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Phone (07) 3553 6344

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 20 November 2025

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THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2025

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Pat Weir, Condamine) read prayers and took the chair.



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, 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.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Hawkins, Mr A



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise members that Andrew Hawkins, our Sergeant-at-Arms, has resigned and this is his last sitting day serving the House. Andrew has been with the Parliamentary Service only for a short period, commencing in September 2024, but in that time he has had considerable impact in hardening the security of the precinct and electorate offices. Andrew has resigned to take up a promotion with Queensland Health at Metro North. I am sure all members will join with me in wishing Andrew all the best for the future.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025. In summary, the same question rule is enlivened by clause 59 and schedule 1, amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the bill, contrary to standing order 87. A motion to suspend standing order 87 would be required for this clause to be considered. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling, circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF SAME QUESTION RULE TO HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 3) 2025

I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025.

The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025 was introduced on 14 October 2025. It seeks to amend provisions of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* and the *Public Health Act 2005* that have already been considered by the House in this session of Parliament in the context of amendments contained in the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which was passed by the House on 12 June 2025 and received assent on 16 June 2025, and the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2025, which was passed by the House on 18 September 2025 and received assent on 23 September 2025.

Standing Order 87 provides the general rule of Westminster parliamentary practice that, once the House has resolved a matter in the affirmative or negative, the same question shall not again be proposed in the same session. Similarly, Standing Order 150 provides for the application of the same question rule in relation to amendments, new clauses or schedules of a Bill. As previous Speakers have noted, the matters do not have to be identical but merely the same in substance as the previous matter. In other words, it is a question of substance, not form (Speaker Reynolds, Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2008, p. 2559).

Clause 59 of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025 proposes an amendment to a provision of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* that is substantially the same as an amendment previously considered and agreed to by the House in the same session of parliament. This is contrary to Standing Order 87.

Schedule 1, amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025 propose amendments to provisions of the *Public Health Act 2005* that are substantially the same as amendments previously considered and agreed to by the House in the same session of parliament. This is also contrary to Standing Order 87.

Accordingly, I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by clause 59 and Schedule 1, amendments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Bill contrary to Standing Order 87. A motion to suspend Standing Order 87 would be required for these clauses to be considered.

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Contempt of Parliament



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 31 October 2025, the member for Cook wrote to me regarding an interjection by the member for Bundaberg during the debate on the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2025 on 30 October 2025. The member for Cook suggested that the member for Bundaberg made a personal reflection that was not withdrawn. My inquiries reveal the member for Bundaberg did interject on the member for Cook. The interjection did not amount to a personal reflection but rather was disorderly and unparliamentary. In any event, I will not be taking any further action in respect of the matter, but I remind members that they should not engage in unparliamentary conduct. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Letter, 31 October 2025, from the member for Cook, Mr David Kempton MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Pat Weir, regarding an interjection by member for Bundaberg, Mr Tom Smith MP, on 30 October 2025 during the debate on the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2025.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Visitors to Public Gallery



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Labrador State School in the electorate of Bonney and the North Brisbane homeschool co-op in the electorate of Redcliffe.

PETITION

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

Crabbing, Regulation

450 petitioners, requesting the House to review crabbing regulations with input from all stakeholders, and introduce a modern, balanced approach to crabbing management and mud crab population sustainability.

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Cricket; Queensland Day



Hon. DF CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.34 am): The first test of the 2025-26 Ashes series begins tomorrow, sadly in Perth. It is an event that is close to Queenslanders' hearts. For the past 43 years, it has been a drawcard for our state but, for the first time since the 1980s, the first game of the summer will not be held at the Gabba. Cricket fans, aspiring stars and tourists will miss out and it is all because of a former government that had no plan.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Greenslopes, you find yourself on the warning list very early today.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Labor's indecision and bad planning forced Cricket Australia to look elsewhere. The stop-start messaging around the future of the Gabba forced Cricket Australia's hand and test cricket does not belong at QSAC. Sadly, for years to come we will continue to feel the effects of a Labor government with no vision. As revealed prior to the election—

Mr Power: When are you going to take responsibility?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection from the member for Logan. I will re-read those words: as revealed prior to the election, during the summer of 2026-27 we will miss out altogether. There will be no test cricket in Queensland at all for the first time in 50 years.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, on both sides of the chamber!

Mr CRISAFULLI: Those opposite should hang their heads in shame. However, here is the good news—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I have just called order. We have one name on the warning list and I will start adding to that from both sides of the chamber.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Here is the good news: our government does have a plan and we are going to give cricket tragics, AFL fans, concertgoers and all Queenslanders the stadium they deserve. Our 2032 Delivery Plan—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am not sure why they do not like good news. This is really exciting. Our 2032 Delivery Plan has secured a new future for test cricket in Queensland. It provides the certainty that Cricket Australia needed to lock in test cricket in Queensland. We have done a deal with Cricket Australia because of the certainty surrounding the Gabba's future. From season 2027-28, we will see test cricket return to Queensland and today I can tell Queenslanders that, from season 2032-33, the first test of the summer is coming back to Queensland. It is coming home. It is coming back to where it belongs. That is what happens when you have a government with a plan and a vision and that understands the future of this state.

Sport is in our DNA and Queenslanders love cricket. The first test belongs in Queensland and it is coming home. I want to thank Cricket Australia—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am not sure why they do not like this. There must be someone who loves cricket over there, surely? I really want to thank Cricket Australia.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you can join the list as well. You are warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I want to thank Cricket Australia for heeding our calls, returning test cricket to Queensland and returning the first test of the summer to where it belongs.

We live in the best place in the world. Nothing beats being a Queenslanders. This year I said we were going to take Queensland Day to the next level and we have. I want to celebrate what makes our state special and I want Queensland Day to be something that every Queenslanders can be proud of. In 2026, we are in for the best Queensland Day ever. We love our sport and for next year's celebrations we have locked in blockbuster clashes right across the board: the Gold Coast Suns versus the Brisbane Lions; the Firebirds versus the Sunshine Coast Lightning, the Brisbane Broncos versus the Gold Coast Titans and, ladies and gentlemen, the North Queensland Cowboys up against the Dolphins.

What better way to celebrate than watching your favourite team take on another Queensland team on Queensland Day. I thank the AFL, the NRL and netball for heeding our calls to back this initiative. Ladies and gentlemen, mark your calendars: we will have the best of Queensland talent on show and the best of Queensland passion. It is hard to beat being a Queenslanders.

Defence Industries

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.39 am): I echo the comments of the honourable Premier. How exciting it is that the test is coming back to Brisbane in our new stadium.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I love it. I am a big fan. I am taking all of their interjections, by the way. I am excited about the blockbuster classics the Premier just spoke about, but Premier you missed one. You missed a blockbuster classic that I am really looking forward to and that is the blockbuster classic of the Labor leadership challenge that is looming. That is the one I am looking forward to before Queensland Day next year. I get sidetracked.

After a decade of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli government is backing in defence investment in Queensland, focusing the department of state development on areas where we have a comparative advantage to secure thousands of long-term jobs for more Queenslanders. The former Labor government was embarrassed to support our defence industries. I recently visited a defence industry procurement business and they had been awarded a grant from the former Labor government. I said that I had never heard about this grant being awarded. Do members know what they said to me? They

said, 'The former Labor government never announced it because they did not want to be associated with defence.' I said to this business, 'I will announce it with pride.' Stand by for that big announcement. The Crisafulli government is investing in that business. Where Labor was afraid to speak we are not.

We are restoring Queensland's reputation with our international partners. I was pleased to recently attend Indo Pacific in Sydney to spread the word that Queensland is open for defence business, particularly with regard to our defence manufacturing capabilities, and the opportunities that exist with respect to critical minerals and AUKUS.

I am pleased to announce to the House today that as part of our focus on supercharging defence industry investment in Queensland, the Crisafulli government has declared the \$2.5 billion Cairncross Dockyard a prescribed project. It will be re-established as a working shipyard in Morningside. This project is expected to create more than 1,000 direct jobs and thousands more indirect jobs across steel, advanced manufacturing and logistics.

Mr Lister: Sovereign defence capability.

Mr BLEIJIE: Indeed. I take the interjection from the honourable member. The site is one of Queensland's historic defence precincts, playing its part during Australia's effort in the Second World War where it supported naval operations in the Pacific. Giving this project prescribed status ensures the streamlining of its approval which will fast-track its development and the creation of thousands of Queensland jobs, securing our future as a nation leader in defence. The government understands the importance of Australia securing its sovereign defence capabilities, particularly with evolving strategic circumstances around the world, but also in the Indo-Pacific region where we reside.

The project will include the construction of a large-scale graving dock, a 6,000-tonne hydraulic chain jack vertical ship lift, a 1,200-tonne crawler crane, new and expanded wharves, and critical power and water infrastructure, representing an investment which will be felt in our state for generations to come. Queensland is determined to lead the nation in marine defence and maritime maintenance which is why this government has taken the important step of progressing this project.

After a decade of decline under Labor, we are re-establishing Queensland's domestic manufacturing workforce to lead Australia's defence maintenance and sustainment program, which is why we are investing in Queensland's local skills and training through our partnership with TAFE Queensland and the university sector to ensure that our young people are able to take advantage of the opportunities that are coming. The government will back our growing defence industry every step of the way, and this step today demonstrates our commitment to attracting all defence industries and that Queensland is the partner of choice for defence investment in Australia. It is yet another example of how the Crisafulli LNP government is once again open for business.

Health Workforce



Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.43 am): Our hardworking Queensland Ambulance Service paramedics, patient transport officers, and emergency medical dispatchers embody the values of our healthcare system—dedicated, resilient and unwavering in their commitment to Queenslanders in their time of need. In September, I announced the Crisafulli government had reached in-principle agreement with the United Workers Union for a new QAS certified agreement. I am pleased to advise the House that, following a ballot of all employees, QAS staff have resoundingly supported the proposed agreement. In fact, 85.4 per cent of those employees who were balloted voted in favour of the Crisafulli government's offer.

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take that interjection. It was one of the largest ever and one of the largest participation rates ever because our paramedics know that they are being backed by the Crisafulli LNP government. This means that more than 6,700 frontline QAS officers will receive their well-deserved pay rises before Christmas. Importantly, they will also get back pay. The new agreement features other enhancements like attraction and retention incentives for those working in rural and remote locations as well as allowances to recognise staff working night shifts. I thank the UWU for their open, collaborative engagement and their shared commitment to supporting our valued ambulance workforce.

This agreement is another demonstration of the Crisafulli government working in partnership with the unions to deliver better wages and conditions for our workforce. In fact, the Crisafulli government has reached agreement on deals that cover 116,000 health workers, including our nurses and midwives, salaried medical officers, health workforce and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers.

It does not stop there. We are also doing the proper planning to secure the future of the health workforce. On 10 November, I released the Queensland Health workforce gap analysis which diagnoses the critical workforce shortages, challenges and systems left by Labor. The Queensland Health workforce gap analysis and associated consultation will form the backbone of the Crisafulli government's cohesive, proper and considered system-wide health workforce plan. The Crisafulli government is committed to respecting, retaining and growing the health workforce—and that is exactly what we are doing.

Youth Justice

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.46 am): Queenslanders were promised action to turn the tide on youth crime after a decade of decline under Labor. I am proud to say that we are a government that listens to Queenslanders. We are a government that sticks to our promises. We went to the election with our plan to restore safety to Queensland with tougher laws, more police and new youth crime fighting early intervention and rehabilitation programs. We are delivering on that plan.

Adult Crime, Adult Time is now law. Youth offenders will face tough consequences for their actions. We have recruited more than 1,000 police officers from Cooktown to Coolangatta and beyond, and we have rolled out our early intervention and rehabilitation programs right across the state. Today, I can announce that our intensive, youth crime rehabilitation program—Staying on Track—has been rolled out across Greater Brisbane. Right now, for the first time, every youth offender leaving detention will receive 12 months of rehabilitation under our Staying on Track program to stop the revolving door of youth crime and prevent these youth offenders from falling back into crime.

Youth offenders are partnered with a mentor while in detention and they are given tailored support to address the behaviours that are causing them to offend. These youth offenders are managed alongside their family before they are released back into our communities. These mentors help them get back on track, ensuring that when they are released back into our communities they are going to school, they have a job, they are in training, they have hope and, most importantly, they do not fall back into a pattern of offending and a life of crime.

Under Labor, we saw 94 per cent of youth offenders leaving detention reoffending within a year. In some of our facilities, like Cleveland, 96 per cent of youth went on to reoffend. Often this happened in the first two weeks of them being released. That is shocking. That is Labor's legacy. It is a direct result of their weak crime laws and their failure to invest in effective rehabilitation that addresses the factors that cause youth to offend. Under Labor, many youth offenders were released with zero support. They were dumped straight back into communities with no support. Only serious repeat offenders were given a measly 72-hour transition plan. For years, the sector called this out as ineffective and failing communities.

We have listened. Our Staying on Track program will ensure 12 months of rehabilitation so that youth offenders leaving detention have support so they can stop causing harm to our communities. By reducing the number of repeat youth offenders, we will have fewer victims of crime and a safer Queensland.

Beef Industry, Road Infrastructure

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.49 am): The Queensland Beef Corridors initiative began as an advocacy campaign between seven Central and Western Queensland mayors, representing critical industry stakeholders and primary producers and an area about the same size as Great Britain. The Crisafulli government believes strongly in supporting our rural and regional road network and backing in our primary industries. It is why, before the last election, we made an election commitment to deliver the \$100 million Country Roads Connect program, which is now funding 22 critical sealing projects right across the state. We are looking to build on that record now by investing in key road upgrades to support the beef industry, jointly with the Australian government. We want our beef producers to have faster access to markets and stronger supply chains, delivering more jobs and more economic activity right across the state.

Today I am pleased to announce that construction on the first of five projects in the \$47.5 million early works package is underway. It will pave and seal a priority section of the Clermont-Alpha Road in the Gregory electorate. I want to acknowledge the member for Gregory's advocacy not just for the beef industry but for the entirety of Central and Western Queensland. This first project, approximately 89 kilometres north of Alpha, is one of two locations on the Clermont-Alpha Road that will benefit from the

\$500 million joint Australian-Queensland government investment which was locked into the budget and published in QTRIP and will improve key beef freight corridors in Central Queensland.

In addition to the Clermont-Alpha Road project, the early works package includes widening floodways and paving and sealing sections of Alpha-Tambo Road, the Fitzroy Developmental Road between Bauhinia and Duaringa, and May Downs Road. I want to acknowledge the member for Mirani, who has been a tireless advocate to upgrade the May Downs Road in particular. The broader program aims to enhance the Central Queensland beef supply chain while supporting development of the sector and will improve safety across the network and boost freight transport efficiency.

I say to our beef producers and I say to Central Queenslanders: you are looking at a government that wants to see you succeed. We want to ensure you can transport stock to market safely and efficiently, and we want to ensure the Central Queensland road network will receive the due care and attention that reflects the importance of the beef industry to Queensland. As long as Central Queenslanders have fighters like the members for Gregory, Mirani, Rockhampton and Keppel fighting for them, our government will always back Central Queensland. This is what it looks like to have a government that is invested in Central Queensland, that understands Central Queensland and that believes in our primary industries and will continue to deliver for all Queenslanders no matter where they live.

Bruce Highway; Regional Queensland, Resilience



Hon. A LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (9.52 am): Yesterday, the Minister for Transport and I, along with the federal government, announced that improvements to the Gairloch to Ripple Creek section of the Bruce Highway will be going out to tender in coming months, with construction to get underway next year. This is a \$50 million project which will deliver for Hinchinbrook, providing safety upgrades and making this section of the Bruce Highway more flood resilient. This is just another demonstration of the Crisafulli government—

Ms Boyd: Pork-barrelling.

Ms LEAHY: I will take the interjection. This is just another demonstration of the Crisafulli LNP government's commitment to building a more resilient Queensland community, especially in North Queensland. Earlier this year we announced the Stronger Homes Grant, allowing North Queenslanders to access up to \$10,000 for flood upgrades to their homes. The grant can be used for a variety of purposes, from raising a washing machine to removing plasterboard wall linings and replacing them with fibre cement sheets. This program has been a great success.

We know that prepared communities are resilient communities and, although we cannot stop severe weather from occurring, we can improve resilience to its impacts and invest smartly in our regions. However, what we can stop—and what we have stopped—is Labor's decade of decline. We have been on the ground fortifying our communities, speaking to residents about how to be prepared. Compare that to the Leader of the Opposition, who only focuses on fortifying his position from his colleagues.

Unlike Labor, the Crisafulli LNP government will ensure regional communities are prepared for whatever challenges may come. We will back our regional communities every step of the way. That is why we are asking the people of Hinchinbrook to back Wayde Chiesa next Saturday. Wayde is someone who will fight for Hinchinbrook and who will be there for them when the going gets tough, unlike the Katter Labor candidate, who has abandoned the Labor colours because he knows that it is not easy being red up north, which is funny because the Leader of the Opposition has never had a problem sipping reds in North Queensland.

Primary Industries, Workforce



Hon. AJ PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (9.54 am): As we celebrate National Agriculture Day tomorrow, we acknowledge that an appropriately skilled workforce is fundamental to meet primary industries' goal not only today but also in the decades ahead. It is needed to meet the Crisafulli government's goal of increasing Queensland's primary production output to \$30 billion by 2030. It is why a skilled and agile workforce is one of the strategic priorities of our 25-year blueprint, Primary Industries Prosper 2050.

The Crisafulli government aims to build a strong pipeline of skilled workers who are drawn to primary industries, boosting productivity and output, while employers adopt innovative and inclusive

practices to meet evolving workforce needs and support sustainable, long-term careers in the sector. A critical step is to improve student exposure in schools. We want to inspire and train our young minds to ensure a bold future in agriculture. Importantly, we also want to make sure a career in agriculture is not dismissed at an early age.

Last week the Crisafulli government held its first agricultural education ministerial round table. Our round table brought together leaders in industry, education, universities, teachers, principals, vocational specialists, TAFE Queensland, training institutions and representatives from across government. This would not have happened without the support and commitment of my colleagues the Minister for Education and Arts and the Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training. Participants not only identified successful initiatives that are making strong progress in education generally and applied agricultural science but also highlighted the opportunities and available career pathways. They explored initiatives such as agricultural cadet programs, access to school certificate programs, how to attract more agricultural teachers, ATAR weighting for agriculture subjects, fit-for-purpose agriculture facilities in schools, upskilling and better informing school guidance officers. They want to better showcase what a career in agriculture looks like. We heard about the importance of connecting schools with local industries such as Boonah State High School and Gympie State High School. There were examples such as from Corinda State High School, which operates a smart farm onsite where it has poultry, sheep and alpacas, as well as 70 head of cattle on the Oxley Creek Common.

We need our students, their parents and schools to be aware of the opportunities and careers agriculture provides—opportunities in STEM, engineering, innovation and science. The opportunities available today are very different from what existed when I first entered the workforce. A working group will provide advice and identify ways to expand the initiatives that are already working and considering new, bespoke and place-based initiatives which address today's workforce shortages and help meet future workforce demands.

Following the round table, headmaster of Rockhampton Grammar School, Dr Phillip Moulds, wrote to me saying—

I was struck by the passion, foresight, commitment and tenacity demonstrated by all present in advancing agriculture Queensland. It is clear that there is a strong momentum behind initiatives that will shape the future of agricultural education.

Jo Sheppard from the Queensland Farmers' Federation said it was refreshing to see government departments working hand in hand alongside industry to address what is a longstanding, serious issue.

The Crisafulli government is committed to working with industry and our educational providers to deliver the opportunities and vision for those who want to be part of Queensland's enviable place as a primary industries powerhouse.

Multiculturalism



Hon. FS SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism) (9.58 am): Parliamentary colleagues may have heard the powerful and joyous roar of Queensland Maori children performing the haka here at parliament on Tuesday afternoon, or a beautifully moving Samoan hymn. It gave me such joy to host these special guests at the people's house this week, and I want to pass on a huge congratulations to the kids particularly who, not long after the haka, got back on their school bus to return to Keebra Park State High School on the Gold Coast, some for their graduation ceremony. The pride these young people have in their culture is inspiring, and I wish them the best for their bright futures as Queenslanders.

These wonderful guests were some of the recipients of the first round of the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland grants. Seventy community organisations from the Gold Coast to Cairns will receive a grant of varying amounts through the first round of the program, totalling \$500,000. Applications for round 2 grants—which will support events in the second half of 2026—are now open, and applications close on 13 December. These grants will empower our multicultural communities to celebrate culture, build connection to community and strengthen social cohesion throughout the fabric of our society.

This is part of the Crisafulli government's plan to deliver a fresh start and ensure the state's multicultural communities, who contribute powerfully to our economy, workforce and society, feel welcome and valued. During a decade of decline under Labor, the former government saw them as nothing more than a box-ticking exercise and did not address the concerns of community leaders.

Speaking of community leaders, I would also like to acknowledge the Jewish community has been contributing to Queensland for 160 years. At the celebrations on the weekend, I learned about Brisbane-born Professor Gary Roubin, who invented the first FDA approved cardiac heart stent, which is saving lives right across the world.

I am proud to be part of the Crisafulli government, which believes in building stronger communities, strengthening social cohesion and bolstering participation in our society—like in the case of Professor Roubin and others—to the benefit of not only Queenslanders but also communities right around the globe.

Tourism Industry

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.01 am): At the outset, I want to attribute myself to the comments made by the Premier earlier today and rejoice in the fact that test cricket will be returning to where it rightly belongs—here in Queensland. As well, I acknowledge the amazing Queensland Day derby blockbusters that will be held the length and breadth of this state.

