \$441 million maintenance backlog, this report shows and our study shows that it is going to be impossible to do it over one year. We have to make sure we plan it and hopefully level it out and then not end up in the same situation again. Otherwise, we are going to have facilities that are very unpleasant for people to try to work in. That is another reason for teachers to share their concerns about their conditions.

Mr SPEAKER: Before we go back to non-government questions, I remind members that they are here to ask questions and not make statements. If questions contain statements or the member's own opinion, they become argumentative and are likely to be ruled out of order.

Ms FARMER: My question is to the minister. I table a copy of a *Courier-Mail* article from 25 February which has the minister saying that he did not intend to meet the KPIs set for him by the Premier. Minister, is it correct that the Premier was very upset about this, raised it with you in cabinet and you challenged him to sack you?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: as the member for Bulimba would know, discussions of cabinet are cabinet-in-confidence. I would say to you that that question is out of order and I would submit to you that it needs to be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I would also say that the minister knows what is cabinet-in-confidence and what is not. I am sure he is capable of responding to the question.

Mr LANGBROEK: I think that is a quite extraordinary question. Normally I do not speak about cabinet. We do not speak about cabinet, but I can rule out that any of those things happened.

Ms FARMER: Minister, I table a copy of a *Gold Coast Bulletin* article from 6 August 2025 which shows you have taken five free limo rides to various glamorous events. Do you think it is acceptable that you are accepting limo rides from LNP donors while failing to give teachers a fair pay deal?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: that is seeking an opinion. There are a number of imputations in that. I am raising this under the standing orders. I understand the question as asked. I would submit to you that that question is not appropriate and should be ruled out of order. I do not even see how it could be rephrased.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to move on, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. That would help.

Ms FARMER: You did not attend the Isolated Children's Parents' Association conference, the Primary Principals Association conference and the P&Cs Queensland conference. I table the agenda for the Secondary Principals' Association conference, which also has you not attending; is that correct?

Mr SPEAKER: Did you want see the document first?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, thank you. It is not my intention to go through every item in my diary that I am not able to attend, but I would like to speak about a couple of those specific events. The former minister would know that when you are in a very big portfolio one is not able to attend everything. The Isolated Children's Parents' Association conference is something I have attended in the past. This time we had an assistant minister attend. In fact, a number of our ministers were there. The Hon. Ann Leahy was there. Sean Dillon, who is our assistant minister, was there. I think Trevor Watts, the member for Toowoomba North, may have been as well. That conference was held at St George which I was not able to attend, but I certainly got a briefing about the things that happened. I know the honourable member who has asked the question, as I understand it, attended as well.

When it came to P&Cs Qld, as per my diary, it is quite obvious when people look at my diary that I was at the arts and cultural ministers meeting. The Hon. Ann Leahy, who is also the Minister for Volunteers, kindly attended in my absence. I continue to meet with Scott Wiseman, who is the President of P&Cs Qld. I was at the School Business Managers Association conference just this week. Scott Wiseman was there, along with the Pat Murphy and Mark Breckenridge from the principals associations.

As I have mentioned before, I regularly meet with stakeholders. Of course the principals associations are very important parts of that, so I meet with those stakeholders quarterly, as I am sure the honourable member did when she was the minister. It does mean at times we are going to have diary conflicts. To that end, we are very appreciative as minister when people represent us. All of the government members here on the committee have made efforts to represent me but also other ministers including the Premier, as I do when asked by the Premier's department. It is something we do working as a team. It does mean that with a very crowded diary there are decisions we have to make that may not always mean we can go to every event.

I have addressed the ICPA and P&Cs Qld. I am not sure, honourable member, if there was another one.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to move on.

Mr LANGBROEK: One thing I would say though is that when there are priorities I do not go to a Pink concert instead of going to an asbestos concern at a local school.

Ms FARMER: I would like to go to the P&Cs Qld conference, which was held in your electorate. As you have said, the member for Warrego flew in on her plane to cover for you. I table your diary extract for that weekend which shows that in fact you were at a cultural ministers meeting but only on 6 June, with no official events or meetings on 7 June, when there was a full schedule of events at the P&Cs Qld conference. Why didn't you attend the conference in your own electorate? Is it because you wanted to spend more time in Tasmania or you don't like P&Cs?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Which point of order I am taking—the member for Moggill or the member for Keppel?

Dr ROWAN: My point of order is that there is argumentative content contained within the question as asked. There are inferences. There are imputations. There are a range of matters. I would suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that that question be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I gave a ruling just before we started this block. Member for Bulimba, I am going to rule that question out of order. You heard my ruling. I will ask you to respect it. Ask your next question, member for Bulimba.

Ms FARMER: I welcome the students and their very hardworking teachers who are in the gallery today. Welcome to parliament. Minister, for the benefit of the committee, could you advise the five interest areas that the QTU has been negotiating regarding EB11?

Mr LANGBROEK: Sorry, I was having a look at one of these articles that you tabled. Honourable member, could you ask that question again?

Ms FARMER: For the benefit of the committee, could you advise the five interest areas that the QTU has been negotiating regarding EB11?

Mr LANGBROEK: It is a matter of public record—whether it is about conditions in schools or whether it is about the public sector wages policy. There are a number of different conditions with which we have been working with the union trying to improve those conditions through the offers that we have

made, whether it is the Beginning Teacher payment or whether it is enhancing the Experienced Senior Teacher—the allowances that we look at that can be incentives. There are a number of different things that are part of the Teachers' Union request for which we continue to negotiate. I am happy to have the deputy director-general answer this.

Ms FARMER: I was really more keen to know whether you personally were aware of them.

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I think the shadow minister is offering opinion and commentary.

Mr de BRENNI: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the shadow minister has made it clear that the intention of her question was to test whether or not the minister himself was aware of this.

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I will finish the point of order here, if there is a point of order. So far I have not heard a point of order.

Mr de BRENNI: As far as I heard it, that question had been answered.

Ms FARMER: I am happy to move on.

Mr SPEAKER: I am happy to move on.

Ms FARMER: For the benefit of the minister and others, I will table a list of the five interest areas for EB11 which have been endorsed by the QTU State Council as the interest areas that are to be negotiated for EB11.

Mr LANGBROEK: I see as I look at them that they are exactly the things to which I just referred—remuneration; attracting and retaining teachers; a comprehensive review of school resourcing; supporting teachers and school leaders as professionals; and fair and safe workplaces—many of the things we have spoken about today.

Ms FARMER: Minister, one of the more than 10,000 teachers who were on strike yesterday asked me to give this document to the Premier. I believe it is an apt summary of their demands. This is a very big document, so we have copied it for tabling.

Mr SPEAKER: We are not going to use any props, are we, member for Bulimba?

Ms FARMER: No, Mr Speaker. I am tabling this. With your permission, Mr Speaker, may I read out what is in the document?

Mr SPEAKER: Can you?

Ms FARMER: Yes, these copies are the same as this booklet. That is the front of the booklet.

Mr SPEAKER: No. That is a prop. I asked you not to use props.

Ms FARMER: Could you clarify, Mr Speaker? Am I allowed to read out the words in the document?

Mr SPEAKER: You can read it but not waive it around.

Ms FARMER: The first page says, 'Working nights, weekends and holidays! That's not funny David!' Obviously they are referring to the Premier. 'Sworn at, hit, kicked and spat at! That's not funny,' referring to the Premier. 'No money for resources or support staff!'

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I appreciate we are speaking about Labor's legacy, but is this a long preamble?

Mr SPEAKER: It is. There is a fair bit to read in there. Member for Bulimba, do you have a question regarding this document?

Ms FARMER: It is good to table that document. Minister, the teacher who gave this to me asked me if I could get this to the Premier. Could I please give this document to you to pass on to the Premier?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order: the member is asking for an opinion in relation to the question as asked. I also want to clarify that the document and the size is in accordance with the standing orders with respect to it being tabled.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, the document does fit. The document will be tabled, so it will be there for anybody. Ask your next question please.

Ms FARMER: Sorry, Mr Speaker. I was asking the minister if he could give the original document to the Premier as the teacher asked.

Mr LANGBROEK: I am not sure that that is an appropriate petition in the form that it has come in. I would also say that I think some of these placards in their own way—people should be having a look at the things that they write and the things that they use as diagrams. People have families. In its own way, this can be seen in my view as modern-day bullying. It is all very well to have a message that people want to try to express about their concerns about behaviour and bullying.

The Premier comes with me to visit schools. As I have mentioned, we have been at Gumdale together. We have been at Sunnybank Hills State School together. He meets with teachers wherever he goes. In fact, many of the policies to which I have already referred that the honourable member for Moggill brought in as part of our election commitments were done in conjunction with the Premier.

I think that it is important for us, when we are looking at what we call modern-day bullying, to be assessing some of the things that people say—‘I want to say this to a person,’ or ‘I’m going to write it to them,’ or ‘I’m going to draw a picture of them’—and whether they consider whether that has any effect on the person to whom they are referring, as it might if they were being referred to themselves in some sort of parodied form. We are all happy to cop cartoons about which there has been outrage.

Ms BOURNE: Mr Speaker, point of order: is that a ‘no’ to the question?

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Keppel, I will hear the member for Ipswich West’s point of order before I take any other points of order. Was there a point of order?

Ms FARMER: The original question was: would the minister be willing to pass this on to the Premier—yes or no?

Mr LANGBROEK: As I understand it, Mr Speaker, there is only one rule when it comes to answers: they should be relevant to the question asked.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister has answered and we will move on to the next question.

Ms FARMER: The Premier lives in my electorate so I will pass that on to him myself. Could I just clarify from what you have just said, Minister—

Mrs YOUNG: Mr Speaker, point of order: I think validation is needed on the previous question of the teacher who asked the minister to pass this on.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to the next question without any preamble.

Ms FARMER: Minister, could I clarify: from the comments you just made, are you suggesting that the Premier is being bullied by teachers?

Mr LANGBROEK: No.

Ms FARMER: Minister, what is your definition of occupational violence?

Mr LANGBROEK: The first thing I would say is that violence in any form is not accepted. We have zero tolerance for violence in our schools. We have said this a number of times because we understand the concerns of teachers. It is one reason we are very concerned. The occupational violence strategy that is contained within the workforce strategy is something we are going to have a very good look at.

When it comes to the definition, I would say that any type of violence in a school is inappropriate. As I have already mentioned, I met with the head of that particular organisation and there are different understandings about managing those issues when it comes to special schools. As a simple answer, I would certainly say that occupational violence in schools is one of the reasons that teachers are feeling so frustrated. It was mentioned by many people in light of yesterday’s industrial action.

That is why at the Teachers’ Union conference the Premier announced an additional investment of \$57 million to roll out almost 140 new workplace health and safety officers across more than 340 state schools to address occupational violence and aggression in schools and reduce red tape for teachers. It includes \$54 million provided under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement—Full and Fair Funding from 1 January 2027.

In 2024-25, 4.75 per cent of staff had an accepted WorkCover claim, which is consistent with the previous year, which was down from the year before from 4.84 per cent. As I have said, all departmental staff are supported to feel safe in classrooms by the Department of Education’s occupational violence prevention procedure, which focuses on risk management strategies with the intent of protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of staff.

A 'No excuse for school abuse' campaign highlights the awareness of the kinds of behaviour that constitute OVA and reinforces that the mistreatment of school staff is never acceptable. A new webpage—www.qld.gov.au/noschoolabuse—has been created for the campaign to provide tips and resources for parents and students. A wide range of school collateral, resources and practical support is being developed for school leaders to use within their community. The development of a workplace health and safety action plan is currently underway to improve system-wide WHS performance.

We have had workers compensation reforms, resulting in more workers receiving the support they need for psychological injuries and more claims being accepted. During 2024-25, 4,351 claims were accepted by WorkCover. The most common injuries are from trips and falls—

Ms FARMER: Mr Speaker, point of order: I am comfortable that my question has been answered. Minister, I table a document provided by a whistleblower which outlines 54 incidents at a school between January and July this year including one student throwing a chair, a staff member bitten by a student, and a student scratching their teacher's eye. There are countless more. Minister, could you please point out for the benefit of the committee and school staff specific references in your budget papers to occupational violence?

Mr LANGBROEK: I would be interested to know more. When there is a whistleblower it is not about identifying who that person is, but I certainly would appreciate it if the department or I could be advised about the specific school because that would indicate—I know the director-general has spoken to me when there is an issue in a school—that either the school supervisor or the regional director may need to go in there and sort something out.

The member asked me specifically about occupational violence. I do want to point out for the benefit of the committee that, given this is a topic that people are concerned about and expressed their concerns at the day of industrial action yesterday, the occupational violence strategy lapsed under the former Labor government and was not replaced. I have now directed the department to develop and consult on a new strategy. Now here we are: teachers are so concerned about the elements the honourable member has just mentioned in that question. Under the former Labor government it was another example of some of the most significant issues and yet—

Ms FARMER: Mr Speaker, point of order: I was asking the minister for the specific reference—

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Ms FARMER:—to the term 'occupational violence' in your budget papers.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Keppel, I just said that I will hear a point of order before I go to the next point of order. Do you have a point of order?

Mr HUTTON: Apologies, Mr Speaker. Yes, my point of order was that the member may not like the answer but she does not get to dictate the minister's response to questions about Labor's legacy.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, have you—

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Having done the national agreement, workplace health and safety officers, whilst not mentioned in the budget papers, are a proactive way. Schools and teachers have been appreciative of these 140 workplace health and safety officers. That is a significant investment that is going to assist in over 340 schools. We are going to work on a new occupational violence strategy, given the former one lapsed. There are a lot of issues we have dealt with since coming to government including behaviour, bullying and red-tape reduction. Occupational violence and infrastructure are the next things to which we are going to turn our minds.

Ms FARMER: Mr Speaker, point of order: could I just clarify from part of what you just said, Minister, that the term 'occupational violence' is not mentioned in the budget papers? Is that correct? I am sorry, I am not clear from all of those things you just said.

Mr LANGBROEK: I can assure the member that we are working on a new occupational violence strategy. It is an important issue for teachers in schools and parents and students. We are going to turn our attention to this posthaste, to make sure that those teachers who were protesting yesterday with their day of industrial action know they are being heard, just as they have been heard in relation to the issues of behaviour, bullying, red tape and focusing on NAPLAN—all the things the previous government had no interest in, including occupational violence, where their own strategy had lapsed.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, there is time for one more question before we change.

Ms FARMER: I table a separate statement from a whistleblower that outlines her pleas for help and describing her physical and psychological trauma, including a recent incident on Friday, 1 August, where—

An 11-year-old student—who has been violent towards staff almost daily this year—scratched my lips, neck and chest with long, dirty fingernails, grabbed my clothing, tried to head-butt me, and attempted to drag me to the ground.

It took four staff members to pull him off me.

Minister, is it correct that you are not only in this budget not funding any specific initiatives to combat occupational violence but also it is not considered enough of a priority to even be referenced in the budget papers?

Mr LANGBROEK: I have said that we are committed to making every Queensland state school a safe learning and working environment for students and staff. We want to hear those stories, which would have been reported in years gone by. In fact many of the issues that were raised at yesterday's day of industrial action highlighted that some of these complaints have been made since 2017. As I have already said, we have zero tolerance for violence of any sort. There is a lapsed occupational violence strategy from the former government. We know it is of growing concern for schools and across a range of professions. We want to maintain strong behavioural standards for all members of our communities, so we are focused on initiatives to continue to strengthen safety and discipline in our schools.

All departmental staff are supported to feel safe in classrooms by the Department of Education's occupational violence prevention procedure which focuses on risk management strategies with the intent of protecting the health and wellbeing of staff. That is not something that has ceased under this government. It should have continued, but I am concerned that some elements of that lapsed under the former government's occupational violence strategy and there may not have been the focus on it as there should have been. I mentioned our 'No excuse for school abuse' campaign. It highlights the awareness of the kinds of behaviours from students, staff, parents or community members that constitutes occupational violence and aggression and it reinforces that the mistreatment of school staff is never acceptable.

Ms FARMER: Speaker, I am comfortable that my question has been answered.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the minister to finish.

Mr LANGBROEK: No, it is fine.

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

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, with reference to your response to a question on notice regarding new school and campus builds in the 2025-26 budget, is the minister aware of any previously announced new schools and campuses that are yet to be built, including any funding shortfalls?

Mr LANGBROEK: Unfortunately, because of a lack of planning from those opposite, there are no new schools opening in 2026. This is almost a carbon copy of what happened the last time I was minister. In 2012 we became the government and as I recall—and I stand to be corrected—we did not open any new schools in 2013 because there had been no planning. We then subsequently announced 10 or 11 schools that we planned and they proceeded to open in the years after we left.

Labor's gross mismanagement of finances left several new schools that were publicly announced by Labor during their term of government with no funding for construction. Labor failed to deliver new schools, so they deceived Queenslanders who had made choices on where to live and raise families based on their empty promises. Labor's gross mismanagement of finances left several new schools publicly announced by the government but with no funding for construction. Several schools and expansions were announced by the former Labor government but they had their funding reallocated. One of them was Caloundra South, which is a primary school, \$70.3 million. I was pleased to stand there with the Treasurer and Kendall Morton, the member for Caloundra, in the week of the budget to announce that we are going to build that one at Aura.

Other schools include: Springfield Central State High School, with an expansion of \$7.63 million; East Brisbane State School, whose community lived under the threat of relocation and closure for some time until we announced that school would stay there after our infrastructure plan for the Olympics, that was \$148 million, all reallocated elsewhere; and Ripley Valley at Whiterock, a primary school of \$63 million. As I mentioned, the former Labor government announced the Caloundra South school in 2022 and never funded it and did not build it—breaking promises and deceiving the Caloundra community.

Labor failed to deliver new schools, deceiving Queenslanders who had made choices on where to live, as I have said. The former Labor government made promises to acquire land for a new secondary school at Greenbank in Logan in 2020 but failed to deliver on their own election commitment. Bizarrely, over this term of parliament, I have had those members—the member for Logan and the member for Jordan—trying to petition the government to now buy the land that they had promised to do some time ago. It took the Crisafulli government to finally purchase this land for a future secondary school, and I was pleased to do a media announcement about that a couple of weeks ago. This is a significant issue to do with schools and campuses, because as our population grows we want to make sure there are state school provisions within those communities. We want people to have the choice of going to a state school or a non-state school, be it a Catholic or independent school.

This side of the parliament, the conservatives, built 100 schools under then minister Jack Pizzey between 1957 and 1969 so that Queenslanders could go to a state high school within 45 minutes of where they lived. That is the type of thing the conservatives have done for state schooling, and it is not often acknowledged. Until then, Queenslanders went to school until grade 8 and the end of primary school and then got a job. The foundation of our modern education system has been the expansion of state schooling and state high schooling. Jack Pizzey put year 8 into high school in 1962 and I was pleased to put year 7 into high school in 2014.

Along with the mineral resources that have underpinned our economic standing, our approach to schooling has enabled Queensland to become an educated, modern 21st century state. We have built new schools and encouraged Queenslanders to go to either state high schools or non-state high schools to make sure we caught up with the rest of the world in terms of education. Under Labor, we were an agrarian state in terms of education where there was no great prospect for students after they finished grade 8. It is our side that has proudly brought state high schooling and state schooling to the level it is now. This is something we are very proud of and we want to keep growing.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, with reference to page 4 of the SDS and NAPLAN results, will you please advise participation rates this year, 2025, compared to the previous three years of 2024, 2023 and 2022?

Mr LANGBROEK: Of course we know we had significant challenges in term 1. We had ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred and I think we have already had reference to three issues. The member for Hinchinbrook is acutely aware of issues in his own electorate with what happened in the north. The Premier and numerous ministers were there doing some amazing work in communities, whether in schools, roads or hospitals—including the transport minister, Brent Mickelberg, and the health minister, Tim Nicholls. There were lots of ministers up in that area. We had ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred which affected over 600 schools in March, and then finally we had the western part of our state which was also badly affected—places like Thargomindah. I know lots of work has been done there and the director-general has been out there to see that and support those communities.

Despite those challenges, Queensland achieved its highest participation rate across all year levels since 2019, at 89.7 per cent with around 1,800 more students sitting NAPLAN in 2025 compared to 2024. We saw very large improvements in year 7s, with an increase in participation of four per cent, and year 9s with an increase of 4.6 per cent. Participation rates in previous years were as follows: in 2022 it was 86.9 per cent; in 2023 it was 88.8 per cent; and in 2024 it was 88.4 per cent. Under the former Labor government and the QTU, schools, parents and students were actively discouraged from participating in NAPLAN. A former minister—not the former minister who is here—said it was out of date and we should not be using it anymore. School attendance rates declined and more students failed to meet national standards in literacy and numeracy.

We believe that, unless you measure something, it is very hard to remedy it. What we did after coming to government in November is have a student-free day early in the year where teachers were encouraged to make sure their students were comfortable with the form of testing and with how they would be responding with answers and encouraged to get them to participate. We have seen an increase in participation this year. We want to continue this momentum to ensure that results are lifting, along with participation.

We are committed to getting back to the basics of English and mathematics to lift results. I have mentioned the mandatory year 1 phonics and numeracy checks. Also, bearing in mind teachers were concerned as to whether they would have backup if they were doing those phonics checks, we have made sure we will have a relief system that will provide support for those teachers in the classroom and less red tape. We continue to back our teachers to give them more time in the classroom to deliver a world-class education to Queensland students.

Bearing in mind that we had fewer and fewer students meeting those national literacy and numeracy benchmarks, teachers were concerned about administration, as they mentioned yesterday, and unnecessary red tape. The last time I was minister, NAPLAN results improved across a number of areas, including in early childhood in the Closing the Gap initiatives, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, and in year 12 completion, which was something I was very proud to achieve. I am determined to do it again this time. By focusing first of all on participation and then, of course, with our increased focus on literacy and numeracy, we hope to see and expect to see improved outcomes in our NAPLAN results.

Mrs YOUNG: With reference to the Regional Delivery Plan for the Redlands, Minister, will you please outline the investments in this region from this budget, including the delivery of additional learning spaces at Redland District Special School, and why these investments are required?

Mr LANGBROEK: I know that, as a new member, the honourable member for Redlands is passionate about supporting schools in her own electorate—making sure that the infrastructure we have already spoken about today is up to date. Maintaining that infrastructure, as well as having new infrastructure, is so important for the morale of students, teachers and principals.

In 2025-26, more than \$7.6 million is planned to be invested in building and maintaining education infrastructure in the Redlands electorate. I want to give some specific examples: Redland Bay State School, \$348,000 to refurbish the tuckshop; Redland Bay State School, \$880,000 for rectification to the resource centre; and Redland Bay State School, \$100,000 for external painting to blocks J and F. The member asked specifically about Redland District Special School. There will be \$130,000 for fence installation there. I was pleased to visit Macleay Island with the honourable member during the election campaign. There is \$160,000 for a playground upgrade at Macleay Island State School. At Victoria Point State School there is \$250,000 each for two roof replacements, to blocks 4 and 5.

To maintain competitive and transparent procurement processes and achieve value for money, projects that are not at contract award have not been identified in the budget papers, to preserve market tension. In other words, what we do not do is say how much we have allocated for particular expenditure because we want the market to have some sort of competitive tension.

I have mentioned maintenance. I have mentioned the \$7.6 million in Redlands, but, with regard to maintenance and minor works—you know we have a \$441 million backlog—the combined total annual maintenance and minor works allocation for schools in the Redlands electorate is \$687,859.

Enrolments at Redland District Special School have continued to grow. Student numbers are forecast to increase from 233 in February 2025 to approximately 284 by 2028. Additional facilities are required to meet demand for enrolments in the short to medium term. These features will include 12 new learning spaces and outdoor learning areas to foster innovative teaching methods. Bearing in mind that in special schools class sizes are often small—as few as five—with enrolments going up by 50 extra learning spaces are needed.

Also at Redland District Special School, there will be a dedicated administration building and staff preparation area to support school operations, a basement car park and a designated drop-and-go zone to improve traffic flow and safety for students and families. I have seen that at Woody Point Special School. Because of concerns around drop-and-go zones around special school students, they often need extra provisions in this regard. There will be a relocated sports precinct, including a tennis court and oval, to promote physical activity and wellbeing, and modern staff and student amenities as well as a lift for accessibility. It will include the removal of two aging buildings, ensuring the school's facilities remain modern and fit for purpose. The Department of Education has built flexibility into the project, with planning works undertaken to enable delivery of a second stage if enrolments continue to grow.

Funding for stage 2 at Scenic Shores State School was secured through the 2025-26 state budget commitment of \$814.8 million for new schools, including for the delivery of stage 2 of recently completed new schools. I was recently at Palmview with the transport minister, announcing a stage 2 there. Scenic Shores State School opened in 2024 with 101 enrolments and has grown to 222 enrolments in 2025. It has an enrolment capacity of 636 students.

Mr SPEAKER: I will return to non-government members.

Mr DAMETTO: Minister, in relation to the rollout of the youth justice crime prevention schools, can you provide some detail around the crime prevention schools flagged for Townsville, such as where they will be located, whether or not they will be attached to existing schools, what their capacity will be and whether they will be mandatory?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I am not exactly sure how that fits in to this portfolio, but I will allow you to answer if you can.

Mr LANGBROEK: I was about to point that out, Mr Speaker. It is not my portfolio. The Hon. Laura Gerber is the Minister for Youth Justice, but we do work very closely together on these issues because we will often be providing the education services in these schools. That question is more appropriately directed to Minister Gerber. I know that she will be prepared to provide information on those schools, such as Men of Business Academy at the Gold Coast. The tender is out in Townsville. We are certainly happy to provide that information. I know that the Minister for Youth Justice will be only too happy to provide more information to the member for Hinchinbrook about his area.

Ms FARMER: I would like to ask a follow-up question about the crime prevention schools and youth justice schools. Minister, are you preparing any amendments to the legislation of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act?

Mr LANGBROEK: The Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act is something that, of course, is the subject of discussions. I think the honourable member initiated a review of NSSAB just a couple of years ago. For the moment, though, we have the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill before the House. I will not refer to that. Homeschooling is another issue that was withdrawn from a previous bill.

When it comes to NSSAB, of course it plays a vital role in supporting non-state schools. The honourable member is referring to something, as I said, that the former government did as a review. We have asked NSSAB to take a more proactive and educative approach. We have had a number of different issues, especially in child safety. Independent Schools Queensland, which is their peak body, might give them some information, but we believed that it was also important for the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board to be taking a more proactive and educative approach when it comes to some of these issues, engaging principals and schools. Earlier this year, the chair of NSSAB, Patrea Walton, conducted face-to-face and online forums. As well, I wrote to the chair, asking them to undertake an audit of a minimum of 10 per cent of non-state schools to assess the child protection and child safety processes—

Ms FARMER: Point of order, Speaker: the minister may be assuming I asked the question for this particular reason. With respect, I think we are getting our assumptions mixed up.

Mr LANGBROEK: Sure. Please clarify.

Mr SPEAKER: Clarify it, please.

Ms FARMER: Minister, are you aware that that particular act shows that the Minister for Education is responsible for compliance and all other governance with regard to special assistance schools? You are inferring that the Minister for Youth Justice will have carriage of it. Does that require a change to legislation, given the legislation currently requires the Minister for Education to have the responsibility? How will that work if you are not intending to change the act?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there was a lengthy preamble in relation to standing order 115.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Moggill. There was a lengthy preamble, but I think it was probably needed to clarify the question.

Mr LANGBROEK: I am happy to answer. These are not a unique form of school. In a couple of cases if they are going to be non-state schools and they come under the non-state schools accreditation act, they will be doing all the things that schools currently have to do to comply with the non-state schools accreditation act. Given Men of Business have already been allocated as a school—and they are a non-state school—any of the processes that currently apply under the non-state schools accreditation act are ones that we will make sure we are still enforcing.

Coming back to the original question from the member from Hinchinbrook: I was clarifying that the delivery of those schools will come under the Minister for Youth Justice but any of the appropriate processes will be carried out under the non-state schools accreditation act. To give more information to the committee, I will call Kathleen, my deputy director-general, to give some clarification.

Ms FARMER: I do not require any other information.

Mr SPEAKER: If the member is happy with that—

Mr LANGBROEK: Okay.

Mr SPEAKER:—before we go any further, we had a question on notice which I wanted to make sure was clarified before we finished this session. Would the director-general be able to answer that question taken on notice?

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, the director-general has that answer.

Ms Schimming: The question was about whether principals were instructed—or not instructed—to survey parents about their children’s attendance on the strike day. I can confirm that no instruction was given whether to collect or not to collect and in actual fact, we are not sure whether principals did that or not. Of course, some of them may have actually collected that information prior to the day.

Ms FARMER: Thank you, Director-General. Minister, I would like to address another of the formal five interest areas of the QTU’s EB11 negotiations. You had the *Comprehensive review of school resourcing* report—the CROSR report—across December 2024 which is eight months ago. How much longer will it take you and cabinet to consider the report?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. We do not talk about cabinet but it is a very important review that will, for the first time in 30 years, potentially remove 140 different funding sources down to five. The review is something that the former government initiated. As the honourable member mentioned, we only received it in December. As a new government coming to government there has been discussion about whether this resourcing review should be revealed or whether it, in fact, has anything to do with the enterprise bargain.

I think because there is this report that has not been released—because we only received it in December and it needs to be considered, as the honourable member asked in her question—as to the funding of it and how it would be rolled out without any people missing out on the funding they currently have. It is nothing to do with the enterprise bargain. That is why, whilst it has been asked about and has been the subject of significant conjecture, I want to speak about the resourcing review itself and say: the government will be working on the school resourcing review but it is a very big piece of work. We have been doing the work that we have been doing up until now with many of the other issues that I have spoken about this morning many times—behaviour, bullying, red tape, the federal agreement that we signed. I do want to outline for the committee exactly what the resourcing review means—but without releasing it. At the moment, as I mentioned, we have 140 separate payments to understand for resourcing in schools. It is hard for schools to predict their resourcing from one year to the next; they can lose or gain a whole position with a change of just one or two enrolments.

Ms FARMER: Point of order, Mr Speaker: my specific question was how much longer will it take you to consider the report? To clarify, this year you have had the report for eight months—will it be this year or next year, or how much longer will it be?

Mr LANGBROEK: I assure the member that—as we have with many of the issues we inherited—we will have a calm, methodical approach to implementation. I will work with the Treasurer and my department to make sure that when we do announce it that the frequently asked questions and concerns that teachers and schools have will be allayed because of the preparation we have done.

Mr DAMETTO: A quick yes-or-no question to the Minister: are blue cards required for parents who volunteer at schools—like at tuckshop for example?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for the question. I will refer to the director-general as it is an operational matter. I personally do have a blue card but not all MPs do.

Mr DAMETTO: No. I said ‘parents who volunteer’—not MPs.

Ms Schimming: I thank the member for the question. I will ask our deputy director-general of state schools to come and talk about the operation of blue cards, but my understanding—I will have to be corrected if I am wrong—is that if you are in a tuckshop then you do need to have a blue card. It does depend on the type of volunteering and how frequently you are volunteering. Obviously parents who are dropping their children off at school and walking through the school do not need a blue card, but if you have a role where you are in a classroom—perhaps doing reading groups or in the tuckshop—my understanding is that you need a blue card. I will hand over to Stacie Hansel, if that is okay.

Mr SPEAKER: Would you like some more clarification on that, member for Hinchinbrook?

Mr DAMETTO: No. So it is a yes—they would need a blue card.

Mr LANGBROEK: Is it a ‘yes’?

Mr DAMETTO: Is that a ‘yes’ if they are working in a tuckshop?

Ms Hansel: Yes, they would require a blue card, thank you.

Mr DAMETTO: That is all, thank you.

Mr LANGBROEK: How do you know I am not an MP who is a volunteer as well in a school?

Mr SPEAKER: Who has the next question? We are running out of time.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, did the Department of Justice, the Attorney-General or her office brief you, your department or the minister on the unfunded blue card screening positions?

Ms Schimming: I thank the member for the question. I will have to take that on notice if it is okay with the minister to come back with that answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, are you happy to come back?

Mr LANGBROEK: I would like to see if we could get it but we only have two minutes before the end so if we can provide it by the end of the session we will try to do that but if not, we will have to take it on notice.

Ms FARMER: Minister, earlier this week the department referred to the fact that there would now be unfunded blue card screening positions within the department. Given the increased attention on child safety and early childhood education, what action will you be taking over those positions not being funded?

Mr LANGBROEK: Can I get some more clarification on what the honourable member is referring to?

Ms FARMER: In the earlier estimates hearing of this week it was revealed that there are a number of blue card screening positions which will no longer be funded.

Mr LANGBROEK: I answered this question at a press conference yesterday and I refuted the assertion that there are any issues or fewer blue card positions—that is what I said yesterday at the press conference.

Ms FARMER: With respect, Minister, it was not from your department—it was evidence that was given by the department in an estimates hearing this week; were you aware of that?