In October last year Queenslanders voted for a fresh start. Within our first 100 days we formed the Tourism Cabinet Committee and began consultation on a bold new plan to secure Queensland's tourism future. Tourism went from being an afterthought to a key focus. Labor's secret funding cliff was uncovered and our visionary Destination 2045 strategy was launched with the investment the industry deserves.

Tourism is serious business in this state. It employs one in 11 Queenslanders and injects more than \$110 million into our economy every day.

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr POWELL: After a decade of decline under those opposite, including the member for Cairns, who is interjecting at the moment, the industry was under threat. What was the member for Cairns's legacy? What was the legacy of those opposite? It was a 95 per cent funding cliff that would have gutted the tourism department—\$160 million down to just \$7 million by 2028-29. Where was their support for Queensland? Where was their trust in our operators and small businesses?

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cairns!

Mr POWELL: They talk about supporting tourism, but their actions show otherwise. We know the value of tourism and the 65,000 small businesses that drive it. Better yet, we have backed it with a record \$1 billion investment over four years in our first budget. That is why the Premier, the Deputy Premier, members of the Tourism Cabinet Committee, the Assistant Minister and I proudly attended Tourism Week last week. It was a chance for industry to connect, upskill and plan for the future. With Destination 2045 as our guiding light, the week celebrated achievements since its release and looked ahead to global trends and growth opportunities. The more than 1,500 attendees over three days proved one thing: tourism is in great hands.

Kicking off with Destination IQ on Wednesday, tourism operators and leaders from across Queensland came together at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre. On Thursday DestinationQ delivered a packed agenda—workshops, panels and networking opportunities that sparked real conversations about the future of our industry. It was about collaboration, innovation and making sure Queensland tourism stays ahead of global trends. On Friday night the Queensland Tourism Awards showcased the very best of our industry. To every finalist and every winner: congratulations. Your passion and commitment are what make Queensland the home of the holiday. We are proud to stand with you as we build an even stronger future for tourism in this state. A special thank you goes to QTIC for bringing this incredible week together, and for everything they do on a daily basis to champion our operators and our tourism regions. Queensland is the home of the holiday.

To deliver Destination 2045, we are working to cut red and green tape to strengthen the industry and drive visitation when businesses need it most. That is why we have renewed the Education Experience Program—saved from Labor's funding cliff. This program subsidises school students in travelling to some of the greatest classrooms on offer—the Great Barrier Reef and the iconic outback of our state. Almost 50,000 students have travelled under this subsidy to the reef and outback. We have extended it for four years. We have added homeschools, expanded the destinations in outback Queensland and increased subsidies for those outback excursions. That is an investment of \$2.4 million to give kids an unmatched learning experience.

Mr Healy: Not enough.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Cairns. That is not enough? Under him, there would be nothing. It would be gone. We have invested \$2.4 million to give kids unmatched learning experiences and regional operators reliable visitors.

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Cairns, you are now warned.

Mr POWELL: Extending this program is a win-win: young Queenslanders experience exceptional parts of our state and regional tourism operators get a steady stream of visitors throughout the shoulder season. We are just getting started. Destination 2045 is our road map to an \$84 billion industry by 2045, and we will deliver. Every day is a great day to be a Queenslanders.

Sport

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (10.06 am): It goes without saying that sport is entwined in the very fabric of Queensland life. Our Brisbane Lions women are on track to hand Queensland a clean sweep of all four major AFL and NRL trophies as they host a preliminary final at Brighton Homes Arena against Carlton on Saturday night. I am sure that everybody in the room will join me in wishing them luck.

All of the success that Queensland has seen not only at home but also across the globe with Queensland athletes competing throughout the year proves that Queensland is the home of Australian sport. I know that I have claimed credit for this great sporting success—and some people have mocked me for that—but there is substance to claiming that success because it is a result of the investment that the Crisafulli government is making in grassroots sport.

To maintain our status as the home of Australian sport, we know that we have to invest in the next generation of Queensland athletes and inspire more Queenslanders to get active. That is why we have launched the \$250 million Games On! sport infrastructure program, funding upgrades at our Queensland clubs after a decade of decline under Labor. We are delivering for the Glenmore Bulls Australian Football Club in Rockhampton. Their \$200,000 will be used to upgrade amenities, and female change rooms will be a game changer, especially for all of the girls taking up footy. We are delivering \$1.575 million for the Jabiru Park baseball field in Townsville, which will be used to upgrade lighting and build female change facilities. We are delivering \$1.8 million for the Aspley Hornets Football Club, which will be used to build two women's change rooms, each with showers and toilets, as well as an equipment and education room.

We are committed to getting more young Queenslanders to be more active, and that is why we are investing in community organisations which offer a way to do that. Today I am announcing that 10 Girl Guides and Scouts groups which were promised upgrades under the Games On! program have received their funding. The groups are sharing in \$1.7 million to upgrade facilities and infrastructure, getting more kids outside and active.

We are also making it easier for parents to keep their kids in sport through our new Play On! sports vouchers. Play On! is helping to get more kids involved in sport and providing cost-of-living relief for Queensland families. I am pleased to say that 2,800 Play On! activity providers have signed on across the state. I am also very happy to announce that 1,974 of those clubs offer programs for children with a disability. We are investing in Queensland sport and Queensland families. As a result, we are laying the groundwork to produce the next generation of Queensland champions.

In conclusion, I want to mention that next week another great event will be played in Queensland: the BMW Australian PGA Championship. During the week I had the great privilege to be out at RQ, where I bumped into Cameron Smith from Wantima on the putting green. It was a great opportunity to talk to him. I mentioned a couple of things about his swing from watching TV. I gave him a couple of tips, which he was very grateful for! Meeting somebody like Cameron Smith is a great thrill for sportspeople like me. I know there are some people who are non-sporting who do not appreciate that. The best way to explain my meeting somebody like Cameron Smith is to equate it with the Deputy Premier last week meeting Princess Anne. I did not bow as low but I still showed great deference. We wish great luck next week.

Social Enterprise and Impact Investing Roadmap

 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (10.10 am): Today is a historic day for social impact investing and social enterprise

in Queensland. This morning I launched the Queensland government's Social Enterprise and Impact Investing Roadmap, and it has been a long time coming. Social impact and social enterprise businesses are littered across the electorates of everyone in this House.

One of the first things I said in my first budget reply speech in 2021 was that if we were given the great privilege of forming government in Queensland we would set about putting the Office of Social Impact at the heart of government, in Treasury. We have delivered on that promise. It is an important moment for Queensland. It is a historic moment. Setting up of the Office of Social Impact places us at the head of any jurisdiction in Australia. I want to give particular thanks to the Treasury team—Ben, who leads it, Sarah and Karen—but it would not have been possible without some key leadership from right across the social enterprise and social impact sector.

When I look at the road map that was launched today, I see a whole range of businesses that work not just for profit but for purpose—and they are littered right throughout every electorate across our state—businesses such as Foodbank and TradeMutt, which are featured on the front page. I announced this morning the first recipients of the impact revenue investments right across Queensland. There is Bama services in the Far North. This morning at the launch on the green we had visitors from Gladstone. RoboFit had come from Melbourne.

My personal experience is as a founding director of Vanguard Laundry Services in Toowoomba. These businesses set about working towards a common purpose, a social good, but are operating as businesses—not seeking recurrent funding but developing revenue streams and developing opportunities for people. In my experience at Vanguard Laundry, it was about putting people who had been living with long-term mental illness back to work. We have done the longitudinal studies—and I note the member for Townsville was interested in this. This does not just give people the dignity of a job. We saw the longitudinal studies from Swinburne which showed there would be lower presentations to the mental health unit at Toowoomba Hospital, lower smoking rates and more security in housing. We know that these businesses play a vital role in our communities.

I want to acknowledge the presence this morning of my ministerial colleague Amanda in families, communities and child safety, and also the work that the housing minister announced last week in the Queensland Procurement Policy, embedding social enterprise into social procurement right throughout Queensland. I want to honour everybody involved in the social impact investing community and social enterprise sector—those people who have taken a punt, worked years without income, stayed up late at night wondering whether they could get through their next period of time working in their business—as they all work right across Queensland to do social good business with purpose. Today I am very proud that the Crisafulli government has launched our social impact investing road map.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time today will conclude at 11.14 am.

Member for Cook



Mr MILES (10.14 am): My question is to the Minister for Women. I table a Facebook post from the member for Cook's MP page defending self-confessed woman puncher Michael Trout.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 8 August 2025, from the Facebook page of the member for Cook, Mr David Kempton MP, regarding a *Cairns Post* media article titled 'MP defends relationship with former member accused of assault'.

The member for Cook stated, 'I am an Aussie and will stick by my mates because I'm not afraid of grubby gossipers.' Does the minister agree that punching a woman is grubby gossip?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the responsibilities under the minister, I ask whether the question is in order.

Mr Bleijie: It's asking for an opinion.

Dr ROWAN: He is asking for an opinion as well.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Murrumba, the question seems to be asking for a member to give an opinion on an area that falls under the jurisdiction of another minister. Would you be able to rephrase that question?

Mr MILES: Yes, Mr Speaker. I refer to the Facebook post I have just tabled where the member for Cook stated, 'I am an Aussie and will stick by my mates because I'm not afraid of grubby gossipers.' Does the Minister for Women stand by the comments of the member for Cook?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am taking advice.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I am taking some advice at the moment. I will read from the standing orders, member, for your information. The question should relate to 'public affairs with which the Minister is officially connected or to any matter of administration for which the Minister is responsible'. Can you explain how that question relates to that?

Mr MILES: As the Minister for Women is responsible for the protection of women, this matter relates to an assault on a woman.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I submit to you again that the question is not in order in relation to the responsibilities under the minister. As has clearly been articulated, even with the rephrasing of the question it is still seeking an opinion from the minister.

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: I am going to rule that question out of order.

Member for Cook

Mr DICK: My question is to the Premier. The member for Cook has paid to promote the post defending self-confessed woman puncher and LNP donor Michael Trout on Facebook, and I table the relevant document.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 8 August 2025, from the Facebook page of the member for Cook, Mr David Kempton MP, regarding a *Cairns Post* media article titled 'MP defends relationship with former member accused of assault' along with details, dated 16 August 2025, of the sponsored Facebook advertisement.

Will the Premier ensure the member for Cook has not used and will not use taxpayer funds to promote this post?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I am raising a proper point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am taking a point of order.

Dr ROWAN: My point of order—and the opposition should understand this because this is about due process—relates to the expenditure of parliamentary electorate funds, which is under the auspices of the Clerk as opposed to the minister's responsibilities. I seek your guidance in relation to that.

Mr SPEAKER: No. I am not taking that point of order, but I am going to take some advice from the Clerk. I am going to allow the Premier to answer.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I want to start by saying that I was asked this previously and I condemned the behaviour, and I will condemn it again. That is the first thing I want to say.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Premier is speaking directly to the question.

Mr CRISAFULLI: What I do want to do, though, is speak about how important this government views women's economic security, the safety of women and the opportunity for women to succeed in this state, so much so that we put together the Women's Economic Security Statement.

I want to go through some of the things the government has done around women's issues and then I want to touch on a few other broader issues. Firstly, I want to talk about the \$20 million Returning to Work program. This program will ensure that, if somebody takes a break, if they are caring for a loved one or if they have had a child, they are given the opportunity to go back to work and make a contribution so they can have the dignity that comes with work.

I want to talk about \$333 million over four years and \$80 million for the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. I want to mention the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. There was a lot of talk before the election about that program. There were a lot of scare campaigns about that program. That was another scare campaign that did not work. I want to talk about the contribution of superannuation payments.

I want to talk about further support for the Future Women's Jobs Academy, which was not funded beyond the forwards. I want to talk about \$400,000 for Female Founder Investment Readiness; \$540,000 for Empowering Queensland Women grants; \$12 million for Community Action for a

Multicultural Society; \$640,000 for the STEM Girl Power Initiative; \$500,000 for a program designed in partnership with industry to boost support for women in operating technical roles.

There is something else we are doing for women: we are fixing the DNA lab. I am going to tell you why we are fixing the DNA lab. Those opposite were prepared to live in a state where women had been raped, women had been murdered, and they were—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you have 56 seconds.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Not only were they prepared to allow it to occur; they tried to sweep it under the carpet. I point to what the Attorney-General did in her first seven days in office and compare it to the cover-ups, the belittling of people who wanted to tell their stories, women who were raped and women who were denied the opportunity for justice. There were women in this state who were the victims of a DNA crisis and those opposite were not prepared to stand up. This government is proud to represent the women in this state socially and economically, and we are prepared to keep them safe.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, you have had a fair go this morning. You are warned.

Community Safety

Mr BAROUNIS: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Veterans. How is the Crisafulli LNP government continuing to prioritise community safety across Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any policies that would not keep our community safe?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I thank the honourable member for Maryborough for his advocacy not just in youth crime but also antisocial behaviour, an issue that ran riot in Maryborough. He is attacking it head on. I also thank the member for Toowoomba North for his assistance in driving that change.

The member asked about consequences for actions and the member asked about the youth crime crisis. I want to talk a little bit about the first legislation this government brought to this House. There were many in the community who said 'no consequences for actions' and we did not listen to them. There were many in the community who said 'no Adult Crime, Adult Time' and we did not listen to them. There were many in the community, including those opposite who are yelling, who said the rest of Australia would never look at this favourably. Now we even have the most left wing government in the country backing what we are doing. The only Labor Party that does not are those opposite, which wants to wind it back.

There was another entity who said we were not able to do this, and that was the United Nations. In a moment I am going to talk about a letter I received. I say to the United Nations that Queenslanders control our destiny, not the United Nations. I say to the United Nations that the LNP answers to Queenslanders, not the United Nations.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CRISAFULLI: I received correspondence from the United Nations—

Ms McMillan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, I just brought the House to order. You are warned.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I received correspondence from the United Nations. They asked to us back down on our stronger laws. It came from someone whose title included, among other things, special rapporteur for cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. That is how Queenslanders have felt. They have felt cruelled against, degraded against. Queenslanders have been living under siege, and this government is prepared to take up the fight. Every change we make will be to strengthen our laws, including breach of bail.

Today I can announce to Queenslanders that as long as the LNP is in power there will be no change to the minimum age of criminal responsibility—none—because our heart is in community safety. Those opposite cannot say the same thing. This team is prepared to put Queenslanders ahead of the United Nations. This team is prepared to put the rights of the victim ahead of the rights of the offender. This team will not be watering down the age of criminal responsibility. Those opposite cannot say the same. Their heart is not in it. They were weak on youth crime. They created the youth crime crisis. We will continue to drive safety where you live.

(Time expired)

Child Sexual Abuse, Vicarious Liability

Mr MILES: My question is to the Attorney-General. Victims of childhood sexual abuse join us in the gallery today, demanding the government act after the High Court decision regarding vicarious liability. Will the Attorney introduce laws by the end of the year regarding vicarious liability to support victims of childhood sexual abuse?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I start by acknowledging the victims of historic child sex offences who join us here today. I acknowledge their pain and suffering over many, many years. I know people from my own electorate whom I have met with over numerous years. We are closely monitoring the implications of the High Court decision handed down late last year. The member asks about the implications of the Bird decision. The implications of the decision were recently discussed at the Standing Council of Attorneys-General. In fact, it was discussed at the last two. At the meeting last week we noted options for reforms to address the impacts of that High Court of Australia decision. Vicarious liability and retrospectivity in this regard are complex legal matters. Importantly, my SCAG colleagues—

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This is a really serious issue. Rather than play politics with this matter, which is an horrific matter of historic child sex abuse, I think it is important that the House gains a thorough understanding of the implications of the High Court decision which all states and territories are grappling with. This is not a matter that should be reduced to a political fight by the shadow attorney-general.

Again I place on the record that I acknowledge the pain of the victims of historic child sex abuse and what they have endured. These victims have suffered—many for decades and many in silence—and I commend them for their courage in coming forward with their stories. We know it is vitally important that we consider this in an appropriate manner because of the implications the decision has on both common law and the duty of care. Equally, it is important that responses to the decision are carefully considered. Any reforms will undoubtedly impact the survivors of child sex abuse; therefore, the ramifications of future reforms must be thoroughly developed and not add to further trauma for victims. The Crisafulli government will continue to consider the decision. We will consult with other jurisdictions to ensure we avoid unintended consequences and represent the views of all Queenslanders.

Workplace Safety

Mr LEE: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. How is the Crisafulli LNP government making Queensland worksites safer, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any policies that would threaten workplace safety?

Mr BLEIJIE: I thank the member for Hervey Bay for this serious question on workplace health and safety in the state. It is clear from the last 12 months of the Crisafulli government that the LNP is now the natural party of the blue-collar worker in the state of Queensland because the Labor Party have abandoned them. We saw it yesterday in the debate on the motion. They abandoned coal workers and resource workers across the state. Every Queensland worker deserves to go to work, get a fair day's pay and go home to their families safely. I will make some reflection on some CFMEU issues a bit later in question time, maybe.

Mr O'Connor: If you get asked.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection: if I get asked. Worksites are not immune to Labor's youth crime crisis. We have seen it on worksites across the state. That is why the lunacy of the Labor left and the opposition leader and deputy opposition leader's policy of youth justice being weakened should be scary to all Queenslanders, particularly those who have suffered because of the youth crime crisis. As the Premier said, whilst ever the LNP is in government, we will strengthen our laws—whether it is Adult Crime, Adult Time; putting victims ahead of offenders; or putting the resources to the police on the beat. One thing we will not do is raise the age of criminal responsibility, like the Labor Party does. That is the left-wing lunacy of the opposition leader.

Is it any wonder Ali King, the former member for Pumicestone, who is leading their agenda, has said that at their convention on 29 November—which, incidentally, is the same day as the Hinchinbrook by-election, and we are taking strong youth justice policies to that by-election—the Labor Party will be

debating weakening youth justice laws in the state. I can reveal this today because I have seen the Labor policy document. Here it is; here is their platform. Let me read from point 8.65 in the Labor Party policy document on page 103. It states—

Labor supports the international conventions, which have been ratified by Australia in relation to the care and protection of young people. Labor—

Labor—

will increase the age of criminal responsibility from 10 years old to 14 years old in line with international best practice.

There it is in black and white, the Labor Party policy platform. They have a lunacy left-wing leader who will do a great disservice to victims in this state if ever he is given the reins of power. He will weaken the youth justice laws. He will raise the age of criminal responsibility. If he wants to sit there and shake his head, he should get up and say it: rule it out. I call on the opposition leader to rule out getting rid of Adult Crime, Adult Time and rule out raising the age of criminal responsibility. He will not do that because it is not in his DNA. Soft youth justice laws are in his DNA.

(Time expired)

Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Information Technology

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. I table a departmental document which reveals that critical Unify staff were redirected to other duties. Did the minister sign off on that decision?

Tabled paper: Extract of document, undated, titled 'Attachment 1—Strategic Analysis'.

Ms CAMM: Mr Speaker, can I see the document the member is referring to? I appreciate that the member has tabled that. I was expecting some questions on Unify and I welcome the opportunity to speak on Unify.

Mr Crisafulli: Labor's Unify.

Ms CAMM: Labor's Unify; I take that interjection from the honourable Premier. The Unify system was designed, developed, tested and delivered by the former Labor government, so I thank the honourable member for the question. We have heard a lot in this House with regard to Unify, particularly around what those opposite say they knew about Unify. My department is undertaking to address the failures in the design and functionality of Unify. We are also commissioning Deloitte to undertake a review. I receive weekly updates from them and I am receiving one later this afternoon. I welcome the independent work of Deloitte.

Some of the work we have undertaken with them is to commission a survey of the workforce with regard to Unify. I stood in this House and told the parliament and Queenslanders that the Together union had undertaken a survey of around 300 staff, but we have had over 1,000 staff across Child Safety participate in the independent survey being undertaken by Deloitte that my department has commissioned. As part of that, I have spent time out on the front line with regard to—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance and whether there was a ministerial sign-off on the redirection of staff.

Mr SPEAKER: The point of order is on relevance, Minister.

Ms CAMM: I will take the point of order that was raised. The honourable member would know with regard to ministerial responsibility that that is a question actually for my director-general as it relates to operational matters of staff. However, I can assure the House and the member opposite that what we have done is double the scaling—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, you have 45 seconds remaining.

Ms CAMM: The shadow minister has wanted to visit all of our child safety service centres while we are cleaning up the mess of the failed Unify system. I have denied her access because I do not need my frontline staff distracted by the politicking of those opposite on a system that they designed. I hope there are more questions on this today. They knew the functionality failures of the system. We have taken action. We have doubled the workforce in our intake and assessment to make sure we are meeting demands on the system and we are protecting children, which those opposite failed to do.

Community Safety

Mr MOLHOEK: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. How is the Crisafulli LNP government putting perpetrator accountability at the centre of our justice system, and is the Attorney aware of any other policies that would see perpetrators walk free?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: What an important question on community safety here in Queensland. After a decade of decline under the former Labor government—they watered down the youth justice laws and made sure young crims were running around our streets—we had a situation where people were not feeling safe in their homes, their cars were being stolen and they felt threatened all the time. We know that the federal Labor government is right now completely hopelessly weak on crime, soft on crime, just like the state opposition here in Queensland. They are in lock step. I have spoken this week about the report of the Bail and Remand Reform Working Group.

We just heard from the Deputy Premier that the Labor state convention is now again in lock step with the federal Albanese government in trying to raise the age of criminal responsibility. We know that this was started by the former attorney-general, the member for Waterford. I quote from 2022, when she agreed to develop a proposal to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility. This was the same year that her office confirmed they were ‘working towards a national agreement to develop a proposal to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility’.