Mr LANGBROEK: I am sorry, I would have to examine that particular hearing and so I am afraid I cannot answer that question as it refers to my department.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, we have one minute left.

Ms FARMER: Director-General, how many meetings have you had with the minister that have canvassed the implementation of the CRoS review?

Ms Schimming: I think it is really important for me as the director-general to make sure that I brief the minister and the minister's office on current events. As they came in, we would have briefed the minister appropriately on all of those things. I cannot put a number on the number of meetings. I would have to go back and look at records to be able to do that. We have spoken about it quite regularly as to what the review contains and then talked about what some steps might be going forward depending on the outcome of the cabinet.

Ms FARMER: Can I just clarify? Is the director-general going to provide us with that number, or can you give us a ballpark number coming back? It does not have to be today.

Ms Schimming: At this point in time I can say to you that a record of the number probably would not be of benefit to the member because we talk about it often. There are some formal agendas for us in the department to look at, but it has been a number of times. That is what I can say.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much. It being 11.30 am the committee will now adjourn for a short break. The hearing will resume at 11.45 am.

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Speaker, I can answer the last question taken on notice. The director-general of the Department of Justice confirmed yesterday during estimates that there have been no cuts to blue card staff despite Labor leaving huge funding holes. Any reports suggesting otherwise are inaccurate.

Proceedings suspended from 11.30 am to 11.45 am.



Mr SPEAKER: Welcome back, Ministers and officials. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of the arts open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, would you like to make a short statement of no more than five minutes?

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As Minister for the Arts, it is a privilege to appear before the committee—and I want to welcome the shadow minister for the arts—to outline how the Crisafulli government is delivering for all Queenslanders by fostering a vibrant arts sector across our state. Last Thursday I launched our new arts policy, Queensland's Time to Shine: a 10-year strategy for arts and culture 2025-2035. This is our clear plan to strengthen Queensland's reputation as a cultural destination while celebrating our cultural heritage and sharing our uniquely Queensland stories with the world.

Queensland's Time to Shine is a decade-long commitment with clear priorities, measurable outcomes and benefits for Queenslanders wherever they live. Our strategy has six key pillars: one, transformational arts and culture for Brisbane 2032 and beyond by delivering statewide creative activation and legacy outcomes driven by the opportunities of Brisbane 2032; two, uniquely Queensland arts experiences by shining the global spotlight on Queensland's unique arts and cultural experiences, attracting audiences, driving economic growth and enhancing the state's reputation as an arts destination; three, maximising opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creatives by enabling the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, cultural and creative sector to maximise economic, cultural and social benefits for individuals, communities and Queensland; four, future creative workforce for a creative economy by preparing Queensland's creative sector for the future by investing in skills, innovation and opportunities that support long-term careers and a growing economy; five, arts for all Queenslanders by strengthening Queenslanders' access to enriching arts and cultural experiences; and, six, sharing our stories and celebrating our storytellers by celebrating and investing in the development and sharing of stories by Queensland storytellers.

The Crisafulli government's commitments are backed by actions, not words. As minister, I have already delivered record investment through the organisation's fund by delivering \$39.2 million to support 53 small to medium arts organisations, 18 in regional Queensland and 13 new entrants. These organisations are the lifeblood of our sector, delivering performances, exhibitions and programs from Thursday Island and Cairns to Cunnamulla and from Brisbane to out west. We have also provided almost \$2 million for iconic regional festivals such as Opera Queensland's Festival of Outback Opera, the North Australian Festival of Arts and the Woodford Folk Festival—events that boost cultural tourism by bringing visitors, boosting local economies and showcasing regional creativity. The Brisbane 2032 games are a once-in-a-generation opportunity, a global platform for our creativity and vibrancy. Through new infrastructure, cultural programming and international exposure, we will activate communities, attract visitors and cement Queensland's place on the world cultural map.

I will be working closely with Arts Queensland, many of whose senior officials and CEOs of our statutory bodies are here today, to monitor the delivery of this policy and action plans to ensure that every commitment is met and that we deliver for Queensland. We will track and deliver outcomes including: growth in regional touring and programming; workforce training and career development; increased cultural tourism visitation and spend; new Queensland works created and presented; growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led enterprises; and international showcasing of talent.

Queensland's Time to Shine places regional communities at the heart of our cultural growth, ensuring opportunities and investment are spread right across the state. The government is committed to supporting artists, arts workers and organisations not with slogans or short-term grants but with a plan for a sustainable, vibrant arts future. It is Queensland's time to shine and with clear priorities, real investment and measurable outcomes, the Crisafulli government is delivering a vibrant arts scene across Queensland for all Queenslanders. I welcome the committee's questions.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to opposition members for the first question.

Ms ENOCH: I do want to congratulate the minister on his appointment as arts minister. He gets to work with some of the best people in the business, and I mean that sincerely. On that note, I direct my first question to the CEO of the State Library. In establishing the independent panel of judges for the black&write! writing fellowship, can the CEO confirm that she was satisfied with the skill, expertise, knowledge and community standing of the judges and their ability to make fair and informed decisions about fellowship recipients?

Ms McDonald: In relation to the black&write! judges, I can confirm that there were three judges appointed to the panel for the judging of the awards comprising people with the relevant expertise in First Nations writing and editing and with the professional experience.

Ms ENOCH: Just to confirm, State Librarian, you were satisfied with the skill, the expertise, the knowledge and the community standing of the judges?

Ms McDonald: I was, yes.

Ms ENOCH: CEO, further, would it be fair to say that you are satisfied in the same way with the judges for all Queensland Literary Awards?

Ms McDonald: In relation to the appointment of judges to all panels, there is a process that we go through to ensure we have the relevant expertise on all our panels.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you. CEO, when were you informed that the judging panel's decision regarding this year's black&write! fellowship winners was to be rescinded and who provided the direction to you?

Ms McDonald: The decision to?

Ms ENOCH: Rescind.

Ms McDonald: I will just go to my notes. The decision to rescind was provided in a letter from the Minister for the Arts through to the chair of the Library Board on 19 May.

Ms ENOCH: Just to confirm, did the minister or the minister's office contact you directly about this matter?

Ms McDonald: About the panel?

Ms ENOCH: About the rescinding of the awards.

Ms McDonald: The advice in relation to the written direction in relation to the fellowship was provided on 19 May by letter to the chair of the Library Board, with a copy to myself.

Ms ENOCH: So the chair of the Library Board provided you with that direction as a result of the minister's letter?

Ms McDonald: The direction is from the minister under the act and the direction is given to the Library Board, so it is then my role to implement the direction, yes.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you. What was the reason given?

Ms McDonald: I will just go to the letter. The letter states—

It is my firm view and direction under section 23 of the Libraries Act, and I am sure the view of most Queenslanders, that Ms Wyld should not receive the award in a Queensland government or State Library of Queensland venue.

Ms ENOCH: CEO, on the receiving of a fellowship, are fellowship recipients required to sign a contract that outlines expectations regarding community standards once their work has been selected as the winner?

Ms McDonald: Recipients of the fellowship sign the contract prior to the actual awarding ceremony, so they do sign the contract, yes.

Ms ENOCH: And so that is not retrospective; it is with regard to what happens after they win?

Ms McDonald: Yes, so it is in relation to the term of their fellowship. The fellowship is for a period of 12 months and it relates to their term within the fellowship.

Ms ENOCH: CEO, how many Queensland Literary Award judges have resigned in protest since the decision to rescind the fellowship was made?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: I think that there is an imputation with respect to the term 'in protest', unless there is authentication that can be provided by the member in relation to that. People may—

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to reword, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, if you would, that would help. Thank you.

Ms ENOCH: Again to the CEO: how many Queensland Literary Award judges have resigned since the decision to rescind the black&write! writing fellowship was made?

Ms McDonald: Under the QLAs, 34 judges are appointed across nine panels and 12 of 34 judges resigned.

Ms ENOCH: Sorry, but can I just confirm that again: so 12 of the—

Ms McDonald: Thirty-four judges.

Ms ENOCH:—judges resigned following—

Ms McDonald: Following the rescindment of the black&write! fellowship.

Ms ENOCH: That is quite a lot, isn't it, CEO?

Ms McDonald: Well, yes. Twelve—

Mr SPEAKER: That is asking for an opinion, I am afraid, member for Algeester. Next question.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Speaker. Since you have been CEO and State Librarian, has there ever been a time when you have seen that many judges resign in one go?

Ms McDonald: No, we have not had that number of judges resign previously.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, CEO. My next question then is to the minister, please. The CEO of the State Library of Queensland has just confirmed the number of judges for the Queensland Literary Awards who have resigned, reportedly in various news articles, in protest to the minister's overreach, citing concerns about censorship. Can the minister guarantee—

Mr LANGBROEK: Overreach?

Ms ENOCH: That is what is reported in news articles.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister's interjection is entirely inappropriate. The shadow minister is entitled to have her question heard in silence. I ask you to remind the minister of the decorum that is expected at these hearings.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, I have been ruling that I will hear the question and then I will take any points of order from there. Member, you have completed your question?

Ms ENOCH: No, I am about to ask the actual question, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Okay. Do that.

Ms ENOCH: Can the minister guarantee that the Queensland Literary Awards or any other arts related awards decided on by independent panels of judges will not be overruled by you, your office or your department in the future?

Mr LANGBROEK: So we have had significant questioning about the circumstances of judging panels. Let me make it very clear to the committee that I am not questioning the skill, expertise and knowledge of panel members. What we are talking about here is the circumstances in which a fellowship was withdrawn under my direction. Panels may have skill, expertise and knowledge about the particular subject in which they are a panel member, but that does not mean that—and I am going to quote some of the issues that came to light as a result of this fellowship winner—they can make judgements about the appropriateness of someone receiving a prize or a fellowship as in this case. So I did issue a formal direction. I am going to go through quite extensively here about this. I took action to uphold the integrity of publicly funded cultural institutions following the State Library's decision to award a black&write! fellowship to Karen Wyld—an individual who had made public statements supporting a listed terrorist figure. Even Ms Wyld has acknowledged that the tone of her original tweet or comment—whatever it was—could have been done slightly differently. She has acknowledged that herself.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order: my question was can the minister guarantee that the Queensland Literary Awards or any other arts related awards decided upon by independent panels of judges will not be overruled by the minister, his office or his department in the future. That was my question.

Mr SPEAKER: I heard the question, but the minister is providing some clarity around this which I think is probably of interest to the committee, so, Minister, you have the call.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I will answer this question, but it is important that I give background to the committee about the circumstance of what happened in this case.

The background is that on 16 May 2025 I wrote to the State Librarian and CEO of the State Library of Queensland to express my deep concern about the decision to award a fellowship to Ms Wyld. Ms Wyld had made social media posts praising Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas leader responsible for the 7 October terror attacks, describing him as a martyr and hero. I stated in my letter that such comments are incompatible with the values of respect, unity and inclusion that the State Library of Queensland must uphold.

On 19 May 2025 I issued a formal direction under section 23 of the Libraries Act 1988 instructing that Ms Wyld should not receive the award in a Queensland government or State Library venue. The direction was necessary to prevent the use—and this is a very important part, Mr Speaker, and goes to the heart of the question that the honourable member has asked—of a taxpayer-funded platform to honour someone who had expressed views appearing to justify terrorism. I made it very clear that any perception that taxpayer-funded awards are being granted to individuals who express views that justify terrorism undermines public confidence in our institutions and the broader cultural sector.

The Premier and I have been unequivocal. There is no place for hate, discrimination or racism, including anti-Semitism, in Queensland. While we support free expression and creative diversity, publicly funded institutions must uphold community standards and remain focused on celebrating artistic excellence. I want to stress: this is about upholding community standards. It is no reflection on the skills, expertise or knowledge of panel members.

There is now an independent review underway into the State Library of Queensland's governance and awards processes, and I am confident it will strengthen future practices. To that end, I want to say to the committee: I will not rule out taking similar action in the future if it is deemed necessary, applying the standards about what we should do in our public institutions. It is nothing to do with the panel or the decisions they have made. If they choose not to be judges again, we will find other judges.

Ms ENOCH: On that quite lengthy contribution, can the minister then rule out the inclusion of a criteria related to retrospectivity for future awards that would see artists judged not just on the work they have submitted but on their past comments, activities and relationships?

Mr LANGBROEK: No, I cannot rule out that it may not happen again—just as we are seeing in other aspects of our society. Members of parliament will be—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: just to clarify for the minister, I am asking whether he will rule out a retrospectivity criteria in any awards going forward, seeing that there is a review underway.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order: the minister was barely into his response in relation to the original question as asked. He should be allowed to answer that question. He has given a very important answer about what sounds like people trying to defend terrorism here in Queensland, which is outrageous.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order: I find that personally offensive and I ask that the member withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Just wait. Member for Moggill—

Dr ROWAN: I was finishing my point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Without any unnecessary commentary.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order was the minister was barely into his response in relation to the question when he was interrupted. He should be allowed to finish his answer.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Speaker: with regard to the point of order from the member for Moggill, I do take personal offence at his comments and I ask that he withdraw.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I did not reflect on the member for Algeester.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Algeester, he did not reflect upon you specifically. I am going to come back to the minister to round out his response to the question, having heard the member for Algeester repeat the specific part of the question that she was interested in.

Mr LANGBROEK: I am happy to do so, Mr Speaker. Importantly, there is an independent review that is now being conducted. Let me speak to that and then I will address the issue that the shadow minister has specifically asked me about. Words do matter. That is the whole point of what we are discussing here. We are discussing it quite lengthily. We have developed the terms of reference for an independent review of the circumstances. Rather than focus on the awards and fellowship, the review will now focus on the governance arrangements between the board and the minister to identify areas for administrative improvement and clearer understanding of the minister's expectations. I think I have outlined what the Premier's, my and the government's expectations are. The outcomes of the review will benefit not just the State Library of Queensland but all arts statutory bodies that come under the purview of the minister for the arts.

I was also consulted regarding a suitable person to conduct the review. The honourable Martin Daubney AM, KC is indeed well qualified for this matter, having served as a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland and as the president of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. He has recently concluded work for Queensland Health as lead investigator of an investigation into the public health virology laboratory. Justice Daubney is also on the Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees, having been appointed by the previous government, and as such has experience in matters pertaining to the administration of arts statutory bodies and the relationships between those bodies and the minister.

Now can I turn to what the member was asking about: whether I would rule something out in the future. I would rather not try to make some prediction about what might happen in the future. Let us await the outcome of the review. I do want to stress, as I was saying at the beginning of my contribution,

that words matter, and whether you are a member of parliament or whether you are seeking a fellowship, especially words in the public domain are ones that people have to consider very carefully—the things that they say. It has happened at the Music Awards earlier this year. They have conducted their own internal review. I am looking forward to seeing the results of those. These are the things that can really drive division in our community. As a former shadow minister for multiculturalism, I am certainly aware of the divergent nature of some of the feelings of people in this space. I want to reassure the shadow minister that I have no intention to retrospectively remove awards. Let us await the outcome of the review. I am happy to see where we go from there.

Ms ENOCH: You have made it clear that you will not rule out the inclusion of retrospectivity criteria.

Mr SPEAKER: I have made many rulings about unnecessary commentary. If you have a question, could you ask your next question.

Ms ENOCH: My next question is to the CEO of QPAC. Welcome to the estimates process. Can you confirm that the original endorsed position of the QPAC board was to name the new performing arts venue after a prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and that their endorsed suggestions were Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Stephen Page, Harold Blair or Henry Gibson?

Ms Healy: As you may be aware, I took up duty as QPAC's chief executive officer in December 2024. I have been briefed on the process undertaken for the naming of the now Glasshouse Theatre and so I am responding in accordance with that information. The QPAC board was invited on 7 August 2023 by the then director-general of the department of treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, communities and the arts to provide advice on the name of the new theatre through the board's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee. I understand that a considered process was undertaken by the committee to arrive at the recommendation which was conveyed to the director-general on 18 March 2024 and made a range of suggestions for the name in accord with the request that was made of it by the director-general on 7 August.

Ms ENOCH: Just confirming, then, that the original proposed endorsed position was for a prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and was the names that I have already provided to the committee. That is correct, is it not?

Ms Healy: It is correct in that the letter that went to the director-general noted the inclusion of a range of names and that one stood out in the committee's view and that was of Oodgeroo Noonuccal.

Ms ENOCH: When were you informed that the board's original endorsed proposal would not be honoured and that the minister would be initiating a competition to name the new theatre?

Ms Healy: On 28 May 2025, we received an email from Arts Queensland advising—pardon me; it was earlier. We received advice on 10 April that a public consultation process would be commenced in relation to the name.

Ms ENOCH: Given the board's original proposal, why was a potential First Nations name not included in the voting options of the minister's competition?

Ms Healy: That was a matter for the department and for the minister. Our understanding was that there were four names put forward but that community members could nominate alternative names and that that is what occurred and that there were a number of First Nations names put forward as part of the public voting.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to government members' questions. I will go to the member for Keppel.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, earlier you spoke about the Queensland's Time to Shine initiative. Can you explain how the Crisafulli government's new arts policy delivers a bold new future for the arts in Queensland?

Mr LANGBROEK: As I have already mentioned, *Queensland's time to shine: a 10-year strategy for arts and culture* is the Crisafulli government delivering a bold new future for the arts through a record \$420.7 million investment in 2025-26. This funding supports over 300 organisations, festivals, artists and screen productions enabling long-term planning, building industry capacity and growing the creative economy. Our approach focuses on career pathways, strengthening cultural infrastructure and ensuring that Queensland talent is showcased nationally and internationally. We are committed to access for all Queenslanders whether they live in the regions or in our capital. We are driving growth through partnership across government, industry and philanthropy. This is about a thriving creative sector and a strong economy. Our 10-year vision is set out clearly in the Queensland's Time to Shine strategy.

Importantly, when it comes to the Olympics we want to make sure we partner with the infrastructure plan of the government and the tourism plan, with the Hon. Jarrod Bleijie, the Deputy Premier, and the Minister for the Environment and Tourism through Destination 2045. The former government failed to deliver a decade-long 2032 aligned statewide arts strategy, leaving the sector without a clear growth and legacy plan. That was sadly lacking, just as we saw with built sport infrastructure. It is my job as arts minister to make sure we do plan for 2032 and the opportunities that it offers. Opportunities to coordinate careers, infrastructure and cultural tourism clearly were missed by the former government. Especially when it comes to the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance and acknowledgements, I know the Premier is very passionate about that as well as tourism developments in his original area of North Queensland.

I have mentioned the six strategic priorities in preparing for 2032 and delivering arts for all Queenslanders, backed by more than \$420 million in annual investment, to provide a long-term platform for sector growth. Importantly, as we have heard with built infrastructure for sport, we want to make sure that the regions do not miss out. I have been to Crossroad Arts in Mackay, which is a disability company, on music trails in Charleville and Cape Hillsborough near Mackay and to Dancenorth in Townsville and at QIAF the assistant minister, who I believe is at this estimates hearing, well represented me.

Queenslanders love and know the importance of arts and culture. We need to make sure that we get a great spinoff from that as well as engaging our regional Queenslanders in all of it. Whether it is through festivals such as the Brisbane Festival taking dance performance to the regions, we are encouraging people to enjoy various elements of our regions. For example, Treasurer David Janetzki's wife is an opera singer so this means we are making sure that we take things to the Empire Theatre in Toowoomba and the Brolga Theatre in Maryborough, which I have been to.

Queenslanders understand that arts and culture are all around us and not necessarily in the way that we interpret traditional arts and culture. It is something we really want to grow, including in my portfolio of education where we have a music program that is the envy of the rest of the country, starting in year 3 with strings. Other ministers have mentioned that to me. As parents, we want our children to be able to do things that we cannot do. We want our kids to go to events so that they are inspired to want to become performers through the things they see, whether in the metropolitan areas or the regional areas.

Mrs YOUNG: The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games certainly is going to be inspiring for our young athletes. Minister, can you tell us what role the arts policy plays in preparing Queensland for the Olympics and Paralympics?

Mr LANGBROEK: I have mentioned that Queensland's Time to Shine places arts, culture and creativity at the heart of the Brisbane 2032 experience. The director-general was able to go to Paris recently to understand some of the aspects of their Cultural Olympiad. We want to make sure that we also learn from London 2012. 2032 will be a once-in-a-generation opportunity to put our stories, our culture and our talent before a global audience. We are delivering a statewide arts and cultural legacy plan, supporting ambitious works that grow Queensland's profile and embedding arts in games infrastructure from precinct planning to public art. Partnerships with festivals, cultural institutions and tourism bodies will ensure benefits to communities right across Queensland, building cultural tourism and creating a legacy that lasts well beyond the closing ceremony.

Importantly, when we look at the Olympics and the Paralympics, the things that people often speak about the most are things that actually do not involve sport but do showcase the arts and culture of the hosting jurisdiction. It is important that we ensure that our arts and cultural offerings will be on show, as I saw recently at Creative Generation, which is the state schools on-stage performance where up to 5,000 students performed. That was absolutely inspiring. We have the expertise, including staff members who have worked on the Sydney Olympics. As I have mentioned, the director-general and the deputy director-general went to Paris to learn about some of the things that happened in their Cultural Olympiad. That is part of our planning, as well as work with the sector here in Brisbane.

I note that the shadow minister is a member of the Creative Brisbane Collaboration and Jonty Bush is the co-chair of the parliamentary friends group. Importantly, across both sides of the parliament, we are all committed to making sure that we have a spectacular arts and cultural experience at the 2032 games, although not necessarily in the form of big concerts, I do not think. It will be about enlivening spaces and making sure that arts and culture are all around us so that people get to see Queensland showcased in all its beauty from the north to the south and from the east to the west.

Miss DOOLAN: Queensland is home to a vibrant and growing arts sector, yet federal funding through Creative Australia is disproportionately lower for our state compared to others. Could you outline how the Crisafulli government is addressing this imbalance?

Mr LANGBROEK: This is an interesting issue, one which the state and the national arts and culture scenes have wrestled with for some time. It is a little like the GST reallocations that were made some years ago where changes were made in favour of Western Australia. In relation to the arts and culture scene, I have been buoyed by my recent meeting with Tony Burke, who has returned as the federal Minister for the Arts. He privately said to all of the arts and culture ministers that he wants to try to reassess the allocation of funding.

We have been overlooked when it comes to Creative Australia funding. A great proportion of that monetary investment is concentrated in Sydney and Melbourne. This is despite our state having the second largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, world-class companies and vibrant regional arts communities. Through our Queensland's Time to Shine strategy, we are pushing for a fairer share. I have mentioned that I met with Minister Tony Burke at the culture ministers' meeting in June. He agreed the balance needs addressing. He will be working with our government and other governments to give Queensland its fair share.

Queensland government funding, though—I am sure to the surprise of many—still outweighs federal funding, with the federal government investing only 86 cents for every dollar invested by Queensland. That is unlike many of the other states, where the federal funding is far greater than the individual state funding. It is essential that funding allocations consider the challenges of large and geographically diverse states and the costs borne by state budgets to ensure accessible, statewide and high-quality cultural experiences. With the most decentralised state it is a significant issue for us, and we should receive our fair share.

To give the committee an example of the proportions in percentage and dollar terms, under the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework in the calendar year 2025: New South Wales receives \$55 million—I will round this off—for 13 recipients, so they receive 40 per cent of the funding; Victoria receives \$34 million for eight recipients, which is 25 per cent of the funding; and Queensland, with 20 per cent of the population, receives \$14 million for seven recipients, which is 10 per cent of the funding. There is a lack of equity of funding for Queensland, and I am very buoyed by the suggestion from Minister Tony Burke that he is looking to redress this over time.

Mr SPEAKER: I understand the member for Hinchinbrook has a question, so we will go to non-government questions.

Mr DAMETTO: I have a quick question with regard to the arts in North Queensland. Can the minister please outline what allocation is being made to electorates like Hinchinbrook which include places like Townsville and Cairns?

Mr LANGBROEK: As I have already mentioned, we do believe that arts and culture need to be accessible to all Queenslanders, regardless of postcode. I was in Townsville recently—I think it was for a cabinet meeting—and I visited Dancenorth. I was pleased to meet the North Australian Festival of Arts, who were having their board meeting in Townsville. They will receive \$300,000 over two years. The Australian Festival of Chamber Music will receive \$270,000 over the four years 2026 to 2029. That chamber music festival, though, is going to be moving to Cairns. The local council in Townsville decided, as I understand it, not to build a new centre but instead fund an aquarium, which is next to Queensland Museum Tropics, which we believe will enhance our museum offering. It is a concern for me, but I am leaving that to the board, who are taking it to Cairns. We are looking at working with them to assist them with that.

We are also investing a further \$1.47 million to support the North Australian Festival of Arts, the Festival of Outback Opera and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music through base funding. As at 30 June 2025, we have a total of \$18.17 million in regional arts funding. I cannot say that I can speak specifically to the member for Hinchinbrook's local area, but, importantly, we do want to have industry placements funding, which will mean there will be regional recipients. I look forward to advising the member about more of those.

As well, \$4.57 million has been allocated to dedicated regional arts services and initiatives. The Regional Arts Development Fund, which I am sure the honourable member would be aware of, has had an uplift this year to \$2.42 million, and the Regional Arts Services Network will receive \$2.15 million. There is certainly more to come, and I am looking forward to advising the community about more of those as time goes on.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, do you have a follow-up question?

Mr DAMETTO: Just one, and it is with regard to the Festival of Chamber Music and its move to Cairns. Was the minister approached by the Townsville City Council at any stage about finding ways to keep the festival in Townsville?

Mr LANGBROEK: I stand to be corrected, but I am not aware that I received any communications from the Townsville City Council about that. I was first advised of it when we had a cabinet meeting in Townsville and I met with members of the board. They advised me at that stage that it had not been publicly announced but they were coming to an agreement, which has subsequently been carried. They, along with Mayor Amy Eden, who I understand has been very supportive of the move, have been asking us for some sort of assistance. There will be costs involved for the festival to move.

Personally, I do find it a disappointing outcome. I think the aficionados of chamber music in Townsville will be disappointed that they have lost an event that they created. I look forward to seeing the progress of that and the other developments in Townsville that will go with Dancenorth and the museum, in which we are investing \$3.8 million to enhance it. I have been to visit that a couple of times.

Mr SPEAKER: Do opposition members have any more questions?

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, with reference to page 2 of the SDS, can you advise on the consultation that was conducted regarding the decision to abandon the business case and not progress with the two First Nations cultural centres in Brisbane and Cairns, please?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the language in the question is argumentative and I ask that it be rephrased.

Mr SPEAKER: We do not have much time left, so I am going to allow the question. Director-General, are you happy to answer?

Ms Schimming: As part of the 2025-26 budget process, there was consideration for that particular centre.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, can I just confirm: there was no consultation outside the budget process; is that correct?

Ms Schimming: Can I just clarify: consultation with whom, are you asking?

Ms ENOCH: The consultation for these two First Nations cultural centres—I assume you would understand who the stakeholders are who are attached to that.

Ms Schimming: Absolutely, and I believe there was consultation leading up to putting the business cases together.

Ms ENOCH: Sorry, Director-General, the question is: what consultation was conducted regarding the decision to abandon the business case and not progress with the two centres?

Ms Schimming: I believe the decision was actually part of the budget process. Decision-making is very different from consultation. There was consultation about the business case and then the budget decision was taken.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, can you please advise the committee of any meetings you had with First Nations stakeholders prior to announcing that the cultural centres would not be going ahead?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute to answer.

Mr LANGBROEK: As I understand it, the business case was completed in August 2024, before the election. The previous government could have made an announcement in the lead-up to the election. These First Nations cultural centres have been on the agenda since 1999. Looking back, Peter Beattie first promoted the idea of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural centre in 1999. I have heard about it many times since I have been in the parliament, including when I was the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships. Importantly, a second one was prospectively added when we had the Cairns regional parliament.

The business case was delivered prior to the election. Unfortunately, it was decided that we will not progress with something that is going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars in this budget process, but we will be making provision for these centres to be delivered in the future.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We have now reached the end of the time allocated for the consideration of proposed expenditure for the areas administered by the Minister for Education and the Arts.

Mr LANGBROEK: May I make some thankyou, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: We have actually closed.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thanks, everyone!

Mr SPEAKER: The committee will now adjourn until 1.15 pm, when we will examine the estimates portfolio area of the Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism.

Proceedings suspended from 12.30 pm to 1.15 pm.

**ESTIMATES—EDUCATION, ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE—WOMEN
AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY; ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER PARTNERSHIPS; MULTICULTURALISM****In Attendance**

Hon. FS Simpson, Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism

Ms Suellen Holmes, Chief of Staff

Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism


Ms Natalie Wilde, Director-General

Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism

Ms Kathy Parton, Deputy Director-General, Strategic Policy, Legislation and Reform

Ms Anna McGrath, Acting Deputy Director-General, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

Ms Julie McDougall, Executive Director, Multicultural Affairs Queensland

 **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 today's hearing.

The members of the committee are: Nigel Hutton, the member for Keppel and chair; Wendy Bourne, the member for Ipswich West; Nick Dametto, the member for Hinchinbrook; Ariana Doolan, the member for Pumicestone; and Rebecca Young, the member for Redlands, who is a substitute on the committee today. We also have three substitutions in this session for Corrine McMillan, member for Mansfield: the Hon. Leeanne Enoch, member for Algeester, until 2.50 pm; Charis Mullen, member for Jordan, from 2.50 pm until 4 pm; and the Hon. Shannon Fentiman, member for Waterford, from 4 pm until 5.05 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 my discretion or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcasters of proceedings are available from the secretariat.

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. 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 upstairs. 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships portfolio area until 2.45 pm. We will then take a short break until 3 pm before examining the portfolio area of multiculturalism until 4 pm and women and women's economic security until 5 pm.

I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the times specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, available throughout the chamber and on the committee's webpage. 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, director-general, officials and departmental officers, and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisors to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships 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.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker, thank you and good afternoon to you and the committee members. I respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting and pay my respects to elders past and present. I also want to take the opportunity of giving a shout-out to the mayor of one of our communities in Queensland. I believe the mayor of Cherbourg, Bruce Simpson, is still in the gallery. I acknowledge Family Responsibilities Commissioner Tammy Williams and Deputy Commissioner Rod Curtin as well as all people who are present in person or listening online.

I am very grateful for the opportunity of serving in this role as the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Partnerships. It has been a delight to have the opportunity to engage with our First Nations leaders in their communities throughout the state. Through their leadership they are demonstrating resilience and wisdom. They have been sharing their priorities with me, particularly with regard to the need for a path to reconciliation where Closing the Gap actually does deliver tangible and meaningful outcomes for our First Peoples across the state—our First Peoples in Australia and in Queensland, who are the longest continuing culture in the world.

I would like to thank and recognise my director-general and staff of the Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism for all their hard work in preparing for estimates and for their ongoing work in the large state of Queensland serving our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This year is 40 years since a number of our discrete Aboriginal communities were first formulated with elected leaders of their communities. I think we need to recognise that there have been some significant milestones. In particular, I think we need to acknowledge the hard work and the difficulty there can be, particularly in rural and remote communities.

When communities are practically resourced and basic human needs are met, self-determination is more possible. I have referenced the fact that there are a number of communities that are in fact marking 40 years since they were first formed with elected leadership. They are at the front line of some of the hardest issues that communities can face in not only delivering for their local communities but also accessing the resources they need to thrive and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity of living not just their best lives but all that is possible.

It is an honour to discuss the LNP government's first budget for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, delivering on a fresh start for Queensland. It is no secret that the Crisafulli LNP government has intentionally and strategically shifted the focus to frontline actions and deliverables on tangible projects that have been presented to us, particularly by our First Peoples, in areas where there has been some of the greatest disadvantage and divide in access to services.

Let me be clear: we are not focusing on spending money on Brisbane-based lawyers. We are focused on reconciling the clean drinking water issue in multiple discrete communities across Queensland; reconciling the need for housing ownership such as on Palm Island, where we have given a commitment to working with community to deliver that; reconciling the need for better housing in all of our regional and remote Indigenous communities; and reconciling the need for education infrastructure such as in Cherbourg, where there has been the outstanding Buwu program. Once again, I give a shout-out to Cherbourg. That program has previously been delivered in a demountable shed or donga offsite. I know that council supported and enabled that program. We have heard the need for an appropriate facility going forward, and that is why we are funding that.

Under Labor there was not a focus on a number of frontline needs such as clean drinking water and such as elders sleeping rough. In Woorabinda there have been boil-water alerts since last year due to a failure of investment in water infrastructure in Queensland. We are focusing particularly on—be it Woorabinda, Kowanyama or Aurukun—whatever community where there are frontline requirements to ensure people have access to First World services. I look forward to outlining in greater detail some of the outcomes that we are delivering on and acknowledging all who are working with us on these important initiatives to deliver on practical outcomes.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We will begin with questions from opposition members.