I have the great honour of sitting in the exact seat at the Standing Council of Attorneys-General that the former attorney-general, the member for Waterford, used to sit in. However, I take a distinctly different approach to the former attorney-general, the one who wants to go lock step with the other Labor states and water down our crime laws and raise the age of criminal responsibility. I will not be bullied by those other states. I will certainly not take a weak-on-crime approach, like the former attorney-general the member for Waterford did. There is no way the Crisafulli government is going to raise the age of criminal responsibility in this state. When we have kids as young as 13 who are stealing cars, breaking into houses and putting people in danger in their own homes, we will not be watering down our laws. In fact, just as the Premier is always talking about, if we need to, we will be strengthening the laws. That is unlike the Labor Party conference that is coming up where we know they are planning on raising the age of criminal responsibility.

I say to those opposite, who have left a decade of decline and an increase in crime in this state: shame on each and every one of you. They should go to their constituents and tell them that they want to do this terrible act and water down our laws.

(Time expired)

Youth Justice, Workforce

Ms FARMER: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice. The minister has said urinating and defecating in separation rooms does not happen in our detention centres despite the Inspector of Detention Services indicating it does, and I table a news article.

Tabled paper: Electoral Commission of Queensland form, dated 4 October 2018, titled ‘Request to Amend a Return’ regarding Jennifer Hill.

What action is the minister undertaking to resource hardworking detention centre staff, who are faced with difficult situations including urination and defecation in the centres?

Mrs GERBER: Anyone would think that this question was written by the government because that report from the Inspector of Detention Services covers the period from 2022 to 2023. The inspections of Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, where the former minister talks about urinating and defecating, happened under that very member. That very member is responsible for the acts in the question she has just asked.

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, you have asked the question.

Mrs GERBER: She is responsible for the acts in the question she has just asked me. The Auditor-General found that because of critical staff shortages by the previous Labor government youth were left in separation rooms in our detention centres. That was because the member who just asked me the question failed to adequately staff our detention centres. That meant that youth were left in those separation rooms where they could not be taken to the toilet because the member for Bulimba failed to staff those detention centres. There was not enough staff to take them to the toilet. The urinating and defecating happened under the very member who has asked me the question. The report of the Inspector of Detention Services—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am trying to hear the minister.

Mrs GERBER:—is entirely Labor's record. It is entirely Labor's record and it is a damning indictment of the way the previous Labor government turned our detention centres into criminal factories.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister has the call. Cross-chamber quarrelling will cease.

Mrs GERBER: The Inspector of Detention Services went into our detention facilities across Queensland during the period 2022, 2023 and on one occasion in 2024. His report covers entirely Labor's record. What the minister is asking about—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am trying to hear the minister.

Mrs GERBER:—is the member's own failings. She failed to adequately staff—

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Pine Rivers just made a very unparliamentary gesture and I ask her to withdraw that gesture.

Mrs GERBER: And she is on a warning.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I ask her to withdraw the unparliamentary gesture, please. I take personal offence and I ask her to withdraw that.

Mr SPEAKER: Just hold on—

Ms BOYD: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, did—

Ms BOYD: If it assists the smooth running of the House, I am happy to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers—

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Pine Rivers, did you make the unparliamentary gesture?

Ms BOYD: I do not know what the—

Mr SPEAKER: I will be reviewing—

Ms BOYD: I am happy to withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will be reviewing, I can assure you.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is my point of order. In relation to what has been already outlined by the Premier, I would ask you to review the tape and take appropriate action given this would be disorderly conduct and not compliant with the code of conduct of the parliament.

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

Mr SPEAKER: We will be reviewing the tapes. I will be taking it very seriously.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member has withdrawn the unparliamentary gesture, therefore, admitting she did it. It is based on that—

Opposition members: No.

Mr BLEIJIE: She said, 'If it assists the House I will withdraw.' That is what the member just said. She has admitted it. She is on a warning. I saw what she did when she made the unparliamentary gesture to the Premier. Now she has accepted liability because she withdrew it.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pine Rivers, you did withdraw, so you are admitting that you made the gesture. I now ask you to withdraw for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Pine Rivers withdrew from the chamber at 10.45 am.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have 56 seconds left to respond.

Mrs GERBER: To see that kind of disgraceful behaviour from the member for Pine Rivers—we would not tolerate gestures like that in our detention centres. Youth in our detention centres are not

allowed to flip people the bird. For the member for Pine Rivers to flip the Premier the bird during question time—

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I will look after the House. You will be responding to the question. You have 37 seconds left.

Mrs GERBER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Inspector of Detention Services report into our detention centres is a damning indictment of the Labor government. It fully covers the period that the previous Labor government was in government. The inspector has called out the Labor government for completely failing to adequately staff our detention centres, leaving youth in circumstances that the inspector described as inhumane. So the Crisafulli government has properly staffed our detention centres.

(Time expired)

Workplace Safety

Mr CRANDON: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations. The government has announced the revitalisation of port Hinchinbrook. How will the government keep workers safe onsite and is the deputy aware of any approaches that did not keep workers safe?

Mr BLEIJIE: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. We indeed have revitalised port Hinchinbrook. We are getting on with the work. We want to keep workers safe. What I have seen in the last few days with the CFMEU royal commission concerns me. One thing I can guarantee honourable members is that that sort of behaviour will not be tolerated on port Hinchinbrook when we commence that work through EDQ, so I thank the member for the question.

Speaking about violence on worksites, I must reveal to the House today that allegations that Labor's candidate in the Hinchinbrook by-election, Maurie Soars, physically assaulted a young volunteer and threatened to kill him yesterday. I have received allegations that Labor's candidate, Mr Soars, has said, after pushing a young volunteer, 'I'm going to take you out. That's not a threat, that's a promise.' These allegations were made yesterday. I am further—

Mr O'Connor: On the booth?

Mr BLEIJIE: It was on the booth. I am further advised that Mr Maurie Soars has just denied those allegations when asked by the media reporting on the Hinchinbrook by-election. What Mr Soars does not know is I have seen the video. The video that I have seen clearly shows Mr Soars saying, 'I'm going to take you out. That's not a threat, that's a promise.'

The question now for the opposition leader is: does he stand by his Labor candidate for Hinchinbrook's threats to kill a young volunteer on an election booth? Does the opposition leader stand by Labor's candidate and his threat to kill a volunteer on a booth in the Hinchinbrook by-election? This is a test of leadership. Will he ask Labor's candidate for Hinchinbrook to resign today? Will he show leadership and ask his candidate in the by-election to resign today, because people are voting today?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for McConnel.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel! Deputy Premier, put your comments through the chair, please.

Mr BLEIJIE: People in Hinchinbrook have voted and are voting today. They need to know the truth of this, and the video exposes Labor's candidate, Mr Soars, threatening to kill a volunteer who was working on a booth yesterday and 'take him out'—and he has now denied it, not knowing a video exists. This is a test of leadership for Mr Miles, the opposition leader. Further, Labor's Katter candidate—I table copies of correspondence—Mr Molachino, with Mr Soars was on Jenny Hill's Labor team, and guess what? They have accepted CFMEU donations! They are in bed together! Whether it is physical assaults or physical threats, the CFMEU and Labor's candidate are all the same. He should resign from the candidacy!

Tabled paper: Electoral Commission of Queensland form, Request to Amend a Return for Jennifer Hill, dated 4 October 2018.

(Time expired)

Member for Cook

Mr McCALLUM: My question is of the Minister for Victim Support. In the comments section of the member for Cook's post defending self-confessed woman puncher Michael Trout, the member for Cook liked a comment that read, 'Stand by your mate, whatever the outcome'. I table a copy.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Facebook page of the member for Cook, Mr David Kempton MP, regarding a *Cairns Post* media article titled 'MP defends relationship with former member accused of assault' and a list of comments.

Can the minister advise: should Crisafulli LNP members be standing by self-confessed woman punchers while a victim is scared to leave her house?

Honourable members interjected.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for McConnel, you are warned. I called for order. I am taking a point of order. What is your point of order?

Dr ROWAN: Mr Speaker, I have two points of order. One is in relation to the lengthy preamble. The second point of order is that, under the direct ministerial responsibilities of the minister as asked, I would seek your guidance as to whether it is compliant with those aspects under the standing orders.

Mr SPEAKER: Once again it is the same issue and, as I quoted earlier, it is if the minister is directly officially connected or a matter of administration for which the minister is responsible. Can you explain to me how that affects the specific minister that you have asked?

Mr McCALLUM: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The minister is responsible under the portfolio matters for administering policies as well as procedures that relate to the protection of victims. The question goes to a victim who has been impacted; therefore, the minister is responsible. That is a matter of fact, in my submission.

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Once again I will rule that question out of order. It is asking for an opinion from the minister for an area in which she has no jurisdiction.

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mrs GERBER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence against the member for Aspley's comments and I ask him to withdraw.

A government member: He's on a warning.

Mr SPEAKER: No, he is not.

Mr MELLISH: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Aspley, the minister has taken personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Mr MELLISH: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

A government member: He's on a warning.

Mr SPEAKER: No, he is not. He is not on my list. I have the list in front of me. Believe me—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Okay. I have had enough assistance for one day. Let me do my job.

Community Safety

Mrs KIRKLAND: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services. Can the minister inform how the Crisafulli LNP government is restoring safety to Queensland communities, and is the minister aware of any alternatives that would further risk Queenslanders' safety?

Mrs GERBER: I thank the member for Rockhampton for the question. She is a fierce advocate for community safety in her own electorate. The Crisafulli government was elected with a clear mandate to restore safety where you live and put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders, and that is exactly what we are doing. We have strengthened Queensland's youth crime laws. We have ensured

we have effective early intervention and crime prevention and rehabilitation programs. In fact, just last week I was in Hinchinbrook with our fantastic LNP candidate, Wayde Chiesa, where I listened to him and his community in relation to his push for stronger bail laws.

We know that the alternative approaches that the member asks about under those opposite would see us with weaker laws, and we have just heard from the Deputy Premier in relation to the test of leadership that the Leader of the Opposition faces in relation to his Labor candidate in Hinchinbrook. There is a test of leadership for the Leader of the Opposition with a candidate who has—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mrs GERBER:—threatened violence and to kill other constituents on booths. I take the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's interjections defending that candidate right now. There is one other test that the Leader of the Opposition has today. He has the test of leadership on his comrade Soars on the booth, but he also has a test of leadership in relation to the Labor Katter candidate, because the Leader of the Opposition is running two candidates in Hinchinbrook—there is the Labor Labor candidate and there is the Labor Katter candidate. He needs more numbers in his caucus. That is why he is running two candidates. Members do not need to listen to me. The proof is right here—the photos of Mr Soars and Molachino arm in arm—

Mr SPEAKER: No, we are not using props. You either table it or put it down.

Mrs GERBER: I will table this, Mr Speaker—hands around each other, comrades together. Here is another one showing Soars and Molachino—the Labor Labor candidate and the Katter Labor candidate—with arms around each other. I have one more.

Mr SPEAKER: You know the rulings about props. You can refer to them but then table them if you wish to table them.

Mrs GERBER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a number of other photos to table that establish that the Labor Katter candidate, Molachino, and the Labor Labor candidate, Mr Soars, are—arm in arm—comrades in the Labor Party. I table all of these photos—one, two, three, arm in arm.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino and others.

The real question is: will the Leader of the Opposition release the Katter Labor candidate's record? It is a risk to Queenslanders' safety.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister's and the Deputy Premier's flagrant disregard for your ruling immediately after giving it is, I submit to you, extremely disorderly.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you for the point of order, and I reinforce: do not use props. Minister, you have 28 seconds remaining.

Mrs GERBER: The Leader of the Opposition needs to come clean and show Queenslanders the Katter Labor candidate Molachino's Labor record. When did he join the Labor Party? How many Labor campaigns has he worked on?

Mr O'Connor: Elections?

Mrs GERBER: How many elections? Which other Labor people has he supported during elections? Has he ever donated to the Labor Party? The Leader of the Opposition needs to come clean because Queenslanders need to know: when did Labor's Katter candidate join the Labor Party? How many times has he voted at conventions? Queenslanders deserve to know before the by-election.

(Time expired)

Charters Towers Hospital

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister either confirm a start date for the new Charters Towers Hospital or then direct the relocation of the new hospital to the adjacent vacant land which would save 54 home units for Queenslanders during the housing crisis?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for Traeger for his question. I was starting to feel a little neglected after the events of this week! I thank the member for Traeger for stepping up to the mark in respect to his question, and what a sensible question it is. I know the member for Traeger has been fighting for a number of issues in his electorate. We have been able to deliver up in his part of the world recently, including the delivering extra renal dialysis sessions for Charters Towers. From January 2026, additional nursing staff will come on board so we can double the number of dialysis patients from four to eight. This will save them the journey of many hundreds of kilometres and much inconvenience. I

know the member for Traeger has posted on that recently on Facebook and I congratulate him for his advocacy. That \$400,000 a year will deliver care closer to home for those patients—less travel, lower cost to patients and more time spent with family and friends.

We are also delivering a new CT scanner for Charters Towers to provide easier access to healthcare services closer to home. On top of that, we are funding a CT scanner in Ingham that had not been funded by those opposite. We are allocating those funds. In fact, one of the first things I did was sign off on a ministerial approval which was subsequently approved by Governor in Council in January this year for funding for the Ingham CT machine. Planning work is underway to develop the Mount Isa Hospital campus and at Ingham to upgrade the emergency department. So we are working strongly across the electorate of Traeger.

The member for Traeger has written to me on a number of occasions and run a petition regarding the Charters Towers Hospital. He knows better than anyone the fact that the Charters Towers Hospital is yet another example of Labor ignoring health care in rural and regional Queensland. The hospital was built in the 1800s and has had little to no substantive improvement since its initial construction. We are taking action. We have completed the detailed business case into the hospital's redevelopment. That will be considered as part of the capital expenditure for Queensland Health over the coming years. That is on top of what we have already announced in our \$18.5 billion 2,600-bed capital expansion program. It is a big bill and you know that it is a big bill—we have had that discussion—and obviously we have to consider the capital.

I know you are also interested in the Eventide units there. I know this is something you have been concerned about and have presented a petition to which I have responded. The reality is: those Eventide units are not currently fit for occupation. They are, as many things are, constructed out of asbestos and they were damaged by a fire earlier this year. Structural engineers who have inspected those premises have determined that they are not currently fit for occupation but we will work with the member for Traeger to find a solution.

(Time expired)

Rural and Regional Queensland, Roads

Mr DALTON: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering key road and rail infrastructures, particularly in rural and regional Queensland, and is the minister aware of any approaches that would disadvantage these communities?

Mr MICKELBERG: I thank the member for Mackay for his question. He is part of an LNP government that is delivering better road and rail infrastructure for all Queenslanders; a member who helped secure an 80-20 funding deal for a \$9 billion package of work on the Bruce Highway within the first three months of coming to office—something that the Labor Party said could not be done. The former Labor minister for transport walked away, signed up and rolled over for 50-50 on the Bruce Highway. We said no and we secured it within three months of coming to office. That is what advocacy does. That work is already underway. That work can only be delivered if you have a seat at the table and strong local advocates like the member for Mackay and the strong team we have in Townsville.

Yesterday I was in Hinchinbrook with our candidate for the seat of Hinchinbrook, Wayne Chiesa. We were announcing another \$50 million, as the Minister for Local Government and Disaster Recovery spoke about, for the section between Gairloch and Ripple Creek. This is an important section of the Bruce Highway that is flood-prone and has deteriorated. The pavement there is pretty ordinary. We are pleased to be getting on with the job of fixing it. As a consequence of the advocacy from our Townsville team, our North Queensland team and candidates like Wayne Chiesa, these projects are getting done.

Hinchinbrook has been ignored by the Labor Party for far too long. Now we see Labor's Katter candidate for Hinchinbrook, Mark Molachino. He said, 'I did join the Labor Party. They were the closest party that aligns with my values.' Today I can reveal just how deep Molachino's Labor roots run. Today I will release the Molachino files. I have proof right here that Mark Molachino aligns with Annastacia Palaszczuk's values. He would side with Labor when it comes to 50-50 on the Bruce Highway. I table the first photo.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino and others.

He would align with Aaron Harper—

Mr SPEAKER: No waving props around.

Mr MICKELBERG: Understood, Mr Speaker, I will table them quickly. He would align with Aaron Harper's values. He would call victims of crime rent-a-crowd. I table that.

He would align with the member for Bulimba's values in supporting the weakening of Labor's youth justice laws. I table that.

He would align with Mark Bailey's values, the member for Miller, on cost blowouts. The Leader of the Opposition have got answers that he needs to deliver today about Labor's Katter candidate and about and Labor's Labor candidate. Neither of them are fit to sit in this parliament. Either way, the people of Hinchinbrook have one choice—to support a hardworking local candidate in Wayde Chiesa who will have a seat at the table of government, or to support a pseudo Labor candidate or a Labor candidate who is not fit to run.

(Time expired)

Women, Safety

Mrs NIGHTINGALE: My question is to the Minister for Women. The minister is responsible for fostering an environment that allows for Queensland women to be economically secure. The victim of self-confessed woman puncher Michael Trout is scared to leave her house. Noting the member for Cook has supported Michael Trout, can the minister advise what actions they are taking to ensure a safe environment for Queensland women, including the victim of Michael Trout?

Ms SIMPSON: I want to refer to the comments that the Premier has already made and remind the House that the Premier has condemned the incident that was involved. That has been appropriately dealt with by the courts. We condemn violence against women in the strongest terms. I remind members opposite that in their ranks they stayed silent in regard to one of their own where there is record allegedly of domestic violence. They failed to take timely action to address that and that member still sits in this parliament.

Mr Crisafulli: And they take his vote—every time.

Ms SIMPSON: I remind members opposite that there is a deficit in respect to protecting and standing up for women when they have been willing to take the vote of the member who still aligns with them as the member for Stafford. Then we have the comments of the member for Cairns—

Mr Crisafulli: He is on the frontbench.

Mr SULLIVAN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. They have made specific reference to me. I take personal offence.

Mr SPEAKER: The member takes personal offence. I ask that you withdraw.

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw. I refer to the member for Cairns in respect to the horrific social media posts that were lauding horrible violence against women that that member liked, that that member was condoning online. That member is a frontbencher in the Labor opposition.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg!

Ms SIMPSON: In contrast, the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland women, not only in regard to the women's economic security plan that we are rolling out—the \$20 million Women's Career Grants are currently receiving applications—but we also have been standing up in regard to stronger laws and systems of support. I acknowledge my colleague the Minister for Families—

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bundaberg, my patience has run out. You are warned.

Ms SIMPSON:—who is doing an excellent job in regard to services and support for women facing domestic and family violence. With respect to what was happening with the failure of services under the previous government, the failure of DVConnect and the lack of action to ensure systems were in place, this government is taking action. We are fixing Labor's failures in regard to the DNA lab debacle. We saw a situation where Labor enabled a failure to rip off women's right to justice where rape kits were not being tested and that was under the Labor Party's watch. We will stand up for the rights and safety of all Queenslanders, particularly women.

Community Safety

Ms JAMES: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development. How is the Crisafulli LNP government delivering for regional and rural Queensland, and is the minister aware of any approaches that would put these communities at risk?

Mr LAST: I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Barron River, a valued member of the team on this side of the House, 'Team Crisafulli', and her work in particular in breathing life back into Double Island, which is in her patch. She is a fierce advocate for her area. When we talk about teams, we talk about teams like QRIDA under a new board and a new CEO and the work they are doing. We also talk about my manufacturing team—the team I have in my portfolio who are pulling together those regional forums across Queensland, in places like Roma and Emerald, bringing our government to the bush where we can act on the issues they raise. They are proving invaluable. There is another team that has reared its head this week, a team that has gone into the seat of Hinchinbrook: 'Team Hill' is back. The band is back together in Hinchinbrook. 'Team Hill' is back in Hinchinbrook. Here they are—I will table this document—

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino and others.

Liam Mooney, tick; Jenny Hill, tick; Margie Ryder, tick; Maurie Soars—of course—tick. Who is on the end of that photo? Mark Molachino! There he is, a proud member of 'Team Hill' back in the fray, protesting his innocence that he has divorced himself. I also want to table this how-to-vote card.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not a prop.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'How to Vote: Jenny Hill and Mark Molachino' regarding the Townsville Council election.

Mr LAST: There he is with Jenny Hill on the how-to-vote card authorised by none other than 'knock-'em-down Les Walker'. We are hearing word that the yacht is coming up the Bohle River with the red spinnaker up, the yacht called *I'm an Innocent Man*. 'Knock-'em-down Les' is on his way. I table that.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino and others.

He is a member of that team as well. You wonder why there is so much chaos going on in Hinchinbrook at the moment. You have Labor members handing out for Katter and vice versa. Here they were yesterday, Maurie Soars and Mark Molachino having a chat—thick as thieves, working together: 'You look after me and I'll look after you.' I table that.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino and others.

Government, Integrity

Mrs POOLE: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity. How has the Crisafulli LNP government delivered with integrity, and is the Attorney aware of any alternatives that lack integrity?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I thank the member very much for the question. What an important question it is. This member has the highest standards of integrity; she knows exactly what party she stands for. I want to follow on from my honourable colleague who was talking about teamwork in Hinchinbrook. I know what team should be supported throughout the next week and into next Saturday—that is, of course, the LNP team, which has the mighty Wayne Chiesa standing. I am looking at this team photo, 'Team Jenny Hill'. I remember Les Walker—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, if you wave around another prop I will warn you.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will put the props down. I will table all of these very important 'Team Jenny Hill' photos.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to Hinchinbrook by-election candidate Mark Molachino.