Ms ENOCH: I, too, want to acknowledge that we are on Yagara and Turrbal country and I respectfully acknowledge all of our elders from wherever you come and whatever your culture. I acknowledge the minister and congratulate her on her position for a portfolio that is incredibly important. I want to acknowledge all of the hard workers of the department who I know are a fantastic team.

Minister, you have shared a story of your settler ancestry at a number of significant First Nations events this year, following which community members have told me they were offended by the minister's lack of cultural sensitivity. Can the minister outline for the committee what cultural awareness training she has undertaken since becoming a minister?

Ms SIMPSON: I want to firstly address the great opportunity it has been to go to events in rural and remote as well as urban areas, travelling throughout the state meeting hundreds of our Queenslander First Peoples from across multiple tribes, multiple clans, multiple families, with a rich and resilient history of contributing to our state, ensuring that they are able to mentor and support another generation and to overcome some of the challenges that have been well documented, and ensuring that each generation has an opportunity to thrive.

We have an amazing state. We have an amazing opportunity to walk alongside and champion and uphold our First Peoples, but I do believe it is important to acknowledge the country that we share and to acknowledge our first custodians of the land upon which we live, work and play, hopefully creating a better future for each generation that comes. That is why it is important that we do have the chance for those personal conversations as well as the larger forums where we meet, be they celebrations such as NAIDOC recently. The director-general and I had a wonderful opportunity on the first day of the bump-in of the NAIDOC celebrations in Musgrave Park to sit and listen and hear stories of that area as well as stories of language and the importance of language.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: my question was whether the minister can outline for the committee what cultural awareness training she has undertaken since becoming minister.

Ms SIMPSON: If I am able to finish answering the question, I am more than happy in sharing that it is not only about the formal training; it is about the conversations that you hold. Together with all of my ministerial staff, we have completed cultural capability training.

Ms ENOCH: Just to confirm, Minister, you have undertaken formal cultural capability training—you have personally?

Ms SIMPSON: In answering the question again I will outline that, in addition to meeting with our First Peoples through some of our most rural and remote communities on country, I have also been undertaking extensive engagement in addition to the cultural capability training which I myself as minister and my office have completed. This inclusion program was designed to enhance cultural understanding and exploring across not just one area of history but understanding the diversity of the programs in history that—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: Minister, I just wanted clarification—yes or no—that you have undertaken formal cultural capability training that has been provided by your department?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister has been responsive to the question as asked. She is providing extensive information in relation to the question as asked. Specifically, she has gone to the point that the member for Algeester raised in relation to being responsive.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order: I want to clarify, because there is no reference to any formal cultural capability training in the minister's diary extracts. I want to make it very clear for the committee: has she actually undertaken formal cultural capability training?

Ms SIMPSON: I am happy to answer the question even though it is repetitive.

Mr SPEAKER: Let me decide whether it is repetitive. I thought you were speaking about the training as the point of order was being made, so I would ask you to round out your response on that issue.

Ms SIMPSON: I am more than happy to repeat my answer. I have undertaken formal—

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Speaker.

Ms SIMPSON: No, I will complete my answer because the member did not hear it the first time.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister is rounding out her answer.

Ms SIMPSON: I would like to provide additional information for the benefit of the member because perhaps she was speaking when I was giving my answer before. In addition to meeting on country and hearing stories directly from multiple communities, I have also formally undertaken the cultural capability inclusion program—

Ms ENOCH: Perfect. Thank you, Minister—

Ms SIMPSON:—that outlined a number of—

Ms ENOCH:—my question has been answered.

Ms SIMPSON:—very moving and important stories from the across the state.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to move on, Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: One second, member for Algeester. I think the minister is finalising her response.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In addition, ministerial staff were provided the opportunity to also participate in cultural emersion experiences in places such as Cherbourg. This has been important with the ongoing understanding about local history in addition to history—

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Speaker. The question has been answered.

Ms SIMPSON:—presented generally across the nation and to understand that people do have very personally powerful stories, both individually as families but also in each community. There is diversity within diversity, so no one story tells the same case for everybody when they are sharing, and that is why it is important to hear.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with reference to SDS page 2 and the Closing the Gap agreement, the minister's charter letter clearly identifies her as the minister responsible for working towards the objectives of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. That is right, is it not?

Ms SIMPSON: What was the question, member? If the member could repeat the question that she was asking.

Ms ENOCH: I am about to, thank you, Minister. Minister, with reference to SDS page 2 and the Closing the Gap agreement, the minister's charter letter clearly identifies her as the minister responsible for working towards the objectives of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap; that is right, is it not?

Ms SIMPSON: Well, member, I will choose how I answer a question. I will not be dictated to by you. I do want to address this very important issue of Closing the Gap and the agreement that was signed nearly six years ago.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister has just started to answer. What is your point of order?

Ms ENOCH: It is a very straightforward question. Is she responsible—

Ms SIMPSON: I will address the question—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I am taking a point of order. I will rule on the point of order.

Ms ENOCH: It is a very straightforward question. I asked if the statement that I made was correct.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister was being responsive and, as you have ruled previously, it is up to the person who has been asked the question—in this case, the minister—as to how she answers. She was barely into her response to the question as asked.

Mr SPEAKER: It is up to the minister how she responds to the question. Minister, you have heard the question asked. I ask you to respond.

Ms SIMPSON: I am very pleased to answer a question about Closing the Gap, which is an important initiative. It is something that the Premier in particular charged me to work across government with other ministerial colleagues on. With regard to Closing the Gap as an agreement and in practice, I have received feedback from not only local communities but also engagements with peak organisations around what is working and what they do not believe is working as effectively as it should be. Some of the feedback I received was that there is more than just a gap. As the mayor of Kowanyama, Territa Dick, said to me, 'There is not a gap: there is a hole.' There are holes. There has been a lack of attention in the previous Labor government's plans. One of the key targets within the Closing the Gap agreement, 9b, is supposed to be about delivering services into some of our most rural and remote discrete communities.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, I think the question has been answered.

Ms SIMPSON: In 9b of the Closing the Gap agreement there are no agreed measures nationally for the delivery of frontline services, critical services or infrastructure in those communities—which might explain why the previous minister under the Labor Party never talked about water in rural and remote communities, yet 9b is about frontline services—

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Ms SIMPSON:—and under Closing the Gap it was not addressed by the Labor government.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Algeester, what is your point of order?

Ms ENOCH: I take personal offence at what the minister said. She is wasting a lot of time. I take personal offence at what she has just said and I ask her to withdraw.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw. I will finish my answer, though. Let's put it on the record. Target 9b in the Closing the Gap agreement was supposed to address the delivery of services within our most rural and remote and discrete communities. It may offend Labor members to talk about this, but the reality is that they did not address some of the worst disadvantages in this state. There is a gap that goes beyond what people see in the aggregated statistics. There is a gap in the average life span of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland compared to non-Indigenous Queenslanders. There is also a gap with regard to Indigenous—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I will ask you to finish your answer.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will come to it, because this is one of the reasons we have focused particularly on delivering water infrastructure into Woorabinda. There were boil-water alerts since last year and nothing was done by the previous Labor government despite this being a requirement under the Closing the Gap agreement. They failed to measure it. They failed to act. They failed to deal with a fundamental failure, and we are now getting on with funding this and getting it done.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with reference to Closing the Gap target 12, what is the current rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, please?

Ms SIMPSON: I am happy to continue to address the Closing the Gap agreement, which does cover a number of very critical social indicators that are important to communities—in this case, some of our most rural and remote communities—working towards having safety and security in their homes. As we know, there is an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. With regard to target 12, that was also the case under the previous Labor government. I will take advice about target 12.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to have that information provided later if the minister is unable to—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, do you have that at hand or will you come back to it?

Ms SIMPSON: I do have that at hand. With regard to the figures, as at 30 June 2024 the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was 42.9 per cent per 1,000 children.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Minister.

Ms SIMPSON: That 30 June 2024 figure was not on track and that continues to be the case, which is why there is a focus on addressing the child safety system—

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for answering.

Ms SIMPSON: My colleague the honourable Minister for Families and Minister for Child Safety and other important portfolios, Amanda Camm, has launched a commission of inquiry into the child safety system because of our concern about ensuring that all children are safe.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with reference to Closing the Gap target 11, what is the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people currently in detention?

Ms SIMPSON: I will gather the rate. As the member would know, this was not on track under the stewardship of the previous minister, who I understand was the member who asked the question. This has been an issue of concern. It was not on track under the previous minister and it is still not on track. This is why under the Minister for Youth Justice and Minister for Corrective Services there are early intervention programs. I am not aware if any opposition member asked her questions about the early intervention programs, but it is very important that there are interventions with children involved in the youth justice and criminal justice system. That is why a comprehensive scheme is being rolled out with regard to interventions. Under the previous Labor government it was not on track, and that continues to be the same. That is why we have such a need to address not only children who are in the youth justice system—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the question asked for the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people currently in detention. If the minister is unable to get that information, that is fine; we can get it later and we can move on.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, do you have that information at hand?

Ms SIMPSON: I am more than happy to finish my answer. As was previously the case, the average daily rate of young people in detention per 10,000 was 41.1 in 2023-24, which was the last published figure.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Minister.

Ms SIMPSON: That was under the previous government but it has continued to be an issue.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with reference to—

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there are constant interjections taking place. The minister had not quite finished responding—I understand she has now finished—but there are constant interjections over the minister which are not being taken.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I will look after that.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with reference to priority reform area 2 of the Closing the Gap agreement, how many times has the minister formally met with the Queensland Coalition of Peaks?

Ms SIMPSON: Just to finish my answer from when I was cut off before, in the last 10 years under the previous government there was a 288 per cent increase in the number of First Nations people on remand. That is more than double the growth when compared to the 123 per cent increase in non-Indigenous prisoners. That goes to the issue of addressing early intervention and the cycle of crime as well as recognising that some of the people who are most impacted as victims of crime are in fact our First Nations people.

An important part of my role has been meeting peak organisations both individually and corporately. This has occurred directly on country and rural and remote with leadership groups such as TCICA. I have had about 130 formal meetings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals throughout my work. Some of those are individuals from the peaks and I have been meeting some of them individually in their roles. That has been an invaluable part of understanding.

Feedback I have received—particularly from some of the peaks that actually have a membership base—is their concern that the Closing the Gap program needs to hear from the grassroots of our communities, in particular our First Nations communities. I reflected before on the words of Mayor Territa Dick: 'There is not just a gap; there is a hole.' I have also reflected on another remote and discrete community mayor who has talked about the concern that, while some of the organisations do good work, they do not necessarily talk about all of the issues they are raising. This has been the concern again about 9b in the—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the question goes to the Coalition of Peaks. How many times has the minister met with the Coalition of Peaks?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, do you have that at hand?

Ms SIMPSON: A joint meeting of the Coalition of Peaks with ministerial representatives occurred recently. That meeting was in Darwin with both ministers and our federal Minister for Indigenous Australians. I understand that particular joint council meeting with the Coalition of Peaks was in early June. That was the joint Coalition of Peaks and ministerial council meeting with Malarndirri McCarthy as the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians. In that particular process, in addition to representatives of the peaks that were participating, individual organisations were also present and were taking the opportunity of liaising with members from across Australia.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you. That has been answered. So you did not meet with the Queensland Coalition of Peaks.

Mr SPEAKER: We do not need any commentary. We will go to government members for questions.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, I refer you to page 2 of the SDS and the \$108 million Closing the Gap Priorities Fund. You previously stated that you visited multiple remote and discrete communities across Queensland. How does the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund deliver essential services to discrete communities, and how is this different to previous approaches?

Ms SIMPSON: As you are from a beautiful part of the world in Central Queensland, you would understand that all of our communities would expect to have access to clean drinking water. We do not expect to turn on a tap and not be able to drink the water that comes out of it. It has been quite shocking to see the lack of attention to frontline service delivery by the previous Labor government. This is why before coming to government we made a commitment that we were going to deliver what was required to help all Queenslanders live their best lives. They need the services so they can live in their community and in this case have access to clean drinking water.

Early in the piece we learned how the Woorabinda community had been on a 'boil drinking water' alert since last year. From what I can see in *Hansard*, I do not think the previous Labor government even mentioned what they were going to do to get them into a safe and secure situation. This did not happen overnight; it was years of disadvantage and the communities being ignored. This is one example of closing the gap with respect to access to opportunities and frontline services of health, housing, education and a whole range of critical areas of need. Surely everyone has a right to clean drinking water.

Early on, we gave a commitment to allocate \$18 million to help fix Woorabinda's water supply, except we needed to have the federal government match that \$18 million. It is expensive to build what they need and not to have a bandaid solution. I am so pleased that the federal government has done what their previous Labor state members did not do and has finally come on board. It is matching our \$18 million to fix the Woorabinda water supply.

We have also assigned funding out of the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund for another program that was not funded by the previous Labor government—to fix the bores to upgrade the water supply in places such as Kowanyama and Aurukun. These are communities that may have been out of sight and out of mind to the previous Labor government, but they are not to us. This is why we have the Priorities Fund. This is why we are funding water supply rather than Brisbane-based lawyers because everyone deserves the ability to turn on a tap to get clean drinking water. As I said, I am delighted the federal government has come on board. We approached them in December last year.

I also want to give a shout out to the Minister for Water, Ann Leahy, and our local member for Gregory, Sean Dillon. I hope we can partner with the federal government to deliver more of these critical infrastructure upgrades that everyone in Queensland deserves to have. They were not funded, they did not happen which then had a huge social impact as well as a health impact on those communities.

Ms DOOLAN: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and the key deliverable of supporting the recognition, protection and conservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, I note the government's active engagement with NAIDOC Week last month and your personal involvement in many NAIDOC events. I also enjoyed my local community's NAIDOC event with the Bribie Project. How did the Crisafulli LNP government support communities to celebrate NAIDOC?

Ms SIMPSON: It is a delight to have you, member for Pumicestone, join us in this parliament as one of our newest members. I know you engage with your community, and I note the feedback you provided about how well received your local NAIDOC events were.

It is incredibly powerful to recognise NAIDOC Week—hearing stories, supporting celebrations and knowing why it is so vitally significant to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout Queensland. It truly bridges a gap in understanding, as well as providing an opportunity to elevate and celebrate the power of culture and connection to stories. We made sure, as a government, that right across Queensland Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders were supported and encouraged to celebrate the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee Week—NAIDOC Week. This year's theme was 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy'. It is held nationally and internationally in the first week of July and celebrates First People's culture and achievements. That theme of strength, vision and legacy highlights the strength of young community leaders forging a bright future which also respectfully acknowledges elders' legacy. It promotes empowerment by the strength of our young leaders, the vision of our communities and the legacy of ancestors.

NAIDOC Week offered a chance to reflect and celebrate. As such, the Crisafulli LNP government invested more than \$215,000 to support 64 NAIDOC Week celebrations across Queensland. To break that down, the Crisafulli government provided a combined \$85,000 for two major events to celebrate NAIDOC Week—the Musgrave Park Family Fun Day which the director-general and I, probably many people in this room, and my staff enjoyed going along and participating in, and the Brisbane NAIDOC Ball was presented by Indigenous not-for-profit Triple A.

In addition, the Crisafulli government provided the remaining \$132,000 in the form of NAIDOC Week grants to communities right across Queensland to support 62 individual local celebrations from Barcaldine to Brisbane and as far north as Aurukun, Cooktown and Kowanyama. They consisted of 19 organisations in the South-East Queensland region, 14 in the state's central and south-west regions, 14 in the North and 15 in the Far North region.

The Crisafulli LNP government supported and sponsored events right across the state. They included: the Torres Strait NAIDOC Awards on Thursday Island; Toowoomba's NAIDOC Golden Oldies Luncheon; the Tony Turnbull Memorial NAIDOC Golf Day in Chinchilla; Cherbourg's NAIDOC Community Acknowledgement Awards; the NAIDOC Native Forest and Bush Food Immersive Day, which I want to highlight was in the member for Hinchinbrook's electorate; and NAIDOC celebrations at Baringa Community Centre in Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast; Pormpuraaw NAIDOC Celebration Day in the Cook electorate; the Charleville Netball NAIDOC Day; Voices Across Time in Rockhampton; Goompi Community NAIDOC Celebration in Oodgeroo; the Logan NAIDOC Family Fun Day; Palm Island's community celebration day; and the Charters Towers street march and community elders' morning tea, and there were more. It was really wonderful to hear the stories from across Queensland and to know that this is not only of powerful importance to our First Nations people but also provides incredible opportunities for all Queenslanders to participate, understand and walk together to help overcome social and economic barriers.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and the funding surrounding the work of Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Commissioner, the Crisafulli LNP government state government has demonstrated a commitment to cultural recognition and Torres Strait Islander traditional child rearing practices. Minister, why has the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Act been funded beyond 2025 and why is this so important for Torres Strait Islander peoples and Queensland as a whole?

Ms SIMPSON: I thank the member for this very important question. This vital piece of legislation which was enacted by the commissioner was not funded beyond 30 June by the previous Labor government. We, as the Crisafulli government, believe that not only is it valuable in recognising culture but also, as a critical service, makes such a difference to the lives of people who have been able to access it.

Page 2 of the Service Delivery Statements shows the Crisafulli LNP government's investment of \$6.8 million in new funding over three years, from 2026-27, and a total of \$8.9 million to support the work of the commissioner and the ongoing implementation of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Act 2020. Funding for continuous support of the commission was not previously allocated by the former Labor government. We believe it is important, which is why we have ensured there is ongoing funding.

The commission reached a significant milestone recently with the issuing of the 100th Cultural Recognition Order. This funding directly benefits Torres Strait Islander peoples by ensuring their traditional child rearing practices are recognised in Queensland law through cultural recognition orders, and by strengthening culturally safe access to government and community services. In very simple and practical terms, people did not have the necessary identification. It is very difficult to get a driver's licence. This cultural practice now being recognised in law does require more than just the law; it requires the commission to deliver the outcomes so that people can access these cultural recognition orders. For practical reasons, they have identification that allows people to access government services and many other necessary benefits.

If the Crisafulli LNP government had not provided this critical funding investment, there would be no support for Torres Strait Islander people to apply for cultural recognition orders to keep their families together and to address some of these practical issues of identification. The Crisafulli government knows that families preserve culture, and it is in family and local community settings that children learn their heritage and place in the world. This legislation makes that possible for children who are being raised by cultural parents rather than birth parents. The act supports Closing the Gap target 4, children thrive in their early years; target 13, families and households are safe; target 14, people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing; target 15, people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters; and target 16, cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing.

The act gives Torres Strait Islander families a process for making an application for legal recognition. If granted, this will result in a permanent transfer of parentage from the biological parents to the cultural parents. The process to apply for a Cultural Recognition Order will ensure cultural parents

can make parental decisions—for example, in respect of education and health—about their child without difficulty and the child will have the same legal rights as other children of the cultural parents, including inheritance rights.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS, how will the Crisafulli LNP government support economic development within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including in my electorate of Redlands, and how is this different to previous approaches?

Ms SIMPSON: I want to thank the member for the question. Certainly, the member is engaged in her community and with the First Nations people in her community. She knows the importance of helping people fully participate and overcome both economic and social barriers to live their best lives and to thrive. Economic development and opportunities to establish and grow businesses, or to participate in other people's businesses, are important and some of our core points of focus.

Before I outline some of the initiatives we are undertaking, it is important to note that the previous Labor government promised to deliver an economic policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland by 2023 and they did not do it. We are getting on with the business of ensuring we are delivering. We will be delivering an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic policy that will involve and consult with our First Peoples to address the opportunities that they see and want to take advantage of as they grow their businesses so that another generation know that there is a great future for them.

Some of these businesses that are emerging will have a very strong cultural focus and access to opportunities in our tourism sector. I appreciate that the member also has a thriving tourism community. In the lead-up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032, we are very keen to enable the growth of those businesses through procurement. It is not only about access to government contracts; it is also about access to a diverse economy that is able to provide opportunities. The tourism sector is one particular area. My colleague the Minister for Tourism, Andrew Powell, has recently released Destination 2045, which addresses part of that. We are also engaging with our small business minister, Steve Minnikin, with respect to the arts and the opportunities that will continue to emerge and flourish with the 10-year policy document that my colleague the Minister for Education and the Arts has recently released. All together, the new economic strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships—I have lead through my department—will also benefit through the oversight of the economic security team with the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance.

To go to some of the core, vital issues, to have a strong economy you have to have access to frontline services. I refer again to Woorabinda. In terms of having a strong and thriving hospitality sector, you cannot run a catering business unless you can turn on a tap and get clean water. How can you have a childcare centre if you do not know that children will have access to clean drinking water when they turn on a tap—whether they be home-based or centre-based businesses? Frontline services are very important, and this is why in our rural and remote communities—and in all communities—you have to get the fundamentals right. At the heart and soul of an economic plan you have to have infrastructure. You also have to have skills development. We are ensuring investment is going into these very key areas as core pillars of the development and delivery of our economic plan for our First Peoples in Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: We will now go to opposition members.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you, Minister, for addressing the committee today. I have a question in regard to the Crisafulli government and whether or not the government is currently paying for welcomes to country, cultural ceremonies or smoking ceremonies in Queensland. If so, how much has been budgeted this year and what line item is that coming from?

Ms SIMPSON: We do not have a budget item on that. The Queensland government's position on welcome to country and the acknowledgement of traditional owners and elders has been published. It is publicly available, and it has not changed. We do not have a budget item for such ceremonies. I cannot answer for individual agencies. With respect to making acknowledgements, we do that as a matter of courtesy. There will be some agencies that have staff in-house who provide that; I cannot answer for other agencies. With regard to acknowledgements, that is something that we do as a matter of course.

Mr DAMETTO: With regard to the \$180 million that has been committed for delivering frontline tangible projects in rural and remote discrete communities, can the minister outline what some of the projects are—other than water quality projects—and also how they will be measured?

Ms SIMPSON: One key measure is being able to turn on a tap and drink water which meets drinking water standards. I outlined before that we have a number of rural and remote discrete communities where there is a responsibility to deliver services in those communities but they do not have a rates base to fund a lot of these particular critical services. They have a need for funding assistance from state and federal governments because of their very remoteness and the lack of a natural rates base.

This is why it was very important for us that we recognise where there is tremendous need. That Woorabinda water project, which we are funding \$18 million from the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund—and now it is to be matched by the federal government—is a recognised need that the Woorabinda community had been raising and had wanted assistance with. We prioritised that as a project that we were going to make happen. It had to happen. They had been on boil-water alerts for nearly 10 months and for a longer period—years—they had insecure water and great difficulty in ensuring they had clean drinking water. First and foremost, a key measurable is clean drinking water that meets standards so people know they will not have a health outcome as a result.

Kowanyama is another community for which we have assigned \$8 million to ensure they have greater water security. When I was last there, they had not long since had a weekend with no water; they had run out of water. They did not have the supply that would get them through. That once again is—

Mr DAMETTO: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I wish to bring the minister back to the question. I asked for projects other than water projects.

Mr SPEAKER: That was part of the question, Minister.

Ms SIMPSON: How to ensure they are meeting a standard with regard to—

Mr SPEAKER: Do you want a bit of clarification around the question?

Mr DAMETTO: I asked the question about tangible projects other than water projects.

Ms SIMPSON: 'Other than water projects', I am sorry; I thought you wanted me to outline the water projects.

Mr DAMETTO: No. We have heard enough about them already.

Ms SIMPSON: I like talking about water because we can take it for granted here. We can pick up a glass and we can pour water out of a jug. They have been some of the areas of great focus because of their urgency and because there was such a deficit in attention.

With regard to the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund, it will be for health, and certainly water is a health concern. Projects funded by the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund must align with priority Closing the Gap goals that improve outcomes in health, education, housing or employment or living standards in remote and discrete communities. There are other Closing the Gap indicators, but health does cover water; that is why it was so critically important we prioritise that. Projects must be targeted to Aboriginal people or Torres Strait Islander peoples and be delivered in at least one remote or discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. They must also be ready to commence and can be delivered using one-off, non-recurrent funding.

One of the projects in the first tranche of funding that has been announced was the Buwu educational program in Cherbourg, a program the local Aboriginal council have been very involved in. That is prioritised as a Closing the Gap priority because there are children who might be removed from the classroom but they do not want the kids out on the street; they want them still in education but not disrupting those who are learning. The Buwu program is for children who are engaged in alternative learning. They were basically in a metal donga offsite, and council were good enough to provide that. They are at-risk kids. They want to keep them in education. This funding, the \$3 million, will allow them to come onto the school grounds in a proper facility that is built for that purpose.

To answer the question, it is Closing the Gap and it can be across a range of practical frontline projects that are ready to commence and that do have the support of the community. In this case, the first tranche were those that were ready to go. Woorabinda would have liked to have gotten it going sooner, but we are pleased that the funding from the federal government that we have been waiting for has now come through, so that full project can go ahead.

Mr DAMETTO: My question is with regard to property ownership on Palm Island and its success. Is there any push from the government or policy objective to extend this into other remote and Indigenous discrete communities, for example, Mornington Island?

Mr SPEAKER: Is that under your portfolio or local government?

Ms SIMPSON: I am working with the Minister for Housing so I can give an answer—

Mr SPEAKER: Just a brief one.

Mr DAMETTO: That would be fine.

Ms SIMPSON: Through Minister O'Connor, there has been engagement across all communities to see what the communities want with regard to opportunities for access to housing and home ownership. As you would appreciate, there is more of an appetite in some communities than others, but there has been a very strong appetite obviously in Palm Island. Where there is a community that expresses an interest, I understand the department of housing is more than willing to work with them. I believe that as the Palm Island model rolls out more communities will look at whether that model suits them and there may be a different approach used in some other communities. Palm Island is certainly the first community where this rent-to-buy model is being piloted. Some other communities might have a different approach that they want to see come about. There are other communities that are keen to just have more housing per se because of the sheer cost of having housing provided. We are certainly keen to work with all communities about the best way to meet their aspirations both today and into the future.

Ms ENOCH: My next question is to the director-general. With reference to page 2 of the SDS, the \$108 million Closing the Gap Priorities Fund is fully administered by your department; is that correct?

Ms Wilde: I am sorry, could you repeat the last part of that question?

Ms ENOCH: Is it correct that the \$108 million Closing the Gap Priorities Fund is fully administered by your department?

Ms Wilde: Correct, member.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, can you point the committee to where we can find the full criteria being used to determine where this funding is expended, please?

Ms Wilde: The criteria in relation to the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund for tranche 1 was something that was done as a result of consultation that the minister undertook with various communities. In relation to future projects, that criteria is currently under development. As the minister outlined, it must align with priority Closing the Gap goals that aim to improve outcomes in health, education, housing and employment or living standards in remote and discrete communities.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Director-General. Just to confirm, the criteria has not been formalised as yet?

Ms Wilde: The criteria for the next tranche of projects is currently under development.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, can you confirm how much of the \$108 million Closing the Gap Priorities Fund has already been expended, please?

Ms Wilde: There is \$71 million remaining out of the \$108 million.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Director-General—so confirming, Director-General, that you have already expended \$37 million of the fund. Can the director-general inform the committee: how was the expenditure that was announced by the minister determined, then, if there is no criteria?

Ms Wilde: As I indicated earlier, the criteria for the next tranche is currently under development. The criteria that was used in order to assess the first tranche was done in relation to conversations that the minister had had in her engagement across communities. As the minister has also indicated throughout other answers, she has certainly heard from communities that essential water infrastructure is something that they very much are needing and lacking.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Director-General. To confirm, the minister determined how that funding—the Closing the Gap priority funds—was to be used? The minister alone made those decisions?

Ms Wilde: I am unable to answer that.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, you have a \$108 million fund and it appears that for a large proportion of it so far you have decided how it would be spent yourself, essentially deciding who are the winners and who are the losers; is that correct?

Miss DOOLAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: that was an imputation.

Mr SPEAKER: I would suggest that it was probably argumentative. Could you rephrase the question, please, member for Algeester.

Ms ENOCH: I am happy to, Mr Speaker. To confirm, Minister, you have a \$108 million fund and the director-general has informed the committee that for a proportion of it you have been able to make those decisions yourself regarding how that fund is expended; is that correct?

Ms SIMPSON: I find it extraordinary that the member somehow feels that getting clean drinking water into a community such as Woorabinda—

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Ms SIMPSON:—that was denied an opportunity for clean drinking water—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Hold on, Minister. We have a point—

Ms SIMPSON:—is somehow—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister—

Ms SIMPSON:—winning the lotto.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms SIMPSON: It should be a human right.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister! Thank you. I have a point of order. What is your point of order, member for Algeester?

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, I take personal offence at the member's comments. She knows there has been over \$180 million expended in the last seven years for water infrastructure by former governments.

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, point of order: the questioner was actually providing commentary as opposed to making a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I am going to ask the minister to respond to the question and not debate or be argumentative in her response.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order: I do take personal offence to what the minister has said. I ask her to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: There was a personal offence taken as well.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw. I do wish to answer the question, and I should have the freedom to answer this quite fully. When I became minister I met with a number of communities and also received detailed briefings from communities about some of the critical infrastructure deficits. The fact that the previous Labor government did not listen to the request for assistance from Woorabinda for water is a disgrace and I will continue—

Ms BOURNE: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Ms SIMPSON: It is not a personal reflection on the member.

Ms BOURNE: Mr Speaker, you clearly gave the minister an instruction not to be argumentative.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: I would submit to you that there was no argument or argumentative commentary.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes. No, that is not a point of order. There is no point of order. Minister, you have the call.

Ms SIMPSON: So that I can answer the question, I recommended the projects to government for consideration based on the feedback I had received about the failing water infrastructure in these communities which was quite urgent. That was a matter of collaboration with government based on well-known deficits in access to frontline services. The fact that the previous Labor government is a bit surprised that it had failing water infrastructure in places like Woorabinda is more a reflection on the fact that it is out of touch with the critical frontline services. There is no dispute that Woorabinda had been on boil-water alerts since last year and it was cabinet approved to address these critical shortfalls. The opportunity of getting applications in to seek, hopefully, federal funding to continue to advance the full upgrade was time sensitive, and that was back in December—

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am happy to move on.

Ms SIMPSON:—but we finally got matching approval for funding from the federal government. This should not be about seeing this as some lottery win for communities; it is a basic human right that the previous government did not fund and did not address and it was well known, but they failed to act. We are getting on with working with communities on the basis of their concerns and their need to have access to First World water conditions. I think about 76 per cent of the world has access to clean drinking water, and how on earth you have a community like Woorabinda on boil-water alerts since last year, with a failing system for years under the previous Labor government, that never mentioned, is just—

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, I think the minister has answered the question—

Ms SIMPSON: It is unfathomable how out of touch they were with frontline services.

Ms ENOCH:—and she is being repetitive.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Algeester. I think it has been answered and the member for Pumicestone has a question she is keen to ask.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, with reference to page 1 of the SDS which states that the department will develop a plan for Queensland's future by coordinating whole-of-government efforts to lift living standards in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, can you update the committee on the work of Community Enterprise?

Ms SIMPSON: This is an important part of my portfolio that provides the opportunity for some of our most rural and remote communities to have access to goods and food, and good food. Community Enterprise Queensland, CEQ, is a not-for-profit statutory body that was established under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities act 1984, known as the JLOM act. I have powers with regard to Community Enterprise Queensland under the act, but there is a very effective board and oversight. I want to acknowledge the chair, Joann Schmider, along with the CEO, Michael Dykes. Given what they are doing as a board and with their many community workers who are employed by CEQ to deliver good outcomes, they deserve to be acknowledged.

CEQ is part of the social and economic fabric of communities in which they are located. It has a strong history of partnering with community, government and non-government organisations through sponsorships and donations of local and regional events. CEQ is aware of the need to ensure the availability and affordability of healthy food and essential staples to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and offers special and other incentives to the store to help with the cost-of-living burden in remote communities. They have also put a particular focus on nutrition across the network—they have introduced an internal nutrition policy—and they do checks on the cost of their bundle of fruit and vegetables and utilise access to subsidies, federal and state, to try to keep the costs down.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, I want to thank you for running through economic opportunities in my previous question but, just to extend on that a bit, what is your approach to economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses in relation to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games?

Ms SIMPSON: I am sure that the member's electorate will be a particular beneficiary of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as all of Queensland will be. Before I answer this more fully I need to correct myself: where I said that 76 per cent of the world has access to clean drinking water, it is 73 per cent of the world has access to clean drinking water—except for Woorabinda which we are working on because they deserve access to clean drinking water.

With regard to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032, we are going to have international visitors on our doorstep. They are going to be experiencing Queensland's culture and the rich diversity of our First Australians' history and heritage. We have some amazing Olympians who are First Nations Olympians. When we look at the likes of some of our sporting stars, such as Cathy Freeman, Ash Barty, a well-known tennis player, Patrick Johnson and so many others, they are inspirations to Queensland kids. There are also business opportunities. Already I have had some very fruitful conversations with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business community. There are emerging opportunities for those who are looking for opportunities in the tourism sector. I mentioned earlier that the Destination 2045 program that my colleague the Minister for Tourism has announced has quite extensive opportunities for our First Nations people. We will be working with those businesses across the spectrum of opportunity to help provide more advancement and maturing of the business model so that there is not just a good opportunity, but a really rich array of cultural experiences and other businesses that are able to fully participate.

The government is also focused on increasing the economic and employment pathways in all aspects of the games planning and delivery to improve social and wellbeing outcomes for our First Nations people. I want to take this opportunity to thank our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander athletes for the role they play in lifting the aspirations of Queensland kids all over the state. They are heroes to many, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous kids, and are setting aspirational examples for our next generation. This is where Olympic athletes begin: in local communities with leaders and elders who believe in them and make opportunities for them. That is exactly what the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is going to do. It will create opportunities for people with vision and grit. It will be a prime opportunity to support Indigenous businesses to position themselves with knowledge and capability. Lyndon Davis and family, and so many others on the Sunshine Coast where I am from, already do such an awesome job in presenting culture and language and explaining landscape to a lot of our community groups. It is such a rich experience to have someone like Lyndon and others who come in and present culture and the learnings and the sharing of the stories.

Since being voted into government we have particularly focused on looking at how to continue to expand and support Indigenous businesses to position themselves with knowledge, capability and scalability to create a legacy going forward. Whether through tourism, culture, arts, food, manufacturing, design or construction, so many opportunities will arise from this event. We need to be ready to help do all we can to elevate, to throw a spotlight on and also incubate today's businesses for tomorrow's opportunities for all of our First Nations peoples. The opportunities with the Olympic and Paralympic Games presents quite an extraordinary benefit and legacy that goes beyond just today.

Mr SPEAKER: I think we will go back to opposition members. Member for Algeester.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, with reference to SDS page 7, can the director-general confirm the number of FTEs for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships section of your department in the budget, excluding any members of the strategic policy and legislation team which services the whole department?

Ms Wilde: I am referring to my notes. If I could have a moment, thank you. If I could, through the minister, I would like to take that on notice. I only have the full number for the department as far as what is listed in the SDS. I do not have the breakdown.

Mr SPEAKER: Are you happy for that to be taken on notice?

Ms SIMPSON: We will come back in this session before we finish.

Ms ENOCH: For further clarification, what I am after is the actual number of FTEs dedicated to the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships section of your department and whether that has reduced in real numbers.

Ms Wilde: I understood, thank you.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, given the director-general and yourself have confirmed that you alone decide the expenditure of the \$108 million fund, is the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund being used for projects in discrete Indigenous communities that usually would be funded through the budgets of relevant departments such as Water and Local Government, as was the case just last year when the then water minister announced joint funding of \$62 million for remote Indigenous communities?

Ms SIMPSON: Before I answer the minister I want to correct something I said before in regard to the rate of children per 1,000 in out-of-home care. I think I said 42.9 per cent per 1,000 children. I should have said 42.9 per 1,000 children in out-of-home care, just to clarify and be accurate. Could the member repeat the question?

Ms ENOCH: Are you right, Minister? Are you listening this time?

Mr SPEAKER: No preambles, no commentary. Just the question, please.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for your guidance, Speaker. Given the director-general and yourself have confirmed that you alone decide the expenditure of the \$108 million fund, is the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund being used for projects in discrete Indigenous communities that usually would be funded through the budgets of relevant departments such as Water and Local Government, as was the case just last year when the then water minister announced joint funding of \$62 million for remote Indigenous communities?

Ms SIMPSON: With respect to the \$108 million fund and the funding in the first tranche that has been announced—and then there is the second tranche where the guidelines will shortly be announced, where there will be expressions or applications that will come forward from community. There was an

urgency in particular with the first tranche, which somehow Labor members seemed to be upset about. They did not fund the water projects I am announcing. They were not funded and that cannot be ignored. They were not funded by Labor.

It beggars belief that a community like Woorabinda, that had been waiting for years to get funding for clean drinking water, was not funded. It did not fail overnight and it was not funded by Labor. There was nothing for Woorabinda, and it took some time to get a response from the federal Labor government, but to their credit they did what the previous state Labor government never did. There was no funding provided by the state Labor government or from the federal government previously for Woorabinda, despite years of neglect and the fact that it was failing, or other communities where there had been an urgency to move to provide assistance for their water supply, places that regularly ran out of water, such as Kowanyama, which ran out of water on the weekend. There are a couple of them that are prone to having days without water due to a lack of secure supply.

I need to be clear that I do recommend the projects to government. These projects are not matters that I make decisions on on my own. I do consult with communities and hear their frustration with the previous Labor government failing to listen about critical frontline services. The projects that have been announced were, in fact, recommended to government and have been part of a government agreement and response. We have a whole-of-government approach to Closing the Gap.

I find it amazing that members of the previous Labor government do not want to acknowledge that they failed to address critical frontline services that were not funded. These water projects were not funded. Woorabinda was not funded. I have been there. I have met with the community. I have met with the council. They were not funded by Labor. It does not matter how much Labor members try to verbalise me: the 'boil drinking water' alerts do not tell a mistruth. They are the truth of a failure to deal with the frontline basics. That is where we have listened and we are finding a way to ensure that, through a whole-of-government approach, we are addressing Closing the Gap.

With respect to these frontline services such as clean drinking water, this was a recommendation of projects to government that have been accepted and are going forward. They are on the basis of direct feedback from community that were not only desperate to have these projects addressed; they requested that these projects for this critical frontline water be addressed.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, how much more of the Closing the Gap fund, under what you have described as tranche 1, will be determined by the minister?

Ms Wilde: Tranche 1 is \$37 million of the \$108 million. Those are the four projects that the minister has spoken to. They were ones that she recommended for government consideration. Tranche 2 is the \$71 million that is remaining to be allocated. As I indicated in previous answers, the guideline for that is currently under development.

Mr SPEAKER: Director-General, do you have a response to the question that was to be answered by the end of this session regarding full-time equivalents?

Ms Wilde: I probably need another minute or so, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: You have about 2½ minutes.

Ms Wilde: Understood.

Mr SPEAKER: Do you have another question, member for Algester?

Ms ENOCH: Minister, with regard the Palm Island home ownership program that you announced in December last year, how many residents of Palm Island have purchased their own home?

Mr SPEAKER: Keep it brief, Minister, because we want the other answer before we finish.

Ms SIMPSON: This program is under co-development with the community; thus, the very first of the rent-to-buy homes will be rolled out in cooperation with the community. It is co-designed with the community. My colleague the Minister for Housing has lead. There have been expressions of interest from the community with regard to those who wish to participate—

Ms ENOCH: So none.

Ms SIMPSON:—as that program is being designed jointly with the community. We will ensure that it meets the objectives of the community and that they can fulfil that. It has been a long-held wish of the community to be able to do this. It is one that they did not believe they could do under the previous Labor government.


Mr SPEAKER: Minister, we need to round that off so we can have the answer to the other question.

Ms Wilde: There are 198.76 FTE in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships part of the department. The SDS, as you have mentioned, is inclusive of both corporate as well as strategic policy and legislation FTE.

Ms SIMPSON: Mr Speaker, thank you very much for your assistance today. I would like to thank you, the committee, all the departmental staff and my staff for their assistance in facilitating and making this possible today.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. We have reached the end of the time allocated to examine the proposed expenditure of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships portfolio area. The committee will now adjourn for a break. The hearing will resume at 3.00 pm with the examination of estimates for the portfolio area of multiculturalism.

Proceedings suspended from 2.45 pm to 3.00 pm.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Welcome back, Minister and officials. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of multiculturalism open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, you can make a brief opening statement of no more than five minutes, if you so wish.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Welcome back to the committee and to the members joining us. It is important I recognise the staff of the department and Multicultural Affairs Queensland for all of their hard work in preparing for this estimates hearing and for their ongoing work serving those within our communities who have travelled from countries across the globe and chosen to call Queensland home.

I am truly honoured to be the Minister for Multiculturalism, and it is a thrill to be able to talk about this portfolio now at the beginning of August, which is Multicultural Queensland Month. Just last Friday I had the pleasure of joining the Premier at the Luminous Lantern Parade at South Bank, and we were joined by young families and people from across our state who are from diverse backgrounds. They were among the one in five Queenslanders who were born overseas.

The Crisafulli LNP government is committed to the multicultural communities of Queensland and to get the work done that truly matters. Why would so many people from around the world choose to make Queensland their home, apart from the benefits of the beauty of our natural environment, the weather and the great Australian and Queensland way of life? Many families tell me they chose Queensland because they believe it is a place where they and their families can thrive. Family is central to our multicultural communities. They can practise their faith and continue to bring their families up in their cultural traditions. Central to our multicultural communities is people being able to celebrate their diversity as well as overcome the social and economic barriers so they can fully participate and thrive as part of our Queensland community.

They want to make a better life for their children and their children's children. Aspiration is central to our multicultural communities. This means that we will be working hard to assist those Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to be able to fully participate in the life that Queensland has to offer. We will be working to help them achieve recognition of their skills or skill levels or run their small and family businesses so they can fully participate in and enrich the Queensland economy. Feeling safe and being safe wherever they live or having the health services for them and their families where they live is all part of being part of Queensland's future.

When a multicultural community thrives, everyone wins. That is why an extra \$1.5 million has been allocated by the Crisafulli LNP government to the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland to expand their capacity to support these communities, especially in regional Queensland. This budget delivers a \$5 million boost for Multicultural Connect grants, which enable multicultural community organisations who are on the front line to support migrants and help them integrate into society. These grants are for infrastructure projects, which will enable multicultural organisations to build the facilities they need to support their communities. In addition, we are working with them to bridge the employment gap, which is critical, so they are able to overcome socio-economic gaps.

Wherever I go across the state, I hear stories from people who have moved here with the knowledge and skills that our state needs but they cannot always use them. That is why it is vital to have skills recognition and pathways to full recognition and employment. I acknowledge the work of so

many who are helping and advocating to achieve that, be it from my department, other community organisations or Settlement Services International. On that note, I am more than happy to take questions from the committee.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much. We will go to opposition members for the first question. Member for Jordan, you have the call.

Ms MULLEN: Good afternoon, Minister, Director-General and officials. Director-General, I refer to the response to estimates question on notice No. 10 in relation to changes the minister has made to the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program. Can I confirm that the changes were: splitting the funding into two rounds, clarifying intercultural sporting events are eligible; and capping expenditure on performers and entertainment, along with minor administrative changes to monitoring and the application form?

Ms Wilde: Can I confirm that your question is in relation to the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland grant program?

Ms MULLEN: Yes.

Ms Wilde: Thank you. The program is going to be delivered over two rounds each year, offering \$500,000 per round for January to June events and then for July to December events. This will help organisations who run events later in the year to apply for funding when they are more progressed in the planning process. The grant guideline has been amended and the member outlined the amendments that were made.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, I refer to an email from Multicultural Affairs Queensland dated Thursday, 24 April 2025, advising the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program would be opening for applications on 1 June and closing on 13 July. I table a copy of the email for the committee. Director-General, when did the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program open for applications?

Mr SPEAKER: Can we get a copy around to the director-general, please?

Ms Wilde: To ensure the program best supports the government's priorities and community needs, the program and funding guidelines were reviewed, as I outlined. As a result of this review, the funding round for January to June events opened on 21 July 2025 and will close on 17 August 2025.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, why was the opening of applications delayed by over seven weeks, given there were such minimal changes to the program?

Ms Wilde: As I indicated in my previous response, to ensure the program best supports the government's priorities and community needs, the program and funding guidelines were reviewed. This was to ensure the guidelines were fit for purpose, which gives applicants the best opportunity to apply for their very important projects. The program caps expenditure on performers and entertainment at \$5,000 of events funding and notes they must be local, Queensland based artists and a mix of urban, regional and remote talent where possible. Previously there was no cap nor a requirement for local artists to be used.

We have clarified that intercultural sporting events are eligible under the program, noting that sport is very effective in bringing people from different backgrounds together. We have strengthened expectations around outcomes monitoring to ensure there are clear, measurable outcomes. This took a period of time and the guidelines were released as soon as they could be.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, the recent ECCQ report *Sustainability of multicultural organisations in Queensland*, which you yourself referenced in your recent media release on these grants, specifically raises the need for a longer lead time for grant applications. Why have you reduced the timeframes for organisations to apply for this round 1 of funding?

Ms SIMPSON: Member, if I could clarify: I think it is same grant fund that you are talking about that we have outlined. Is that the one you are referencing?

Ms MULLEN: The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland grants, yes.

Ms SIMPSON: What became clear from feedback from community groups is that they were asked to have a lead time of 12 months for some events. If they applied 12 months out, they were finding that they perhaps did not have timely or appropriate information for the event. The alteration to the guidelines, which I envisage will be ongoing, means the grants are split into two rounds. This will result in greater fairness. What was occurring was that applicants were finding that it was often a long while until their event and that inevitably meant that, by the time they considered the event six months out, they did not have the degree of information required.

This is about ensuring fairness. It is about making clear that intercultural sporting events are part of these grants. It is also about ensuring the application process, which was mentioned by communities, is easier. I understand that colleagues in this role before the change of government raised how complicated some of the application forms were. There was a two-week reduction in the timing from that contained in the previous guidelines, and applicants were advised that that was occurring. That was in order to deliver guidelines that very much reflected the feedback from multicultural communities. I believe it will be fairer and easier for them to apply going forward. That is why there was a slight delay in this instance.

From the feedback we have had, there has been quite a strong and positive flow of people saying that they are happy with the change. We are always pleased to receive that feedback.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, with reference to the SDS at page 2 and the \$5 million allocated over four years for multicultural community group upgrades, can you advise if any modelling was undertaken by the department on the expected uptake of these grants?

Ms Wilde: This program will aim to foster inclusive community spaces including community halls, meeting spaces, hubs or sporting facilities that support the cultural, social and service needs of Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, enhancing community infrastructure, promoting cross-cultural understanding and strengthening social cohesion. Certainly in my visits when meeting key stakeholders this program has been raised with me. They are very much looking forward to its release. We feel that there will certainly not be any lack of uptake. The multicultural grants in general are heavily oversubscribed. It is certainly anticipated that the same oversubscription will happen with this grant program.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, to confirm: there has been no modelling undertaken by the department in relation to this?

Ms Wilde: Certainly in the time that I have been the director-general—since 22 April—no, there has not been modelling undertaken.

Ms MULLEN: Does the department have a record of Queensland multicultural organisations that own their own facilities and those that rent or lease either from councils or privately?

Ms Wilde: From the conversations with the people I have been talking to, they are organisations that own their own facilities. I will confer with my colleague so that I can potentially answer the question now. The department does not have a register or the details about the ownership of various properties.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, can you advise what criteria will be used to assess applications under the program?

Ms Wilde: The guidelines are currently in development. However, I can say that it is intended that there would be one-off funding of between \$10,000 and \$500,000, excluding the GST, available for building or upgrading facilities. The application process for the Multicultural Connect grants program will follow a two-stage approach. Applicants would be required to submit an expression of interest outlining the proposed project. That would then be reviewed within the department, as is the normal course of business, by a suitably diverse panel. The EIs will be assessed against the mandatory criteria outlined in the funding guidelines that are currently under development. All eligible expressions of interest would then be offered the opportunity to submit a detailed application. This two-step process is quite common in grant programs. It ensures that people who sometimes have very limited resources are not wasting time doing a detailed grant application should they not meet the general threshold criteria.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, will multicultural groups that do not own their own facilities be eligible for Multicultural Connect grants or have these organisations been overlooked by the Crisafulli government?

Ms SIMPSON: I think it is important when responding to the member's question that I outline what is being achieved with this. Labor never allocated one dollar for multicultural capital works. It did not exist. This is about working with communities, some of whom may not have an existing facility but have a fundraising program where, through their hard work, they have raised funds to build a facility and then look to apply for a capital works grant. They will be eligible. There was no program for that within the department of multiculturalism.

Under the multicultural capital works grant program, new organisations that have been working hard to create their own facilities through fundraising will be eligible to apply for a capital works grant. What I have also found significant in the feedback from some of the more established multicultural community organisations is how important those organisations are for new and emerging migrant

communities. They do not have an 'it's only for us' attitude. We find that a lot of multicultural organisations are very inclusive and welcome other groups using their facilities. One of the beauties of the new Multicultural Connect grants program, which we committed to deliver, is that it will help those groups that have been fundraising to create their own community facilities.

Ms MULLEN: Thank you, Minister. You have said that already. Director-General, I refer to the response by the minister for the estimates question on notice No. 5 in relation to the Strengthening Multicultural Queensland Program to confirm 26 applications out of 178 applications received funding. Is that correct?

Ms Wilde: My understanding is yes.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, I note that there has only been a minimal uplift in funding for this program for 2025-26—around \$69,000. Given the significant number of applications for the program last year and the fact that 85 per cent of them did not receive funding, what advice was provided to the minister regarding further funding for this program?

Ms Wilde: The Strengthening Multicultural Queensland grant has an annual allocation of \$2 million for community-led projects and co-design projects. In 2024-25, the program provided funding of over \$1.9 million, excluding GST, for 26 community-led projects to be delivered from 1 July 2025.

Ms MULLEN: That was in the question on notice answer, so I have received that. I specifically have asked whether there was any advice provided to the minister regarding seeking further funding for this program.

Mr HUTTON: Point of order: my concern is that the director-general was answering the question. The member may not like the Labor legacy in this space but should accept the answer on behalf of the director-general.

Mr SPEAKER: Director-General, continue to answer the question.

Ms Wilde: To finalise my answer to your question, member, as I mentioned earlier, these programs are heavily oversubscribed, as you have also identified. The department has not provided specific advice in relation to additional funding, if that was what your question was in relation to.

Ms MULLEN: The minister did not seek advice on further funding for this program from the department?

Ms Wilde: In relation to this specific program, no. As we have discussed with the Multicultural Connect program, there is another new program coming online. There have not been explicit discussions in relation to increasing the funding for this particular program, which has an annual allocation of \$2 million.

Ms MULLEN: Director-General, in October 2023 Multicultural Affairs Queensland established a community engagement team to liaise with culturally and linguistically diverse communities experiencing social cohesion pressures. With reference to estimates question on notice No. 4 regarding staffing numbers within Multicultural Affairs Queensland, can you please advise how many of these FTEs are specifically within the community engagement team?

Ms Wilde: There are four.

Ms MULLEN: Given continuing tensions as a result of geopolitical escalations across the globe and the potential decline in social cohesion in our state, have you received any direction from the minister to support an uplift in staff or bolster the capacity of MAQ in undertaking this direct community engagement and response in Queensland?

Ms Wilde: That is a policy matter for the minister to determine whether she is going to seek further resourcing. However, resourcing distribution within the department is my responsibility as the director-general.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, will you commit to increasing the number of staff working in the community engagement team to ensure that they are better supported in helping community organisations to respond to uncertain geopolitical challenges that our state currently faces?

Ms SIMPSON: The community engagement team and the work that they do, in addition to the very important work that the police liaison officers do and other arms of government, is something that I do acknowledge is an important piece of work. It is vital that we do have not only engagement with community but engagement with government, with their advice and their expertise also flowing back to government. Also, it has to be acknowledged that some of the important work in addition to these particular programs is base funding of \$2.4 million per annum allocated to the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance program, which also includes health, housing—

Ms MULLEN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms SIMPSON:—employment supports for people fleeing identified conflict zones.

Mr SPEAKER: Hold on, Minister, I have a point of order. What is your point of order, member for Jordan?

Ms MULLEN: My point of order is on relevance. My question was very specific about whether the minister will commit to increasing the number of staff working in the community engagement team in MAQ.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you are aware of the question.

Ms SIMPSON: I am aware of the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Round out your answer, please.

Ms SIMPSON: I want to respond to the context of the question which was pretty broad. I think it is important—

Ms MULLEN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: it was not broad; it was very specific.

Mr SPEAKER: It is alright. The minister is responding.

Ms SIMPSON:—to acknowledge all of the programs that are part of the very important and vital work of engaging with communities that also have experience and have come out of some very difficult identified conflict zones.

Let's talk about all of the work the department is doing where there is funding allocated for asylum seeker and refugee assistance programs. I was trying to provide the context of this because these are people fleeing from identified conflict zones. There is also \$3.5 million to establish the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre for people to identify the dangers of racism, hatred and genocide.

There is also a total of \$4.8 million over two years from 2024-25 provided to expand the program I just mentioned with regard to asylum seeker and refugee assistance. It is very relevant for the cohort of our new migrants who have experienced significant impacts. When there are events occurring overseas, it retraumatises people who are living here. The decision to provide a boost is vitally important and incredibly relevant to this.

There is also \$1 million over two years for the Peace Leadership Program, delivered by the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, supporting young people and families through training and workshops focused on conflict resolution and building intergenerational resilience and help.

Ms MULLEN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I asked a specific question about the community engagement team. The minister is giving me information about external bodies that are not part of MAQ. I have asked a question and I believe it has been answered. There are four people within the community engagement team.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, if you have completed your answer, we are going to go to the member for Pumicestone.

Ms SIMPSON: I will just conclude by reinforcing that—I do not think this is a laughing matter—the other programs that are funded in addition to—

Ms MULLEN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I take personal offence at that. I was not laughing at this issue but I am very concerned about the minister's answer.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe that I heard that the minister was making a personal reflection against the member for Jordan. I believe her comment was a general comment.

Ms MULLEN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: who did the minister refer to who was laughing?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, the member did take personal offence. I ask you to withdraw and then we will move on.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw. It is important to make it quite clear that these very important programs I have outlined are actually funded by our government. They are funded through MAQ. All of our teams—all 39 in our teams—are working to support and connect for cohesive communities. That is vitally important. Everyone in the team is working towards that aim, in addition to the funded programs

that I have just outlined. I do not think they are a light matter. That is why it is important that we do liaise with external bodies including those that we fund. It is important that that message of vulnerability and the need for everyone to be safe and feel safe is heard and supported across the department and other departments that also have programs to share support.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pumicestone.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, with regard to page 4 of the SDS, how would the \$5 million Multicultural Connect grants program help not-for-profit multicultural community groups build or upgrade facilities to meet community needs in an inclusive and harmonious Queensland?

Ms SIMPSON: This new funding, which was not provided by the previous government, is such a great opportunity to help not-for-profit multicultural groups build or upgrade their facilities so people have a place where they can gather for celebrations or sometimes challenging times. That is really important.

The Crisafulli LNP government values our multicultural communities. That is why this new and additional funding will help partner with groups in our multicultural communities. We believe that people who come from all over the world to fulfil their dreams make Queensland a better place. As a government, we believe it is our role to back them when they aspire to create these facilities. That is why this \$5 million Multicultural Connect grant program has been so well received by community groups throughout the regions.

When we were in opposition, one of the main things raised with my colleague the member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, was that there was no funding for multicultural capital works projects outside of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. As members know, that is not sufficient to meet some of the significant needs, and that is why this program has been designed. There was a funding gap; this is an opportunity. I think it is going to be a very popular program, and we will hear many stories of people enjoying celebrations within their community centres.

They are on the front line of bringing communities together, and not just their own. I alluded to the fact that multicultural groups often embrace others and allow access to these facilities, including the Serbian Australian centre, the Brisbane Croatian club and the Gold Coast Croatia Sports Centre. There are many facilities right across the state that are heavily used by many different multicultural groups for festivals, weddings, birthdays and funerals.

I am reminded of a recent visit to the Brisbane Croatian club at Rocklea, where they hosted Liberian Independence Day celebrations. I thank Massah Foboi, Francis Davis, James Aulto, George and Mesa Parker and the entire Queensland Liberian community for welcoming me. There are also younger people playing sports such as the Brisbane Knights Football Club, which is based at the Croatian club. The facility was based on the idea of being a Croatian club and the host of the Croatian soccer team in Brisbane, so it is amazing to hear stories about how it is not just a venue for events; it has become a surrogate home for new communities to welcome them on their settlement journey. I would like to give a shout-out to Frank, Fabian and the team from the Brisbane Knights.

All of this good work is being done on the back of the club being inundated by two flood events in a decade, which has left the club with a lot of projects to repair buildings, fields and the car park. That is a lot of fundraising and that is the work they are doing. There are established groups that will be looking for upgrades for particular projects as well as others that have done a lot of hard work to fundraise to create their own facilities. Grants will be available from \$10,000 to \$500,000, depending on the capacity of the applying organisation to apply matched funding for their proposal. That is why it is so vitally important to respond to those needs. I believe it is going to be a very popular program. It was never funded by the Labor Party before.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, Keppel is an electorate that has many South Sea Islander people who call it home. With reference to page 2 of the SDS and the reference to the importance of the South Sea Islander community, we acknowledge that this year marks 25 years of the South Sea Islander community being recognised as a distinct cultural group here in Queensland. How will the Crisafulli LNP government be commemorating this occasion?

Ms SIMPSON: With a great deal of enthusiasm and support. I want to place on the record the work that you, the member for Mirani and others have done to advocate for South Sea Islander communities throughout Central Queensland and the Capricorn Coast.

In 2021, 5,562 Queenslanders reported Australian South Sea Islander ancestry. From the Rockhampton South Sea Islander hall in Berserker through to the Joskeleigh South Sea Islander Museum, there are plenty of special places that are run by some pretty famous families in the

electorates of Keppel and Rockhampton. For those living in South-East Queensland, the State Library of Queensland has a range of content exploring Australian South Sea Islander history including photographs, heritage maps, videos, conversations and art. My own area on the Sunshine Coast is a region that also has a strong history and heritage of Australian South Sea Islander communities. I will give a shout-out to my mate Rex Eggmolesse and the whole Eggmolesse family. There are many other community members who are strongly involved in sharing their proud heritage and history, and I have enjoyed learning from them. I also thank the descendants of the Australian South Sea Islander Association, which has done so much work on the Sunshine Coast and throughout Queensland providing rich connections and improving our diverse local community.

In September 2000 the Queensland government recognised Australian South Sea Islander people as a distinct cultural group. It is the 25th anniversary of this moment that we will celebrate this year. I want to give a special shout-out to Clacy Fatnowna, president of the Queensland United Australian South Sea Islander Council. Whilst he is a constituent of the member for Gympie, his family runs all the way from the Sunshine Coast through to Central Queensland. He has done an amazing job in bringing together and advocating for the community on the 25th anniversary of the recognition of the community as a distinct cultural group.

The Queensland government supported the development of QUASSIC as a peak body to provide a legacy for the community. We want to build on the goodwill generated during the commemorations that occurred during the last LNP government of the 150th anniversary of blackbirding. Some of the funding we are supplying through MAQ includes up to \$170,000 to deliver a suite of activities to mark the 25th anniversary.

The department engaged an Australian South Sea Islander and First Nations graphic designer to create the anniversary artwork being used on digital and print materials. A display building awareness of the history and contributions of Australian South Sea Islanders was featured at the Rockhampton and Mackay shows in June. This display will also feature at the Ekka in Brisbane shortly and there are many events occurring here at Queensland Parliament House. The department is also sponsoring the two-day Recognition, Reclamation and Determination: Australian South Sea Islander Conference in November 2025. A South Sea Islander scholarship MOU was re-signed recently with the Queensland University of Technology. We are committed to ensuring the community has the support to thrive as we move past the 25th anniversary.

I want to place on the record my condolences to the Backo family after the passing of Sam Backo in recent days. Sam made it all the way from the cane fields of Ingham to the Canberra Raiders. He played for the Maroons seven times and was immensely proud of his Indigenous and Ni-Vanuatu heritage. I am hopeful that the development of the Kanaka Cup will continue the legacy of the Backo family and Mal Meninga in the sport. That tournament alternates between Rockhampton and Mackay and continues to grow, from strength to strength. As I said, I extend my condolences to the Backo family. His is a proud legacy, one that will inspire others to participate.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS, we know that multicultural communities contribute to building an inclusive and harmonious Queensland. In fact, during ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred I joined the Sikh community while they served meals to people without power on the Southern Moreton Bay Islands while they waited to get served at our community hub over there. Minister, what have you seen across the state with regard to contributions made by multicultural communities?

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you for that wonderful feedback about how your Sikh community responded and provided opportunities to keep people fed in a time of great distress. I think it is those examples we need to give a shout-out to—where you have humanity helping humanity, where there is a need and people respond. Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred was one of the many examples where volunteers from many multicultural groups stepped up to help their fellow Queenslanders, such as the example you shared.

Brisbane Sikh Temple cooked hundreds of thousands of meals for people who could not get food during COVID lockdowns. GOPIO Cairns helped get food to those who were without power or shelter during ex-Tropical Cyclone Jasper. Many multicultural groups did that. Volunteers from Turbans 4 Australia cooked through the night at the Brisbane Sikh Temple, making 400 meals to deliver to residents without power on the Southern Moreton Bay Islands and to those hardworking SES volunteers who were helping those residents in their hour of need.

I met Ben. He is actually with the Red Cross but he was a member of the ECCQ volunteering in Townsville after Townsville was hit by the cyclone. It was wonderful to walk into a recovery hub and see an example of our beautifully diverse multicultural Queensland, with these young people and older people reaching out with a hand of help and friendship. Volunteering has a personal cost, through taking the time to do it, but it provides a rich outcome where it happens.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Logan spent hours filling hundreds of sandbags. Their mosque in Stockleigh mobilised as soon as they realised what was going on with those cyclonic weather events. The community were fasting during Ramadan; however, that did not stop them. There are many examples where they were their own mud army. There were also multicultural churches of diverse backgrounds. This is the best of Queensland and it is the best of multicultural Queensland—humanity helping humanity. Regardless of colour, race or faith, they were reaching out to help people in their greatest hour of need.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to opposition members for a few questions. Member for Jordan.

Ms MULLEN: Local community hubs play a vital role in connecting CALD families to education, government and social services. Community Hubs Australia has confirmed that there is no funding beyond December 2025 for the hubs in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville. Have the LNP members for Rockhampton, Keppel, Mundingburra, Thuringowa, Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South advocated for their local community hubs, given funding is going to run out later this year?

Ms SIMPSON: This is actually in the portfolio of the Minister for Education. I do not recall whether the funding applications were actually put to the minister in that portfolio. I am aware that a number of community organisations also partner with community hubs and extend the funding they have so there is a mixture of funding streams that some of the community hubs have built up and accessed. It would have been more appropriate if the question had been put to the appropriate portfolio area, which in this case is the education portfolio.

Ms MULLEN: To confirm, Minister, as the Minister for Multiculturalism you have no interest or responsibility for the 24 community hubs in Queensland that specifically support culturally and linguistically diverse communities?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Jordan, that question is argumentative. Either you rephrase it or I will rule it out of order.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, to confirm, have Community Hubs Australia contacted you or met with you to discuss ongoing funding for the 24 hubs in Queensland?

Ms SIMPSON: I want to acknowledge the question from the member opposite. As I outlined, this is actually not a program that was previously funded under the Labor government under MAQ, Multicultural Affairs Queensland. This was a program that was funded by the education department. I have had engagement with them and I referred them to the correct portfolio. I have also had feedback from individual communities that are engaging with other funding sources where they have perhaps a different model of delivery. The engagement is actually through the education portfolio.

Mr DAMETTO: Minister, thank you for addressing the committee this afternoon. As part of a multicultural community myself, I appreciate what your department does. My question is with regard to the department's spending through this year's SDS. What types of events, festivals or projects is the department funding in North Queensland this year?

Ms SIMPSON: We can get you a list of those because there is quite a lot spread throughout regional Queensland. It is very important that communities can celebrate and be part of that locally. There is the India Fest in Townsville where the council pulled the money out and we funded it. I believe we put \$30,000 into that because that occurred with very little lead time and it was in danger of going under. It has been a wonderful event so the Crisafulli LNP government has found the money that council pulled out and it is going to be yet another terrific celebration. I have some other examples of what we are funding but that one particularly stands out because it is a ripper. The community works hard. There is such a diverse and proud Indian diaspora in Queensland and the Townsville festival will be a wonderful celebration.

We will get you some more examples of those programs and I will be happy to come back to you with that. That one in particular is a terrific event and I am glad we were able to help them continue to celebrate. It is all part and parcel of appreciating diversity and where people come from, whilst also acknowledging what a rich contribution they are providing to our local economy and our local community in general.

Mr SPEAKER: Just to be clear, Minister, are you coming back to the committee or are you coming back to the member for Hinchinbrook?

Ms SIMPSON: I can come back to the committee before the end of business with some more information.

Mr SPEAKER: That will be the next session.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, in an earlier response you discussed the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance as well as the work being undertaken by the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma. Given how vital you have indicated these programs are, has the government committed any funding beyond the current financial year for these programs?