I am very deeply concerned about the integrity of the Leader of the Opposition and where he stands on his violent candidate in the seat of Hinchinbrook. We know that he is running two candidates. We have the Labor Katter candidate and we have the Labor Labor candidate. I want to know where the member for Murrumba stands on his Labor Labor candidate.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION



Mr MELLISH (Aspley—ALP) (11.14 am): I seek leave to move general business notice of motion No. 1 standing in my name.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 33:

ALP, 32—Asif, Bailey, Bourne, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, J. Kelly, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

KAP, 1—Katter.

NOES, 50:

LNP, 50—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Stoker, Watts, Vorster.

Resolved in the negative.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (EMPOWERING COUNCILS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Hon. A LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (11.20 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Regulation 2012 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Minister, before you continue, I would ask the people who are leaving to do so quietly and quickly and to take your conversations outside if you need to. I remind members of those who are on warnings: Greenslopes, Callide, Cairns, Pine Rivers, Mansfield, Ninderry, McConnel and Bundaberg.

Ms LEAHY: I am pleased to introduce the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill delivers on the Crisafulli government's commitment to re-empower Queensland's councils. No two of Queensland's 77 local governments are the same, but by reducing red tape and giving them the resources and legislative framework they need to deliver for their communities we can re-empower our councils after years of neglect.

This is the first tranche of the Crisafulli government's broader local government reforms. These include a suite of significant improvements that address priority issues identified by the local government sector. In designing this bill, the local government sector, including the Local Government Association of Queensland, were consulted and they are supportive of the reforms. The bill proposes amendments to the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 and associated regulations. Other complementary amendments to regulations are being progressed to further empower councils and mayors and to cut red tape. Subject to governor-in-council approval, it is intended that these amendments will follow shortly.

This bill demonstrates the Crisafulli government's unwavering commitment to the local government sector and to Queensland's communities. Local governments know their communities best. Every day they directly touch the lives of Queenslanders through local services and infrastructure. We understand this as we have several members in this place who have served their local communities as mayors and councillors. From the outset, the Crisafulli government has worked hard to reset the relationship between state and local governments, recognising local government as a genuine equal partner. Since taking office, our government has been pursuing a wideranging and extensive local government reform agenda, including the implementation of our government election commitments for the local government sector.

Furthermore, the Crisafulli government also made an election commitment to review the impacts of depreciation on local government to ensure councils are not unfairly burdened. Queensland councils are responsible for managing approximately \$142 billion worth of infrastructure assets and depreciation of those assets represents a significant proportion of council operating expenses. The Depreciation

Taskforce will deliver its final report to me in December 2025. Tackling the growing depreciation challenges will ultimately provide cost-of-living relief to ratepayers.

My department is also undertaking sunset reviews of the Local Government Regulation 2012 and the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012 in accordance with legislative requirements and the Queensland Government Better Regulation Policy. These regulations contain detailed and complex provisions that cover a broad range of areas. I know there has been keen interest from stakeholders in contributing to this review.

The government published a discussion paper earlier this year as part of our review of the Local Government Electoral Expenditure Caps Scheme, which first applied at the 2024 quadrennial local government elections. The review identified some potential areas for improvement to ensure that the scheme continues to meet its objective. A report on the outcomes of the review is being developed and will be published shortly.

Each review that I have outlined to members includes comprehensive consultation with the local government sector, in the spirit of the recently signed Equal Partners in Government Agreement. This is a large volume of work and is a clear indication of the Crisafulli government's commitment to local government and to creating an environment where the sector is empowered through fit-for-purpose legislation.

The bill I am introducing today demonstrates our intention to work proactively with the sector throughout our term in government. This will further strengthen a positive and cooperative relationship, laying the groundwork for further reform. The bill addresses a number of shared objectives for the state government and local government. These are: empowering councils; empowering mayors; improving the councillor conflicts of interest and register of interests frameworks; reducing unnecessary red tape and regulation; providing certainty about councillor remuneration, leaves of absence, vacancies and eligibility; promoting good governance and decision-making; enhancing safeguards for election participants; and making minor, administrative and technical improvements.

Turning to the detail of each of these objectives, the bill empowers Queensland councils by reinstating the role of councillors in the appointment of senior executive employees. The bill provides for local governments to use a panel for the appointment of senior executive employees comprising the CEO, the mayor and either the deputy mayor or the relevant committee chairperson. The CEO will remain responsible for the management, direction and discipline of all local government employees, including senior executive employees. The bill makes no changes to these arrangements. This model was in place from 2012 to 2019 and proved successful in ensuring that decisions about the senior leadership of a council were made by both the CEO and elected councillors.

The bill re-empowers councillors at Brisbane City Council to appoint senior contract employees, including at the general manager level. These amendments recognise the unique role of the Brisbane City Council as the largest council by population in Australia and the size of its operations.

The bill makes essential changes to the requirements around council access to state owned quarry material. Efficient and affordable access to quarries, in particular gravel pits, to obtain the necessary material for road repairs is critical for ensuring value for money on the restoration of essential public asset works. This has become a significant issue for local government. State owned quarry material is the only source of material for many councils, particularly in western and northern Queensland. It is particularly important for maintenance and rectification works and natural disaster recovery.

The bill amends the Local Government Act 2009 to provide for the period when a local government worker gives a reasonable entry notice to the owner or the occupier of relevant land in order to enter and remove materials, including gravel. This provides the flexibility for councils to act according to their individual circumstances, noting that all other requirements of these provisions must also be met.

In relation to rating, the current position is that Queensland's 16 Indigenous local governments must not levy general rates nor any other type of rates calculated using the rateable value of land. Historically, most of the land in each of their areas has been held by the local government in trust and, therefore, is not rateable. To empower these local governments, the bill provides a framework to enable them to rate in the future if circumstances are favourable.

As I have outlined to the House, the bill reinforces the authority of Queensland mayors by clarifying the scope of the extra responsibilities entrusted to them under the legislation, including the role of official spokesperson of a council. The bill amends the Local Government Act 2009 to put beyond

any doubt the longstanding position that the mayor is the official spokesperson of the council without preventing other councillors from communicating with the community on local government matters generally.

The bill also puts beyond doubt that the mayor of a local government is the default chairperson for ordinary and special council meetings and committee meetings for which the mayor has been appointed chairperson. This includes managing the conduct of the participants at the meeting. The intention of the amendment is to ensure that a local government is not able to remove the mayor as the default chairperson.

I know there will be great interest in the amendments to reform the conflicts-of-interest framework. The bill makes major changes to the framework. These will commence by proclamation to ensure councillors are given sufficient time, training and support to comply with the new requirements. The government believes that the reformed framework strikes the right balance between allowing councillors to represent their communities while still ensuring transparency and accountability around decision-making. The amendments will allow councillors to get on with the job for which they were elected.

They appropriately place the onus on councillors to consider whether they have a conflict of interest in a matter and trust councillors to manage any conflicts in the public interest, including by declaring interests, backed by significant penalties for those councillors who breach the trust placed in them by their communities. The bill replaces the current conflicts-of-interest framework, introduced in 2020, with the framework which was in place from 2013 to early 2018. Some modifications are included to clarify the test as to whether a councillor has a conflict. This will ensure there are appropriate exemptions for councillors and will clarify penalties for breaches.

In summary, the bill repeals the current conflicts-of-interest framework, which is based on the concepts of prescribed conflict of interest and declarable conflict of interest. It reinstates the concepts of material personal interest and conflict of interest. The current requirement for non-conflicted councillors to vote on whether to allow a conflicted councillor to participate in decision-making is open to political manipulation and is being removed.

The bill also removes from conflicts of interest the concept of a close personal relationship with a councillor. This concept lacks specificity and in smaller communities could lead to councillors having a conflict of interest in nearly every decision. The bill also abolishes the duty on a councillor to report a belief or suspicion of another councillor's conflict. This was open to misuse for political reasons and created fears of possible reprisals. Complementary amendments are made to the requirements around the published extract of a councillor's register of interests. These provisions mirror the current rules governing the register of interests for members of parliament.

The bill includes the first tranche of amendments to remove unnecessary red tape and regulation. Some of these amendments were identified as suitable for early implementation by the Local Government Red Tape Reduction Taskforce. To streamline procurement processes during disaster events, the bill provides the minister with the power to issue an approval to a council to make major policy decisions to progress recovery works during the caretaker period for local government elections. We have received feedback from LGAQ that delays in councils obtaining various approvals hindered vital emergency disaster recovery work related to Tropical Cyclone Jasper. This bill resolves this issue and removes the regulatory burden. These improvements will ensure the minister may issue an approval which applies to multiple local governments for multiple decisions.

A key reform in the bill simplifies the process for managing conduct breaches under the councillor conduct framework. Currently, the Office of the Independent Assessor may refer suspected conduct breaches by a councillor to the relevant local government to investigate and determine if any other action is appropriate. Generally, conduct breaches are at the lower end of the scale and include conduct that contravenes a behavioural standard or a local government policy, procedure or resolution. Allegations about conduct breaches often have a disproportionate impact on councillor reputations and the operations of local governments.

Following feedback from the sector, the bill removes the category of conduct breach from the councillor conduct framework. Local governments will continue to deal with the poor behaviour of councillors in local government meetings, including the chairperson, as unsuitable meeting conduct, consistent with how parliament deals with the behaviour of its members. The bill amends the definition of 'misconduct' to ensure the more serious types of councillor conduct that are currently captured by the definition of 'conduct breach' continue to be appropriately assessed and actioned by the Independent Assessor, with potential referral to the Councillor Conduct Tribunal.

The amendments provide that the following conduct is misconduct: bullying, sexual harassment and failing to comply with an order of the chairperson of a local government meeting to leave and stay away from the place at which the meeting is being held. These changes to the meaning of misconduct are considered appropriate, given such conduct has the potential to cause significant harm to people and to the reputation of local government. These amendments will commence by proclamation to allow for updated training and education for the sector and for updates to the councillor code of conduct. This will be done in consultation and partnership with the local government sector.

The bill empowers incumbent councillors by only requiring new candidates to complete mandatory pre-election training under the Local Government Electoral Act 2011. It is intended that returning councillors are only required to do post-election training where there have been major legislative changes. These changes will ensure that training requirements are not onerous and that both new and returning councillors can focus on getting on with the job.

The bill achieves further streamlining by removing the power in the current legislation to make regulations in relation to the functions of councillor advisers. These regulation-making powers in the legislation have not been used, are deemed unnecessary and are being abolished.

The bill makes a range of red-tape-reduction reforms in relation to electoral processes involving the Electoral Commission of Queensland. The bill removes inefficiencies in the process for reviews of wards, divisions and councillors before a quadrennial election. Currently, divided councils are required to review whether each ward or division of its local government area has a reasonable proportion of electors or quota for each councillor elected for the division. On completion of the review, councils provide the Electoral Commissioner and the minister with notice of the results of the review. The amendments enable the ECQ, as the provider of the relevant data, to initiate the review and notify councils and the minister of the results.

The bill further cuts electoral red tape by allowing local governments to lodge postal ballot applications directly with the Electoral Commissioner, rather than requiring an application to first be made to the minister. While the final decision will still be made by the minister following a recommendation from the ECQ, the new process will provide more time for the ECQ to meet its obligations under the legislation.

Finally, in relation to red-tape-reduction measures, the bill abolishes the requirement for councils to provide the minister with a copy of a public benefit assessment report, and relevant resolutions, when a council conducts a public benefit assessment for a new significant business activity.

Turning to the next key objective addressed by the bill, it provides clarity on a range of matters concerning councillor remuneration, leaves of absence, vacancy of office and eligibility. First, it provides certainty to councillors on when they are entitled to begin and end receiving remuneration following their election or appointment. Second, the bill provides certainty to councillors by clarifying that a councillor, other than a Brisbane City councillor, is entitled to their remuneration when absent from council, including during leaves of absence. Third, the bill provides certainty to councillors that a leave of absence does not preclude a councillor from participating in the meeting for which the leave has been granted, nor limits the councillor from undertaking the councillor's other responsibilities. Fourth, the bill provides certainty to councillors that a councillor who is elected or appointed to fill a mayoral vacancy is taken to vacate the office of councillor when they commence in the mayoral role. Finally, in relation to this objective, the bill makes amendments which automatically remove a councillor from office upon nomination as a candidate for election as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Currently, the legislation provides that a councillor must only take leave without pay for the duration of the period for which the councillor is a state candidate. These amendments will ensure stability, minimise disruption and reduce operational impacts on councils of councillors running for state office.

To promote good governance and decision-making in local government, the bill prevents the disclosure of unauthorised information and documents to councillors. The amendments provide that the power for councillors to request information from the CEO does not apply to information or a document that comprises proceedings in the Assembly, as defined in section 9 of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. This resolves certain conflicts between that act and the local government legislation that were identified by the Ethics Committee. Given the interaction with the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, the Clerk of the Parliament was consulted on the proposed approach, and I am pleased to say that Mr Clerk's comments were incorporated into the drafting of the provision.

The bill also includes important amendments affecting Brisbane City Council's Establishment and Coordination Committee. The bill provides for confidentiality for information that is part of the

deliberative processes prior to the Establishment and Coordination Committee reaching a final decision on the matter. This recognises that the committee performs executive decision-making functions and therefore requires protections to promote robust and confidential deliberations leading to sound decision-making.

The bill amends the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012. To allow time for implementation, the amendments will commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

The bill also addresses important safety and privacy issues for participants in council elections. These amendments are aimed at removing barriers to people standing for election to represent their communities. The bill removes the requirement for a person who authorises an advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice to include a full residential address. Instead, a candidate or participant will be given the option of including other contact information, for example, a post office box. Similar amendments are made in relation to how-to-vote cards. A new regulation-making power provides flexibility in identifying other suitable options, in consultation with the ECQ, giving candidates further options to ensure their safety.

The bill makes a range of minor, administrative and technical amendments. These include amending the timing for the approval of Brisbane City Council's annual budget. Currently, the budget must be adopted before the start of the financial year to which it relates. To ensure consistency with arrangements for other councils under the Local Government Act, the bill allows Brisbane City Council to adopt its annual budget before 1 August or a later day decided by the minister.

Additional minor amendments include: extending the term of appointment of an acting Independent Assessor; clarifying requirements applying to trustee councils; ensuring the name of a councillor who engages in unsuitable meeting conduct is included in the councillor conduct register; streamlining the process for resolving competitive neutrality complaints; clarifying the operation of an offence provision about frivolous complaints; and correcting minor references.

This bill is just the beginning of our reforms to restore autonomy to local governments across Queensland, by empowering them to serve their communities unhindered by overly prescriptive regulation. We have listened to the concerns of the sector about the operation of the current legislation. We are handing back responsibility to local governments to decide for themselves what is best for their local communities, without unnecessary interference from the state. We place a high priority on our partnership with local government.

This bill represents a fresh start, as we embark with the sector on a wide-ranging reform agenda. The department will work with the sector to ensure comprehensive support is provided ahead of changes to the councillor conduct framework, including requirements about conflicts of interest and registers of interests. This is in line with the staged commencement of these amendments.

I would like to thank all of the stakeholders who have contributed to the development of the bill, in particular the Brisbane City Council, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Local Government Managers Australia, the Office of the Independent Assessor, the Electoral Commission of Queensland and the Local Government Remuneration Commission.

First Reading

Hon. A LEAHY (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (11.44 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor



Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (11.44 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): The message from Her Excellency the Governor recommends the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT

BILL 2025

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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

A Bill for an Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Act 2018, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006, the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, the Water Act 2000 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 20 November 2025

Tabled paper: Message, dated 20 November 2025, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025.

Introduction



Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (11.45 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Act 2018, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006, the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011, the Water Act 2000 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025.

Tabled paper: Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights.

I am pleased to introduce the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill will support the Crisafulli government's commitment to protect the natural environment by improving the regulatory framework to achieve long overdue administrative efficiencies and streamlining. The amendments contained in the bill will deliver practical and sensible red and green tape reduction, providing better outcomes for industry, local governments, my department and the community, while reinforcing clear and consistent environmental protections.

The bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Water Act 2000, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Forestry Act 1959 and the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 to implement a targeted range of enhancements that modernise the way we regulate and manage environmental impacts across Queensland.

The amendments through this Bill will modernise the architecture of the Environmental Protection Act. This includes creating a new regulatory option in the licensing framework—environmentally relevant activity codes—ERA codes—to further deregulate certain lower-risk activities. A central pillar of the current framework is the designation of activities as environmentally relevant activities—ERAs—which then require an environmental authority prior to operations commencing. This environmental

authority contains enforceable conditions that mitigate and manage environmental risks and may have annual fees attached.

There are currently over 9,000 authorities held by operators right across Queensland. New ERA codes will provide an alternative to the existing requirement to hold environmental authorities for lower-risk ERAs. Transitioning ERAs to regulation via an ERA code will reduce administrative burden for industry and government, while maintaining an appropriate level of regulatory oversight to achieve sound environmental outcomes. Review processes to identify ERAs appropriate for regulation via an ERA code, and implementation of new ERA codes, will occur in phases with resource industry activities a priority for reform. I want to make clear that public consultation and engagement will be a feature of making each new ERA code.

To help facilitate these efficiency measures, the way ERAs are prescribed in the Environmental Protection Act are also being amended. Currently, there are a mix of specific activities prescribed by regulation and broad industries included as a whole in the Environmental Protection Act. Under the bill, almost all ERAs will instead be prescribed in the Environmental Protection Regulation, allowing for a more targeted, risk-based approach to be taken. It should be noted that the current cohort of ERAs will be maintained initially until the proposed reviews are completed.

To provide improved clarity to industry and regulators, the bill will clearly identify and consolidate significant environmental values that are priorities for protection so that regulatory effort can be better directed. Identifying significant environmental values will deliver a clearer and more consistent framework, with key benefits including: consolidating the list of priority environmental matters to simplify the regulatory framework rather than having these matters identified through a number of different instruments and references, as is currently the case; providing a sound basis for determining appropriate regulatory oversight for environmentally relevant activities, including opportunities to streamline regulation and deregulation; and increasing outcome certainty for industry and government regarding priorities for environmental decision-making.

The list of significant environmental values will not—I stress will not—introduce further regulatory requirements or burden. Rather, it will clarify and consolidate into one place those environmental values that are a priority for protection in this state. The significant environmental values will be listed in a schedule of the Environmental Protection Regulation and will guide administration of the Environmental Protection Act. Other amendments to the Environmental Protection Act are included to improve administrative processes and efficiency, resolve implementation issues and clarify aspects of the legislation that have been raised consistently by industry and regulators over many years but which were ignored by the former Labor government.

The bill includes amendments to the progressive rehabilitation and closure plan framework—known as the PRCP framework—to respond to concerns and challenges from industry in completing the transition into the framework, which has been ongoing since 2018. PRCPs are a tool to ensure mined land is progressively rehabilitated and, as much as possible, returned to a post-mining land use. Unfortunately, the current legislation has been the cause of significant difficulties for operators seeking to transition—something which this bill is fixing. Some of the fixes are administrative in nature, such as ensuring operators who for some reason have fallen out of the transition process can reapply, whereas others remove unnecessary or ineffective requirements.

The Environmental Protection Act currently requires an audit of a PRCP schedule every three years, regardless of whether the rehabilitation has even commenced or any change has been made to justify the expense of an audit. The bill provides that, instead, the administering authority may set a timeframe for audits that is appropriate to the reality of each mine site.

The bill removes the bureaucratic public interest evaluation process from the consideration of a PRCP, as it is a duplicative and unnecessary process that results in regulatory burden and approval delays. It is important to note that public interest considerations are already required as part of the decision-making process. Currently, the offence provision for a transitioning operator not having an approved PRCP schedule is reliant upon the conduct of activity. The bill amends related provisions so it is solely concerned with not having an approved PRCP schedule in place, giving unequivocal certainty that the transition must occur.

Another impediment to implementing PRCPs has been a lack of clarity on what may be approved as best practice management of an area after closure of the mine. For a mine site that was developed decades ago and will close decades into the future, this bill will clarify that its historical context is to be considered by the regulator. This provides a more practical and pragmatic approach to balancing modern management expectations for sites that were developed without today's technologies.

Other streamlining and efficiency amendments to the Environmental Protection Act include: strengthening the seizure and forfeiture powers for a court to prevent reoffending, providing clearer statutory timeframes to commence summary proceedings and extending these to three years for a set of more serious offences; clarifying the timeframes for residual risk payments; removing the duplicative public notification of a terms of reference for an environmental impact assessment; and removing duplication for matters already adequately assessed by impact assessment reports and related processes under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971.

The bill includes administrative amendments to the accredited program provisions for Great Barrier Reef protections such as moving from calendar to business days and limiting the retention of records to six years. These amendments will provide greater clarity and consistency regarding the recognition process, which will benefit industry.

Amendments to chapter 3 of the Water Act will streamline processes relating to managing underground water impacts from the resources industry and provide greater certainty for tenure holders and bore owners. Obligations to prepare baseline assessment plans for landholder water bores will be better aligned with obligations associated with the underground water impact report prepared by the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment—OGIA. Amendments provide a more strategic, coordinated and flexible approach to requiring baseline assessments.

The amendments also refine reporting arrangements for a more efficient and contemporary reporting framework to support OGIA's role and function as well as administration of chapter 3 of the Water Act by the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation. The prescriptive and poorly framed three-year timeframe for preparing an underground water impact report will be replaced by a more sensible five-year timeframe, measured with reference to approval of the previous report. In addition, the existing process for landholders to request a bore assessment by a tenure holder will be formalised to provide review and appeal processes for such decisions, ensuring improved procedural fairness for landholders. Collectively, these changes will improve the workability of this important part of the Water Act.