Ms SIMPSON: I am just checking my notes. As I understand, it is limited-life funding, but it was in response to a gap in services that was found between what the federal government was doing and where there were real needs in community. I believe it is a program of work that does deliver and helps. I support the work that this program is doing. It was limited-life funding under the previous government, but it is currently funded. I believe we need to be alert to community feedback. This would normally be sitting with the federal government in service delivery. An opportunity was identified after feedback from community that there continues to be a need for people to have access.

To make it clear to the committee, the previous government did not have long-life funding attached to this program. It is currently funded. I am always keen to work with our federal government to ensure appropriate services are available to people in our community.

Ms MULLEN: Minister, the Welcoming Australia program is another valuable program that works with local governments to create inclusive and connected local communities, especially in key settlement areas. Welcoming Cities has previously received funding from the Queensland government. How much funding is being provided to support the work of Welcoming Cities over the next four years?

Ms SIMPSON: I will just take some advice. The Welcoming Australia program received limited-life funding with a contract set to end in December 2025, with any extensions contingent on securing suitable funding sources and meeting agreed performance outcomes. There are different councils that have engaged with that particular program and utilised it in their local community. This is another program amongst a number that our department funds, and I have outlined a number of the grant projects that are funded to reach out and provide assistance to new and emerging and established communities.

I note comments previously about external groups delivering programs, but the external groups or councils delivering programs that have limited-life funding are separate and different from the other grant programs that we have committed to and, in fact, other grant programs that we have extended to also build up the capacity and strength of our new, emerging and established migrant communities throughout Queensland.

Ms MULLEN: The Diverse Queensland Workforce program was supported with \$8.5 million in funding until 30 June 2025 to assist up to 2,500 migrants, refugees and international students into employment. Can you advise whether this valuable program will be continuing under the Crisafulli LNP government?

Ms SIMPSON: I was clarifying whose portfolio that question pertains to. It sits within the portfolio of the Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training. Minister Bates holds responsibility of the portfolio that that particular program is aligned with.

I am more than happy to talk about the programs that we fund and are extending to build on the capacity of our community. We have some very good programs that are also being delivered through our Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. Once again, that does sit primarily with my colleague Minister Bates, who is delivering those programs. As I understand, there are some very diverse and great opportunities for people undertaking those programs.

Mr SPEAKER: I told the member for Moggill I would allow him a question in this session.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, with reference to page 5 of the Service Delivery Statements, how have multicultural communities responded to the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government's budget for 2025-26?

Ms SIMPSON: We have had a really positive response because of the increased funding we have provided, particularly from community groups that want to build or improve their facilities because it is part of what they do—people being able to gather and being able to do so in their own multicultural community centre or whatever their facility is. It has been really strongly and well received.

I want to also reference the fact that on budget day I had the pleasure of hosting more than 50 stakeholders in this place to watch the Treasurer bring down the budget. The majority of those came from multicultural affairs stakeholder organisations, leaders in the community and service providers. It was great. I especially want to thank Petero Civoniceva for attending that event. I acknowledge the work that Petero has done for the Pasifika and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities since his retirement from Rugby League. He is a revered figure to so many. After talking to him on that day I know why: his heart is as big as his stature and he really is such a leader in our community. I look forward to seeing his work progress through his foundation and his latest endeavours with Dr David Lakisa.

Our event had attendees from all over the world, whether that be Beny Bol OAM from Village Connect, a well-known figure for many in this place including my ministerial colleagues—he is an advocacy force for our African communities—through to many South-East Asian communities and beyond. The event received fantastic coverage from our friends in the Asian community news, Radio 4EB and many more.

I want to give a shout-out to Queenie Pelesa and her team at Radio 4EB, Felix Shen from the Asian Community News as well as all those who covered this event. I look forward to many engagements with them, to visiting the Kangaroo Point studios of Radio 4EB and to the content they produce. I also want to thank Nick Attam for his coverage in the *Indian Sun* newspaper, which he runs from Townsville. He is a key member of the Indian community in Townsville and has been instrumental in getting the India Day event in Townsville underway.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I remind you we have less than a minute and we want to answer the last question on notice from the member for Hinchinbrook.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I can answer that. In North Queensland there were 500 projects: in Townsville, celebrating our multicultural community; in Thuringowa, the India festival; in Cairns, Centacare, the Human Library, the Mareeba Multicultural Festival; and Townsville's diversity and cultural inclusion appreciation day. I should have said before that in Thuringowa, the India festival is 25,000—just to make that clear on the record.



Mr SPEAKER: We have now reached the end of the time allocated to examine the proposed expenditure for the multicultural portfolio area.

The committee will move to examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of women and women's economic security until 5 pm. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of women and women's economic security open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, you are allowed a short statement of no less than five minutes if you so wish.

Ms SIMPSON: No less than five minutes?

Mr SPEAKER: No more than five minutes.

Ms SIMPSON: I thought you were being really generous, Mr Speaker! Thank you, Mr Speaker, and welcome also to all members of the committee and the other members who are joining us. I would like to recognise the staff of the department of the Office for Women for all their hard work in preparing for the estimates hearing and for their ongoing work in empowering women across Queensland. It is a privilege to not only be the Minister for Women but also the first Minister for Women's Economic Security in Queensland's history—a great ministerial initiative under the Crisafulli LNP government. The economic security of women is a direct reflection on the economic security of Queensland. In every OECD country, women's health and wellbeing are key performance indicators for measuring a society's progress beyond its GDP. The Crisafulli LNP government's Women's Economic Security Strategy will raise financial and legal literacy; give women the confidence to participate in or re-enter business and work; and uplift economic participation across the state.

I launched the first Women's Economic Security and Wellbeing Report in March 2025. That shows the statistics beyond the drive to develop a dedicated women's economic security strategy. Research shows that in major advanced economies around 60 per cent of adult males are financially literate but only 50 per cent of adult females are financially literate. The Crisafulli LNP government is taking this seriously. Yes, there is a pay gap, a superannuation gap and a savings gap but research also tells us there is a confidence gap, and we want to give Queensland women a boost of confidence

to take their first steps in returning to the workforce. If women do not feel safe at work, their participation is reduced. For example, the Watson report exposed a decade of systemic violence, misogyny and intimidation within the CFMEU which was enabled and ignored by the former Labor government.

The Crisafulli government has launched a full commission of inquiry with powers to compel evidence and protect victims who were too afraid to speak out under Labor. Queensland women deserve action—not the hypocrisy of the previous government. They deserve to be safe. There must be accountability and justice where Labor failed—such as with the forensic DNA lab debacle. It is probably the worst in the world in respect of how that has undermined women's access to justice. A rape kit can be tested by a forensic lab within five days in other states; whereas in Queensland, I understand it can be more than 400 days because of the legacy of dysfunction left by the previous government that we are having to fix.

The LNP government is working on multiple fronts to reduce crime on the streets and intimidation in the workforce. A key part of that is the commission of inquiry into CFMEU's violence to ensure there is safety for women in the workforce. In addition, there is \$540,000 as part of the Empowering Queensland Women grants program and the returning to work program—\$20 million over four years to give women the opportunity to upskill, purchase work wear and equipment and renew licences so they can participate and work after a season of unemployment.

There is far more but I appreciate that my five minutes—unless you are granting me more than five minutes, I would always take it—but the matters of the CFMEU, the forensic lab failure and the ability of women to be safe are key and fundamental to us, as well as the programs we are rolling out to support women to have economic security and re-enter the workforce.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to opposition members and welcome the member for Waterford who I assume will ask the first question.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Minister, page 4 of the Women's Economic Security Statement for the budget references 'restoring women's health services'. In particular, I draw your attention to the \$36.3 million commitment for women's reproductive and sexual health. Could you please outline to the committee your role in expanding women's reproductive health services including termination of pregnancy services for women across Queensland?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: this does relate to the health portfolio area. As I heard the question, I think there was a submission about what role was played there but predominantly the strategy as it is outlined relates to the health portfolio area; the health minister appeared in a previous hearing of estimates.

Mr SPEAKER: The question was asking the minister about her role as the Minister for Women, as I understand it, so I am sure the minister is capable of answering that question regarding her role. Minister, you have the call.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to set the context of women's health as a whole. It is important to have a women's health strategy that is able to support women in all areas of this state, as well with all issues that they face. I mentioned the forensic lab failure that meant women who had suffered terrible circumstances such as rape then had a lack of access to justice when they had their rape kit collected and it was not tested for potentially more than 400 days. The women's health strategy that was referenced has also been very important with regard to women's access to services throughout the state. That includes access to the counselling services that have been part of this health service where the psychological counselling that is necessary where women are facing some very difficult choices—whether it be with perinatal issues of the wellbeing of their babies or the choices they are facing, there was a recognition of the need for access to counselling services as well. That has been funded and provided.

I recall being with the health minister, who has carriage of the Women and Girls' Health Strategy. We were able to talk about the importance of women having access to appropriate services; that is a phone service but with clinical support and an appropriate connection to services wherever they may be. As part of the trauma and the tragedy women face at various times in their journey, one issue is lost pregnancies. What was so important about the service that we did announce a number of months ago is that it was not restricted to just one aspect of women's challenges around their reproductive journey—tragedies that sometimes do not get the attention around access to counselling, non-judgemental, professional, clinical and appropriate mental health services are available in respect of that particular aspect which is encompassed through the Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy—

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Minister.

Ms SIMPSON:—and the detail is broad but there is a need for access across the state. This is why I know the health minister has previously done quite a deal of media on this but that service, in particular, is one that I think is important to acknowledge.

Ms FENTIMAN: I appreciate all of that detail in an answer that was well over three minutes, but I am a little confused by your answer. Do you support a woman's right to choose in the expansion of termination-of-pregnancy services?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker, with regard to the long preamble prior to getting to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: I have stated many times that we do not need any commentary before a question. Just go to the question. Minister?

Ms SIMPSON: The question the member was asking me previously was with regard to the Women's Strategy, and that strategy is supported by government. There is access to services throughout the state. The member may be wanting to ask a different question now, but I am saying that the Minister for Health has outlined the financial support within his portfolio for the Women and Girls' Health Strategy, which has many aspects. The legislation is not part of the budget process, but there is no indication in this budget process that the legislation has been changed. The member should be quite aware of—

Ms FENTIMAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: relevance. My question was not to do with the legislation. I was confused by the first answer, so I wanted to know whether the minister supports a woman's right to choose in the expansion of termination-of-pregnancy services.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the member for Waterford is seeking an opinion. The minister has been providing an answer, but her follow-up question is again seeking an opinion. Therefore, I would say to you that under standing order 112 it is not appropriate.

Mr SPEAKER: Give me a moment, please. Member for Waterford, we are examining the budget. If you could ask a question as it relates to the budget or the portfolio area that we are examining, that would help.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker, yes. Of course, the Women's Economic Security Statement on page 4 states, 'women and girls' access to quality healthcare has lifelong benefits on their overall wellbeing and participation in work', which is one of the key KPIs in the minister's charter letter. One of those commitments is to expand termination-of-pregnancy services across the state. I have asked the minister what her role is; I got no answer, so I was a bit confused and wanted to know whether she supported that allocation of funds in the budget.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I think I know what it is going to be, but I will hear it.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order, Mr Speaker, is that the member for Waterford is offering statements and opinions. She is entitled to ask questions but she is not entitled to make statements. You have made a number of rulings over the estimates hearings and I would draw your attention to that.

Mr SPEAKER: I thought that is what the point of order might be. I have been clear since the beginning of this process that we will have a question without any statements, which can quite often make the question argumentative. Ask the question again, please.

Ms FENTIMAN: The question is: does the member support a woman's right to choose and the expansion of termination-of-pregnancy services, and what is her role in expanding those services?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the member for Waterford is again seeking an opinion.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, there was nothing wrong with the second part of the question. The first part of it was probably not so good.

Ms FENTIMAN: I will move on since I have not been able to get an answer to the first part of my question several times. I will ask the minister as the Minister for Women: what was your role in the Premier's decision to gag the Queensland parliament from debating advancements to women's reproductive health?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: That is argumentative, I am afraid. That is not relevant to the budget. Next question, member for Waterford.

Ms FENTIMAN: Last week it was revealed that the government has indefinitely paused publicly funded IVF services for women with cancer and other complex medical conditions despite a \$42 million investment from Labor, with the program due to start on 1 July. Were you, as Minister for Women, consulted on this decision and did you advocate for the thousands of women across Queensland who are burdened with the impact of chemotherapy on their ability to have children in the future?

Ms SIMPSON: This is a question that I am not sure the member asked the Minister for Health when the health portfolio was being examined in detail. There are obviously many aspects to the health portfolio. It is a complex budget and it would have been more appropriate for that question to be put at that particular point.

I want to also acknowledge that access to health services such as chemo is vitally important, but Labor shut regional maternity wards—I think about 34 were shut—and babies were being born on the side of roads. We have many issues that need to be addressed with the health funding and many areas of great need. There will certainly be a few babies who might have 'Warrego Highway' as their middle name. Hopefully, going forward, more will be born in actual birthing units that are being funded and properly staffed. With all of the issues in health, I would say this is a question that is more appropriate to have been put to the Minister for Health.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Minister, but I cannot ask the Minister for Health whether you were consulted about a decision. Were you consulted and did you advocate for the women undergoing chemotherapy who wish to have a family in the future? That is my question.

Ms SIMPSON: I will answer the member by saying that, with regard to the health services throughout Queensland, we appreciate there are many areas that need to be addressed across the state. I cannot answer questions in detail about the health portfolio. We can talk about broader areas of health policy, but the detail of the health portfolio should be answered by and put to the health minister.

Ms FENTIMAN: Minister, what can we ask you, since all of my questions—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, you are being argumentative.

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Speaker, all of my questions relate to the budget's Women's Economic Security Statement, so what can the minister answer in relation to the Women's Economic Security Statement?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Waterford, that was a statement. Let's go to a question.

Ms FENTIMAN: Minister, hopefully you can answer this one. Your charter letter states that you will 'work proactively across agencies to close the gender pay gap'. When the Premier axed Queensland's special equity and diversity commissioner, did he consult you and did you advocate for this specialist position to continue?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there is an imputation contained within that question, so I would submit to you it needs to be rephrased—specifically the term 'axed'.

Mr SPEAKER: In the interests of moving forward, I am going to allow the question. Minister?

Ms SIMPSON: I am happy to answer the question because—let's put it on the record—it was actually Labor that failed to fund this because the contract expired during the caretaker period in October 2024, before the election. It was the previous Labor government that did not put in the forward funding for the position. In line with caretaker conventions, the position was extended for three months, but the funding was not put in place by the previous Labor government. Maybe the member should have consulted herself as to why the previous Labor government did not choose to have funding beyond that period.

Dr ROWAN: So Labor axed it.

Ms FENTIMAN: No—thank you, the minister has confirmed the commissioner was extended for three months and a decision was made not to continue that position. When the Premier made that decision—

Ms SIMPSON: I am being verballed, Mr Speaker. Could I ask—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No, this is not an opportunity for anyone to make a speech. This is not an adjournment debate or anything else. This is estimates.

Ms FENTIMAN: I understand that. I am merely trying to clarify. This decision was extended, but then a decision was made—

Mr SPEAKER: No. Next question, please.

Ms FENTIMAN: So did the Premier consult you when a decision was made not to continue that position and did you advocate for it to continue?

Ms SIMPSON: The member has not heard my answer, which was that it was the previous government that did not fund it going forward. Perhaps the member should have been consulting herself and her colleagues who sat on the treasury benches when they did not fund this position going forward. The opportunity was there. When you look at the many things the previous government did not fund you realise that it was a fairly chaotic time, but it was still a choice of the previous Labor government not to put forward funding against this position.

Ms FENTIMAN: I table the results from a survey released by the Australian Human Rights Commission that outlines one in three workers have experienced sexual harassment at work in the last five years, and it is women who are far more likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace. Minister, following the indefinite pausing of respect at work laws, did the Attorney-General consult you and have you advocated to the Attorney-General to continue these special protections for women at work?

Mr SPEAKER: Is one of these documents on the way over to the minister?

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker; I will wait to receive the document. I actually find it rather amazing and hypocritical of the Labor Party to be raising respect at work when they looked the other way, and the member certainly has not spoken about what the CFMEU were known to be doing in abusing women in the workforce, including public servants in the workforce being locked in rooms by thugs and bullies, with women in Queensland being threatened with bullying and their children being bullied and followed into gyms. That is what has been revealed about what the CFMEU in Queensland were doing and yet there are Labor members opposite who praised the CFMEU for their assistance to get them elected and they have been silent ever since when the damning revelations of the Watson report came out. I think the violence within the CFMEU has to be exposed, but there has been no—

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Ms SIMPSON:—appropriate explanation from the member opposite—

Mr SPEAKER: We have a point of order from the member—

Ms SIMPSON:—of what she knew when and what she failed to do.

Mr SPEAKER: Just hold on, Minister. I have a point of order from the member for Waterford.

Ms FENTIMAN: Yes, just on relevance, Mr Speaker. Did the Attorney-General consult the minister and did she advocate—she is clearly very passionate about this subject—for those protections to commence as soon as possible?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister is being responsive to the question as asked and is talking about women's safety within the workplace. There is a broad nature to the question. There are some specific elements, but the minister is being responsive to the question as asked.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the minister to continue. You have heard the question.

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. With regard to Queensland's situation in terms of respect at work and the safety of women and the debacle of the CFMEU and Labor members opposite who were elected with their help, I think the real question is what the member knew when and why she failed to act when there were these allegations of thuggery, violence against women and threats, yet the member and other Labor operatives failed to act. These are allegations that were brought down in the Watson report, and there will be more to come with regard to the inquiry into the CFMEU. This is an issue that goes right to the heart of women's safety in the workforce and those in power previously who failed to keep them safe.

Ms FENTIMAN: Director-General, did the Office for Women provide any advice to government about the impact of sexual harassment at work on women's economic participation before the decision was made to pause those protections?

Ms Wilde: I commenced in the department on 22 April. I am advised that if we had given any advice it would have been through government consideration processes.

Ms FENTIMAN: Minister, Brittany Higgins said pausing these laws proves that the government is not taking the concerns of women in this state seriously. Minister, did you or your office reach out to offer to meet with Brittany Higgins after she raised concerns about this?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: as I heard the question in relation to the laws, the laws are under the responsibility of the Attorney-General with respect to the relevant legislation that is being referenced.

Mr SPEAKER: Once again, member for Moggill, as I heard the question, the member was asking what actions the minister took in her role as Minister for Women. I call the minister.

Ms SIMPSON: I have received feedback from people in the community, including with my multicultural responsibilities in fact, and I know the Premier was asked about this as well. We always welcome feedback from whoever wishes to provide it in the community, and firstly in our own community. I reference the fact that the CFMEU thuggery and Labor members looking the other way and being silent about it is a concern because that goes to the heart of women's safety in the workforce.

With regard to the other communities that had concerns with this legislation and the lack of appropriate consultation to make it work the way they believed it should work, there were certainly concerns raised within some of the Islamic schools and other faith-based schools that felt that the legislation still needed work to make it able to be practically implemented, so we certainly do listen to views across a wide area of the community. One of the views that has been coming to me with regard to the safety of women in construction has been how Labor women stayed silent when the CFMEU were following people home and threatening their children, threatening their wives, threatening their spouses and yet Labor stayed silent. It is unfortunate—

Ms FENTIMAN: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order, and I am sure you know—

Ms SIMPSON:—that Labor is concerned for respect at work but is silent—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, we have a point of order.

Ms FENTIMAN: I am sure you know what is coming, but relevance. Did the minister or her office reach out to Brittany Higgins? Yes or no?

Ms SIMPSON: I will answer. I receive responses from many people across the state about the issues that are of concern to them, and they are always welcome to express those concerns and to provide them. I received feedback from Queenslanders about the legislation. While this is not in my portfolio—it is in the Attorney-General's portfolio—I appreciate that there has been a lot of work to deal with respect at work. A lot of Labor operatives have been very silent about the abuse of women by the CFMEU in construction and wanting to divert. There have been Queenslanders whom I have spoken to who have been wanting their voice to be heard, and I always welcome people to provide their diverse viewpoints about the issues that—

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Minister.

Ms SIMPSON:—matter to them—

Ms BOURNE: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on relevance.

Ms FENTIMAN: I think we have the answer, Mr Speaker.

Ms SIMPSON:—and that is why they are always welcome to do that.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have completed your response? If you have, we will go to government member's questions and the member for Pumicestone.

Ms DOOLAN: Minister, with reference to page 2 of the SDS and employment opportunities for women, as the Minister for Women what was your response to the Watson report into violence in the Queensland CFMEU and the treatment of women in the workplace?

Ms SIMPSON: I particularly want to acknowledge the member for asking that question. Women and men have responsibility for the culture in the workforce and keeping people safe. We all have that responsibility. Leaders in particular in government who were elected by, in this case, the CFMEU and the thuggery of the CFMEU also have a responsibility to say what they knew when. The Watson report into the CFMEU really blew the lid on just how bad things were, but there are still others who have not spoken. They have been too afraid to come forward. It is important that they have the protection of this inquiry.

As the Minister for Women, I will speak plainly and directly about what the Watson review into the CFMEU uncovered and what the people of Queensland, especially women, deserve to know and deserve to hear. The findings in Geoffrey Watson SC's report are damning: systemic violence, intimidation, misogyny and bullying perpetrated by the CFMEU and ignored for over a decade by the former Labor government, who were too compromised, too politically dependent or too cowardly to act.

This report sent shockwaves through every workplace, every union and every boardroom in Queensland, because what we learned is that it was not just bad behaviour; it was prolonged. It was a campaign of fear towards men and women, but women in particular were targeted. A public servant's daughter was bullied at her gym. A female senior staff member was locked in a room by CFMEU officials and verbally abused for 20 minutes. Enterprise negotiations took place under threats to women and to their children.

What did the former minister for women do while all this happened under her watch? Nothing. She stood at podiums and talked about respect at work but did nothing when the allegations were known that the CFMEU were acting in these appalling ways. There is no denying it with these disclosures now. Her diary discloses and confirms that she took meetings behind closed doors with the CFMEU but publicly nothing about women's safety. When women were under attack, she continued her silence about what she knew and when. This is the same person who has failed to act about real respect for women in the workforce. I will quote from the previous minister for women. She said—

The CFMEU's empowered and strong Women's group is leading the charge to reform worksites and practices across the state, as well as encouraging young women and girls into a career in the construction industry.

I know the women at their Women in Construction conference today face significant barriers in achieving respect, safety, and security in this growing industry; often facing the additional barrier of simply being accepted, regardless of how skilled they are at their job.

Women have something important to offer every industry. Getting (and keeping) more women in construction is win win, because we know that increasing gender equality leads to greater inclusivity and therefore productivity, too.

When details of real violence, intimidation and misogyny perpetrated by the CFMEU against women in construction were revealed in the Watson report, all we heard from the now shadow minister for women was what she had for lunch. That silence is inexcusable. That hypocrisy is shameful. The truth is the former Labor government had every opportunity to act. Over 200 meetings with CFMEU officials, millions in donations and years of legislative changes that empowered union thuggery told the real story. When the CFMEU said, 'We own the government; we run the state,' they were not exaggerating.

The Crisafulli government is ending that era of terror and bullying. On 1 August 2025 a full commission of inquiry commenced under Mr Stuart John Wood AM, KC. He will have full powers, under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, to compel evidence, examine witnesses and, crucially, protect the victims and whistleblowers who were too afraid to come forward under Labor. This is timely. It needs to occur to delve into the CFMEU's criminal links, financial dealings and systemic culture of misconduct, particularly against women.

Ms YOUNG: Minister, in reference to page 2 of the SDS, how do you define women's economic security? What does it look like for the women of Redlands?

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you, member, for your question. Given your history as a business owner and someone who knows what it takes to engage in that challenging world of creating your own job and employing others, I appreciate the insights that you bring as an advocate for your community.

This is a very important question. The Premier understands the importance of addressing women's economic security and having a lens on the barriers and opportunities to unlock the potential that women have. That is why the Crisafulli LNP government has formed the women's economic security team. It is chaired by me and comprises the Treasurer, David Janetzki. The women's economic security team is part of a whole-of-government economic security strategy. This government believes in building a future where women and girls can thrive. We believe in creating opportunities for every woman and girl to succeed, ensuring they have the freedom to grow up and live in ways that suit them by breaking down barriers to women's economic participation, prioritising safety, supporting women's advancement and working towards a stronger, fairer and more prosperous Queensland where women are safe in the workplace.

We are committed to addressing barriers in health, housing, safety, justice, education, employment and training while considering the experience of women with diverse backgrounds and laying the foundations for a fresh start. We are committed to helping women achieve their career goals

and thrive in the workplace. This means creating opportunities in industries they are passionate about. With Queensland's gender pay gap at 10.8 per cent, we are determined to help close the gap. By empowering women in the workplace we are building a stronger economy and a brighter future for all.

This government believes that economic security is not one part of the equation; it is the foundation and it underpins everything. It is about the freedom to make choices and the dignity to stand by them because when women rise, communities rise. It means being able to pay the bills, plan for the future, support their families and leave a situation that may be unsafe. I want to be very clear that there are many Queensland women facing situations of needing assistance to fully participate, to be safe, to have a roof over their heads. Whatever the circumstances, we want to work with them to help them thrive, be safe and have that security.

Women's workforce participation is just 63.9 per cent, compared to 71 per cent for men. Some 41.7 per cent of women are in part-time work—twice the rate of men. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women face an unemployment rate of 13.1 per cent—three times the state average. Homelessness is at an all-time high among young women and those aged over 55. These are all matters we are working on delivering tangible solutions for, such as the \$20 million for our Returning to Work package; the \$333 million Skilling Queenslanders for Work program; and \$540,000 for the Empowering Queensland Women grants program. There are many other aspects that I could unpack, but I will allow the member to ask another question.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, in reference to page 2 of the SDS and the Women's Economic Security Strategy, since taking office you have hosted and attended multiple women's forums with women across Queensland. The Pumicestone women's economic security forum was well attended. Thank you for coming to that. Can you explain your vision for the women's economic security portfolio and how it will benefit the women of Pumicestone?

Ms SIMPSON: Thank you very much, member for Pumicestone, for helping host that when we were in your electorate. It was attended by such a wonderfully diverse group of women providing their insights. That is at the heart of what we are doing with the development of the Women's Economic Security Strategy. I have travelled across Queensland and will continue to do so. We are hearing from Queensland women on their terms—in their communities, in boardrooms, in communities and in small businesses—and what I have heard is powerful. Queensland women are driven and capable and deeply resilient, but they need systems that recognise their worth and the tools to remove the barriers that continue to hold them back.

I did hold a forum in your electorate, member for Pumicestone, and I acknowledge you as one of the youngest women ever elected to the Queensland parliament, which is such a terrific achievement. It is important that we do hear from young women and from women at all stages in life such as those who have built businesses, survived domestic violence or fought for a return to the workforce as women may find that they have lost their current qualifications while caring for children and cannot afford to retrain. Those are some of the aspects that we are already dealing with in the program of funding that we are releasing and also with the development of the policy going forward.

Women need access to reaccreditation. They may be underemployed. There may be barriers to, say, getting a bank loan because a single mother may have met every financial benchmark but is still discriminated against with regard to being able to acquire a loan. We need to address some of those barriers or at least throw a spotlight on them until we get some changes to ensure that women have fair access to the finance they need because finance is about a home or a business. Some women have shared that, although they earn more than their partners, they are expected to reduce their work hours because they are the ones who are offered flexibility. There are a multitude of issues and we will be advocating for and working with women to develop and champion the policies that unlock opportunities so they can thrive in their communities.

At the Townsville community cabinet, I met a young woman who is running three small businesses. She is quite amazing. She is a young woman who came from that community. She is determined to show her children that they have a bright independent future. On Boundary Street in Brisbane I visited Lox & Co, a salon founded by a vibrant young Indigenous woman, Janaya, who is building a business with pride, purpose and cultural strength. I also acknowledge and honour her aunt who sadly passed away recently. There is no doubt she would be very proud of what her niece has achieved and will continue to achieve in her lifetime.

There are so many stories and they all have wisdom and insights not only about resilience in terms of what helps, what works and what makes a difference but also about where the barriers are so that we can help women overcome them and where the opportunities are. That is part of the policies we have announced and the ongoing work that we are doing with regard to the Women's Economic Security Strategy.

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

Mr DAMETTO: Minister, according to the SDS, \$20 million will be spent over four years to help women get back into the workforce with grants for things such as essential work, day care and associated costs. How will the grants around child care be administered?

Ms SIMPSON: With regard to our \$20 million program for women returning to work, for the eligibility of these grants and how they will be rolled out, we will shortly be releasing the guidelines as to how this will be operating. It will be up to \$5,000 worth, but some may not apply for that. There will be different components. Some of this will be for child care and others may be for accreditation. To answer your question, the detail of how that will be applied will be released in due course. I look forward to sharing those guidelines.

The broad framework of that program is this: there are barriers, be it child care, while someone is looking for work so before they have a job. That has been acknowledged as a real issue. The intention and the way that this policy has been formed is that it is not just about women who are in a job; it might for a woman who is looking for a job because they do not have the money to afford a caregiver while they are going to interviews. That is one of the criteria that we will be incorporating into the guidelines. It will be diverse and there will be some who will have different needs. They might have needs around technology. They might have clothing needs. I know this example is not about child care but it is relevant. It does not always take a lot but it can mean the difference. One woman talked to me about women getting a haircut. That might sound frivolous to some but it is expensive and it is difficult. It might be something as basic as being able to present yourself for that job.

Mr DAMETTO: I understand. It is getting dearer for men, too.

Ms SIMPSON: You have it easy. I am sure you do not spend a lot of time at the hairdresser.

Mr DAMETTO: As a follow-up question, will that be available to biological women and also people who identify as women?

Ms SIMPSON: This program is for women. It is about the same guidelines that we apply across government. It is for women who have been underemployed, are seeking employment or are needing reaccreditation. The way that we apply this program is if someone signs up for the program they will be available for this. I am going to be quite clear that this is for people who apply through this program in the same way that they have applied for any of our women's programs in the past. We are not changing the criteria. A roadblock for women accessing help can be simply coming forward. We find there is a real confidence factor with women applying for help to get back into the workforce. I am looking forward to releasing the guidelines that we are developing with regard to this program. I think that it is very important that we do make it as accessible as possible for women who have had barriers in accessing employment and accessing upskilling to get a job that may in fact give them greater economic security. That is our intention.

Mr DAMETTO: Is it for both women and those who identify as women?

Ms SIMPSON: I will not be asking people to give me their birth certificates.

Ms FENTIMAN: Minister, I bring you back to some of the questions that we were attempting before the break. I refer to the women's economic security statement and the reproductive health investment, on page 4. Minister, have you publicly expressed a position on termination of pregnancy?

Mrs YOUNG: Point of order, Mr Speaker: is the member asking the minister for an opinion?

Mr SPEAKER: I will let the minister answer as she will.

Ms SIMPSON: I refer the member to the statement that I have already made on the record with regard to this issue. While I appreciate the member is actually really asking for the expression of an opinion, there is already a statement on the record that the member can reference.

With regard to my portfolio responsibilities and with regard to this government's commitment, through the health minister who has carriage of our health portfolio we have made it clear that there is a need for support for women who face all sorts of very difficult and sometimes tragic circumstances. It does take a deal of sensitivity and hopefully there will be no weaponising of one of the most tragic and

difficult situations for women facing unplanned and sometimes traumatic pregnancies. That is why the statements that I have made that are on the public record have always been couched with that understanding and care because you are dealing with people in one of the most sensitive and difficult situations. I think it is unfortunate that this has become part of a weaponised attempt to drive politics and run a scare campaign. In the statements that I have made, we try to understand the sensitivity of how this affects women and their families in some of the most difficult of circumstances when they need all the support and understanding and appropriate care that they can possibly have.

Mr SPEAKER: Just as we go to the next question, member for Waterford, I remind you that we are examining the proposed expenditure of this portfolio. You may ask your next question.

Ms FENTIMAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just to clarify: your previous statement on the record was against a woman's right to choose; is that correct, Minister?

Mr SPEAKER: No. The minister has given her response. I have given you some guidance on what area we are discussing. Ask your next question, please.

Ms FENTIMAN: Director-General, I refer to page 3 of the SDS, and I table a copy of the relevant Office for Women page of the SDS from the previous year's budget papers. I am happy for it to make its way to you. Can I ask: why were the words 'gender equality' removed from the SDS description for the Office for Women in this year's budget?

Ms Wilde: In relation to the drafting of the SDS, this was something that we did in combination with reviewing the minister's charter letter as well as other whole-of-government documents. In relation to the wording that is in the current SDS, that was something for which approval was sought, as it is traditionally done, with the relevant minister's office.

Ms FENTIMAN: Is it your understanding that gender equality is no longer a priority for this government?

Ms SIMPSON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: that is an opinion.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the member is asking the director-general about policy. I would submit to you that the question needs to be rephrased and submitted to the minister.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, your question was asking about policy.

Ms FENTIMAN: Sure. I am happy to rephrase the question. Director-General, is it correct that gender equality is no longer a priority for the Office for Women, given it is no longer in the description?

Ms SIMPSON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I would contend that is still asking for an opinion. There are also imputations within the question and it should be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I will seek some advice. Member for Waterford, if you want to ask that question it should be directed to the minister, not the director-general.

Ms FENTIMAN: The director-general is responsible for the Office for Women and the priorities of the Office for Women. Given gender equality is missing from the description of the Office for Women—

Mr SPEAKER: The director-general does not direct policy.

Ms FENTIMAN: All right. I will direct it to the minister. Minister, given the director-general has said this was done in consultation with your office, is gender equality no longer a priority for the Office for Women and your government? Why were the words removed?

Ms SIMPSON: Gender equality is still a priority for this government, and as such we now have a women's economic security minister and we have an Economic Security Team, which I chair with regard to the Women's Economic Security Strategy. The department's strategic objectives are—

... women's equality and economic security enhanced through participation in Queensland's community and economy.

That is on page 1 of the SDS. In addition, we have a Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, and we have elevated economic security to a finance team of the Treasurer, the finance minister and me. We have the opportunity to make sure we elevate this critical policy area across government. The SDS does very much present women's equality, and we do uphold gender equality and the need to overcome all social and economic barriers for full participation to ensure people have the ability to thrive and live their lives fully.

Mr SPEAKER: We will have one more question from the opposition.

Ms FENTIMAN: Minister, given the overwhelming majority of teachers, nurses and midwives are women, what action have you taken to ensure your government gives these workers nation-leading wages and conditions?

Ms SIMPSON: I note this question is in relation to the current work that is being done with regard to industrial relations and negotiating fairly with above-inflation offers from the government to ensure there is fairness, recognition and the ability to address not only the financial issues that are being raised within the enterprise bargaining with the teachers but also the violence in their workplace that has been allowed to occur because for 10 years Labor ignored their safety concerns, which affected their workforce culture and their ability to do their job because they knew they were not supported.

It is not only about the nation-leading and above-inflation offers—and these matters will go through the appropriate processes of conciliation; it is also about ensuring all those issues of safety in the workforce are addressed. Women and men have spoken in the last few days about how upset they were that for 10 years their concerns were not being listened to. We do need to hear those concerns because everyone has a right to be safe in the workplace and be backed up. We need to ensure there is fairness and that conciliation is able to deliver the right outcomes for everyone.

Ms FENTIMAN: Point of order on relevance, Mr Speaker: I asked what action the minister has taken to ensure these women are being paid nation-leading wages.

Ms SIMPSON: The cabinet is kept informed, and obviously I am not able to talk about cabinet deliberations. It is on the public record that there are offers that are above inflation, and there will be a fair process of respecting people at work. Many issues are being raised, particularly about safety in schools and ensuring teachers and students have that backup. In addition to the financial matters that are under consideration, concerns are being raised about Labor's legacy of not listening. They are upset with regard to how that has impacted them as educators being able to do their job, being safe at work and being valued at work. The details of deliberations are obviously matters for cabinet.

Mr SPEAKER: I told the member for Moggill I would let him ask a question before we finish.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, page 2 of the SDS refers to funding of \$20 million over four years to help women return to the workforce. How will this funding support women in the electorate of Moggill and also across Queensland?

Ms SIMPSON: People do not always realise that women who have great qualifications can spend some time out of the workforce because of circumstances such as caring for children, caring for older family members or their own health, which impacts them financially. They may have a lot of qualifications but they may not be current. This funding for a particular new program will help women in a range of areas that our state needs. They may be women such as Nicky from Lovewell who told us that, for her, it could be something as simple as being able to go out and have a haircut or buy underwear.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have one minute left.

Ms SIMPSON: It will be across a range of issues. It will be tangible support. It is based upon feedback from women who said that we need this type of program. It is a new program. It has not been done by a state government before. We are determined to help women overcome the barriers to fully upgrading or being able to participate in the workforce. I am sure it will be very popular, and we look forward to it being available right across our state.

Mr SPEAKER: We have now reached the end of time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the areas of responsibility administered by the Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism. Thank you, Minister, Director-General, officials and departmental officers for your attendance. The committee will now adjourn until 5.30 pm, when we will examine the estimates for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

Proceedings suspended from 5.00 pm to 5.30 pm.

**ESTIMATES—EDUCATION, ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE—
FAMILIES, SENIORS AND DISABILITY SERVICES; CHILD SAFETY AND THE
PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE****In Attendance**

Hon. AJ Camm, Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Ms Anna Hilton, Chief of Staff

Ms Sarah Halnan, Policy Advisor

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety

Ms Belinda Drew, Director-General



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 today's hearing.

The members of the Education, Arts and Communities Committee are: Nigel Hutton, the member for Keppel and chair; Corrine McMillan, the member for Mansfield and deputy chair; Wendy Bourne, the member for Ipswich West; Nick Dametto, the member for Hinchinbrook; Ariana Doolan, the member for Pumicestone; and Rebecca Young, the member for Redlands, who is substituting for Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim. 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. 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. 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 upstairs. 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 child safety portfolio area until 6.30 pm. We will then take a short break until 6.45 pm before examining the portfolio area of families, seniors and disability services until 7.45 pm and the prevention of domestic and family violence until 8.45 pm. I remind honourable members that matters relating to these portfolio areas can only be raised during the times specified for the area, as was agreed by the House. I refer members to the program set by the House, 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, director-general, officials and departmental officers, and members of the public. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask officials and advisors to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or director-general.

I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of child safety 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.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. When I became the Minister for Child Safety, I thought I had a fair understanding of the challenges that lay ahead after being the shadow minister for four years. I was mistaken. The mess that was left behind by the former Labor government is nothing short of diabolical. In the past nine months I have uncovered and continue to uncover every week system gaps and critical system failures that are putting vulnerable children and our communities at risk.

In May, the Crisafulli government took the necessary step to call a commission of inquiry into the broken child safety system. We need to understand how this system evolved into the mess it is now, what decisions were made to this point and, most importantly, how we can create a system that has vulnerable children and their safety at the forefront. This is not about demonising children and young people who live in out-of-home care, but if we carry on like the former Labor government and pretend that there are not issues in the system, how it operates and the trauma that their failures have inflicted on children then nothing will change. This is not acceptable to me and this is not acceptable to the Crisafulli government.

The former Labor government created a billion dollar residential care system, reports of foster carers being treated with disdain, did not invest enough in frontline resource and traumatised a generation of our state's most vulnerable children. The extremely sobering 2024 census found that children who were entering the out-of-home care system had suffered significant trauma; the children who live in residential care have significantly higher needs than those in foster or kinship care; 42 per cent have limited to severely limited intellectual functioning of developmental delay; 51 per cent have a diagnosed or suspected disability; 40 per cent have a diagnosed or suspected mental illness; 48 per cent have extreme instability or extreme emotional responses that limit functioning; 44 per cent self-harm now or in the past; 22 per cent have attempted suicide; 61 per cent have been excluded or suspended from an education facility in the past; and 52 per cent have poor social skills or are disconnected.

The residential care system is in a shocking state, but we have acted. I have torn up Labor's Residential Care Roadmap that was, quite frankly, a road to nowhere, with the sector growing from 650 children in 2015 to more than 2,000 today. It is an unacceptable number of children and it is an unacceptable number of children aged under five living in residential care homes.

I am not on my own in the assessment of this system. In the report titled *Too little too late*, the Queensland Family and Child Commissioner said—

... in this, my first formal monitoring report ... it is clear that the ... is not leading bold, urgent and impactful change to the residential care system.

Change is needed and we are acting. I refuse to watch a broken system continue. I have enacted the Crisafulli government's out-of-home care strategy and our Safer Children, Safer Communities plan while the commissioner goes about his important work.

When it was discovered that the Palaszczuk-Miles government had allowed almost 800 children to self-place across this state, which meant they had no idea where they were, I took action and directed my department to conduct a census and audit of these children. We must know where children in our care are as their safety is paramount. I have also requested a review of the contracting processes that have resulted in an over-reliance on not-for-profit, unlicensed providers in the residential care sector, and its work is underway.

We will deliver the state's first SecureCare facility for children who are highly vulnerable and at risk to themselves—a recommendation from the Carmody inquiry that the former Labor government refused to implement. We have allocated funding of \$54.3 million over three years in this budget. A further reform in the residential care sector includes \$10.9 million over four years to assist in moving to a 24/7 dual-carer model to ensure the safety of the children, the workforce and the community in which they engage. The Crisafulli government's professional foster care pilot is also funded in the budget with \$28.8 million allocated over four years as well as critical funding of \$1,500 a year to help support kids in care to get involved in extracurricular activities. We value the role of foster and kinship carers in ensuring vulnerable children are kept safe and I am committed to restoring value and respect to these families who open their homes and their hearts to children who enter our child safety system.

We are investing \$77.6 million over four years in our frontline workforce, with our commitment of a 20 per cent uplift by 2030. Let us not forget the 91 critical frontline jobs the former Labor government had planned to cut by the Christmas last year that have been saved by this government.

I thank my staff, particularly those on the front line, child safety officers, all of those who work in service centres and my department. We are committed to safer children and a safer community.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I welcome the member for Mansfield, who I assume is going to ask the first question.

Ms McMILLAN: Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge all those working across Queensland to support children in care. The work you do is important and it is so valued.

Director-General, my first question is to you. I table the *Courier-Mail* article entitled 'Blue Card screening jobs axed in budget', which features a photo of new Director-General Cruickshank and the member for Nanango. The article reveals that there are—and I quote—

... 50 full-time jobs no longer funded throughout the Department of Justice.

And that includes positions screening for individuals that could be at threat when working with children ...

Director-General, did your department provide any advice or were you aware that important positions in Blue Card Services, which supports the child safety system, were no longer properly funded?

Ms Drew: In terms of the employment arrangements in relation to Blue Card Services, member, that is a matter for the Department of Justice but, no, we did not provide advice.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, did you advocate for all the positions within Blue Card Services to be funded as they support the work of your agency, or is this another thing you are sitting on your hands until the end of the commission of inquiry?

Mr SPEAKER: No. I will stop you right there. I have been very clear throughout estimates that we do not have unnecessary commentary. That was making your question argumentative. I will allow you to re-ask the question, but it is very close to being ruled out of order.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, did you advocate for all the positions within Blue Card Services to be funded as they support the important work of your agency?

Ms CAMM: My department and the work that we do in protecting children is important work, as is the work of the blue card department, which the Attorney-General oversees. As the member would be aware, we, the Crisafulli government, have taken significant steps to reform the blue card system. The Family and Child Commissioner, Luke Twyford, is well underway with significant reform and oversight of the blue card system.

As the minister responsible for the Child Safe Organisations Act and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which we, as a Crisafulli government, are going to bring forward to ensure that children in Queensland are going to be the safest children in the state, we are taking action and will bring forward the reform in regard to particularly the Child Safe Standards, which commence from 1 October this year, followed by the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which will commence from 1 July 2026. The Premier and the Attorney-General have spoken at length in the media in regard to our commitment—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Hold on, Minister. I have a point of order. What is your point of order, member for Mansfield?

Ms McMILLAN: The question was: has the minister advocated for those jobs within Blue Card Services to be funded?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: in relation to the question as asked by the member for Mansfield, the minister is being responsive to the question as asked and is providing detailed information that is important to the committee.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have heard the question as asked. I will let you round out your answer please.

Ms CAMM: As I outlined, under the Child Safe Organisations Act and under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which my department and I have oversight over, we are committed to taking necessary steps and bringing forward all legislative reform that we can. The previous Labor government failed to do that in a timely manner. I certainly am on the *Hansard* in the last parliament with regard to Labor's failures in bringing forward the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the child safety organisations. Queensland was lagging behind the rest of the nation.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: given the minister is not responding to my question, I am happy to move on to question 2.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister is being responsive to the question as asked. The member for Mansfield might not like the answer as provided by the minister, but the minister is entitled to round out her answer to the question as asked.

Mr de BRENNI: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, I am happy to continue to round out the question.

Mr de BRENNI: My point of order is in relation to relevance. Being responsive to a question that was not asked is not being relevant. Standing orders require the minister's answer to be relevant, not responsive to something else. I would ask you to ensure she remains relevant to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order. Member, I ask you to round out your response to this and we will move forward.

Ms CAMM: I am advised by the department—and I believe that it was confirmed by the Attorney-General—that the same number of people work in Blue Card Services as have always, and there have been no changes or cuts in this budget.

Ms McMILLAN: The commission of inquiry is to provide evidence-based recommendations to reform Queensland's child safety system. Director-General, is the department continuing with the existing recommendations and actions like the Roadmap for Residential Care, informed by 400 stakeholders and Luke Twyford, the residential workforce strategy or outstanding working with children changes for kinship carers?

Ms Drew: I thank the member for the question. It is an important question in terms of the activity of reform in the department in our operational activities, as the commission itself undertakes its important work in view of the system more broadly. I can confirm for the member that the department has continued to meet with stakeholders engaged with us in the development of the residential care road map. Although that does not remain the focus of our work, we continue in our effort of reform in residential care at pace. The department has spent a raft of time over the last six months focusing on the continued work. That continues to remain a focus in terms of workforce including the important work that PeakCare Queensland are doing.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, in your response there are inconsistencies with the minister's opening statement. The minister stated that she was ripping up the road map; is this correct?

Ms Drew: Just to clarify the point that I was making, member, the road map's activities have ceased as they are described in the road map. That is consistent with the minister's statement. The department, however, continues through its operational activities to focus on a raft of reforms in residential care.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, following a report by the ABC today, Katherine Hayes is quoted asking: what is the government doing now? I understand children who were witness to the tragic event at an Ipswich resi-care facility were told not to say anything about it. Minister, is this acceptable?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: can the member for Mansfield authenticate that and provide the committee with some information that that was stated today? There also does seem to be an imputation or inference at the end of that question.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, can you authenticate that?

Ms McMILLAN: I can table the article. I can also inform the minister and you, Mr Speaker, that whistleblowers have advised the opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: We will get the article to the minister.

Ms CAMM: The honourable member would know that the Child Protection Act prevents me or any member of my department commenting on any specific cases pertaining to any child in care. However, more broadly what I can speak to is that the death of a child is a tragedy in any circumstance. If a child is known to child safety in the 12 months prior to their death, a child death review process is undertaken by a specialist internal team in my department. This review is then considered by the independent Child Death Review Board located within the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

Ms McMILLAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: relevance, 118(b). The question very clearly asked, 'Is this acceptable? Why were children told not to say anything?'

Mr SPEAKER: In the minister's opening statement she that she cannot comment on any specific case but she can speak generally.

Ms CAMM: I will continue. When responding to young people experiencing mental health difficulties, including young people identified to be at risk of suicide, my department works with Queensland Health to support their access to mental health services. Our staff training, the practice guidelines and reporting systems also seek to help with early identification and responses to risk factors and warning signs, including health, disability and mental health. We also work with families to identify any supports they require in tragic incidents such as the death of a child and—

Ms McMILLAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister clearly is not responding to the question. The question is very clear: why were children told not to say anything?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: For my information, where does it say that in this article?

Dr ROWAN: It does not; that is my point of order. I cannot reference that exact quote within the information documentation tabled. The minister is being responsive to the question as asked.

Ms McMILLAN: I made it very clear when I asked the question that whistleblowers had advised the opposition, but I am happy to move on. My next question is to the director-general. Director-General, as part of the development of the workforce strategy funded by the department, the Catalyst for Care program released the *Insights and opportunities* report in March this year. I take it you are familiar with this report. I table an excerpt from that report. The *Insights and opportunities* report identified the opportunity to implement a residential care worker register to provide additional accountability and oversight of those working within the child protection system similar to other jurisdictions. Director-General, prior to the delivery of this budget did the minister seek any advice on the investigation or implementation of a residential care worker register as identified as an opportunity in the report?

Ms Drew: I can confirm that yes, I am familiar with the work that PeakCare has undertaken with regard to a youth worker register. In fact, over the last period of weeks and months the department itself has been actively engaged with PeakCare as they finalise further work in their workforce report, which again includes a focus on a youth worker register. Of course it is incredibly important that we are able to ensure the safety of children and young people in our care. Of course that is a paramount priority, particularly as children and young people who enter our care have often experienced trauma. We certainly want to make sure as we care for them that we do not compound that trauma and that we make sure those children and young people have the best workforce at their disposal for their care as possible.

I would say to the member that matters relating to policy are a matter for government. This matter particularly falls within the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry and will be part of its consideration.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, point of order: in relation to the director-general's deferment of this question as a matter for government, I would ask you to remind the director-general of her obligations under the code of practice for Public Service employees appearing as witnesses. We are not seeking for you to advocate or defend a particular policy but I would submit to you, Speaker, that it is within the director-general's obligations to describe government policies, the administrative arrangements for those, and whether or not the minister has sought advice in relation to a particular policy—

Mr SPEAKER: This is a long point of order.

Mr de BRENNI: I think that was the nub of the shadow minister's question, and perhaps you could ask the director-general to comply with her obligations—

Mr SPEAKER: As you are well aware, I cannot direct the director-general how to answer a question. The director-general has answered the question. Director-General, do you have anything to add to your answer?

Ms McMILLAN: I am happy to re-state the question, Director-General, if that helps.

Ms Drew: Thank you. That would be useful, member.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, prior to the delivery of this budget did the minister seek any advice on the investigation or implementation of a residential care worker register as identified as an opportunity in the report?

Ms Drew: Thank you for the clarification.

Ms McMILLAN: Yes or no?

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: You cannot—what is your point of order?

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, you have already resolved my point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: You cannot instruct the director-general on how to answer that question. It is up to her how she answers it.

Ms Drew: I will confirm that the department, through my staff, provide the minister with a broad range of briefings related to child safety, including a range of matters related to youth workers, residential care and our reform in that area.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, I table a *Courier-Mail* article from this morning titled 'Revealed: major gaps in Queensland child safety worker oversight system'. The article states—

Dangerous predators may be among those caring for thousands of children in state residential care—but the government wouldn't know as it doesn't have a list of individuals working in the system.

Director-General, is it correct that the opportunity identified in the report would have provided the list of individuals working in the system?

Ms Drew: Could I just ask you to repeat the last part of your question, please?

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, is it correct that the opportunity identified in the report would have provided the list of individuals working in the system?

Ms Drew: As the member might know, the department funds both non-government organisations, licensed and unlicensed, to provide residential care for children and young people. These arrangements are supported by contractual obligations under the Child Protection Act, including licensed organisations and the licensing framework that applies to them. For all of those organisations these obligations include requirements about blue card status, minimum qualifications and the provision of care that meets particular standards.

In the context of these formal processes and systems if the department becomes aware of concerns about an individual worker, then the department, like any other guardian, will work with individual providers to address specific worker concerns which may include suspension or termination of those workers. The department seeks to take a pro-active approach in those matters and to use all available information that we possess as a result of our licensing and contractual arrangements to ensure the safety of those children. That includes in some instances undertaking child protection investigations or undertaking standard of care investigations in relation to youth workers.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, just to sum up: is this a missed opportunity by the department, led by the minister?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the member is seeking an opinion.

Ms McMILLAN: I am happy to move on.

Mr SPEAKER: We will have one more non-government question before the changeover.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, with reference to 254.2 child safety officer FTEs in pre-hearing question on notice 1(c), are these the child safety officer FTEs required to deliver on the commitment for a 20 per cent CSO uplift?

Ms Drew: The answer is yes.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go now to government members.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, the budget provides funding for the Crisafulli government's Safer Children, Safer Communities plan. Can you outline what is in the plan and how it will improve the lives of vulnerable children?

Ms CAMM: As a young person, she is a fierce advocate for young people across Queensland. The Crisafulli government took to the election the most comprehensive reform agenda for the child safety system. As part of our Safer Children, Safer Communities plan, we have made a commitment in this budget to reform the residential care system by adequately funding a 24-hour dual-carer supervision model of care with \$2.9 million this year from a total of \$10.9 million over four years. We have established an operational working group to support planning and be informed by the sector and potentially the outcomes of the commission of inquiry.

By 2028, we will have a 20 per cent boost in child safety officer numbers to aid early intervention. This will be progressively rolled out, with 100 additional child safety frontline positions in 2025-26. I have travelled the state and met with some of the 91 staff whom the former Labor government had not funded into the forwards, so I know how much it means to that frontline workforce to know that we are going to resource them adequately to meet demand.

There is \$50 million for the state's SecureCare facility for young people to be delivered by 2028. We have allocated \$10 million in the 2025-26 budget from a total of \$50 million of capital funding over the next three years. We will work very closely with stakeholders and other departments to ensure that the SecureCare facility is built to deliver outcomes for our most vulnerable and complex children. A professional foster care pilot program for children with complex needs will commence this year, with \$4.9 million from a total of \$28.8 million over four years.

There is a \$1,500 boost to the yearly allowance for children in out-of-home care for education and extracurricular activities. That is a \$70.1 million investment over three years because we know our most vulnerable children need that extra support for their study or for an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities like any other child. It is really important that we support carers, in particular in a cost-of-living crisis, so that they receive that additional funding.

We took to the election the need for an independent complaints escalation process for complex cases after we heard about the previous government's significant failures in feedback and advocacy we received from foster carers and kinship carers. As part of the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry, we have asked the commission to review and provide recommendations on the best design for an independent complaints process.

What we saw from the previous government was the reliance on the residential care system at an unsustainable rate. The government has inherited a multibillion dollar industry. We know that residential care is not the best form of care for children, and this is an opportunity to invest in family-based care. That is why we have made a commitment around the professional foster care pilot and that is why I want those who have had an interaction with the child safety system over the last decade to come forward with submissions to the commission of inquiry. The Crisafulli government took a comprehensive plan to the election and we have now funded that plan in our budget. It is important that those people who have not been heard have the opportunity to share their experience in the commission of inquiry.

Dr ROWAN: Minister, it is known that the Crisafulli state government is committed to increasing frontline child safety staff. Can you provide an update on the government's efforts to recruit and retain frontline staff?

Ms CAMM: One of the privileges of my job is being able to travel this state and meet our frontline staff across our child safety department in service centres all over the state as well as here in Brisbane at our after-hours call service. Our workforce there are on call 24/7 and they do an incredible job in very challenging and confronting circumstances. We made a commitment to a 20 per cent uplift to ensure our front line is supported. As of April this year, 202 FTE were allocated to the department, with a total of 90.6 FTE already approved from this allocation to frontline work.

As part of the \$383 million Safer Children, Safer Communities policy, we announced a commitment to the front line. I travelled out to Mount Isa and met with our frontline workforce, and the director-general, who was then acting, joined me on that trip. I was moved by the staff I spoke with who broke down in tears because of the workload and case loads they were confronted with and the lack of resources from the previous Labor government. I met people in November last year who did not know if they would have a job by Christmas. These are people who work in some of our most remote communities in Queensland. These staff have moved to Mount Isa and they travel to places like Mornington Island and Indigenous remote communities to work with vulnerable families and protect vulnerable children, and they did not know if they had a job by Christmas.

That is why I am very proud that the Crisafulli government has made a commitment to a 20 per cent uplift in staff. We want to make sure that our child safety officers are valued and they have the support they need. That is why we saved those 91 paralegal positions. These are students who had trained at James Cook University and were doing their placement working in the department. They are the next generation of child safety officers whom we want to engage and retain. We want to demonstrate to them that this department is doing critical work in protecting children.

The message that the former government had sent to the workforce was one that I was confronted with when I travelled to Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton and down here in South-East Queensland. There was not a child safety centre I attended where there was not a position that was not funded into the future and that was not going to be cut. I am very pleased that in this year's budget we have made good on our commitment to commence that uplift of 20 per cent to the frontline workforce.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, this question is about the very special carer families that we have here in Queensland. Minister, the current foster and kinship carer programs form a crucial measure to ensure that some of our state's most vulnerable children are cared for and protected by families who have opened their homes to those in need of care and protection. Can the minister outline how many carer families are currently registered, any current initiatives to support and retain our carer families, as well as any opportunities to improve the recruitment and retention of foster carers here in Queensland?

Ms CAMM: I attended the Queensland Foster and Kinship Care Conference this year and have met as well with carers across our state. Many continue to reach out to me since the opening of the commission of inquiry, sadly, because they did not have a good experience in the last decade, and I encourage them all to come forward with their submissions to the inquiry. We value our foster and kinship carers. I know the member for Keppel has had significant engagement with, and has been a strong advocate for, carers across the care system. As a teacher himself, he has engaged with those children who are being cared for by kinship or foster carers.

I can inform that as of 31 March this year, there were 6,534 Queensland carer families. Of that, 3,917 were foster carers, 2,329 were kinship carers, and 288 were provisionally approved carers. What we want to see as a government is our carers valued and retained, and in fact we want to attract more carers because, as I have previously outlined in my statements, family-based care is the best form of care for a child.

As well as the \$1,500 increase to the yearly allowance to support children in out-of-home care for their education and extracurricular activities, the Crisafulli government is designing a professional foster care pilot program that will focus on children with complex needs. This will commence this year with \$4.9 million from a total of \$28.8 million over four years.

Over the period of the former Labor government, we saw an increased reliance on residential care and, for the same period, we saw a decline in the quantum of foster carers and kinship carers. What we know is the investment we can make in foster and kinship carers is of high value and low cost to the state and to the taxpayer, but they deliver a great standard of care.

I want to acknowledge Queensland Foster and Kinship Care for the work they do and also our other partners who manage and support our foster and kinship carers across the state, many of which at times are looking after children with complex needs as well.

We have also committed \$680,000 in funding in regards to a recruitment campaign for foster and kinship care as part of our engagement and communication in attracting further foster and kinship carers.

Of the foster and kinship carers that I have met, I have been privileged to meet some who have had in excess of 10, 15, 20-plus children in their care over the course of their life. I acknowledge their value and meaning they give. I also want to acknowledge that the parents of the chair of the committee also were foster carers. I know that but for their example and the love and commitment they showed to the children and many young people they cared for, their life would have had a very different outcome. I thank the member for the question.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, at the launch of the commission of inquiry into Queensland's child safety system, the commissioner outlined in detail the terms of reference for the inquiry, the first being the reformation of the residential care system with recent reports revealing that there are 2,212 children living in residential care. Can the minister explain why the residential care system needs reforming?

Ms CAMM: I acknowledge the member's commitment to advocating for children in her community and across the state. When I sat in the courtroom when the commissioner, the Hon. Paul Anastasio KC, outlined his opening remarks for the commission of inquiry and outlined some of the damning figures that I had certainly uncovered since becoming the minister into child safety, and which I outlined in my opening statement, nothing could have prepared me for some of the system failures that have been uncovered, and it is why the Crisafulli government has taken the steps to establish a commission of inquiry.

Over the last decade, the reliance on residential care has been significant. When we look at the last decade, the demand on and growth in numbers of children in the residential care system—and in particular the previous government overseeing a system where residential care for the last 12 months reached a high of \$1.174 billion—exceeds any other state. Over 2,200 children are in residential care. When you compare us to every other state in the nation, it is an appalling record.

Of that \$1.174 billion, \$482 million of that funding goes to 122 unlicensed providers to deliver residential care services. I have tasked my department, the Director-General and her team, to work diligently to transition unlicensed providers to licensed providers, and to meet standards. We have an expectation that children in care should be cared for to the highest standard.

I read briefs and cases every day of children in residential care who were failed by the previous government and the failure in policy and the failure of the residential care road map that did nothing to address the number of children, particularly those aged under 10, who are being cared for in the residential care system. We have taken efforts to work with both the sector and providers to transition from high-cost, unlicensed, individual placement services to focus on those partners that are not-for-profit, outsourced service delivery partners to ensure not just value for money, but that the regulation and the licensing that is required is upheld as we undertake and conduct that audit. While that is occurring, the commission of inquiry will do the work that it needs to do in investigating the residential care system.

I note the commissioner is travelling to Cairns soon. He has already spent time in Townsville. In the Far North, in particular in Townsville and Cairns, we know the correlation that exists and the intersect between the residential care sector—the child safety system—and the youth justice system. I know the work of the commission is going to bring to the fore the failures of the previous Labor government and their lack of oversight when it comes to the residential care system and the way in which it has failed children in this state.

Mr SPEAKER: I believe the member for Hinchinbrook has a question.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you, Minister, for addressing us tonight and answering our questions. I want to congratulate the Crisafulli government on the commission of inquiry into the child safety system. Given that the reporting date is not until 30 November 2026, is the department looking into previous inquiries into child safety in Queensland and looking at taking on some of the recommendations and implementing those, for example, from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse here in Queensland?

Ms CAMM: Thank you. I will just get some information. Can I clarify if that was to me or the Director-General?

Mr DAMETTO: That was to yourself. In addition, two recommendations I would look at would be 12.14, which speaks to implementing a coordinated multidisciplinary strategy to protect children in residential care, and 12.15, which talks about a consistent definition for child sex exploitation across states.

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, I have asked my department to get further information for the member to be able to answer those questions directly, particularly around definitions. I think it is a very important question that the member has asked. I will briefly comment but we will also come back before the end of the session. There have been numerous inquiries dating back to the Forde inquiry, the Carmody inquiry, as well as, in fact, the Disability Royal Commission. Those recommendations and findings I am also responsible for under my other portfolio and they have very important and across-portfolio implications, particularly for children in child safety. I thank the member for the question; it is one that is very important. I will provide him with a more fulsome answer once we look at those points that you have outlined.

Mr DAMETTO: I appreciate that.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, including those FTE that you mentioned in response to my prior question, could you confirm the total active, paid CSO FTE that must be reached for this election commitment to be delivered?

Ms Drew: The total number of FTE that must be delivered in order to reach the 20 per cent uplift in the timeframe of the government's election commitment is 254.2 FTE. If I break it down over the years it includes: 20 in 2024-25; 100 in 2025-26; 75 in 2026-27 and 59.2 in 2027-28.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, would it be appropriate to say that the position of child safety case workers, legal, paralegal, court liaison officers and other frontline and frontline support roles all play a significant and direct role in supporting the work of child safety officers?

Miss DOOLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I think the member is asking for an opinion from the Director-General.

Mr SPEAKER: If you could rephrase the question; you were asking about the appropriateness and so forth, take that bit out and it will be fine.

Ms McMILLAN: My question really asks: are they important or are they not?

Ms Drew: Those roles that the member refers to are important roles in relation to our frontline service delivery. The 91 positions that were made permanent, that the minister referred to before, those positions included case support paralegals and finding kin. Those 91 positions contained those roles that the member refers to and they have been permanently appointed. The short answer is yes, member.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, has the department undertaken any modelling to determine the required uplift of these particular support positions as a result of the 20 per cent uplift in CSOs?

Ms Drew: The department undertakes a range of workforce planning across all of the roles related to child safety. That includes taking a look, as well, at the particular needs of each of our regions because as the member would well know, delivering child safety services here in the south-east corner is very different from delivering those services in Mount Isa. In terms of specific modelling, yes, we undertake data analysis on a regular basis to support our forward planning for CSOs and other support staff.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, has money been allocated across the forwards for all of these FTEs?

Ms Drew: Yes.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, I table question on notice No. 700 and I also table a *Courier-Mail* article from September 2024 reporting on the announcement of the Safer Children, Safer Communities plan. Once you receive the article, could you please read for the committee the highlighted line from the *Courier-Mail* regarding child safety officers?

Ms Drew: Yes, I will read the line. It says, 'The plan includes boosting the number of child safety officers by 20 per cent, above attrition, by the end of its first term in government at a cost of \$69.75 million.'

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, the minister's response in the question on notice appears to be inconsistent with this media report and inconsistent with pre-hearing question on notice No. 1?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe that was a question; it was a statement being made.

Mr SPEAKER: Was there a question in that, member for Mansfield?

Ms McMILLAN: My apologies. Is the minister's response in the question on notice inconsistent with this media report and inconsistent with the pre-hearing question on notice No. 1?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the member is seeking the opinion of the Director-General. If the shadow would like to refer it to the minister, I am sure the minister can provide the policy response.

Ms McMILLAN: I am happy to rephrase.

Mr SPEAKER: I think it is more clarification. I will allow the Director-General to answer.

Ms McMILLAN: To assist the Director-General, could you please clarify these consistencies?

Ms Drew: I am happy if you provide me with some time to clarify the position and come back to you at the end.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, we are coming close to the end of the questions. There are inconsistencies with those three documents. Minister, have you shifted the goalposts?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there are imputations in that question, I would ask that it be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: There are imputations in that question. Either rephrase the question or I will be ruling it out of order.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, why has this delivery deadline continued to change, and when will it be delivered by?