I will move to amendments to deliver an integrated tourism permission. Amendments in the bill also deliver on the Crisafulli government's commitment to have a single integrated permission for tourism activities in parks and forests, an initiative of our 20-year tourism plan *Destination 2045: delivering Queensland's tourism future*. Specifically, the bill includes amendments to the Forestry Act and the Recreation Areas Management Act to enable commercial activity permits and organised event permits to be combined with equivalent permits under the Nature Conservation Act and tourism related state marine park permissions under the Marine Parks Act 2004 as a single integrated permission. This means that operators will be able to make a single application through the online system and receive a single permission to authorise the conduct of tourism activities across protected areas such as national parks, state forests, state marine parks and recreation areas. This approach will also ensure a single expiry date and a single fee for these streamlined arrangements for operators, even when they are conducting their tours across lands and waters managed under different legislation.

Importantly, the amendments will maintain protection of the natural and cultural values of these areas upon which these tourism businesses rely. In addition, amendments in the bill will make commercial activity permits transferrable and provide an extended maximum term of up to five years for recreation areas and state forests, consistent with commercial activity permits in protected areas. Other administrative amendments in the bill provide improved consistency across parks and forests legislation. The amendments in this bill will improve administrative efficiency and flexibility for the tourism operators who showcase to visitors what our natural areas have to offer and will help ensure Queensland becomes a world leader in nature-based tourism.

Amendments to the Nature Conservation Act will ensure conservation officers have the power to investigate offences relating to nature conservation matters regulated under the Planning Act 2016 in line with other frameworks linked to the Planning Act. These amendments do not create any new offences and will only allow conservation officers to apply investigation or compliance actions in relation to matters in scope of the Nature Conservation Act. Currently, this would apply to offences involving interfering with koala habitat. An administrative amendment to the Nature Conservation Act clarifies the definition of 'protected area' to aid interpretation and navigation of the legislation and support more accurate decision-making.

The proposed amendments in the bill have been shaped through extensive consultation with industry, local government and other key stakeholders who have repeatedly called for clearer environmental regulation. Public consultation on the majority of the proposed amendments was

undertaken between 10 June and 14 July this year, with 61 submissions received. Engagement on the integrated permissions proposal was identified through the development of Destination 2045. The feedback from submissions and stakeholders was used to inform the preparation of a draft bill, with further adjustments made in response to targeted consultation on the exposure draft that occurred between 24 September and 17 October 2025. I take this opportunity to thank our stakeholders for engaging on the bill, and I can assure them that all feedback received has been considered, with many of the proposals being revised based on the feedback.

This bill will continue the Crisafulli government's commitment to both protecting our natural environment while also making our regulatory frameworks as efficient and streamlined as possible. It delivers on our government's Destination 2045 commitment—to amend legislation to facilitate a single permission for tourism businesses operating on protected areas without reducing protection for protected areas. I would also like to thank in advance the parliament's Health, Environment and Innovation Committee for any work they will undertake in reviewing this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. AC POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (11.59 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Health, Environment and Innovation Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee.

QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 19 November (see p. 3740), on motion of Mr O'Connor—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (12.00 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This is the third tranche of the government's so-called Building Reg Reno reforms. It makes changes to the Building Act 1975, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991.

This bill has two objectives: first, to move the QBCC further into the digital era, cutting paperwork and making it easier for licensees and consumers to interact with the regulator; and, second, to change how serious workplace safety incidents are notified and reported. The Queensland Labor opposition supports digitisation. In fact, it was the former Labor government that started this work. These reforms are the direct product of Labor's 2022 independent review of the QBCC. The Crisafulli government is simply rebranding Labor's work. Where we differ on is safety. The Queensland Labor opposition has concerns about the removal of the dual notification requirement for serious incidents. We caution against taking away a statutory safeguard that was deliberately put in place after the tragic death of young worker Jason Garrels on a building site in Clermont.

Let me begin with the digital reforms. In 2021 the then Labor government reaffirmed its commitment to build a safer, fairer and more sustainable industry through the release of the Queensland Building Plan update. At the time it also provided an opportunity for the QBCC governance arrangements to be reviewed to ensure the model was contemporary, fit for purpose and reflected best practice. Labor initiated the independent review of the QBCC. In 2022 that review, headed by Mr Jim Varghese AM, made 17 recommendations to improve the performance and effectiveness of the organisation into a modern, customer focused regulator. It recommended investment in digital capability including digital licensing, electronic service of documents and integrated platforms. Labor backed

those recommendations. A digital services road map commenced under Labor on 1 July 2023, along with the replacement of information technology systems with fit-for-purpose solutions for licensing and compliance, information management and data warehousing. Labor did the groundwork. Labor set the direction. The digital reforms in this bill are Labor's reforms.

Under this bill, licences no longer need to be issued as physical cards. They will be available through the Queensland Digital Licence app. These changes were started under Labor in September 2024, with regulation changes to the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994 which expanded the Queensland digital licence provisions to licences issued by the QBCC under the QBCC Act, the Building Act and the Plumbing and Drainage Act. Documents will be able to be served electronically. Importantly, consumers will still have the option of physical communication and in-person service at regional centres.

Given these digital measures, the bill also inserts a requirement for the licensees to advise the QBCC of changes in their residential address, email address or phone number within 14 days of the change, with penalties to apply unless the licensee has a reasonable excuse. These are sensible changes. They reflect the way people live, work and transact today. They will reduce delays and help improve customer experience. They are Labor's reforms. It was Labor that led the push to digitise the QBCC to make it more efficient, more responsive and easier to deal with. We welcome the Crisafulli government's support of our reforms and the significant work that was being undertaken in this space by the previous Labor government.

The chief executive of the QBCC in the recent estimates hearing referenced the digital transformation program as a way to unlock capacity within QBCC teams. In particular, he mentioned transitioning some of their high-volume transactional tasks through to technology-enabled transactions to free up staff to, as he said, 'do more the high-value, customer-facing and outcomes focused activities that our stakeholders expect'. This is clearly necessary, as the CEO advised at the recent estimates hearing that, as at 31 August, there were 558 cases that were pending allocation to an investigator and 437 active investigations on foot. He also confirmed that the average case load per full-time-equivalent was 12.5 cases—something we will continue to monitor once these legislative digital reforms are in place.

In response to a question on notice received on 17 October, the minister confirmed that as at 31 August this year there are 52 full-time-equivalent vacancies within the QBCC. The 30 June 2025 annual report by the QBCC indicates there were 673 full-time positions, and the SDS indicates they are budgeted for 765 positions for the 2025-26 financial year—which is an additional 92 positions. Whether it is 52 or 92, it is a very high number. Whilst the digital transformation work will assist in helping to manage the work of the QBCC, I am not convinced it will address the current and critical understaffing at the organisation. This has real-life impacts. I regularly speak with and meet many home owners who are contacting me in desperation over their ongoing interactions with the QBCC which are both frustrating and, indeed, traumatising. I wish to acknowledge some of the home owners who join us in the gallery today.

On a number of occasions now I have written to the commissioner and the chair of the QBCC urging action on matters where the evidence is crystal clear: the victims of a shoddy and frankly unscrupulous builder is growing and the QBCC is simply either refusing to act or is on a go-slow—home owners who find themselves homeless couch surfing or having to outlay money they cannot afford for a rental property whilst staff drip-feed responses and take months and months to respond to simple requests for advice or information.

Business Chamber Queensland in their most recent Efficient Regulation Report 2025 findings confirmed that the QBCC received the most concentrated adverse feedback compared to other agencies, with 40 per cent of businesses attributing the QBCC with having a high impact on their business. Again, the government and the QBCC have put a lot of stock in this digital transformation piece, so we will be watching very closely to see if it has the productivity gains expected.

I would like to now focus on the second major element of this bill. In 2017 amendments to the QBCC Act inserted section 54A. That provision required licensees to notify both the QBCC and the relevant regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act about serious notifiable incidents. This was introduced to ensure the QBCC had direct statutory awareness of serious incidents on building sites. The QBCC could then act quickly and decisively.

Evidence before the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee shows that dual notification has underpinned real regulatory outcomes: disciplinary actions, licence conditions and even cancellations. The origins of this change must not be forgotten. It followed the tragic death of apprentice

Jason Garrels. Jason was just 20 years old when he was fatally electrocuted at a construction site in Clermont in 2012. He had only been working there for nine days. On 11 August 2015 the findings of the Coroner's inquest into Jason's death were handed down. I table the Coroner's inquest findings.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Office of the State Coroner findings of inquest into the death of Jason Jon Garrels'.

The Coroner was deeply critical of the way safety notifications were handled. Despite multiple government agencies attending the site on the day Jason Garrels was killed, the Queensland Building Services Authority—now the QBCC—was not notified until many months later and only then because Jason's father raised it himself.

The Coroner described this as 'very perplexing' and noted that, while a memorandum of understanding between Workplace Health and Safety and the QBCC now existed, at the time there was no obligation on the principal contractor to notify the QBCC. The Coroner acknowledged the existence of an MOU and still concluded it was not enough. He recommended that the law itself be amended to require both the principal contractor and the building contractor to directly notify the QBCC whenever a death or serious injury occurs on a construction site. Labor accepted this recommendation and created a statutory safeguard via dual notification. This meant the QBCC could not be left in the dark. It meant safety breaches were not missed because of a breakdown in communication.

This brings me to clause 26 of the bill. Clause 26 amends section 54A of the QBCC Act. This amendment removes the legislative requirement for licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations of the same safety incident. The minister in his second reading speech seems to have missed the point of Labor's concerns. Yes, the 2022 review into the QBCC did recommend streamlined processes across regulatory agencies to reduce duplication in reporting, including for safety matters. Yes, as the minister pointed out, Labor in government supported reducing the duplication in reporting as an administrative process and started this work whilst we were in government. Let's be very clear: what we did not support was removing the legislative obligation to report. While it is acknowledged that this reporting may continue administratively under an MOU, the Queensland Labor opposition believes this must remain a legislative requirement. For that reason, we will not be supporting clause 26.

The truth is that under dual notification the burden on licensees is minimal. We are talking about a few minutes of extra reporting in the case of a serious incident. That is not an onerous obligation. It is modest when compared to the consequences of failure. These safeguards should not be removed lightly. The dual notification requirement is a legislative obligation; it is binding. It cannot be ignored, it cannot be forgotten and it cannot be torn up like an MOU. MOUs are useful tools but they do not carry the weight of law. They are vulnerable to change. They can lapse. They can be inconsistently applied. They do not provide the certainty of a statutory obligation and they are not transparent. The MOU between the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations has existed in some form since 2013. It was re-executed in 2021, but it has not undergone regular review. It has not been subject to ongoing scrutiny. To suggest that this is an adequate substitute for legislation is complacent and dangerous.

The committee heard directly from Jason's father, Mr Michael Garrels, who told the committee—

... the MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link so that that pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

These words deserve to be heard in this chamber; they deserve to be respected. Mr Garrels has lived the consequences of system failure. He has fought tirelessly for stronger laws to keep other families safe. We owe it to him and every construction worker in Queensland to not weaken these safeguards.

Labor supports the digital reforms in this bill. They are our reforms. They are sensible, they are practical and we hope they will deliver a better QBCC, but we cannot support clause 26. The burden is modest; the safeguard is significant. It is a safeguard that has delivered real outcomes. It is a safeguard born out of tragedy. It is a safeguard that must not be abandoned for the sake of administrative convenience. If the Crisafulli LNP government proceeds with the removal of the legislative requirement for licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations of the same safety incident, then let it be on its head. If communication breaks down, if incidents are missed, if another tragedy occurs, responsibility will rest squarely with the Crisafulli LNP government that chose to remove this protection. Efficiency is important but safety is paramount. Labor supports modernisation and we support digitisation, but we will not support the weakening of safeguards that protect Queensland workers.

I have a child who is almost 20, the same age Jason Garrels was when he was killed. I see my child at this stage of her life—really the beginning of her adult life. It is exciting. It is filled with hope and

ambition and it is everything a parent could wish for. The Garrels family were not given that opportunity and the Garrels family should not have to fight this fight again. They should not have to watch the Crisafulli LNP government undo protections put in place in their son Jason's memory.

Labor stands for a strong QBCC. Labor stands for a modern QBCC. Above all, Labor stands for workers' safety. For those reasons, while we support the digital elements of the bill we will not be supporting clause 26.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.13 pm): I am pleased to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. At the outset I would like to place on record my thanks to Minister Sam O'Connor for his outstanding speech last night and recognition for the work of the committee. Thank you very much. I also want to place on the record that the work of the committee was very much focused on the safety of Queenslanders and workers' safety.

It is important to address the issue the shadow minister just talked about regarding the duplication of reporting. The legislative requirement remains; it is the method of providing the information that is slightly different and is streamlining the process. The mature information sharing that is available now through the QBCC and the OIR is much more comprehensive. The MOU, which was put in place in December 2013 and was reviewed in 2021, is currently under review again. That will include this digital sharing, so I think the opposition's statement of reservation and criticism by the shadow minister are absolutely not warranted. They should have read the bill and the committee report.

I would also like to place on record my thanks to Mr Garrels for having the courage to appear before the committee to ensure the legacy of his son Jason is recognised. We listened to him intently and sought extra assurances from the department and the QBCC that each of those concerns was addressed.

I would like to give a shout-out to our new commissioner, Angelo Lambrinos. Angelo is a great appointment and he is bringing a very strategic thoughtfulness to that position. The changes in the bill allow the commissioner to take an overarching, strategic approach to all of these matters. The electronic capture of data is long overdue. We recognise that those updates have been in process for a while, but they are well overdue.

One of the things we also ensured through our committee inquiry was that paper-based requirements are still available for those who are not able to make that digital transformation as yet. Again, we were very much assured by the department that remains in place for those who have not yet made that digital transition.

There is important work happening with tranche 3 of our changes to address Labor's housing crisis. I read the statement of reservation where they talked about the issue of communication breakdown. I can tell members that in the government we do not have a communication breakdown. We have established a Ministerial Housing Taskforce where the Minister for Housing, the Minister for Local Government, the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier talk to each other and work together to ensure that each of the issues affecting the housing crisis are addressed. That includes the delivery of the Productivity Commission report, which was one of the things that informed the changes in tranche 3.

There is a much more mature understanding of the interrelatedness of the different agencies than there was before. Most importantly, the issue of workers' safety remains paramount, so again I commend the minister. I thank our whole committee for the way in which we approached this inquiry and acknowledge the advice and expertise we were given to address these issues. In the chair's foreword to the committee report I did stress each of those areas to make sure that not only I but also the entire committee was satisfied that workers' safety as well as the sharing of information were paramount and were addressed by the department. I thank all of those who have worked in this space.

I know the importance of worker safety. As members would appreciate, my former position in the Police Service is in a high-risk environment where you are regularly assessing risks and controls, so this is something that never comes second in my mind. It is something that we should always consider and take the time to work on and resolve. Some opposite say it may only take an extra few minutes to make an extra reporting obligation, but that is the point of it. It is actually making sure there is one clear area of reporting, and that reporting is then passed on and shared. As we heard in the inquiry, there are actually daily meetings about these things between the QBCC and OIR. The sharing is almost instantaneous; it is just the way it is done.

I am disappointed that the statement of reservation from the other committee members came to light because each of those areas were addressed and we did focus on those concerns. I am

disappointed the opposition has not seen the mature information sharing, the new system, and got on board with it and taken away that cloud of uncertainty. We are focused on making sure that worker safety is paramount. I recognise that there was a report and recommendations were made some time ago, but we have come a long way since then—through not just the development of the memorandum of understanding but also the digitisation. Making sure we have that one point of reporting is a very sensible way forward and it is certainly something that I and the government support.

I thank the minister for focusing on that issue to make sure the committee addressed that. Right from the outset, the minister was very concerned about Mr Garrels and the loss that he had through Jason's electrocution. We shared that opinion to make sure the changes were not going to downgrade the issue of safety and reporting. I thank the minister for his consideration of that and I thank the committee for their work.

I must say, though, that this is one part of the change we are making to address Labor's housing crisis. It is a streamlining and productivity issue, but it is also maximising worker safety because every person who goes to work has the right to return home safely. Our focus was making sure the QBCC and the OIR are modern organisations that have the best digitisation platforms. I thank the department for the work they have done to make sure that will be very complete.

I also note that the bill states there will be a review in two years as well as a review in 12 months to make sure the testing of the digitisation is complete and competent and there are no flaws in the system. When you put in place a new system, there are sometimes unintended consequences so we need to make sure the digitisation platform is fit for purpose and able to meet the needs of those reporting and all the workers and their employees. It is critical to make sure we are continually improving and maintaining that professionalism.

Once again, I think dual reporting is a sensible change that will be welcomed by Queenslanders. The industries that spoke to us and gave evidence to the inquiry were very supportive of having that one point of inquiry. It is for those reasons that I support the government's bill and this tranche of changes. This third set of changes sets us up for the fourth set which will come in the near future. I commend the bill.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.24 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. The Labor opposition supports the move to digitise licensing, making the service more accessible for builders and consumers and making it easier for licensing requirements to be met. The licensing reforms in this bill exist because Labor initiated them. Meanwhile, the Crisafulli government is now just rebranding our hard work from maroon to blue. However, we do caution against the removal of dual notification of serious safety incidents. This measure was introduced after the tragic death of Jason Garrels, who was fatally electrocuted at a construction worksite in Clermont in 2012. If information sharing between regulators fails as a result of this bill, responsibility for the fallout of incidents following this bill's assent will rest squarely on the shoulders of the Crisafulli government that chose to remove this protection. That should not be a situation any government should want or blindly legislate themselves into.

During our time in government, the Miles Labor government started the process towards removing the requirements for physical licence cards and allowing digital licences through the Queensland Digital Licence application. This bill enables the electronic service of documents and requires licence holders to update their details within 14 days. This reform also means customers will still have the option to have in-person services at regional centres and physical communication. The Labor opposition will continue to support these reforms.

However, we do have concerns about clause 26, which amends 54A of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. This section legislates the dual notification of safety incidents, and the amendment would legislatively remove this requirement. The Labor opposition does acknowledge that dual notifications would continue administratively, but we believe that this legislative requirement should continue. As such, we will not be supporting this clause.

These dual notifications were introduced in 2017 to ensure the Building and Construction Commission had direct awareness of safety incidents. The removal of this requirement means licensees will only be required to notify the Office of Industrial Relations, which will then share the information with the QBCC. This means the process that is required to be followed after an incident will be slowed down, rather than continuing with the same level of expediency they currently have. The Labor opposition would caution the government against weakening these statutory safeguards which have delivered real outcomes.

In the past five years, the commission has taken action on more than 900 safety notifications. As a result, 26 show cause notices were sought and five licences were cancelled due to serious safety breaches. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the dual notification system and that it leads to direct disciplinary action. Relying on administrative agreements, such as memorandums of understanding, will not substitute for a legislated obligation.

Mr Garrels, Jason's father, also raised similar concerns about the amendments proposed in the bill, stating that changes will remove the legislated statutory safeguard and that information sharing between the regulator and the OIR would be governed by a memorandum of understanding rather than a legislative requirement. Mr Garrels told the committee—

... the MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link so that that pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

In conclusion, the Labor opposition supports the digitisation of licences, as we did whilst in government. This will make it easier for Queenslanders to keep their licensing up to date. We hope the Crisafulli government will heed our calls for caution on the weakening of statutory safeguards which have delivered real regulatory outcomes for Queensland workers throughout all worksites in Queensland.



Mr JAMES (Mulgrave—LNP) (12.28 pm): I rise today to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill represents a significant step forward for Queensland's building and construction industry, ensuring our regulatory framework is both modern and responsive to the evolving needs of the industry participants, consumers and the broader community. The first objective is to ensure a modernised regulatory framework for the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, QBCC. In particular, we aim to support the QBCC's transition to providing more services digitally, improving both efficiency and the customer experience. The third key objective is to streamline workplace safety notifications, boosting productivity without compromising on safety standards.

The changes proposed in this bill form part of the broader Building Reg Reno package of reforms. These reforms are all about improving productivity whilst ensuring regulatory controls remain efficient and risk-based and that building standards are upheld. Tranches 1 and 2 have already delivered regulatory relief, including pausing the further rollout of trust accounts, removing annual financial reporting requirements for some licensees and extending licensing timeframes. The amendments before us today represent tranche 3 of these reforms. Work continues on tranche 4, which will further impose review pathways, facilitate sharing of building certifier documentation, modernise licensing and insurance thresholds and ensure greater consistency and equity across building related legislation.

The QBCC stands as Queensland's primary building industry regulator, an independent statutory body responsible for several acts including the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2017. The legislative framework under these acts is comprehensive, covering contractor, occupational, building certifier, pool safety inspector and plumbing and drainage licences as well as dispute resolution, building rectification, review processes and the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. Queenslanders can now access a range of licences, including driver's and marine recreational licences, on the Queensland Digital Licence app. However, progress has been hampered by outdated legislative requirements. The current QBCC Act, for instance, requires licences to be issued in the form of a card and mandates the provision of two certified passport-size photographs for licence applications. These requirements are no longer practical in the digital age and create unnecessary inefficiencies and regulatory burdens. There is a clear need to simplify and streamline these legislative provisions.

Workplace safety is paramount. Amendments made in 2017 following the tragic death of Mr Jason Garrels required licensees to notify both the QBCC and the regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act of serious notifiable safety incidents on building sites. The intent was to keep the QBCC informed and able to take appropriate action. Since then, improvements in information sharing between the QBCC and other regulators mean that duplicate reporting is no longer necessary.

Amendments to the Building Act, the Plumbing and Drainage Act and the QBCC Act will allow the QBCC to fully embrace digital technology, supporting initiatives to be a more modern regulator and improving efficiency and customer experience. For example, we are removing the requirement to issue hard copy licence cards, enabling licensees to access their licence via the Queensland Digital Licence app.

This bill also introduces pathways to serve documents digitally, requiring licensees to notify the QBCC of changes to their email address to ensure timely communication. Importantly, licensees, consumers and the QBCC customers will retain the choice of how they communicate with the QBCC, whether that is by post, in person or electronically. These changes introduce greater operational flexibility, reduce barriers to efficient business transactions and support the QBCC's move to a more customer focused environment.

Regarding workplace safety notifications, the bill simplifies the process. If a QBCC licensee is required to notify the regulator under the Workplace Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act, they will not need to also notify the QBCC. Information-sharing arrangements will ensure the QBCC is kept informed. This does not alter the policy intent. Serious safety matters will continue to be reported and dealt with appropriately. Operationally, notification processes will be improved to ensure the regulator can properly provide information to the QBCC about serious safety incidents. The QBCC will retain the power to take disciplinary action where necessary such as when the building work has caused death or grievous bodily harm or there is a serious risk to health or safety.

Other important amendments include extending investigators' powers to require an individual's email address where there is reasonable suspicion of an offence and allowing attendance at interviews via technology. These changes support compliance and make it easier for people to engage with the QBCC, particularly where physical attendance may be difficult. The bill also introduces a requirement for licensees to advise the QBCC of changes to their contact details within 14 days, with a modest penalty for noncompliance. Accurate contact information is crucial for effective communication, particularly in cases such as insolvency where business addresses may no longer be valid. The penalty is balanced to encourage compliance without being unduly onerous.

This bill does not introduce additional costs for government or regulators. Instead, it complements and supports work already underway to increase the QBCC's digital capabilities and service offerings, improving customer service, streamlining process and lowering costs. It removes legislative barriers to electronic service delivery, creating a regulatory environment fit for the 21st century.

Consultation has occurred with the QBCC and key industry stakeholders, with broad support for reforms. The Building Ministerial Advisory Council, which includes representatives from major industry bodies, has provided valuable input and support for these changes. In terms of consistency with other jurisdictions, it is important to note that, while each state and territory has its own regulatory framework, there is a broad move towards digital service delivery across Australia.

In summary, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 modernises our regulatory framework, supports digital transformation, streamlines safety reporting and improves flexibility and efficiency for both the QBCC and industry participants. It is a practical, forward-looking reform package that will deliver real benefits for Queenslanders working in or interacting with the building and construction industry. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (12.37 pm): I rise today to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. It is a bill that our committee, the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee, inquired into. At the outset I would like to thank the committee for our work. We did not agree on everything, but we did a lot of work on this and it is appreciated.

While I take issue with the first line of the minister's press release about the bill, which refers to improving safety in the building and construction industry—and I will come back to that—I do support modernising the licensing system for tradies to remove barriers for the QBCC and Queensland tradespeople to utilise digital technology platforms. For those who did not know, I am a licensed electrician, so I know how convenient it will be for us electricians and other tradies to access QBCC licences and other related documents on our phones, just like it is convenient for Queenslanders to access their driver's licence digitally—an initiative Labor introduced to this state. Of course, I am very happy to see the LNP handing in Labor's homework again on these progressive reforms—reforms we did the groundwork for when we were in government. It is good to see it happening.

The QBCC has a big job, especially in these times of unprecedented growth across our state. It oversees the licensing frameworks for building, plumbing and drainage trades, contractors, building certifiers, pool safety inspectors and some fire safety work, along with other functions including dispute resolution and the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. I want to pause here to say how disappointing it is when we hear stories from constituents who have had faulty work done and tried to do the right thing by allowing the contractor time to rectify, only to find that they have gone out of business and the

home owner has missed the deadline to make a claim. I look forward to seeing whether recent changes in communication by the QBCC with customers who are covered by the scheme will help those home owners better understand their rights and the timeframes that apply in accessing this insurance.

I will now move on to the parts of the bill that deal with safety notifications, and I am all for cutting red tape—except when we could be risking lives. That is why the Labor members in our parliamentary committee expressed grave concern in our statement of reservation about reducing a legal requirement for QBCC licensees to notify both the QBCC and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland or the Electrical Safety Office, in some cases, about serious notifiable safety incidents.

Reducing this legal requirement to a memorandum of understanding so that agencies will just talk to each other will not make workplaces safer. I am sure all of us have heard stories from our electorates about cases where government departments should have talked to each other but did not, leading to poor outcomes for our constituents. The minister went on about paperwork duplication and that this is cutting that down, but to me the department could not satisfactorily answer why it cannot just be an email—sending a copied email, pushing one button. I really think it is that simple. We are rightly worried that these safety processes will be weakened by this change—a change that does remove the statutory reporting obligation with offences punishable under the law. The fact that the result will be a weaker regulatory environment is a worry.

This view was also expressed to the committee during our inquiry by Michael Garrels, the father of Jason Garrels, who devastatingly lost his life in a work incident in Clermont in 2012. Jason was only 20 years old. I just want to tell a little bit of Jason's story because it led to the then Labor government that I was proud to be part of bringing in the dual notification safeguard in 2017. Jason took a job on a town house construction site working for a builder as a labourer. There had been a lot of rain on the site. Jason trusted his boss to fix it all up after an inspector from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland had visited the site just 13 days earlier and issued the builder with urgent improvement notices. This inspection was in response to an anonymous complaint about safety concerns on the site.

On the day Jason was electrocuted, the ambulance vehicle—a four-wheel drive built for the country—could only get to within 100 metres of him because of the poor state of the worksite. Paramedics found it impossible to transport their equipment to Jason, causing further delays in potentially life-saving treatment, and the site workers had to push the ambulance out of the mud as it left.

The QBCC was not notified until months later—that is the issue; the reporting needs to be quick—which meant it could not take any immediate action such as suspending the contractor's licence. Frighteningly, a safety audit conducted on the Clermont site before power was switched back on found numerous examples of life-threatening faulty work, so it is upsetting when the LNP refers to a reduction in reporting requirements as streamlining because I reckon the possibility of saving a life is worth the few extra minutes burden of sending two notices or emails in case of a serious workplace safety incident.

As we know, in the past five years the QBCC has acted on over 900 safety notifications, with 26 show cause notices issued and five licences cancelled due to serious safety breaches. This proves that incident notifications directly lead to disciplinary action. This government has form in combining good reform—often those it has copied from Labor—with policy that just does not pass the pub test. In this case I fully support the efficiencies and increased responsiveness we will gain in transforming the experience of Queenslanders who interact with the QBCC with digital options. I do not support making workplace health and safety weaker. Every year on 28 April Workers' Memorial Day is held in Brisbane. I go along and talk to the families and listen to their stories. I hope that we do not hear of another death next year for the sake of sending another email.

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (12.43 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I wish to acknowledge the chair, Jim McDonald, and the secretariat of the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee for their efforts in bringing colour to our deliberations on this bill.

Labor would have us believe that, as of October last year, everyone in Queensland had a roof over their head, new housing was on track and the housing crisis that has befallen us was a recent occurrence. Nothing could be further from the truth. Following a decade of decline under Labor, Queenslanders had seen investment in housing plummet, housing supply plummet, productivity plummet, availability of skilled workers plummet and the cost of houses—both existing and new builds—skyrocket.

Integral to the Crisafulli government addressing Labor's housing crisis is the supply of new homes. Front and centre to the Crisafulli government response are positive, meaningful actions like removing Labor's tax on first home owners, distributing hundreds of millions to the Residential Activation Fund and so on. In lock step to this process of supply of housing is red-tape reduction, which is the aim and objective of this bill. The bill will modernise Queensland's building and construction sector, making it more productive, user friendly and efficient. Central to these reforms is the removal of outdated, paper-based requirements to be replaced with digital licensing, online attendance and electronic communication. Workplace safety notifications and oversight will be streamlined and designed to lift productivity and strengthen safety, which in turn will make it easier to build in Queensland.

Mr Deputy Speaker Lister, it will come as no surprise to you that this bill is responsive to industry and community feedback. Of particular note is that the committee heard from Mr Michael Garrels, father of Jason Garrels, who was so tragically killed in a workplace accident in 2012. Whilst laws were changed in 2017 to require licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations about serious incidents on building sites, this bill puts in place information sharing between the two authorities to remove duplication. To further safeguard the integrity of the process, the bill will increase the penalty for noncompliance from 80 to 100 penalty units.

The first steps to modernisation in this bill will scrap annual financial reporting requirements for approximately 50,000 individual licensees, reducing the administrative burden to more than 97 per cent of individual licences; provide specialist fire protection for workers and five more years to upskill which will mean that QBCC licence holders will no longer have to pay the additional plumbing occupational licence fee to perform certain fire protection work; and extend time limited exemptions for building certifier professional indemnity insurance.

The next step in the process of modernisation of the Building Reg Reno will include reviewing licensed thresholds to improve consistency, reviewing the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme insurance thresholds, improving the QBCC internal review and dispute resolution process, establishing consistent timeframes for future codes, and reviewing and streamlining future financial burden around trust accounts. These reforms will not weaken safety in the workplace; they will put in place processes that will strengthen it. The process for reporting has been strengthened and the penalties for failure increased. It encourages communication beyond statutory obligation to report, as information will be shared between the OIR and the QBCC.

Why is this bill necessary at all? Under Labor's decade of decline, the building industry found it harder, slower and more costly to build in Queensland, facing overlapping, paper dependent, outdated processes—all engaging the QBCC, builders, tradies and home owners in a cycle of red tape. The industry called out for reform, the trades called out for safety and home owners called out for efficiency.

The Crisafulli government and the minister through this bill have responded in a timely and expedient manner. Now Queenslanders under the Crisafulli government can plan, plan, plan; dig, dig, big; build, build, build; and, importantly, save, save, save. What does all of this mean for the electorate of Cook, the furthestmost electorate from the south-east? We all know the old adage of out of sight, out of mind. This had become the mantra for Labor and its invisible members for the past decade as investment in new housing declined, overcrowding became the norm and people were forced into homelessness—all exacerbated by Labor's love of red tape. Thick in symbolic gestures, glossy brochures and tokenism under Labor, the people of my electorate have not only seen a decline in investment in housing but in hospitals, roads, schools, water infrastructure and so on which are all in a state of disrepair.

I cannot believe the decline in Cook. I cannot stand by and do nothing about the legacy left by Labor, who for too long has taken my electorate of Cook for granted. This has all come to an end. Since the good people of Cook placed their trust in me after 10 years of absence, the title 'member for Cook' has become synonymous with turning up, listening and speaking out for everyone in my electorate. I make no apology for my style as the people's representative in Brisbane—rather than a puppet for an uncaring Labor government. I will not rest until Cook gets its fair share and its people are heard. As the member for Maryborough will attest, if one is to hit the target one must first pick up the bow and arrow. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (12.50 pm): I rise to speak to the QBCC bill. I start by thanking the committee that oversaw the bill and the department for engaging well with us through the committee process. As we all know, the QBCC has a huge and important role to play in Queensland, and I appreciate the time they took to inform us of this work.

There are a couple of important elements to this bill but, in the interests of time, I will speak to the part I am most concerned and alive to—proposed clause 26, which will remove the obligation of a licensee to report a safety matter to the QBCC. As my colleagues have done, I will start by sharing the story that goes directly to this bill. It is the story of Jason Garrels, a general labourer who, at just 20 years of age, on 27 February 2012 went to work at a construction worksite and sadly never came home. His only error was to follow the instructions of his supervisor, a person he trusted to protect his rights and interests and to keep him safe onsite. For those unfamiliar with Jason's case there is a short video about his story available publicly, and I would urge people to take people to take a look. It is a shocking example of where systems fail and where construction timeframes and expediency are prioritised over the safety of workers. It is a shocking example of a lack of oversight, scrutiny and safeguards and how this can have fatal consequences.

Jason Garrels was a general labourer who was fatally electrocuted when he physically picked up a construction sub board which was being erected onsite in an attempt to comply with a Workplace Health and Safety Queensland electrical notice that had been issued to his employer just 10 days before his death—a notice that was not shared with the QBCC at the time. In fact, it was Jason's father, Michael, who discovered many months later that the QBCC had not been notified and, in fact, the electrical contractor was still working on sites. It was Michael who alerted the QBCC to that. Had the QBCC been alerted, they could have investigated that worksite and shut it down and a life could have been saved. Instead, the electrical contractor involved in Jason's death continued to work without the direct supervision of a senior and competent electrician. In fact, the coronial inquiry into Jason's death heard how the electrician responsible was still at work and re-creating the same pattern of mistakes which led to Jason's death. This was still happening months after Jason's death. This highlights how important it is that the QBCC—the institution responsible for licensing subcontractors—is notified when a serious safety incident occurs. The coroner was seriously concerned about this case and said at the time—

... if the law does not already provide that the principal contractor, and building contractor are not obliged to notify the QBCC of any death or serious injury on site, then the law needs to be amended to impose this obligation on them.

The coroner felt so strongly that he made a recommendation on that. When we came into government in 2015 we acted on this and we passed that strong legislation to require these notifications to occur. Regrettably, that is what we are repealing today in this legislation.

The minister says that the bill is about finding efficiencies within the QBCC. If you believe that, you have rocks in your head. We would all have had interactions with the QBCC. I have spoken to many residents and builders with ideas on how to improve the efficiency of the QBCC. Not one of them has ever raised with me that we need to remove the dual-reporting mechanism. It has never come up. The department itself disclosed that in the eight years this requirement has been codified it has received 1,100 notifications—about 130 reports a year, one report every three days. That is not burdensome. Safety is not burdensome. Protecting the lives of young Queenslanders—young tradies, sparkies, chippies and TAs—is not an administrative burden and should not be characterised as one. What an offensive statement to make. It is offensive to the Garrels family and to anyone who has ever been injured in a workplace.

Yesterday the minister argued that there is 'nothing to see here', that the regulator and the QBCC share information already on an IT system that electronically washes. That system is great and I have no objections to that, but what I do object to is that after this bill proceeds through this House the only thing keeping that system in place is a voluntary MOU. An MOU is just that: an arrangement between two departments. It is not a service-level agreement and it is certainly not a statutory requirement on the regulator. The MOU specifically states that it can be varied or withdrawn at any time by agreement by the parties. If the departments were to vary or withdraw that MOU, an incredible vacuum would occur. There is no doubt in my mind that the lives of young workers would be at risk and none of us would ever find out about that. If I were the minister I would be particularly alarmed and pretty unwilling to take on that risk. There is an easy and simple way to fix this: move an amendment that would obligate—

Mr O'Connor: Where is it?

Ms BUSH: The minister is the minister. It is on the government to move an amendment that would obligate both parties to share that information. It is literally one sentence and the minister has the government resources to be able to do this. What he lacks is the courage or the willingness to do it to save the lives of young workers. That speaks directly to their ideology in this place. They are absolutely

unwilling to advocate for and to support the workers of Queensland in the interests of expedited construction.

I will leave my final comments to Michael Garrels, who is in the House today and who wanted me to pass on this message. He says that this bill is giving a free kick to kill someone, as it was when Jason was killed. The minister has all of the tools and resources available to correct this shortcoming in this piece of legislation. I urge him today to contemplate that—to contemplate the effect this will have and the effect this has had on the Garrels family, who have done incredible advocacy over many years to get this legislation to where it is today. I reflect on the devastation that family must be feeling, watching this government repeal it in the interests of reducing administrative burden. Government members come in here and speak about protecting the rights and interests of victims but just the victims they want to speak to—not the ones who disagree with them, not the ones who fall outside of their convenient frame. This element of the bill is disgraceful. The fact that they have not engaged and not been open to amending this bill, as they could do, speaks to their ideology. It is a disgrace.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bush, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 pm to 2.00 pm.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member for Kawana, Conduct

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Recent media reports have shone a spotlight on disturbing behaviours by the member for Kawana—and also his conduct as planning minister. A devout Elvis fan and impersonator, the member for Kawana also happens to be the chief flag-bearer of the LNP's ideological right-wing lunatic fringe, which is very pertinent to what I am going to say today. Recent media reports exposed the fact that 90 per cent of public submissions opposing a renewable energy project that the member for Kawana decided to axe were fake. These submissions were based on evidence that simply did not exist. But get this: when the planning minister was confronted with this rather inconvenient truth he claimed he did not take the fake submissions into account when he made his decision. Sounds just a little bit too convenient to me.

Here is the other thing: the Planning Act says the planning minister must consider all submissions. The minister claims he did not take into account the submissions that were fake, which in turn raises another question: did he know they were fake or was it just pure coincidence that they just happened to be the submissions the planning minister took no notice of? It is a tangled web, is it not? You can tie yourself in knots, but the reality is simple: the member for Kawana does not like renewable energy projects.

The Moonlight Range wind farm project he axed cost Central Queensland a \$1 billion investment and an estimated 900 jobs. It is not the first time the member for Kawana has deliberately caused economic harm for ideological reasons. He slashed support for Queensland's battery industry. That is an industry that expert analysis demonstrated could have generated over \$1 billion in economic activity and could have supported more than 9,000 jobs by 2030—before the Olympics. Thanks to the member for Kawana Queensland is closed for business under the LNP when it comes to a battery industry of our own and the thousands of jobs that industry would have supported in this state. This is economic self-harm for the sake of ideological LNP culture wars.

Does all of this sound like someone who is acting in something close to sane, rational and evidence-based behaviour? Of course it does not. It is the behaviour of someone ideologically and politically motivated—ideologically obsessed, you could say. Instead of trying to hide behind fake submissions to rationalise his complete lack of rationality, perhaps the member for Kawana should just come out of his ideological closet and fess up. Maybe the member for Kawana should stick to impersonating Elvis, because he is incapable of impersonating a competent Queensland planning minister.

Kingaroy Electorate

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (2.03 pm): As a proud beef producer in this mighty state of Queensland, I was pleased to visit Pakaderinga Feedlot just 20 minutes from Kingaroy. Pakaderinga is a proud third-generation family operation that has been part of our region's success for decades. I sincerely want to thank the Brown family, Graem, Emma and Lachie and their families, for welcoming me so warmly.

Their vision and dedication to the future of a business in the South Burnett is unreal. It was inspiring to see firsthand the exciting new expansion of this feedlot underway, a shining example of how Queenslanders are building success across generations in the beef industry.

On my way to visit the feedlot I had the opportunity to travel on Memerambi Barkers Creek Road which, after a decade of neglect by those opposite—not just that road but all of our regional roads in Queensland—I am very pleased to say is now getting vital improvements as part of the Crisafulli government's Country Roads Connect Program. It is one of 22 regional roads across Queensland being upgraded as part of this vital \$100 million commitment by our government. It has been a great start by the transport minister and I look forward to working with him to deliver many more overdue road projects throughout the Nanango electorate.

This week is graduation week. This week we celebrate significant milestones in the graduating classes of year 12. I have been so pleased and honoured to attend many speech nights: at Kingaroy State High School, Toogoolawah State High School, Nanango State High School, St Mary's Catholic College, Kilcoy State High School and others. Unfortunately I had to miss speech night at Murgon State High School because it was on a sitting week, but I know Gavin Cooper, a mighty ex Queensland Cowboy, was there and they were all very excited to see him. Congratulations to all of them.

There are incredible opportunities in the bush. I say to any of these students who choose to either get into a trade outside of the region, go to uni or go to TAFE, I know that their heart is always in either the Somerset or the South Burnett and there are jobs aplenty for them to come back to. On Saturday night I was at the Rural Health Summit at Moffatdale. I want to give a big shout-out to Eiryn Twidale, a medical student, who will be Kingaroy Hospital's new intern next year. We are so excited that her and her partner Luke have chosen Kingaroy as their future spot. It will be wonderful to have many more of these students follow in Eiryn's footsteps.

E-Mobility Safety and Use



Mr MELLISH (Aspley—ALP) (2.06 pm): Total public consensus can be hard to achieve, but this LNP government has done it. There is collective agreement across Queensland that this LNP Crisafulli government is failing to keep the public safe when it comes to e-scooters, e-bikes and illegal e-motorbikes. The RACQ calls it a crisis on our footpaths and roads, a crisis exacerbated by this government's refusal to deliver urgent action. When announcing the parliamentary inquiry the transport minister said—

We must do more to ensure no-one else is injured and not another life is lost. We cannot turn a blind eye to illegal e-scooters and e-bikes or to dangerous behaviour.

We are now six months into a year-long process and this government has nothing to show for it. We know that the departmental draft for this inquiry had it wrapping up by now so why is this government delaying action? Just yesterday this government brought forward an inquiry of the Primary Industries and Resources Committee by three months so this is not an unusual occurrence. This happens all the time. If it can happen for sugar, it should happen for e-mobility where people's lives are at stake.

Horrific accidents on these devices continue to occur almost every week. The year is already shaping up as one of the deadliest years on our roads with an increased rate of fatalities, made all the more worse by the recent tragic deaths of three young boys on e-bikes on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. Everyone knows what is needed—riders need to be educated, parents need to be supported, retailers need to be better regulated and the rules need to be enforced. Better age restrictions for under-16s is also widely called for.

The lack of leadership from the Premier and his transport minister is so stark that schools have been forced to step in to protect their students. Three schools on the Sunshine Coast have announced bans on e-bikes and e-scooters from next year. These principals should be commended for their leadership. In commending them, we should ask why did it fall on them to act? This Premier is spending millions of dollars of taxpayer money to promote himself, but he refuses to commission a public awareness campaign on e-bikes and illegal e-motorbikes in the lead-up to Christmas. This is a Premier more concerned with strongarming Bluey into appearing on stage with him, and changing the Queensland state colour from maroon to blue, than he is with saving lives.