Ms CAMM: In regard to the 20 per cent uplift for child safety officers and our government's election commitment, I referenced before—and I draw the member's attention to—what was, I think, a very good question by the member with regard to the support modelling and the support staff such as paralegals or administration support et cetera. I would also draw the member's attention to the fact that

she was a member of the government that, in fact, had planned to sack 91 of those staff leading up to Christmas and it was the Crisafulli government that has taken the steps in our budget to fully fund 91 positions—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: on relevance 118(b). The minister was asked: why the inconsistencies and has the delivery deadline changed?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister is providing a fulsome response and adding context, and I believe she should be allowed to finish her answer.

Mr SPEAKER: She can so long as she finishes it within about 10 seconds.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. To clarify: the member is talking about inconsistencies. What I find very inconsistent is the member asking questions about our commitment to a 20 per cent uplift when she was part of a government that was prepared to sack 91 workers.

Mr SPEAKER: We have reached the end of the time allocated to examine the proposed expenditure for the child safety portfolio area. The committee will now take a break. The hearing will resume at 6.45 pm with the examination of estimates for the portfolio area of families, seniors and disability services.

Proceedings suspended from 6.30 pm to 6.45 pm.



Mr SPEAKER: Welcome back, Minister and officials. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of families, seniors and disability services open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, you can make a short opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Ms CAMM: A sense of community and connection is paramount to the seniors, disability services and families portion of my portfolio. That is why the Crisafulli government has invested in buildings, renovations and upkeep of places across our communities where people come together to spend time and get important information. Millions of dollars have been allocated in the budget to build on these connections throughout Queensland, including: \$4.3 million for a new centre in Rockhampton, \$800,000 for the redevelopment of the Bribie Island Neighbourhood Centre, \$3 million for a new community centre in Moggill, \$2 million towards a new Goondiwindi neighbourhood centre, \$500,000 for Wynnum Community Place, \$450,000 for Logan East Community Neighbourhood Centre and \$2 million for the Mount Gravatt Men's Shed. The government is also working with a number of other communities on the development of neighbourhood centres including in Aurukun, Kowanyama, Palm Island and Cherbourg.

Queenslanders are doing it tough and the elderly are feeling the cost-of-living pinch as hard as anyone. The Crisafulli government has committed \$363.4 million in concessions to assist, including \$261.9 million in electricity rebate schemes, \$62.7 million in pensioner rate subsidies and millions more in other concessions. We have also allocated \$5 million to expand Caloundra's Gateway Care food rescue to put low-cost food on the table for 600 families every day. This year's budget provides \$1.9 million to Foodbank Queensland, \$1.09 million to OzHarvest and \$1.09 million to SecondBite.

As part of our first 100-day plan we launched a parliamentary inquiry into elder abuse to consider its insidious impact on Queenslanders and to get to the root causes and assess the effectiveness of existing responses and opportunities for improvements. It is vital we take steps to ensure older Queenslanders are treated with respect and dignity and live free from abuse and neglect.

The Crisafulli government is committed to progressing the National Cabinet agreement to secure the future of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and I am committed to progressing integrated disability and health reforms that benefit all Queenslanders. We work collaboratively with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to design foundational supports and I will continue to advocate for Queenslanders to ensure critical services are available when and where they are needed. My department and I regularly meet and work with stakeholders to help inform our contributions to these reform discussions.

To support ongoing engagement with the LGBTQIA+ communities across the state we have set up Queensland's first LGBTQIA+ alliance as a representative body connecting individuals and organisations across the state. I support the work of the LGBTQIA+ round table who meet to discuss issues and opportunities in their community. The expression-of-interest process has begun seeking community members for the 2025 to 2027 term of the round table.

The neighbourhood centres we are investing in also play a crucial role during natural disasters, often being stood up as community recovery hubs—I had the pleasure of visiting many in the wake of the state's disasters at the start of this year—a one-stop shop to help people through what is for many the toughest times. There have been plenty in the first quarter of this year from cyclones in the south-east to flooding in the north and west as Queensland's disaster season hit our state. Queensland's spirit and resilience shines brightest during these events and I met with so many across the state who were volunteering, showing up for their mates, and lending a hand and an ear to friends, family and community. As at 30 June, 365,728 disaster grant applications were paid totalling \$150 million, including: \$110.5 million in emergency hardship assistance, \$20.6 million in essential services and hardship assistance, \$18.7 million in essential household grants, and \$43,000 in the Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme. This is an extraordinary amount compared to the last financial year when 191,982 grants were paid totalling \$81.6 million.

I want to thank all of the public servants and in particular the community recovery ready reserves and non-government organisation partners who worked tirelessly throughout the disaster season. Let us hope this year is kinder.

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

Ms ENOCH: On behalf of the opposition I acknowledge the minister and her appointment as a cabinet minister—nine months ago now—the director-general and the incredible team you get to work with in the department as well as all of the stakeholders you work with across the state. My first question is to the director-general. In respect of the proper management and expenditure of taxpayer funds in your portfolio, has Minister Camm made you aware of any conflict-of-interest management plans that the minister has in place?

Ms Drew: Member, I understand that all of the appropriate disclosures have been made by the minister.

Ms ENOCH: Just to confirm then, Director-General, that you have been made aware of any conflict of interest management plans that the minister has in place?

Ms Drew: Yes, member. I understand that the appropriate disclosures have been made.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Director-General. Director-General, has the department been requested to or has it put in steps to ensure any conflicts of interests of Minister Camm are appropriately managed please?

Ms Drew: I reassure the member and the committee that all appropriate steps in terms of management of conflicts of interest across the department are in place. That includes for the ministerial office and indeed for myself and for staff across the department. I can confirm as well that, in relation to grant funding and any other funding that the department is responsible for, decisions related to that funding are with me as the financial delegate or otherwise with my staff according to their delegations.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you so much, Director-General. I really appreciate your response. Director-General, when was the department advised of any conflicts of interest issues or management plans?

Ms Drew: As I said, I understand that all appropriate disclosures have been made and I have been made aware of those, as was appropriate.

Ms ENOCH: Sorry, Director-General, but my question was when was the department advised of conflicts of interest issues or management plans please?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: in relation to this series of questioning, the director-general has been responsive to the questions as asked and has provided answers in relation to the questions that I would now suggest, Mr Speaker, that the line of questioning is becoming repetitive to the director-general.

Mr SPEAKER: That is a fair point of order and—

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, point of order: I appreciate what the member for Moggill is saying and I do appreciate that the director-general is being responsive, but it was a unique question—a different question—and it was about the timing of the conflict of interest issues and management plan.

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, point of order: the question was asked and answered by the director-general.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, I think it was. I think the director-general has been very thorough in her answers. We will go to the next question please, member for Algerie.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, when did you put your conflict of interest management plan in place?

Ms CAMM: All appropriate declarations have been made in line with the Ministerial Code of Conduct, the Ministerial Handbook and upon my advice from the Integrity Commissioner.

Ms ENOCH: Just to confirm then, Minister: the question was when did you put your conflict of interest management plans in place. I am just looking for a timeline thank you.

Ms CAMM: All appropriate declarations have been made at the appropriate times.

Ms ENOCH: So, Minister, I will ask it in a different way: was your conflict of interest management plan in place in 2025 or in 2024?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: there have been two questions asked of the minister and the minister has provided a response in relation to those two questions. I would again submit to you that we are now becoming repetitive in relation to the questions that are being asked of the minister given her fulsome response to the previous two questions.

Ms ENOCH: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have heard the question—

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, I am happy to—

Mr SPEAKER:—so I will allow it.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. All appropriate declarations have been made in accordance with the Ministerial Code of Conduct, the Ministerial Handbook and the integrity advice and all those disclosures were made at the appropriate time, and I have stated that previously.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Algerie, do you have another question?

Ms ENOCH: Minister, have you excluded yourself on any funding, program or policy matters which relate to the Everton electorate?

Ms CAMM: I have.

Ms BOURNE: Minister, I refer to page 6 the SDS relating to 'communities to connect, participate, contribute and thrive'. Can the minister guarantee that the government will continue to fund place-based solutions that strengthen social and economic participation for at-risk families, particularly multicultural communities, women and children whose access to education and employment is at risk of falling through the cracks without ongoing support?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question and she highlights an incredible need across our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable and those who may come from minority segments in our community, particularly the culturally and linguistically diverse background communities as well. I want to assure the member that the Queensland government is committed to ensuring that we support those across our communities who need it most. In this budget we are investing \$36 million across neighbourhood centres to support the needs and the priorities of Queensland communities and assist individuals and families using a local place-based approach.

We are committed to ensure that, particularly through our neighbourhood centre funding, neighbourhood centres' practice is underpinned by three key principles—to respond locally with a place-based approach, to provide universal access to community members and to build local partnerships that meet the needs of their communities. That is why in this budget we have committed \$4.6 million that we have allocated to the complementary Community Connect initiative which funds Community Connect workers in high-needs communities to facilitate support, information and referral for individuals and families who experience significant vulnerabilities and complex needs and also to promote and encourage resilience. As part of our ongoing support and funding, particularly to vulnerable cohorts and families, we are also investing in food security and support.

I was really pleased to attend the opening of the Foodbank expansion here in Brisbane. We have made ongoing commitments to OzHarvest and SecondBite. We have also continued funding for school breakfast programs. They are also quite targeted in vulnerable communities. To assure the member, we have committed \$43.5 million for the Community Support Scheme which aims to improve independence and reduce reliance on long-term support. It also has a focus on reducing social isolation. We continue to monitor the demand for this service because we know it is something that is highly valued by those most vulnerable across our community.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, can you advise specifically what new cost-of-living relief measures are available for Queensland seniors in this budget?

Ms Drew: The support for seniors across Queensland remains an extremely important part of the department's cost-of-living supports. The Queensland government understands these pressures and in 2025-26 has allocated \$363.4 million in concessions and rebates to help Queensland seniors and other vulnerable low-income households to meet cost-of-living pressures. This means that eligible households will see a benefit of \$386 off their power bill through the energy rebate scheme. The Queensland government also continues to assist low-income households by offering emergency assistance of up to \$720 once in a two-year period for those who are experiencing short-term financial crisis and who are unable to pay their current electricity and/or reticulated natural gas accounts. In terms of seniors concessions, I can also let the member know that in 2025-26 the Queensland government has, as I said—I think I have already told you that, member—allocated \$363.4 million which amounts to a \$386 rebate off their power bill.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for that information. Can you outline which of those are new cost-of-living measures, please?

Ms Drew: If you would give me a moment I will confer with my colleagues. Member, could I please come back to you in a moment with that question once I have it for you?

Ms ENOCH: That is no problem.

Mr SPEAKER: You are happy with that, to come back later in the session?

Ms CAMM: The director-general has the answer.

Ms Drew: My sincerest apologies, Speaker and member. An additional \$12.7 million was allocated in the 2025-26 state budget for food relief, emergency relief, financial literacy, resilient services and school breakfast programs on top of the existing \$14 million for these services in 2025-26.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, I am not sure how many seniors are going to school breakfasts, so which of the concessions that you have mentioned are new for seniors in Queensland?

Ms Drew: I will come back to you at the end, if that is okay.

Ms ENOCH: How much will Queensland seniors receive this year in electricity rebates?

Ms Drew: I think I answered that question for you just a moment ago. In 2025-26 the Queensland government has allocated \$363.4 million in concessions and rebates to help Queensland seniors, which is a \$386 rebate off their power bill.

Ms ENOCH: That is \$1,000 less than last year; that is correct, is it not?

Ms Drew: I do not have that information to hand, member.

Ms ENOCH: Director-General, will seniors be required to pay more for their car registration from the end of September this year?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker. I believe this is a question that would have been better referred to the department of main roads. The director-general, while trying to be receptive and helpful, is not best placed to answer this question.

Mr SPEAKER: Director-General, is there any light that you can shed on that?

Ms Drew: I do not have the information to hand. I will have to come back to you if I have got the answer.

Ms ENOCH: Minister, given the DG's evidence and that we know the former Labor government's 20 per cent discount on car registration will end at the end of September, meaning seniors will need to pay more, and we know that the \$1,000 electricity rebate has not been continued on by this government, which means seniors will pay more, I put to you that Queensland seniors are worse off under this government. That is right, is it not?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker. I believe the line of questioning was full of commentary, as well as argumentative.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker. There are two points of order: firstly, there is an imputation in the question, but there are also a number of matters that relate to other portfolio areas.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, it was more of a statement, but I will allow you to answer it as you wish.

Ms CAMM: Cost-of-living increases are one of the biggest challenges facing Queenslanders. In particular we recognise vulnerable seniors. In regard to our rebates, in this year's budget the Queensland government has allocated \$363.4 million, as the director-general outlined, in concessions and rebates to help seniors. This means that eligible households will see a benefit of up to \$386 off their power bill from an energy perspective. I do note that the Minister for Energy did make comments in previous hearings of estimates in regards to energy policy and maintenance guarantees and the like. However, we have made a commitment as a Crisafulli government to targeted, responsible, recurrent funding of rebates into the future.

What I can also say in relation to the energy rebate is that more than 600,000 households will benefit from this concession. This rebate has increased by 3.8 per cent in this year and the Crisafulli government has committed to indexing this concession each and every year. There are also additional concessions where eligible households can access 20 per cent discounts off natural gas bills; up to a maximum of \$200 a year to lessen the impact of local government rates and charges; up to \$120 per annum to eligible pensioner property owners in South-East Queensland on the water grid to lessen the impact of water prices; and up to \$522 towards the Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme for eligible concession card holders. For seniors there are free glasses every two years under the Spectacle Supply Scheme and free dental treatment and dentures through the public dental clinics and hospitals. As you outlined, Mr Speaker, it does cross over many portfolios. Prior to my appointment as minister for seniors, the 2024-25 Queensland state budget did not allocate any additional funding to seniors.

Ms ENOCH: Given that the minister and the director-general have both outlined existing concessions for seniors, I am assuming that there are no new cost-of-living measures for seniors in Queensland. I have outlined that there are obviously extra costs with regard to energy rebates—

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms ENOCH:—and the car registration discounts. Minister, will you commit to advocating for better cost-of-living relief supports like energy rebates and registration discounts for senior Queenslanders?

Mr SPEAKER: You had a point of order, member for Keppel?

Mr HUTTON: Yes, Mr Speaker. I believe that the member is using long preambles as an opportunity to provide commentary and statements beyond the scope of the question she is wanting to ask and that question had an imputation in it.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have the call.

Ms CAMM: The Crisafulli government was very clear with Queenslanders that we would provide targeted responses and recurrent funding. We have demonstrated that to all Queenslanders and seniors through our commitment to 50-cent fares and ensuring that they are funded into the forwards and long term, which is something that the previous government did not do. We also abolished the GP tax. I know many seniors across the community had expressed their concern about that and, in fact, many GPs were also sharing with us that seniors were not going to the doctor because of the risk and cost impost on them.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister knows that she is clearly misleading the House. I will be writing to you on this matter. There is no such thing as a GP tax and 50-cent fares—

Ms CAMM: For clarity, I was asked to expand upon all of the commitments the Crisafulli government has made.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, you do not need to interrupt. If that is your view, you can write, but you write to the committee. This is a hearing of the committee so you write to the committee chair. That is your right. Minister, you have the call.

Ms CAMM: In addition, my department is also investing \$6.8 million in this year's budget for the seniors social isolation program to keep older seniors and Queenslanders connected to each other. Through the work of previous committees of the parliament, we know that social isolation is a considerable factor in mental health. It is a considerable factor in longevity and wellbeing for seniors across our community.

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: whilst I agree with the sentiment of the minister around social isolation, my point of order is on relevance to the question, which was about cost of living. I am happy for us to move on.

Mr SPEAKER: Did you have anything to add, Minister?

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, I was aiming to be very relevant to the question, which was about what we are investing in for seniors.

Mr SPEAKER: It was a very broad question so it is up to you to round out your answer before I go to government members.

Ms CAMM: I am happy to move on if the committee so wishes.

Mr SPEAKER: We will now go to government members.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, with reference to the 2025 Far North Queensland flooding, could you advise how the Crisafulli government's community recovery efforts have supported the affected communities?

Ms CAMM: As a North Queenslander myself, I was very pleased to work with all of my government colleagues and, in fact, both government and non-government members, including the member for Hinchinbrook, in our community recovery efforts and response to the heavy rainfall event that impacted North and Far North Queensland. The Premier was very clear that there would be no daylight between disaster and recovery. Along with my director-general, who played a key role in the disaster recovery efforts, and Minister Leahy and her department, I was very pleased to respond to the needs of the community.

For that weather event, a total of 226 ready reserve staff were deployed across 33 community recovery or pop-up sites and 13 support service sites. Those sites are important. They provide psychosocial support, disaster information and assistance with grant applications. A number of partners including the Australian Red Cross, UnitingCare, Lifeline, Centacare and the Salvation Army partner with government agencies to ensure that they are accessible to provide advice and support to impacted residents. We also established a dedicated community recovery hotline that offered emotional and wellbeing support from experienced disaster recovery counsellors as well as access to direct assistance and referrals to additional services.

In my opening statement I outlined the sheer volume of grants that were processed. I do have to take the opportunity to acknowledge my community recovery team and department based at West End. They do incredible work in scaling up their workforce to meet the demand of those in need for the processing of personal hardship grants. This was activated, of course, on the back of that Far North Queensland monsoonal event. Emergency hardship assistance grants were made available for residents. Those grants provide a vital safety net for individuals who are directly impacted and unable to meet immediate and unexpected costs such as food, medication and clothing.

Having visited, in particular, the Ingham area, I know just how well received that funding was. People were without power for a period. As a government, we worked collaboratively across portfolios. I was on the ground with the emergency minister. We were actually driven around by the member for Hinchinbrook because there was no other transport on the back of those floods.

Mr DAMETTO: A good driver, too.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the member; he was a very good driver. We were able to see the community spirit firsthand and we saw how resilient North Queenslanders are. I look forward to visiting that community again soon to see the ongoing recovery work that I know is happening, the good work of our neighbourhood centre up there and the support that we have provided to the local government and council.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, in reference to the 2025 ex-tropical cyclone weather event, I want to thank you and your team for visiting Redlands during that time. Could you outline the support that you gave Redlands and the south-east corner as a whole during that time?

Ms CAMM: The member for Redlands was an absolute champion and advocate for her Redlands community. I remember being on the ground with her at one of our recovery hubs. It was incredible to see all of the services come together to support the local community.

We processed 28,129 emergency hardship grants worth \$10.5 million for Redlands on the back of ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred; \$2.6 million of essential service hardship grants, which supported 15,855 applications; a total of 6,037 essential household contents grants that totalled \$690,000; and a total of 871 essential services safety and reconnection grants. In addition, there was a total of 1,107 structural assistance grants. We stood up 11 hubs and one support service with over 4,600 visitors to those hubs.

What is unique around the Redlands community is the island communities and the way in which our team had to respond to the different communities. Under the community recovery portfolio we decide whether we stand up a permanent hub or a pop-up hub. We had outreach teams go onto the

islands to assess the needs of those communities and they stood up pop-up hubs on Russell Island and the like. I know they were well received by the community and the local council. I thank the member for her advocacy as part of the natural disaster and recovery response.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pumicestone, do you have a question?

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, can you outline how the Crisafulli government is supporting the community of Pumicestone?

Ms CAMM: I was pleased to be in the Pumicestone electorate as part of a community cabinet recently, meeting with members of your community. I was really pleased to also meet with the Bribie Island Neighbourhood Centre and see the construction of that centre coming to fruition. I know the community is looking forward to that opening hopefully later this year. We know that, in particular, the neighbourhood centre responds to the needs and priorities of the local community. Each neighbourhood centre is different, no matter where they are across the state. That is what I love about neighbourhood centres.

In addition, we are supporting the Bribie Island and the Pumicestone community by investing \$10,000 in funding for emergency relief. When I spoke with members of the neighbourhood centre there, I heard firsthand that families are doing it really tough and that more and more people are presenting to the neighbourhood centre for hardship assistant grants and for vouchers to fund the small things for their family, including food.

We are also pleased to be able to support Bribie Island's community transport with an investment of \$68,630. Community transport assists individuals who are transport disadvantaged to access essential services like health appointments, which I know many of the member's constituents need, and shopping, improving their ability to connect with their community. Planning is also underway for a new Caboolture neighbourhood centre, which will benefit members of the Pumicestone community as well as the growing community in the Caboolture region.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Moggill, do you have a question?

Dr ROWAN: I do. Minister, I listened carefully to your opening statement in relation to your portfolio and where you referenced the electorate of Moggill. Minister, can you outline how the Crisafulli state government is supporting the electorate of Moggill via this year's state budget, please?

Ms CAMM: The member for Moggill is a fierce advocate for his community, and I know that prior to entering government he had engaged and consulted widely with his community. That is why the Crisafulli government was pleased to make an election commitment of \$3 million to construct a new community hub for the community of Moggill. I met with the member earlier this year and connected him with my department, who do incredible work across the families portfolio in engaging with communities and in community and neighbourhood centre design. What I heard during those discussions and consultation is that the community of Moggill would like to see something a little different outside of the traditional neighbourhood centre design. They would like to see a community centre whereby they have access to multipurpose rooms. We know that there are not-for-profit organisations that are willing to partner with government, and we are really pleased to see that the department can engage with those organisations in a way in which we can develop a design and a concept that will actually meet the needs of that community now but also in the long term.

Queensland is a growing state. The member for Moggill has an incredible community that will grow in time, and we need to make sure we are investing in social infrastructure that will not only meet the needs of the community today but also meet the needs and the growth of the community in the future. I look forward to working closely with the member for Moggill to deliver the Crisafulli government's election commitment of \$3 million for a community centre.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to the opposition now. I believe the member for Hinchinbrook has a question.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you, Minister, for staying up so late with us. I have a fantastic question about something that is dear to my heart—that is, men's sheds here in Queensland. They play a fantastic role in making sure our elderly gentlemen have somewhere to go during their years in retirement, especially when some of their wives need a bit of respite. My question is with regard to the \$29.4 million that has been allocated for election commitments, including men's shed facilities and other initiatives. How much of this budget will go into men's sheds facilities? Also, if there is money left over how do other men's sheds apply?

Ms CAMM: I have to completely agree with the member about how important men's sheds are. I have two across my local community that I know are well utilised. The member highlights what is really important: we as a government should invest in initiatives like men's sheds because they are really important community hubs. They promote good mental health and connection, which is important because men over the age of 55 are at higher risk of suicide. It is critical as a prevention measure that we invest in men's sheds.

I was pleased that, as part of the Crisafulli government's budget, we are making a commitment to a number of men's sheds across the state. It includes: \$2 million for the Mount Gravatt Men's Shed; \$1 million to support the construction of a new shed for the Oxenford Men's Shed; \$400,000 to complete the expansion works at the Collinsville Men's Shed; \$20,000 for a new workshop and equipment for the Tin Can Bay Men's Shed; \$20,000 to install solar panels on the Mary Valley Men's Shed; \$22,000 for new tools and equipment at the Burrum Men's Shed; and \$500,000 towards building a new men's shed in Labrador.

I say to the member that I look forward to visiting his community in the future as part of my commitment to connect with the community on the back of our natural disaster and recovery work. The Crisafulli government welcomes the advocacy of the member and of all members in this House, particularly around social infrastructure like men's sheds. We as a department are proud to fund and work with men's sheds and to work and support the development of more men's sheds across our state. I would welcome the member's engagement with my department to identify that need. If it is identified in his community I would be happy to receive some further information and engage with him about it.

If the committee would be happy to indulge me, the member asked a question in the previous session and it potentially crosses over with this portfolio because of the disability services portfolio. The question was with regard to taking on recommendations from previous inquiries such as the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. He referenced recommendations 12.14 and 12.15. In response to that, the Queensland government's fifth annual progress report into the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, dated December 2022, shows that recommendation 12.14 is complete. This was completed through the commencement of minimum qualification standards in January 2019. A national framework requires all residential care staff and their direct supervisors employed by licensed residential services to hold, or be enrolled in and working towards, a recognised relevant qualification to commence unsupervised direct work. For those staff currently enrolled, they must obtain the qualification within the timeframes determined and to complete the online Hope and Healing Framework training prior to commencing unsupervised direct care work.

In relation to 12.15, a nationally agreed definition for 'child sex exploitation' has been included in the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set—

Ms ENOCH: Point of order, Mr Speaker: with your guidance, the minister is answering a question from another session. I have not heard any crossover and she is using up this time, which I do not think is correct.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister was going to have to answer this question in either this session or the next session. We will finish it now. You will be able to ask more questions. Do you have much more to go on that, Minister?

Ms CAMM: I will be brief. I believe it does intersect because of disability services and children with disabilities. In 2019 members of the strategic information group, a subgroup of the national Children and Families Secretaries group, provided endorsement or in-principle endorsement of a nationally agreed definition for 'child sexual exploitation'. This definition has been included in the glossary of the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set manual since 2019-20.

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the director-general. It is understood that some individuals may have double dipped, receiving two or more financial hardship payments, or received payments when they were not eligible for it, such as people from New South Wales, after ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Is this correct?

Ms Drew: The supports that are provided under the personal hardship assistance grants during disaster events are really important to the immediate response to community recovery. Community Recovery is absolutely focused on making sure that those grants are paid to eligible applicants. We have a set of robust processes and systems in place for checking to prevent fraud from occurring. Some of the practices used include ID—

Ms McMILLAN: Sorry, Director-General, can I just check with you are you aware that there was double dipping that happened? Is your department aware of that?

Ms Drew: I thank the member for the question, and I was getting to that point. As I was saying, we have rigorous processes in place to detect fraud. I can let the member know that during the period of time of those events 3,172 applications were identified as suspected fraud. That represented 0.87 per cent of all of the applications. Of those, 365 were determined to meet the requirements for police investigation and were referred appropriately.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, a whistleblower has informed the opposition that artificial intelligence was initially used to make an assessment of claims which was subsequently found to be wrong. What actions have you or your department taken about this issue?

Ms CAMM: During the disaster season, Community Recovery did not implement any new automated processes. To date, Community Recovery has never used AI to process disaster relief grant applications. Community Recovery uses a range of system driven processes to help manage large volumes of data during times of crisis, as I think everyone here can appreciate particularly on the back of the three largest events culminating to be one of the largest disaster events that our state has experienced. These workflows allow the department to scale quickly and efficiently when demand increases. Most importantly, this ensures that Queenslanders impacted by disasters receive the support they need and when they need it most.

On 6 June 2025, the department received a media inquiry regarding the use of AI to process disaster requirements. The media were advised the system process used to cross-reference this data was called Jeff-bot. It was not AI but an internal scripting to assist with identity confirmation of grant applicants.

As the member can appreciate, we have a large number of grants that are processed that I outlined previously. Community Recovery has used scripts for many years in regard to bulk update data. All data has been checked and scripts confirmed by staff members who support the system and applications. AI was not used in this process. I will reconfirm that. All grant applications received were manually checked and have been touched by a staff member.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you for your response. Minister, were the overpayments that were made the reason Minister Leahy was the first minister to be stripped of her responsibilities?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there is a clear imputation contained within the question as asked. I would ask you to consider that matter.

Ms McMILLAN: I am happy to rephrase.

Mr SPEAKER: You will have to do that significantly.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, what are you doing to ensure respect for taxpayer funds and to ensure this situation never happens again?

Ms CAMM: The Crisafulli government came to government with a very clear message to the people of Queensland that we would respect taxpayers' money. We will respect taxpayers' money not just in this portfolio that I hold of Community Recovery but in fact in my entire department. It is why in other sessions I have pointed to other measures that we have taken as part of a new government.

I think the people of Queensland witnessed for some time the previous Labor government not respecting taxpayers' money. I could go on and on with many examples that have been reported in the media—many examples uncovered by each member of the cabinet, including the Deputy Premier, whether it comes to cost blowouts of major projects or whether it comes from a commission of inquiry now launched into the CFMEU—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: whilst I appreciate that the initial response of the minister was being responsive, the last couple of sentences are not relevant to the question that I asked.

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I would argue the minister is being directly relevant to the question that was asked in contrasting how respect for money is a priority for this government and the steps they are taking to make sure that the former government's legacy is not repeated.

Mr SPEAKER: The question was around respect for public money. Minister, I ask you to be relevant to that and finish your response please.

Ms CAMM: I am proud to be part of the Crisafulli government in which I serve where we have taken a budget forward that has been very responsive and responsible when it comes to Queensland taxpayers' money. Whether it is the Hospital Rescue Plan that I know Minister Nicholls has clearly outlined and the work that he has done, what we saw under the previous Labor government was a lack of respect for taxpayers' money. What we have seen under the previous Labor government was a lack of investment in regional and rural Queensland.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker, on relevance under standing order 118(b): I think the minister has answered the question and I am happy to move on.

Mr SPEAKER: We will be moving on this way, member for Mansfield. The clock is a little bit lopsided. I will go to government members.

Mr HUTTON: Minister, can you explain how the Crisafulli government is advocating for Queenslanders with a disability as national negotiations are being undertaken?

Ms CAMM: This is an area of my portfolio which is causing great angst and anxiety across the Queensland community and, in particular, for those living with a disability and also for the carers, the support workers and the family members who all play a role in supporting those with disabilities. The reform which the federal government is rolling out, without further communication and consultation, is absolutely, I know, frustrating many across the sector.

The Queensland government is committed to progressing the National Cabinet agreement to secure the future of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in parallel with work underway by my health ministerial colleague to strengthen the health system. As the disability minister, I am committed to progressing the integrated disability and health reforms that will benefit Queenslanders.

The NDIS review considers the scheme design, operation and sustainability. Stakeholders, service providers and those living with a disability have raised concerns that the Commonwealth is making changes to the NDIS quickly and without adequate consultation with people with disability. The Queensland government is committed to working with stakeholders to inform the contribution that we need to make as part of that reform activity and the meetings that I attend at a national level. What we are doing is identifying what those service gaps are and ensuring that Queenslanders' needs are adequately communicated to the federal government.

We are doing that in many ways, including working with the Queenslanders with Disability Network. I was really pleased to attend a number of workshops across the state with participants and peak organisations with regard to the reforms and hearing firsthand about the design of foundational supports and the impacts of disability reforms that are being rolled out and how they are impacting individual disability plans. I know many who have been reassessed. If they live in regional and rural Queensland, pricing impacts of disability providers have impacted on service delivery and meeting the needs of people with disability. The further you are from metro areas, the greater your vulnerability and the greater the need for services.

I can assure the member and the committee that as the Minister for Disability Services I am committed to advocating very strongly for those with disability across our state and to make sure that as part of any of the NDIS reforms and reviews Queensland gets our fair share.

Miss DOOLAN: Can the minister provide information about the Seniors Expos and Seniors Savings Pop-Ups that happen across Queensland? We will be hosting one in Pumicestone this year.


Ms CAMM: I am not sure yet, but I hope to get there. I have attended a Seniors Expo in my local community and it was so well-received. I am very pleased to share with the committee that the 2025 Seniors Savings Pop-Ups over this past year have occurred across Kingaroy, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Mackay and Brisbane. We have upcoming pop-ups in Atherton, Ipswich, Strathpine, Logan, Maroochydore, Beaudesert and Cairns. We have hosted Seniors Expos in the Redlands, Boonah, Runcorn, Gladstone, Sunshine Beach, Proserpine and Rockhampton. We have upcoming Seniors Expos in Innisfail, Warwick, Maroochydore, Townsville and Chermide.

Seniors Expos are a great initiative that connect older people with important information, services and supports that help them to age well in their community. They also connect them with vital information and services. Presentations include: information on concessions and rebates, particularly around cost-of-living measures, with Smart Service Queensland; staying safe in the home and community with the Queensland Police Service; staying safe from scams and fraud with the Office of Fair Trading; and making documents and healthcare plans with Queensland Health's Statewide Office of Advance Care Planning. Up to 19 community service providers and services funded by our department hold stalls in our Seniors Expos across the state. I look forward to rolling out many more.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, I was lucky enough to attend the Pride Ball this year on behalf of the Premier. It was a great event here in Brisbane. Can the minister advise how the Crisafulli government is supporting Queensland's LGBTQIA+ community?

Ms CAMM: I look forward to attending this year's Pride march as the minister responsible and on behalf of the Premier. For the committee's benefit, I was pleased to meet with Ms Rebecca Johnson OAM, who has been appointed CEO of the LGBTQIA+ Alliance and commenced 10 February. Ms Johnson is a proud First Nations and Australian South Sea Islander woman. She was raised in regional Queensland and has extensive experience in Queensland government and community leadership advocating and volunteering for, and working alongside, LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders and the community. Members of the LGBTQIA+ Alliance to date include representatives of 15 organisations from across Queensland, including: Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Gladstone, Bundaberg and Cairns. I look forward to the new expressions of interest that I know are out there with regard to the membership of the LGBTQIA+ roundtable.

In particular, I am very pleased that the Crisafulli government will be continuing with the Pride in our Communities 2024-2032 strategy and action plan from 2024 to 2026. This strategy was developed through the largest statewide community engagement with LGBTQIA+ people and organisations, networks and social groups through extensive consultation. As the minister responsible, I plan to continue with that consultation and engagement. I also plan to meet with members of the LGBTQIA+ Alliance, once formed, to hear their feedback. I look forward to working with them all.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** We have now reached the end of the time allocated to examine the proposed expenditure for the families, seniors and disability services portfolio area.

The committee will now continue with the examination of estimates for the portfolio area of prevention of domestic and family violence. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of prevention of domestic and family violence open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes if you wish.

Ms CAMM: I think everyone who is sitting in this room tonight can agree that domestic and family violence is a scourge on our community. The rates of violence, control and abuse are far too high. Women are being murdered, children are growing up without mothers, and perpetrators of domestic and family violence have not been held accountable for their acts. I have met too many children of victims just this year alone.

For far too long the solution has been to do the same thing and hope for a different result. We must do better. That is why the Crisafulli government has acted. We are following through with our election commitments to better protect victims and hold perpetrators to account. Our 10-year Domestic and Family Violence Strategy is well underway. That will guide our government's direction and investment with four key pillars: prevention; early intervention with young people and families; responses to perpetrators; and victim safety and crisis response.

Courts will be able to impose GPS trackers on high-risk domestic and family violence offenders, with \$20 million in this budget over the next five years to track them around the clock. Victim-survivors in these cases will also be given the choice to own their own safety device. This will go a long way to ensuring those with domestic violence orders in place stay away from their victims, which will hold perpetrators to account for their heinous behaviour.

When someone in crisis reaches out to our 24/7 crisis support line, run by DVConnect, they need to know that the phone will be answered and that they are not left waiting in a time of crisis. That was not the case when we came to government. I immediately called for a review into the system to get to the bottom of why calls from victims were not being answered. I am pleased to say that DVConnect has shown great improvement since my department's intervention and support. The Crisafulli government has committed \$31.3 million over the next four years to double both women's line and men's line capacity, to help more victims, and to deliver a new 24/7 crisis line and hub in North Queensland.

The North Queensland hub design is well underway, with my department meeting with stakeholders to get an understanding of how the service will be designed to meet the needs of rural, regional and Far North Queensland. The government is also committed to growing and supporting Hope hubs, with three additional sites and an investment of \$3.5 million over four years and \$1 million per

annum ongoing after that. Hope Hub recovery centres play an important role in further prevention by helping women and children rebuild their lives after domestic and family violence, including: counselling; legal and housing; advocacy; financial counselling; and employment focused programs.

I have also established a working group of victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. I cannot overstate the importance of groups like this to get to the truth of system gaps. Their contributions to the discussion will help support future victim-survivors and inform government policy and decisions on service delivery that can better assist victims. The courage of the members who are part of this group must be commended, and I have been moved by their experiences and their contributions.

We have also increased the funding for sexual violence services to \$50.9 million, an increase of \$3.8 million to strengthen the capacity of the women's health and wellbeing sector, including \$32 million for sexual violence counselling services, \$12.9 million for women's health and wellbeing support services and \$6 million to community and system support. In the 2025-26 budget, \$734,000 has been delivered for LGBTIQ+ services to support domestic and family violence victim-survivors and their children, as well as persons using violence.

The Crisafulli government has also committed \$75.84 million over the next five years to implement the new national partnership agreement which commenced on 1 July. This matched funding available for Queensland under the new partnership will complement existing national partnership initiatives, including the delivery of 113 new frontline domestic, family and sexual violence workers.

We are continuing to support victims of domestic and family violence with the first reporting on coercive control offences now regularly underway, demonstrating our government's commitment to victims of domestic and family violence and our approach to encourage more reporting of this insidious crime. I acknowledge all of the services that support victim-survivors who work with my department each and every day across Queensland and those through their charity efforts which are supporting system gaps.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to opposition questions.

Ms McMILLAN: I begin this evening by acknowledging and thanking the many hardworking men and women in the DV sector and the department for all that they do to keep women safe. I table a *Courier-Mail* article which states there is 'a devastating surge in domestic and family violence'. Director-General, does your department hold or capture data in relation to domestic and family violence matters, including domestic violence orders and breaches of domestic violence orders?

Ms Drew: To answer your question specifically on the collection of data related to domestic violence orders and breaches of those, that data is collected by the Queensland Police Service and published regularly. It is data we rely upon in our important work.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, it is concerning to hear that your department does not collect or keep data related to domestic and family violence offences, those that were mentioned and many other data aspects. Minister, how can Queenslanders have confidence in you to implement reforms and protections if you do not have a contemporary picture of the issue informed by this baseline or current data?

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the answer that was provided by the director-general in relation to data said that it is actually captured under the Queensland Police Service.

Mr SPEAKER: I heard that also, member for Moggill. The minister might be able to explain that in a bit more detail.

Ms CAMM: The data that she is referring to is absolutely critical to the work of the Crisafulli government and the work my department does with the sector. I would point to several avenues of the data which the member is referring to. While my department is not the custodian of the data, I am the custodian of the domestic violence act. Within that act, we work closely with the Queensland Police Service and my ministerial colleague there, Minister Purdie. They hold comprehensive data in regards to domestic and family violence.

I also point the member to my other colleague, the Attorney-General, where some of the most comprehensive data exists with the Queensland courts' domestic and family violence statistics. That data is comprehensive. It outlines domestic violence applications statewide. It outlines domestic violence orders that are made statewide. It breaks it down via courthouse. It also breaks it down by gender of the aggrieved and the respondent. It breaks it down by the method of lodgement, whether victim-survivors have done it electronically or have entered the court via a counter to submit their applications. The data that is there is also comprehensive—

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you, Minister. I think you have answered my question.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, the minister is being directly relevant to your question as I am hearing it. Minister, would you like to finish your answer?

Ms CAMM: It also outlines defendants convicted of contravention of domestic violence orders and domestic violence offences that are quite heinous, like strangulation offences. What I would say is that under the former Labor government this data grew year on year. The number of domestic and family violence victims increased year on year under the former Labor government, in particular around things like strangulation. There were calls by advocates and members of the community for reform of the definition of strangulation under the act and for greater penalties for domestic violence breaches. That is why the Crisafulli government has made a commitment to the GPS 24/7 monitoring devices. My department is responsible for leading that important work and that government election commitment. We are working alongside the Queensland Police Service and Corrective Services. I am working very closely with my ministerial colleagues, the Attorney-General and the police minister, because we know breaches of domestic and family violence orders are indicators of behaviour that is increasing. What we saw from a previous Labor government is no change to policy and it is why we are reforming legislation.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe the question has been answered.

Mr SPEAKER: Do you have another question?

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, the Premier has said that he will resign if victim numbers do not come down, and I table the article. The Premier last week released a data metric that he will be held accountable to which I understand does not include domestic violence orders or breaches. Minister, will you resign if the number of victims of domestic and family violence does not reduce?

Ms CAMM: The Premier outlined the metrics by which the government will deliver upon our election commitment to report victims of crime. His commitment to the people of Queensland and my commitment as one of the ministers responsible is to support the important work of lowering victim numbers across this state. I was pleased to see through the Premier's contribution in his hearing last week that he was able to report to Queenslanders that victim numbers are down by 5.7 per cent. We will be transparent and open with the Queensland people by putting more information out every month. We will release the victims data and I was most pleased to see the Premier including the data around coercive control.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: I raise the issue of relevance under 118(b). The question was very clear. Minister, will you resign if the number of victims of domestic and family violence crimes does not reduce?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the member has asked a question around victim-survivors, and a very important question. The minister is giving a fulsome answer. I do not believe that when it becomes uncomfortable for members of the former government they should be allowed to—

Mr SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr de BRENNI: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the committee chair's opinions on the style of questions or our consideration of those answers is not a point of order, and I put it to you that the member for Mansfield's question was quite specific around the intentions of the minister if those numbers do not go down. We are still waiting to hear that, so the issue is relevant.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister is being relevant.

Mr SPEAKER: There were definitely a couple of parts to that question: one was talking about the Premier's commitment; the other one was talking about what the minister's commitment may be. The minister is being relevant to the question as asked. If the minister has anything more to add, I will let her round out her answer.

Ms CAMM: I want to be clear about a few things in regards to data and victim numbers. Data continues to be published on DVO breaches, and I explained to the committee the DFV statistics, which I point the member to, that is very comprehensive and housed by the Queensland courts' website. The Queensland Police Service have not changed the way that they report, nor has the government, nor has the ABS. I know that all the victims' ministers, I believe, have prosecuted that this week and have explained that to their relevant committees. My department will use this data to shape policy as well.

I would add for the member's benefit that, as the minister responsible for the prevention of domestic and family violence, we are embarking upon a domestic violence strategy that will be released later this year—a 10-year strategy that sitting alongside it will be a five-year commissioning plan. Unlike the previous government, we will invest in prevention. We will invest in persons using violence because we will not end domestic and family violence unless we invest in persons using violence, both

preventing it from happening, as well as consequences for actions. We have demonstrated, through the Making Queensland Safer laws, that we are committed to putting victims first and we are committed to legislative change that will deliver accountability for actions. The Premier was clear around coercive control—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister has been fulsome. I have the answer that I need. The member for Ipswich West now has a question.

Mr SPEAKER: Hold on. Are you finished, minister?

Ms CAMM: Yes.

Ms BOURNE: Director-General, has your department had any engagement or provided advice to the Department of Justice in respect to the creation of the Police Integrity Unit which stemmed from the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence?

Ms Drew: Could you please repeat the question for me, member?

Ms BOURNE: Director-General, has your department had any engagement or provided advice to the Department of Justice in respect to the creation of the Police Integrity Unit which stemmed from the Commission of Inquiry into the Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence?

Ms Drew: I can confirm for the member that in the period of time I have been director-general of the department over the last 4½ months, I do not believe the department has provided such advice.

Ms BOURNE: As a follow-up question, Director-General, what advice have you provided, if any, to progress an independent police integrity unit in Queensland, noting the legislation before the House to provide greater domestic and family violence powers to the police with no court oversight?

Ms CAMM: Point of order, Mr Speaker: there is legislation, exactly, before the House and I would question whether this line of questioning is appropriate, given that it is not—

Mr SPEAKER: The rule of anticipation does not apply to the budget. This is committee. Member for Ipswich West, had you finished your question?

Ms BOURNE: Yes.

Mr SPEAKER: Director-General, you heard the question?

Ms Drew: Sorry, would you mind repeating the question, member—I do apologise—so I can answer accurately?

Ms BOURNE: Director-General, what advice have you provided, if any, to progress an independent police integrity unit in Queensland, noting the legislation before the House to provide greater domestic and family violence powers to the police with no court oversight?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the question that has been provided by the member is a mischaracterisation of the bill that this committee has investigated and provided a report to the House on.

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

Ms Drew: I have provided my answer which is we have provided no advice.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, as a follow-on question to you, as the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, what steps have you undertaken, if any, to progress an independent police integrity unit in Queensland, noting that you have introduced legislation into the House to provide greater domestic and family violence powers to the police with no court oversight?

Ms CAMM: I do believe the recommendations out of the commission of inquiry that the member is referencing was addressed by the Attorney-General and the police minister in earlier sessions, and that is where those recommendations sit. What I would say in response to the member is I take my role as the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence very seriously, both to support the work of victims and services that support victims. I also—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker: with all due respect to the minister, the minister has answered my question and I would like to now move on to a question to the director-general.

Mrs YOUNG: Point of order, Mr Speaker: the minister was providing a detailed response to the question and I think the committee would like to hear the rest of her response.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Speaker: the minister was very clear that it was not her responsibility and has taken no steps.

Dr ROWAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: No. I have been very plain all the way through this estimates process that we do not have commentary on answers. You do not give your opinion on the answers that are given. The minister gives the answer and it is not you who decides when the minister stops. Minister, if you have anything left to add, I will allow you to round out your answer before we move to the next question.

Ms CAMM: I do, Mr Speaker. While I thank the member for the question, I believe it is important that given the proposal of the legislation that has been introduced to this House, that the members are referring to, I certainly want to be very clear that my role as the minister and having oversight of the domestic and family violence legislation that I take very seriously the concerns of victim-survivors and the need to ensure there are safeguards around expanded police powers. That legislation, which we will debate forthcoming, will have a mandatory review period. Also, as those members opposite would know, because they were on the committee, there are also safeguards and review options through a court and also through the Queensland Police Service and their operational model, if that legislation passes and if it rolls out.

I would also say, as the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, is that I have a zero tolerance for perpetrators of domestic and family violence, and while members of the committee can make claims that I am not taking seriously my role, I would ask of them the same, given the member for Stafford is still sitting in the parliament.

Mr SPEAKER: We will have one more question from the member for Mansfield before we do the changeover.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, have you or your department met with the president of the Queensland Police Union before the introduction of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025?

Ms Drew: Yes.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you for being so up-front and responsive. Director-General, how many times did your department meet with the Queensland Police Union about the legislation or the QPU blueprint which preceded it?

Ms Drew: On one occasion.

Mr SPEAKER: We will go to government member questions now.

Mrs YOUNG: Minister, could you please advise how the Crisafulli government is delivering on its election commitments to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence, put victims first and hold perpetrators to account?

Ms CAMM: I am very pleased to update the member that as part of our government's commitment—and I have outlined this to the committee—we are embarking on a domestic and family violence strategy along with a five-year commissioning plan that will double the capacity of Womensline and Mensline to help ensure that those who need support get the support when they need it. This is as well as the delivery of our new Hope Hubs and the expansion of those services. We have invested \$1 million over four years into DV Safe Phone which provide a really important service for victim-survivors, in particular around technology abuse and ensuring they are well supported.

As a part of the work that is ongoing in my department, we have also engaged with QCOSS to ensure the DFE peak body is established and that that work is being brought forward. I was pleased to meet with QCOSS at a workshop that they were conducting, as part of the design work for the peak body, with First Nations elders and women across our state that came together earlier in the week to discuss the structure and the needs of First Nations communities, women, families and children that need to be represented in the domestic and family violence sector and in the establishment of that peak body.

We as a government continue to invest in specialist homelessness services. I look forward to working with Minister O'Connor to ensure that we expand women's refuges because we know that there is a high demand for those services. We are also investing in specialised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to support victims of domestic and family violence.

One thing that I know, having been the shadow minister for four years prior to being the minister, is that domestic and family violence has grown year on year. We cannot continue to do the same things and expect the same outcome. That is why I am very pleased to have been working alongside Minister Purdie and the Attorney-General in the design of the reforms that we know are desperately needed across this state, particularly around video evidence, ensuring police have the resources that they need to respond to domestic and family violence and around an initiative that I think will lead our state with regard to holding perpetrators to account—the rollout of GPS monitoring devices.

Miss DOOLAN: Minister, in December 2024 you commissioned a review into the state's domestic and family violence crisis intake service operated by DVConnect. Could you update the committee on what you have learned through this review?

Ms CAMM: It is a very important question and, in fact, I received some media attention around the inquiry that I tasked my department with in December last year—a month into my role as Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence—when it became very clear to me that something needed to be done to ensure DVConnect, that operates a 24/7 crisis support line, were doing the job that were contracted to do. This aligns with the Crisafulli government's commitment of respect for taxpayers' money and supporting victims and putting them first.

Through the review process, it was uncovered that there had been a sharp decline in the ability for DVConnect to answer critical calls to Womensline. At its worst point in October of last year, DVConnect were only picking up the phone 41.9 per cent of the time—part of the shocking decline in the service responses overseen by the former Labor government. The rate that vulnerable people abandoned calls to the service also increased by 388 per cent between July 2023 and March 2025. This is more than just data—each of these unanswered calls or abandoned calls represents a woman at risk and a woman who is not getting help. I can reveal, following significant work with DVConnect that my department has led, the service is starting to show positive signs of turning around; the data revealing between April and June of this year the Womensline response rate is now at 73 per cent. The number of calls being abandoned by women seeking help dropped from a high of 10,079 in quarter 2 of last year to 4,001 by quarter 4.

I am happy to report that following our intervention, DVConnect have trialled a new triaging system to answer more calls from victims—one that has shown great promise. DVConnect trialled this new peak time triage method during May and June of this year, including focused and increased FTE during peak times, and they reported achieving a 93 per cent response rate on Womensline within the trial period. This is an amazing achievement given where the service was coming from at an all-time low of 41.9 per cent. I am well aware that more work will need to be done to keep DVConnect on track and to protect women and keep them safe.

The review also uncovered that during the contract renewal negotiations in 2024 with the former Labor government, the service and the former CEO failed to inform the department that they had lost the multimillion dollar contract to deliver the 1800RESPECT service. The report states that in February 2023 the relationship between DVConnect and 1800RESPECT contractors was 'fraught'. Between April and July 2024, board minutes of DVConnect did not record any stated position of the board's willingness to agree to finalise contracts or its position on negotiations. On 1 May 2024, the 1800RESPECT contract was terminated.

In June 2024, the former CEO resigned from her position as the CEO of DVConnect to become the Victims' Commissioner for Queensland, with her final day being 30 August 2024. In July 2024, DVConnect renewed and signed several contracts with the Queensland government, although there was no specific position recorded in board minutes around executing the contracts with the department. On 30 August 2024, all service delivery for 1800RESPECT ceased. The report also notes when reviewing the 1800RESPECT contract that this risk could have been disclosed by DVConnect to the department as part of its funding negotiations at the relevant time. This did not occur.

Those contracts signed in July 2024 saw a significant investment by the former government which effectively covered the lost millions of dollars when funding was pulled for the 1800RESPECT contract. The negotiations led by the former CEO of DVConnect have caused significant damage to the relationship and trust between the service and our government—relationships that are crucial to helping victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. We will continue to work closely with the service to ensure this service is turned around.

Finally, I would like to commend the new CEO, Joanne Jessop, for her work in helping to turn DVConnect around following a tumultuous start to her tenure and for her continued commitment to work with my department officials. I would like to table the report *DVConnect: forensic financial and organisational audit* dated 1 April 2025.

Mr SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

Mr HUTTON: My question is in regards to victim-survivors. Minister, can you outline for victim-survivors how the Crisafulli government has been working to implement the learnings from the DVConnect review to ensure that when victim-survivors call, someone answers?

Ms CAMM: I want to thank the member for the question because victims of domestic and family violence deserve to be supported. They are of paramount importance to the Crisafulli government. They deserve to be heard and they need to know that when they reach out for help, help is there.

As I mentioned earlier, we have already seen DVConnect begin to turn their response rates around and we will continue to work with the service to ensure better outcomes for women and men in crisis who seek assistance when they need it. Importantly, the Crisafulli government took to the election a promise to build a North Queensland 24/7 crisis line hub that will be designed from the ground up to ensure we deliver a service designed with a place-based approach. There has been \$31.3 million allocated in the budget over the next four years to double the state's 24/7 domestic and family violence crisis response including funding for the new North Queensland based hub to be delivered by July 2026.

It was an honour to join the Treasurer and local members Natalie Marr MP, Adam Baillie MP and Janelle Poole MP from the Townsville communities, who have been wonderful advocates for their regional communities, to announce this funding and the Crisafulli government's commitment to North Queensland and delivering victim-centric responses. I can update the committee that planning and engagement with local services has begun to ensure the North Queensland hub is fit for purpose and helps victims when they need it most. We are engaging with local services and stakeholders to ensure this new hub is designed in such a way that there is better understanding of the issues victims face in regional and Indigenous communities while working alongside these local services who have on-the-ground knowledge and experience. I am already seeing the benefits of the collaboration and cooperation that has been facilitated by my department in the Townsville community with our services up there—both domestic and family violence and sexual assault—and the work with Queensland Police Service.

As I travel across the state it has become abundantly clear to me that change is needed across the entire domestic and family violence sector. I look forward to working closely with the sector moving forward to find better outcomes for victims, hold perpetrators to account and ensure that any investment government makes has value for money, delivering outcomes and putting victims first.

Dr ROWAN: I acknowledge the minister in relation to her work in this important portfolio area. Minister, what domestic and family violence services are available to support victim-survivors in my electorate of Moggill?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. It is an important one, particularly for his local community and for victim-survivors in Moggill—or sadly those who need that support who may not have come to terms yet with the need to access it. Across the Moggill community I can share with the member that our government is investing \$192,990 in Beyond DV; \$886,000 in Children by Choice; Micah Projects, which does important, incredible work across the Brisbane community and the community of Moggill, \$11.9 million; Migrant Women's Emergency Support Services, just over \$1.9 million; Northside Connect, \$257,000; Sisters Inside, \$406,000; the Women's Community Aid Association, \$1.798 million; Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre, \$1.5 million; the Red Rose Foundation, \$407,000; and there are many more. I look forward to working alongside those services as we develop our state's domestic violence strategy.

Mr SPEAKER: I will go to non-government members. I know the member for Hinchinbrook is very keen to ask a question.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Minister, I have a quick question in regards to your government's approach to domestic and family violence. The previous government had a strong gender lens approach to finding solutions for domestic violence here in Queensland. Can the minister outline what policy objectives she and her department have with regard to making sure men are not left behind in this space?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question and I know he is an advocate for victims of domestic and family violence including men and I think it is important that we acknowledge that. I can say to the member that there is a doubling in terms of Mensline and that was part of our government's election commitment. Just to be clear, Mensline is not just for men perpetrating violence; Mensline is for all men's services which includes their experience as victim-survivors and men's support services.

I also would expand upon that by saying that particularly across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities there is a very targeted focus for many of that community because, as we know, there is an overrepresentation of First Nations peoples when it comes to domestic and family violence, both as victim-survivors and also of family violence. So our government is investing \$3.9 million across seven organisations supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men aged 16 or older who seek

support. In addition to that, I believe the new North Queensland domestic violence crisis hub is a real opportunity in that we can design that service delivery model in such a way that it has a place-based approach that meets the needs of rural, regional and remote communities, whether they be victims of any gender and also include children and young people.

The investment that our government is very keen to make in the coming months as we embark upon our domestic violence strategy is also in young men and women in a proactive, positive way to engage them and educate them. That is how we will end cycles of violence: through respectful relationships with young men and women to ensure there is zero tolerance for violence. The way in which we do that is by investing in our next generation of people. I also believe with the introduction of the coercive control legislation that we need to acknowledge that while there is a significant impact and representation of women and there is gender-based violence, victims of domestic violence also include men—and I have had representation and met with victims of domestic violence who are men—who also seek support and deserve that support.

Mr DAMETTO: My follow-up question is with regard to misidentification. What strategies are in place to make sure that those people who have been misidentified through domestic violence are supported as well?

Ms CAMM: With regards to misidentification, the Queensland Police Service have invested significantly in their training regarding domestic and family violence. I have met with a number of police officers across vulnerable persons units. I do not want to stray into the police minister's portfolio, but it does cross over, particularly in relation to vulnerable persons units. Young constables are rotating through those units and taking what they learn in the academy and are actually seeing it in practice with regard to the way in which police are now responding to domestic and family-based violence. That is critical particularly in First Nations and culturally and linguistically diverse communities because they are different.

The Queensland Police Service are heavily engaged and have, I believe, come a long way in terms of culture change as well as the recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and the commission of inquiry with regard to their training. They have come a long way. Added to that is the potential new legislation we will debate in the House and police powers. There will also be a significant investment in training that police will have to undertake around identification. As a government we have increased funding to community legal services as well. That ensures that those who need support through any legal process can access it as well as the safeguards that I touched on earlier, both internally within police that we will ensure as well as the safeguards of the courts.

I take the member's point and I think that for anyone who has an interaction with domestic and family violence the No. 1 priority for me is ensuring that if they pick up the phone for help they get it, whether they are a victim-survivor or a person using violence who wants an intervention to support them at that point in time. Sadly, under the previous Labor government you had less than one in two chances of someone answering your phone call, and that is not good enough. It is not good enough for victim-survivors. It is not good enough for a person using violence who seeks help. We need to be able to make sure someone is there—a counselling service is there—to answer their phone call when they reach out for help. That is critical and it is what drives me and my work each and every day and that of my department.

Mr SPEAKER: We will now go to the member for Mansfield for the next question.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Director-General, is it correct that your department provided advice to the minister that the prevention of the domestic and family violence sector held major concerns with respect to the police protection directions proposed by the Queensland Police Union?

Ms Drew: I can confirm that, during the course of briefing the minister with regard to the legislation, our briefing of the minister was fulsome and included the concerns held by the sector.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, just to be clear, the prevention of domestic and family violence sector do not and did not support the new police protection direction laws which you advocated or which were advocated for by the Queensland Police Union. That is correct, is it not?

Ms Drew: I understand that is true, yes.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you very much, Director-General, for your honesty and response. Minister, why are you continuing with the police protection directions when they are not supported by the professionals who lead the sector and the overwhelming evidence that this will make women and children less safe?

Ms CAMM: I think the member is referring to the specialised domestic violence services which my department funds and that I have undertaken significant engagement with.

Ms McMILLAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: I would prefer not to have words placed in my mouth. I am referring to the overwhelming number of professionals who work in the sector and the overwhelming evidence that suggests—

Mr HUTTON: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order.

Ms McMILLAN:—that PPDs will make women and children less safe.

Mr SPEAKER: You had a point of order, member for Keppel?

Mr HUTTON: My concern was that the point of order was being used to re prosecute the question and provide statements as opposed to restating the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you are clear on the question?

Ms CAMM: I am I think, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Okay. I call the minister.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Firstly, I believe the committee has considered fully and has tabled a report with regard to the legislation that the member is referring to and I note that I believe that the member has made a statement of reservation within that report. With regard to the sector that the member is referring to, I hosted a workshop with members of that sector including the Women's Legal Service, charity-based grassroots organisations not funded by my department and services funded by my department. While the member is referring to what is potentially a vast majority of workers within that sector, I have had representation from services that my department funds that are willing to work and are open to working with this legislation and have a proactive working relationship with police. That is why we have engaged with the Queensland Police Service and through our specialised funded services we have co-located support officers and specialised domestic violence service providers within police stations. That is a proactive approach that we intend to support and encourage those services that want to work with Queensland police in community to do so. If when we evaluate the police and the sector and it works, we absolutely will continue to scale that work.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you, Minister. Minister—

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, I hear from the member the advocacy on behalf—

Mr SPEAKER: Just hold on, member for Mansfield.

Ms CAMM:—of the sector and I respect the member in advocating on behalf of the sector, but my response to the member is that that advocacy is not taken very seriously when the member is part of a political party that sat alongside an alleged domestic violence perpetrator in this House—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, point of order.

Ms CAMM:—by the member for Stafford, so I will not take—

Ms McMILLAN: Be careful, Minister.

Ms CAMM:—the allegations that the member is saying.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I am taking a point of order. Member for Springwood, what is your point of order?

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, this is an examination; it is not a debate. I would ask that the next question be asked.

Mr SPEAKER: And it is a fair point of order. We do not debate issues here, just answer questions. Member for Mansfield, do you have another question?

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. My next question is to the director-general. Director-General, your department has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce; is that correct?

Ms Drew: Yes, that is right.

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, there are still a number of recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reports and the commission of inquiry into the Queensland Police Service responses to DFV yet to be implemented; is that correct?

Ms Drew: Yes, that is correct.

Ms McMILLAN: I now table an article from the *Brisbane Times* published today about how the LNP government has abolished the position of implementation supervisor for the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. This article outlines how, despite the supervisor role being a key recommendation from Margaret McMurdo, that role has now been displaced by a committee.

Mr SPEAKER: You have that document?

Ms McMILLAN: Director-General, will you commit to ensuring that there are still public progress reports tabled every six months by the committee?

Mr SPEAKER: You have that document, Director-General?

Ms Drew: I do thank you, Mr Speaker. I can confirm for the member that reporting on the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce continues. At the commencement of this new department I stood up the Reform Implementation Office that works alongside the work of the independent advisory panel that the member referenced. That Reform Implementation Office undertakes the work of continued monitoring across the whole of the Queensland government in relation to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce recommendations from both report 1 and report 2. The most recent round of that reporting is complete, will be reviewed by directors-general across the departments responsible for those recommendations and then further consideration will be made in terms of further reporting publicly on those.

Ms McMILLAN: So, Director-General, will the progress reports be tabled publicly every six months?

Ms Drew: As we continue in the process of reporting, as I outlined, that consideration will occur in due course.

Ms McMILLAN: Minister, your government was elected on a promise of greater transparency and accountability. Given the last report from the supervisor dated November was not tabled until June this year and the progress report due in May has still not yet been tabled, will you commit to tabling them on time moving forward?

Ms CAMM: It seems like only yesterday that I was sitting across the table almost saying the same words to the former government four years in a row, it felt like, with regard to their late tabling of reports and their late appointment of an implementation supervisor. I would like to just inform the member that I read with interest the *Brisbane Times* article today and I would just like to clarify the transparency that both myself and the Premier gave the people of Queensland with regard to the establishment of the independent advisory panel which we announced on 19 January 2025 and that I publicly thanked—

Ms McMILLAN: Mr Speaker, point of order: the minister is referring to the previous question and the response is not relevant to the current question. My question is very clear: when can we expect the next report to be tabled?

Mr HUTTON: Point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister is being directly relevant and is providing an explanation that is fulsome of her understanding, as well as the expression of the government policy which is being desired by the member of the committee and I think the committee would like to hear the answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have heard the question. I am going to have to ask you to make this reasonably tight because we have questions on notice that we have to go through before we conclude.

Ms CAMM: I will, Mr Speaker. I publicly thank Cathy Taylor for her work as Independent Implementation Supervisor and I do that here tonight. We met, Cathy Taylor and I, upon her draft report where she expressed to me the opportunity for government to pause, to reflect upon that work as part of our government's agenda and as part of working forward the future recommendations, as the director-general has outlined.

Reporting on the recommendations across government will continue. The independent advisory panel providing critical advice is made up of eminent specialists and experts across the sector. I would suggest that the member would welcome that. Instead of us having one individual implementation supervisor we now have five representatives advising and supporting government and that important work will inform—

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Ms CAMM: I am getting to the answer—the strategy and we will be transparent in our reporting of our strategy.

Ms McMILLAN: Point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister once again is referring to the previous question. My question is very clear: when can we expect the report to be tabled? Will you table the report, given the greater transparency and accountability that you were elected on?

Mr SPEAKER: Your point of order is relevance. Minister, do you have anything further to add?

Ms CAMM: The recommendations are being assessed by government. They will inform the domestic violence strategy. We will be open and transparent about our strategy once it is formulated and ready for release.

Mr SPEAKER: The questions that we have on notice, Director-General, will you address those?

Ms Drew: I am happy to return to the questions. The first related to the inconsistency issue regarding CSO funding and I can clarify that the media article that was referred to that articulated a \$69.75 million investment was a costing related to the now government's pre-election costings and that the figure of \$77.6 million provided in question on notice No. 1 is a figure that has subsequently been done by the department once the full appraisal of the actual budget measure was known.

On the second issue of the seniors question, I can clarify that the energy rebate has increased by 3.8 per cent. It was \$372, it is now \$386. The natural reticulated gas concession has also increased. It was \$89, it is now \$92. The Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme increased. It was \$503 and now is \$522. On the matter of registration, that is a matter for Queensland Transport. Thank you, Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: For a very short period of time, member for Pumicestone—I know you have a question you wanted to ask—I will go to you, please.

Miss DOOLAN: What domestic and family violence services are available to support victim-survivors in my electorate of Pumicestone?

Ms CAMM: I thank the member for the question. I have the opportunity of visiting CADA in the member's electorate that does incredible work, led by Holly and the team up there. I visit them frequently. We invest significantly in the member's electorate. It is a big electorate. It is actually sad that you need that much investment because of the scourge of domestic and family violence. I am pleased that the Centre Against Domestic Abuse, CADA, received just over \$6.3 million to provide various support services, including domestic violence counselling, court-based services, women's health and wellbeing support. They are an example of an organisation working very closely with Queensland police and have, with their PRADO model, for many, many years, with embedded workers within police stations, delivered great outcomes working in partnership with the Queensland Police Service. We also deliver many other programs that result in an investment of over \$10.3 million for your electorate of Pumicestone and that broader growing Moreton region.

Mr SPEAKER: We have now reached the end of the time allocated for consideration of the proposed expenditure for the areas of responsibility administered by the Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Thank you, Minister, Director-General, officials and departmental officers for your attendance. That concludes this hearing of estimates for the Education, Arts and Communities Committee for 2025. I would like to thank committee members and the visiting members who participated in the hearing. Thank you also to Hansard and the parliamentary broadcast staff, together with all other parliamentary staff who assisted here today. I declare this hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 8.45 pm.