They say all politics is local so the Premier could almost be forgiven for not grasping the urgency of the unfolding situation on the Gold Coast given he is no longer a Gold Coast local. Where are the calls from the more vocal of the Gold Coast LNP MPs to act now? The Crisafulli government had the chance in parliament today to support Labor's eminently sensible and reasonable initiative to have e-bike safety measures implemented by Christmas. In fact, we were not even calling for that. Our motion

in parliament was completely uncontroversial, seeking only to fast-track safety measures that can help stop the needless deaths we are seeing on e-bikes. For whatever reason, the Crisafulli government refused to undertake such a commitment, instead insisting it will not take action until some time next year.

What about this transport minister? Tomorrow he is meeting with his counterparts from across Australia. When they go around the table and say what they are doing about these deaths and injuries on our streets, what will he say? We know he does not have a personal commitment to road safety: filming himself speeding and laughing it off. Please, Minister, stand up to the Premier on this and do something before Christmas.

Blackall-Tambo Youth Council

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (2.09 pm): On the day when the local government minister introduced into this place a bill to empower local councils, it gives me great pleasure to talk about the fantastic initiatives that a community in my electorate is developing to empower youth and local government. I talk about the Blackall-Tambo Youth Council, members of which visited this place yesterday. I would like to mention them by name and outline some of the fantastic initiatives they are working on and undertaking. Youth Mayor Georgia Duncan is ably supported by her youth councillors: Tate O'Brien, Phoebe Shrimp, Imogen Parry, Amelia Black, Wyatt Kadel, Mikayla Clark and Abigail Allen. Yesterday they spent several hours at parliament not only learning about and being immersed in this wonderful building and its traditions but also meeting and deputising with the Premier of Queensland; the Minister for Local Government, the member for Warrego; the Minister for Police, Dan Purdie—and I thank him very much for his time; and the Minister for Agriculture, Tony Perrett. The deputations they undertook and the conversations they had belied their age and experience. The youth councillors discussed some really serious matters in their community and e-scooter safety was one of them. They were very pleased to know that our government is taking some very necessary and appropriate action to review the safety of those devices and ensure their rollout across regional Queensland is done in a safe and responsible manner. They also sought funding for some projects such as tree-lighting programs, a pump track and some more shade in what is obviously one of the hotter parts of Queensland.

However, they did not come empty-handed. They brought with them a fiscal strategy developed from the work they have undertaken over the several months they have been elected. They are not just sitting around having cups of tea and eating scones; they are travelling across their relatively large local area and raising funds through bake sales, car cleaning and discos, which are not only important social outings for some of their colleagues and elders in their community but also an amazing opportunity for them to understand the value of putting their money where their mouth is.

The youth council has undertaken an incredible advocacy strategy under the very wise stewardship of a prominent mayor in Western Queensland, Mayor Andrew Martin, in this case guided by Councillor Boyd Johnstone and Natalie and Jaimee-Lee from the staff at the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council. I commend them as fine examples of the men and women who, irrespective of politics, will lead this state through their passionate advocacy and their drive to improve their region.

In my last few seconds, I want to mention not only year 12 and year 6 students who are close to graduating or moving on to the next phase of their life but also the teachers who have ably supported them, including in their endeavours to come to this place. Thank you for what you have done for the fantastic young men and women of Gregory.

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Mr JKELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.12 pm): It has been a happy week in my household. Exams are over, awards have been distributed and graduation will see the end of our family's journey through the local schools. I thank the teachers and staff at the Greenslopes Hospital childcare centre, Greenslopes State School, Greenslopes OSCA and, of course, Cavendish Road State High School.

On Saturday, newly minted adults will be heading off to schoolies in their thousands to celebrate but, sadly, they will not be as safe as they could be because the Crisafulli LNP government has chosen ideology over evidence. Despite the calls from experts, despite the many people in my community who signed petitions calling for this decision to be reversed and despite the LNP government's claims to be a government that listens, it is just not listening. Despite saying that it would keep Queenslanders safe, it is choosing ideology over evidence and putting young Queenslanders at risk. We have had a year of David Crisafulli and the LNP's broken promises, slick slogans, slippery spin and dodgy deals.

During Labor's decade of job creation, rebuilding schools and hospitals, tackling climate change, investing in public transport, securing the Olympics and getting through COVID-19, Labor also found time to tackle big social issues. We had debates and we passed legislation that, at their core, were about empowering women, listening to young people, standing up for small businesses, valuing our environment, treating everybody with dignity and respect, and seeking genuine reconciliation with First Nations people.

In addition to breaking promises and delivering their slick slogans and slippery spin, choosing ideology over evidence and doing dodgy deals, the LNP found time to shut down debate on social issues. Nope, you are not allowed to talk about abortion in here. Nope, you are not allowed to talk about pill testing in here. Nope, treaty is off the table and, nope, you do not want to be talking about net zero. That has gone. In a decade of tackling social issues, Labor had the courage to engage in those debates and get the outcomes that reflected the changing values of our communities. We courageously had those debates and did not shut them down like those opposite do.

People in my community want pill testing at schoolies. They want evidence-based health care. They want reconciliation with First Nations people. They want action on climate. They want real action on the cost of living and housing, not the slippery spin we had yesterday from the Treasurer, who was justifying robbing people of their energy rebates and registration reductions.

This is a government that has silenced debate on important issues, using slick slogans and slippery spin to cover its broken promises, its dodgy deals and its climate inaction. Perhaps that is why this week's Redbridge poll showed the continuing pattern of 18- to 35-year-olds abandoning the LNP, with just one in 10 putting them at No. 1. On this side of the House we do not take any age group for granted. We listen, we continue to be brave enough to debate the big social issues and we will work every day to end their dodgy deals, their slick slogans, their slippery spin and their climate denial, which every single one on that side of the House shares in.

(Time expired)

Far North Queensland, Representation



Ms JAMES (Barron River—LNP) (2.15 pm): It is hard to believe that many of my parliamentary colleagues and I celebrate our one-year anniversary in this chamber. I stepped into a role that has challenged me to my core, inspired me and ultimately given me the honour of representing the good people of Barron River and Far North Queensland. I decided to run because Cairns was hurting and hurting bad. I looked around our community and our local businesses and saw the challenges we were facing.

Two years ago, just weeks after I announced that I would be running, our region was faced with the worst natural disaster in a 100 years, Cyclone Jasper and the Jasper floods. Far North Queensland is still suffering from that natural disaster, with many of our roads still under repair and many locals still living in makeshift homes while theirs are being repaired. My thoughts are with those still impacted by that disaster.

I knew that this role was not just about delivering for Far North Queensland; it was about taking action. My promise to my region was that their concerns would be brought to the table. From day one it has been about action, listening and delivering results, not just promises. That is what our government is all about. Here are a few of the things that my team and I are really proud of.

For five years, the pleas of former principal Dan Hollis and his staff at Trinity Beach State School for a new fence fell on deaf ears. Multiple emails, letters and conversations later, Trinity Beach State School will get its fence by 2026. I thank Minister Langbroek for delivering safety to the school.

For years the team at Far North Queensland Legacy have been fundraising for Legacy House, a purpose-built facility to support veteran families. I met with them six months ago. We created a petition that over 1,000 people signed. There were lots of meetings with the Premier. Just a couple of weeks ago we announced \$1 million for Legacy to start their dream of building a very important facility at Smithfield in my electorate, where land has been given to them by council. It is very exciting. I thank the Premier, Mr David Crisafulli, for supporting our veteran community. I am really grateful for that funding and for this incredible project.

For 22 months, 130 homes at Kamerunga Villas had been left on generator power after being inundated during the Jasper floods. There were months and months of negotiations, extensions, funding and government support as the residents of those 130 houses lived without power other than generator power. However, finally the power was switched back on the other week and they are back

on the main grid. For the first time in 22 months their streetlights work, their security gates are closed, their pools are open and they can hear the sound of birds again. Thank you to Minister Leahy for caring for that community and for helping with that important issue. She has been instrumental in getting this done. From the bottom of my heart and from all of Far North Queensland, thank you.

For six months, Simon Beggs and the team at JCU Dental have been looking for funding. While we have done lots and lots, as long as I am the elected member for Barron River I will continue to fight for more.

(Time expired)

Crisafulli LNP Government, Performance

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (2.18 pm): A year ago next week, the Crisafulli LNP government used their very first parliamentary sitting day to abuse the processes of this place and rush through legislation to repeal the Path to Treaty Act. There was no consultation, no opportunity for a committee to interrogate the matter and make recommendations and no regard for the Queenslanders the legislation actually impacted. There was none of the respect and decency promised by the Premier, only a clear indication that the far right of his party was now in charge and that First Nations people should prepare for a retrograde policy shift, which is exactly what we have seen.

Over the past year, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the member for Maroochydore, has abandoned the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, essentially attempting to erase Queensland's true history and silence the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders; backed away from important projects like the First Nations cultural centres in Brisbane and Cairns; sat by while key identified positions in government departments, including in Health, were downgraded or absorbed into the mainstream; thumbed her nose at key elements of the Closing the Gap agreement; and scrapped key policies designed to create equitable outcomes for First Nations Queenslanders. This is not to mention that she has somehow managed to allocate \$37 million of her Closing the Gap Priorities Fund without any criteria or guidelines, announce a home ownership scheme almost a year ago that I understand still has not helped a single person into their own home and, as was revealed at estimates this year, covered up the number of FTEs who actually work in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships area of her own department which, according to her DG, is less than half the 412 she tried to pass off as such in this year's budget.

Last night the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships stood in a room full of First Nations business owners to proudly announce that the Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy was no longer in existence and that Indigenous procurement was now 'embedded' in the mainstream policy.

Ms SIMPSON: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Not only is the member misleading the House but her words are offensive and untrue. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Minister, there is a process that you can go through for the first part. Member, the minister has found those words offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms ENOCH: I withdraw. Make no mistake, under the LNP and this minister, Queensland has entered a modern era of assimilation policy where under the guise of creating parity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are being embedded or, as the 1937 native welfare conference described it, 'absorbed' into the mainstream. It is nothing more than an attempt to erase culture and remove First Nations customs, influences and belief systems from government policy and service delivery, implying, just as it had been done in 1937, that there is nothing of value in First Nations culture.

Despite the attempts of the LNP and the Minister, allegedly, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to erase us, we are still here. We always were and we will always will be.

Sunshine Coast, Infrastructure; Harris, Ms C OAM

 **Hon. FS SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism) (2.21 pm): I am pleased to talk about what we are delivering for Queensland—a Queensland where we represent all Queenslanders and not cause division in the way the previous speaker did. The green and gold runway to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is going to be a game changer for all Queenslanders. I want to talk about what that means for the Sunshine Coast. We saw a decade of decline under Labor that failed to deliver critical infrastructure projects.

I want to talk about how we are delivering when it comes to procurement. We have actually seen an increase in contracts awarded to our Indigenous businesses across Queensland. That is totally contrary to what the previous speaker was saying when she was trying to mislead the House. In fact, we have a greater spend for Indigenous Queenslanders under our Indigenous Procurement Policy which we are proud to say is still there and still achieving for these great businesses.

I want to talk about the tangible and practical delivery of the Sunshine Coast Airport Gateway Precinct Master Plan which has received approval from EDQ. This is a major milestone for one of the region's key growth projects. This means we will see new hotel rooms and new services to support this airport which is critical not only to provide for the needs and jobs of the people of the Sunshine Coast but also to deliver the green and gold runway to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That runway will also deliver in terms of road, rail and the metro. With the Wave there will be a connection all the way to the airport. Labor had no connection to the Sunshine Coast Airport. There was nothing, nada, zero. They also did not have anything for the Mooloolah River Interchange. We are delivering on these critical projects for the Sunshine Coast.

We are seeing the new Maroochydore CBD come alive. This will be critical in terms of services for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. There will be an Olympic village, an arena and other services that will be game changing for the Sunshine Coast. How good is that! There was nothing from Labor but the Crisafulli government is delivering. The Olympic and Paralympic Games infrastructure is for all Queenslanders across all regions in Queensland.

I give a shout-out to a very special person. That is Cheryl Harris. Cheryl has won the much deserved award of Queensland's Senior Australian of the Year. Well done, Cheryl, for driving volunteer engagement on the Sunshine Coast. You are a wonderful person who brings our communities together.

Mount Lindesay Highway, Upgrade

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.25 pm): Locals want me to highlight a broken promise of the Crisafulli government that directly affects everyone who lives in the Mount Lindesay Highway corridor. Locals know that many of the 31 broken promises of the LNP hurt Logan residents, but this one particularly hurts.

At the last election the LNP candidate for Logan made the promise that the LNP would match our commitment to release a design plan for the community consultation on the Fedrick Street-Green Road overpass grade separation in the first quarter of this year. I have spoken about this in the House before, but now it is 100 per cent clear that the LNP is breaking their promise.

The transport minister speeds on Queensland roads and he must be distracting himself from the main task which is planning, budgeting, repairing and building Queensland roads. In the last budget there was nothing for the Mount Lindesay Highway, especially nothing new for the Fedrick Street-Green Road overpass.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr POWER: I hear those opposite are not very interested in the Mount Lindesay Highway and they probably think I bring this up too much. Residents around the Fedrick Street-Green Road overpass know that that LNP broken promise cannot be brought up often enough.

I invite the minister to come down and witness this. Every morning and every evening there are major traffic jams that start on the Middle Road exit and crawl down to the lights at the intersection which is overwhelmed. This failed minister cannot even get the lights on Mount Lindesay Highway fixed that have been out every day since he has been minister.

Their promise around the Fedrick Street-Green Road overpass has been broken. This promise cannot be unbroken. I am asking the minister to release the draft plan for the intersection even though it will be a year late. We want this minister to be the first LNP minister to announce new investment for the Mount Lindesay Highway anywhere between Boronia Heights and Jimboomba. They never had any interest in that growing corridor and so far there is no investment for it at all.

By contrast, there is major investment for four laning from Rosia Road to Chambers Flat Road and Stoney Camp Road, for the Camp Cable Road intersection, for the bridge over the creek before Jimboomba and for the upgrade of Johanna Street to South Street. This was all provided by the two ministers who backed the Mount Lindesay Highway.

This minister and every other LNP minister has never delivered any four laning projects between Boronia Heights in Logan and Jimboomba. I am asking him to be the first and I will not let up.

(Time expired)

Coomera Electorate



Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (2.28 pm): It has been a busy time on the northern Gold Coast with some exciting events taking place. We saw the official opening of the Pimpama Train Station where I was joined by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Brent Mickelberg, and—wait for it—Queensland Rail CEO, Kat Stapleton. It was promised before the 2017 election and it took them eight years to deliver it. The Crisafulli government's permanent 50-cent fares were a big win for commuters on the northern Gold Coast with Pimpama station finally opening, together with the extended bus services. One notable addition is the Halcyon Greens over 50s bus service not provided by those opposite for some strange reason that I still cannot work out.

I attended Pimpama State School during this busy time for a World Teachers' Day catch-up. I was joined by teachers who were receiving their long service awards for 10, 15 and 20 years service. We also discussed the delivery of the Pimpama State School tuckshop—a promise I made at the 2024 election. I visited the current tuckshop and discussed the location of the new \$2 million facility that will be delivered this term.

Again this year I awarded the Michael Crandon MP Bursary. This year I congratulate our recipients, Kai Dale from Pimpama State Secondary College and Emily White from Kings Christian College at Pimpama. The bursary will help them both pursue their future studies.

Having met with principal Paul Easton for a tour of St Joseph's College a while ago, I represented the Minister for Education and the Arts, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, earlier this week for the official blessing of yet another project with more than \$20 million contributed by the Queensland government for stages 3 and 4.

I recently attended Pimpama State Secondary College for a tour of the new extension of basketball courts and school hall with the college principal, Megan Roderick. We are looking forward to seeing the new playground and water bubblers that are on their way—another promise made at the 2024 election being delivered this term.

I arranged a meeting at Esuarve to introduce Volo's Mitchell Phillips. Mitch spent time speaking to students about what an employer is looking for in hiring a good employee. Esuarve are doing an amazing job with our at-risk youth, and partnerships with local businesses are a big part of that success.

I also recently attended the official opening of the Hub located at Coomera Anglican College, again representing the Minister for Education, John-Paul Langbroek. The Hub is an amazing addition to a college that is delivering for our fast-growing student cohort on the northern Gold Coast.

There is so much more to say, but I am out of time. It has been a busy few weeks and a busy year, but we are just getting started.

Beenleigh Special School



Ms McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (2.31 pm): I would like to address this House in relation to some of the issues affecting us in my patch in Beenleigh. During the budget, the Premier announced that there would be a 'new special school' for Beenleigh. This was a bit of a surprise to us because we have a special school in Beenleigh already—it is the state's largest special school—but I assumed the government meant an expansion or extension of the current special school because it is, as I said, the state's largest. We built the Coomera Special School a couple of years ago. It did not even make a dent in the enrolments that we had. I understand that the new special school at Logan Reserve is underway and that, too, will have little impact only on our enrolment numbers.

I note that the department had been making some investigations before the last election on how to address the numbers at Beenleigh Special School, so when the Premier did announce that there would be a new special school in Beenleigh I was really interested to find out exactly where that would be, because many departments over many years have tried to build things in Beenleigh. There is nowhere in Beenleigh that you can build something new without demolishing something which already exists. Everyone in Beenleigh knew that, just not the people announcing it.

Imagine my surprise when the principals at my state schools came along to tell me that the education department has decided to co-opt their primary school land to co-locate some of these special school campuses. In one case, a 150-year-old school, my smallest school—it is landlocked and does not even have any parking or drop-off areas—is now going to have 100 extra students.

What should consultation with the community look like? In this case there was an email less than one week before the consultation, which was proposed for during working hours on the Monday or during working hours on the Tuesday—not just during working hours but during the Melbourne Cup! I went along to these consultations and can say that the number of community members who were able to come along was in single figures. It was not consultation; it was, 'This is where it's going.' This will impact the schools that are there, because special schools need special pick-up and drop-off areas and buses need to come in. There is no spot at the current schools for buses to come in. These schools are going to lose land and they are going to lose facilities.

My staff attended the Beenleigh Showgrounds, where a number of local organisations are going to be evicted. To paraphrase in parliamentary language what the head of the showgrounds said, the showgrounds are not for sale.

Local Government

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.34 pm): The Crisafulli LNP government have been extensively engaging with our colleagues in local government because we are committed to rebuilding the state government's relationship with our councils. At the core of this effort is our belief on this side of the House that councils are equal partners in government and that our councils need to be empowered to do the job that Queenslanders rely on them to do. That is why I am deeply concerned by the Bureau of Meteorology's announcement that they will stop using the Enviromon platform to provide real-time rainfall and river gauge data to councils from July next year.

This is a blatant cost-shift from the federal Labor government onto Queensland councils, who have been told by the BoM that they will need to source their own solution at their own cost. Not all councils are able to meet or absorb the costs associated with having to source a new platform, which is provided as part of the BoM's remit. This means that councils are being faced with passing on the cost to ratepayers, services being cut or local disaster management groups missing out on this important data.

Our friends in local government share these concerns. Andrew Johnson, the Somerset Regional Council CEO, said—

This represents a major and unfunded cost-shift from the Commonwealth to local governments, a burden that regional councils such as Somerset cannot absorb.

Councillor Tracy Davis, the environment chair for Brisbane City Council, said—

Scrapping this service to councils would mean the end to alerts and leave lives at risk. This is cost-shifting with potentially deadly consequences.

The LGAQ CEO, Alison Smith, said—

When weather events are becoming more frequent and more severe, it simply does not make sense that a service that taxpayers have already funded wants to charge for emergency information.

This is life-saving data and information. It is not Netflix. It is ridiculously dangerous and almost negligent to put it behind a paywall, as we are seeing. I call on the federal Labor government to stop the cost-shifting and find a better solution which acknowledges the important role that councils play in keeping their communities safe. We know that we are the most disaster-prone state, and it is particularly important to Queensland because we will continue to have those disasters, so we need to have that data and that information at our Queensland councils to make sure they can do their job to keep communities safe.

TAFE

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.36 pm): I rise to speak about a growing crisis in Queensland, a crisis created not by circumstance but by decisions made by the LNP government. The crisis is what is happening to our TAFE system. Across the state, especially in regional Queensland, we are seeing confusion, cuts and chaos in an institution that should be the backbone of the future workforce of this state. TAFE is where Queenslanders go to build skills, create careers and gain qualifications that keep our region strong, yet under this government TAFE is being undermined, hollowed out and treated as expendable.

In Cairns we are seeing glaring examples. The TAFE music department, one of the last remaining in-person creative training hubs in North Queensland, is being pushed towards closure. Staff have been kept in the dark, offered assurances one week and termination letters the next. What passes for a

rescue plan is nothing more than a stripped-down certificate III with double fees and no certainty. This is not stability, this is not leadership; this is chaos.

The damage does not stop there. There are now alarming signs that the Certificate III in Aviation (Remote Pilot), Queensland's leading drones training program, is also on the chopping block. Let me be clear: cutting this course is more than a budget decision. It is a failure to understand the future work, the needs of regional Queensland and the opportunities that advanced technology can bring to most of our remote communities. Drone technology is not a novelty; it is an essential tool for the Queensland of tomorrow. Drones are already being used in agriculture, mining, conservation, firefighting, film and emergency responses, but, even more importantly, they have transformative potential for the Torres Strait and for remote Far North communities. Imagine reliable drone transport delivering medical supplies to outer islands when the weather turns and aircraft cannot fly. Imagine emergency services using drones to reach people faster, safer and at a fraction of the cost. This is not science fiction. These are real-world applications already being trialled around the globe. Queensland should be leading, not lagging. If this government cuts the drone program, it cuts off a pathway to highly skilled jobs and cuts off vital technological capability where it is most needed.

Families are already feeling the consequences. One parent told me that their son had saved for months to enrol in the drone qualification. Now, without subsidies and without certainty, that future is slipping away and with it Queensland's claim to be preparing its people for the jobs of tomorrow. We are seeing a concerning pattern: no new funding for schools, no new Free TAFE spots apart from what the federal government are providing, a TAFE board replaced with political insiders and programs being gutted or quietly abandoned. Far North Queensland and Queenslanders expect TAFE to be a safe place, yet we are seeing nothing along those lines from this government.

Oodgeroo Electorate



Hon. AJ STOKER (Oodgeroo—LNP) (2.39 pm): One in four beds at Redland Hospital is being occupied by stranded Redlanders, patients who no longer need hospital care and should be discharged but cannot be because they are waiting for a place in aged care or disability care. The 60 beds at Redland Hospital that are affected stop our doctors and nurses from being able to move patients through emergency and onto the wards, which adversely impacts the wellbeing of the affected patients. This affects 1,126 patients right across the state—enough people to fill a hospital the size of Royal Brisbane every single day.

The LNP Crisafulli state government is doing its bit to deal with our local need, and I am so grateful for these investments. We have had a commitment for an expanded transit lounge, for a new mental and allied health building with additional beds, for investment into MRI and even for an extra ambulance. Aged care and disability care are clear federal responsibilities, and it is time for the federal government to play its part for our stranded Redlanders.

Huge congratulations are due to the year 12 students who are graduating this week from our local schools. I had the pleasure of joining Wellington Point State High School recently, and Cleveland District State High School students will have their ceremony today—big congratulations to them. Ormiston College and Redlands College, whom I will join tomorrow, round out our local schools.

Well done, students, on reaching this important milestone. I really enjoyed celebrating with you at local ceremonies. All of the very best for your next steps. Stay safe and make good choices if you are doing schoolies. If you need them, the Red Frogs are there to give you a hand. If you are struggling with the transition to the next chapter of life, remember to reach out to your family, to Lifeline or to Beyond Blue. Help is within reach, and there are lots of reasons for you to be hopeful about what is next.

When I came into this role, it was apparent to me that the bus services on North Stradbroke Island were not meeting the needs of our community, particularly given the higher demand that 50-cent fares had driven. Parents told me that they were concerned for the safety of their children, who were often left at the Amity interchange for long periods without phone reception, safety cameras or even much shade or water. Huge fluctuations in visitor numbers meant too many passengers were left waiting during peak times, souring their experience in a manner that was damaging to future tourism. The lack of connection between Dunwich and One Mile meant that many visitors were not seeing all that Dunwich has to offer.

I am really pleased to say that, after listening to locals, changes are on the way from 1 December. The 880 bus from Dunwich to Point Lookout will have the daily addition of an earlier and a later trip to help staff get to work. There will be 41 additional services every week and a further 91 weekly services

during peak and holiday periods. The 881 bus will now connect Amity Point to One Mile, bringing QUAMPI into the transport network, with 112 extra services every week.

Conduct of Member for Pine Rivers, Apology

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.42 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to address what occurred this morning. I have spoken to the Leader of the Opposition about my conduct and he has made it clear to me that he has far higher expectations of me and of all our team. As champions of our local communities in this House, it was unacceptable. Whilst I withdrew twice this morning and withdrew from the chamber at the Speaker's direction, I will always take full responsibility for my actions in this chamber, and I unreservedly apologise to the Premier, the House and all honourable members for any offence caused.

Queensland Human Rights Commission, Conduct

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (2.43 pm): I rise to speak to legitimate concerns about the conduct of the Queensland Human Rights Commission in dealing with and closing a recent human rights and anti-discrimination matter. In about mid-2024, during a Fraser Coast Regional Council ordinary meeting, a local resident—the complainant—was given the opportunity to speak during a public participation meeting. On registration and before speaking, each community participant is informed of the speaking rules and time limits. Community speakers are normally given three minutes; however, council's policy allows the chair to extend the speaking time to five minutes.

Councillor Paul Truscott, as chair, provided the complainant six minutes; however, the speaker continued for almost 10 minutes—well beyond council's policy. Councillor Truscott prompted the speaker several times to bring the presentation to its core objective so that, presumably, councillors could understand the purpose of the presentation. I am informed that the complainant then behaved rudely and was hostile, and after 10 minutes the presentation concluded.

The complainant subsequently lodged a Queensland Human Rights Commission complaint claiming breaches under the Human Rights Act 2019 and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, including claims he was constantly interrupted, denied the allocated time and threatened with removal from the council meeting room by security. The Queensland Human Rights Commission pursued the matter based on alleged breaches to the right to freedom of expression, the right to take part in public life, the right to recognition and equality before the law and the right to privacy and reputation.

I am informed that CCTV, audio footage and witness statements that could have contradicted the complainant's allegations were proffered as evidence but refused by the commission. The commission appeared to have no regard as to whether the allegations could be substantiated. Section 69 of the Human Rights Act 2019 provides that the Human Rights Commissioner must reject a human rights complaint 'if the commissioner considers the complaint is frivolous, trivial, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance'.

It beggars belief that the respondent, Councillor Truscott, would be embroiled in a Human Rights Commission dispute that dragged on for nearly 18 months and incurred over \$15,000 in legal costs alone, ultimately borne by the ratepayers. It also raised unrealistic complainant expectations that their case had real prospects of success. How can the commissioner exercise the section 69 power without some robust substantiation of the facts? In closing, I strongly urge the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner to explain how it is that this case could drag on for so long at considerable cost to all concerned.

South Brisbane Electorate, Development

 **Dr O'SHEA** (South Brisbane—ALP) (2.46 pm): I rise to speak about the urgent need for community consultation by this government on the future of the Visy site in my electorate of South Brisbane. This land is owned by Queenslanders, and they deserve to have a say on its future. The Visy site is seven hectares of public land—equivalent to about 10 football fields—in the heart of South Brisbane or, as the government is marketing it to private developers, it is prime development land with uninterrupted river frontage, Brisbane's landmark development and a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Strangely enough, there is no mention of the already congested roads in our area, of the lack of green space, that our high school is at capacity, that our primary school is nearing capacity or of all of the people sleeping rough along the river, just outside this site, as there is no affordable housing. The Visy site is the last large parcel of state owned land in South Brisbane. When I surveyed our community there was an overwhelming call for the site to be transformed into public green space, affordable

housing and community facilities like a school or sporting ground. The government has invited private developers to submit proposals for redevelopment of this site, without any community consultation, just as there was no community consultation on recent changes to the planning rules for this site, which removed requirements for affordable housing and long-term rentals.

The Visy site is a public asset, and the community deserves to have a real say in how it is used rather than it being sold off to the highest bidder. My community are concerned by the lack of transparency in this process and want to know if this government is planning to sell off the state owned land to developers. They are asking to be properly consulted on the future of this site and not have lip-service paid to consultation, like this government did in Woolloongabba where calls to reinstate the affordable housing requirements and green space, which were removed from the development scheme, were met with a resounding no.

On behalf of my community I have started a parliamentary petition requesting the House ensure that the Deputy Premier undertakes formal community consultation on the future use of the Visy site and that this feedback is incorporated into any decision regarding redevelopment of this site. I urge all Queenslanders to support this petition. Just like South Bank, this land is owned by Queenslanders and they deserve a say on its future.

Capalaba Electorate, School Students

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (2.49 pm): This is an exciting time for all students including those in the electorate of Capalaba as we near the end of the academic year. Yesterday I welcomed the school leaders of Birkdale, Birkdale South, Alexandra Hills, Hilliard and Vienna Woods state schools, as well as Capalaba State College's junior campus, to parliament for a barbecue lunch. This was an occasion to celebrate their achievements over the past year and all the fantastic work they have been doing in their school communities.

Afterwards the students had a chance to tour this place and learn about our democratic institutions and history. The conversations I had over lunch about the big issues facing our younger generations filled me with real confidence that our future is in safe hands. I feel that most of them are enthusiastic and really looking forward to moving up into high school next year. No doubt some may be a little nervous about the unknown, but I am confident they will all do well.

We also had a chance to play some games and were lucky enough to be joined by the education minister, along with our youngest member of parliament, Ariana Doolan, the member for Pumicestone. I give a special shout-out to Frank and Braxton from Alexandra Hills State School, who managed to beat a couple of my staff at a game of Giant Connect 4.

It was not just the primary school kids who have had the opportunity to visit parliament. Earlier this year I also invited the school leaders from Alexandra Hills State High School and Capalaba State College's senior campus to the parliamentary dining room for lunch. They were rapt. These impressive young people have gone above and beyond in what can be an already stressful year for grade 12 students, and I feel this was a just reward. They have displayed great leadership and learned some important lessons that will stand them in good stead for their future.

I understand that the end is in sight—exams are almost finished and schoolies is just around the corner. Whether they head to university, take up a trade as I did or head straight into another field of work, I know that they will do their best and make sure our state is a much better place. I look forward to continuing to work with our local school communities over the coming years to create an even better Capalaba for everybody—young and old.

Queensland Parliament, Upper House

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.52 pm): Over 100 years ago the Queensland government of the day abolished our upper house, against the will of the majority of Queenslanders, leaving us as the only unicameral state. Has this led to the lack of transparency and scrutiny; a rise in voter disengagement; mistrust in governments; movements such as sovereign citizens; loopholes in chamber standing orders and rules that silence and sideline communities; or poor behaviours of parties, MPs and media which can all foster misinformation and misunderstandings, amplified further by social engineering via AI?

Democracy is vital. However, we have some structural issues, with the executive of government, ministers, departments and agencies able to operate in what has been termed an elective dictatorship. Our current government back in 2009 recognised this and committed to a reintroduction of an upper house. This never eventuated, with the rationale being that the reviewed committee system would

address the shortfalls. It obviously has not, with research and a report by the Institute of Public Affairs in 2020 determining that three structural deficits exist in our accountability, democracy and regional representation.

Regardless of how hardworking the opposition of the day is to ensure transparency and accountability of governments, the system itself makes it near impossible. On-the-fly, slogan oriented legislation to fit election campaigns can be pushed through, sold in advertising paid for by taxpayers to be then overturned at a change of government through the same flawed process. As outlined in the IPA report, party dominance means the majority of MPs must adhere to party policy, not to the wishes of their electorate. Hence, parties and those who fund them determine the composition of the executive, with parliament rendered a tool of the executive, not of the people.

In 1910 the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution that Queensland be divided into north, central and southern Queensland. In 2010 all but two mayors supported a separate North Queensland state. The question is: why this ongoing push for change? Obviously something is not working. The report recommended the reintroduction of an upper house. This could restore our parliament to being the people's house, as intended.

That decision over a hundred years ago in defiance of a state referendum has left a permanent stain on Queensland's democracy. Ultimately, if governments are not prepared for our committee system and standing orders and rules to be independently reviewed—that is an economical solution—the question is: will the reintroduction of an upper house address our deficits? To find out, let's have an inquiry—let the people of Queensland speak—and remove that stain.

Redcliffe Electorate, Homelessness

 **Ms DOOLEY** (Redcliffe—LNP) (2.55 pm): Firstly, I want to put on the record my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of 17-year-old Olivia Chivers, who was tragically fatally struck in a hit and run in Margate, Redcliffe this week. I want to thank the residents who were with Olivia at the time she died and I thank them for their first aid. I thank our police for their actions to arrest the person responsible swiftly.

I also rise to update the House on a matter of public importance in my electorate of Redcliffe. This week I launched my supportive housing campaign to see housing provided to those with complex needs. Supportive housing gives people the stability they need to turn their lives around while easing pressure on frontline services. It is a proven model that helps keep our communities safer, stronger and more connected.

Redcliffe urgently needs its own supportive housing project to give vulnerable locals a proven pathway out of homelessness and back into community life. We have situations right now where many sleeping rough in Redcliffe and Moreton Bay who are offered emergency housing refuse it. We have those with drug and substance addictions using and sleeping near children's playgrounds, leaving their used drug paraphernalia and rubbish in public spaces and parks, causing dangerous health risks to others. It is completely unacceptable. Many in Redcliffe report to me their concerns that our public parks and spaces are being taken over by people with addictions, with complex mental health, carrying weapons and refusing the offer of services extended to them and that they are becoming increasingly violent.

Just this week Encircle Redcliffe, who provide specialist homelessness services, had to close due to escalating violence and threats of aggression and abuse towards their staff from some of those sleeping rough. We also saw the incident in Caboolture on Monday involving a shooting and stabbing perpetrated from a homeless encampment. We also had a defenceless man beaten with a pole in a toilet block in Suttons Beach in front of Redcliffe park runners by someone claiming to be homeless. I have personally seen those sleeping rough carrying large knives, posing serious threats to public safety.

We are working hand in glove with the City of Moreton Bay council, specialist housing services, the Redcliffe Breakfast Club, the Salvation Army and local police to find solutions that work for all. However, we will not accept or tolerate violence, threatening behaviour, weapons, public drug use and abuse against the very staff trying to help them. I want to put on the record to Minister O'Connor: thank you for the Moreton Bay Youth Foyer. Every Queenslanders deserves a safe place to call home.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Kurwongbah, you have two minutes.

Copper Theft

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.58 pm): I rise today to talk about the dangers and the cost to our community of copper theft. I was chair of the Transport and Resources Committee which held an inquiry into scrap metal theft, including copper, during the last parliament. We investigated a lot of aspects of copper theft. During a meeting with Energex, they said millions of dollars were being lost annually because of streetlighting copper theft and stealing from substations. As I have said in this House before, the risk to electricity supply and to human safety when earthing conductor and live cables are being ripped out—it is terrifying to me as an electrician to imagine what could happen one day.

During our committee's public hearings we heard from electrical contractors, developers and councils footing huge bills to restore floodlights at sports facilities where thieves had stripped the copper. In my electorate, sadly, this has happened a couple of times at the Harris Avenue sports precinct in Narangba—a venue the Premier knows. It is where he announced on 30 May last year that he would 'be taking legislative action against metal theft in this state'. As we know, the LNP loves handing in our homework because the day before the then opposition leader visited my electorate the then Labor attorney-general put out a press release supporting six out of seven of our committee's recommendations.

To recap: the then Leader of the Opposition and some of his friends came to my electorate to announce they would be doing the same thing our committee recommended and our government had agreed to. They said at the time, 'No more reviews, no more talkfests. It's time to legislate.' I am asking the Premier and his friends, on behalf of the sports teams he spoke to and all of my other clubs, to honour the commitment they made to my electorate. Tell us when we can expect this LNP government to 'give the police the teeth they need'. I know the City of Moreton Bay mayor, Peter Flannery, is keen to hear, as he is still waiting for the solutions that were promised.

I also note from a Instagram reel back in May 2024 about what \$20 million lost to copper theft from Energy Queensland could do for sporting clubs. Premier, for \$2 million we can finish the Harris Avenue sporting precinct upgrade, Narangba Eagles soccer can have their own clubhouse, and Narangba Demons baseball can have their own clubhouse as well. Premier, I agree. It is time to legislate to cut copper theft. There is only one sitting week left. Tell us, is this another broken promise or are you going to do it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Before I call the Clerk to read the next order of the day, I would just like to recognise Glenvale State School up in the gallery today.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 30 October (see p. 3520), on motion of Mr Hunt—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 16, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Queensland Child and Family Commission*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (3.00 pm), continuing: I will pick up where I left off. Data is mentioned over 250 times in the QFCC's annual report. In fact, the report says they use data to improve the sector's understanding of risk factors and support the development of new policies and practices to reduce harm to children and young people. That is the complete opposite of what we have seen from the LNP, which is a bungled, broken, bureaucratic mess—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on 118, relevance. This committee investigated an annual report from over a year ago. Labor members keep referring to things the committee has not examined or reported on.

Ms SCANLON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The previous Deputy Speaker ruled that we could respond to comments made by previous speakers. In fact, I think it was the member for Moggill who talked about watch house capacity, particularly the justice minister and others, so I am referring to the actions being taken and the comments of those opposite in this debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): I understand. I have received advice from the Clerk. This report is quite broad and it does refer to the Unify system, but criticising the current government about things from the past is outside of the report.

Ms SCANLON: I am sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have not done that. Please continue, member for Gaven.

Ms SCANLON: We currently have a bungled bureaucratic mess, which is the complete opposite of what this report by the Queensland Family and Child Commission recommends. A program that was meant to unify our child safety data and system has instead been completely shattered by the Liberal National Party—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I do not mean to be repetitive from the honourable member's point of order, but could you please get the member to explain the relevance to the report that is before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The advice from the Clerk was that when the speaker is speaking to an interjection from somebody else then they can talk about that. They can also talk to this report and not criticise the current government about matters. Member for Gaven, you have not done that at this stage. I am listening very closely. I understand the guidance clearly.

Ms SCANLON: Data is mentioned over 250 times in the QFCC's annual report. I am talking about the importance of data security. We have had members of the Liberal National Party get up and talk about current watch house capacity. If they want to talk about the current government's actions, well, I am merely responding to that. What is clear is that this government is the one that turned on a data system that was clearly broken. For what? To save a couple of bucks; to tick a box. When you lose data you do not just lose numbers; you lose the ability to track a child and the risk to that child. You lose visibility over the warning signs and you lose the capacity to prevent a tragedy. The minister could not even be open with Queenslanders about how many children have suffered—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member on her feet is clearly defying your most recent ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am paying very close attention. The member for Gaven outlined the context of what she was saying when we first started. I am paying close attention. If she strays, I will bring her back to order.

Ms SCANLON: I appreciate that members of the government do not like talking about the failures of their system—a system that the QFCC warned was incredibly important to keep track of children, yet we have seen the complete opposite—

Mrs Frecklington: Developed by Labor.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General because now she wants to talk about the Unify system that the Liberal National Party turned on. It was ministers of this Crisafulli government who made the conscious decision—

Mrs Frecklington: How many failed child safety ministers are there in one government? Three!

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection. It was the Liberal National Party Crisafulli government that decided to turn the Unify system on.

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I am sorry to belabour the point, but as chair of the committee and the producer of this report we did not examine the things the member is talking about. No doubt next year's report will be about Labor's failures in this area. In this report we did not examine any of those things the member is currently talking about.

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. These are vexatious points of order. If it is on relevance, they should be referring to relevance and not continuing on. There are 26 seconds left.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I will raise the point of order with respect to relevance. I have been listening carefully to the contribution. I would submit again that it is a confined period of time in relation to the matters that relate to the report. I accept there is a mention of electronic systems and elements related to that, however, in relation to relevance it is very tight.

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There was an interjection that was taken in relation to that relevance question as well.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will look after the order of the House. Leader of the House, your point of order is relevant and I am giving clear guidance. The member for Gaven gave context at the start. I have been listening to her. She has been taking points of order. If she extends into criticism of the current government then I will address that matter. I received clear guidance from the Clerk earlier today about this. Member for Gaven, you have the call. Please confine your contributions as outlined.

Ms SCANLON: We had a minister who could not even be open with Queenslanders about how many children have suffered.

Ms Grace: She actually didn't know.

Ms SCANLON: She did not even know; I take that interjection. What is clear is that we have a child safety minister who has no idea what is happening with her department despite clear recommendations of the importance of data protection and security, and those children will suffer under this government.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.08 pm): I rise to address the QFCC report. In doing so I want to say that in this 2023-24 annual report they talk about their strong focus on data transparency. I want to talk about their achievements and their milestones when it comes to what should be done with this very important data.

First, in 2024 the QFCC launched the Principle Focus dashboard to monitor and examine the over-representation of First Nations people in the child protection system. In 2024 the QFCC published Data Explorer, an interactive tool aggregating wellbeing data to give a voice to young people in system design. At the crux of this is the QFCC successfully using digital platforms to make quality data accessible, but the LNP's bungled Unify program puts that quality data at risk.

Second, we see in this report that the QFCC hosts the Child Death Review Board, which keeps the Child Death Register. Information here is crucial because it is shared across agencies and projects, sharing data with the Coroners Court. The crux is that it shows how quality data drives child safety reform, but the LNP's bungled Unify program puts that quality data at risk.

Third, in 2023-24 the QFCC undertook major systems reviews and studies. They looked at children's absences from care placements and care and at young people in both the care and the youth justice systems. They found: there are barriers to information sharing which has an impact on the work supporting children; poor quality data erodes accountability; and data accessibility presents a risk, with the annual report stating—

An inability to source high-quality data outcomes—reduces our capacity to effectively monitor the impact of the child and family support system, restricting our ability to drive improvements and build a culture of accountability.

The crux of that is that the Unify rollout bungle from the LNP has proved the QFCC right. Case records are missing, data feeds are gone and transparency is disappearing. The LNP's bungled Unify program not only puts that quality data at risk; it puts children at risk. I commend the report but I call out the careless approach shown so far by the LNP when it comes to this kind of data. That careless approach puts Queensland children in care at risk.

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise today to speak on the committee's report reviewing the Queensland Family and Child Commission's annual report for 2023-24 and the Child Death Review Board's annual report for 2023-24, and I thank them sincerely for their role in providing this report. The QFCC plays a critical role in ensuring Queensland's children are safe, protected and given every opportunity to thrive. Their work ensures that the systems we put in place to care for and support our children—especially those involved in the child protection and youth justice systems—are held to account. It is with that purpose in mind that I address the House today.

The annual report makes reference to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, a bill introduced to this parliament last year. It would be remiss of me not to take this opportunity to thank the then attorney-general, the Hon. Yvette D'Ath, for her dedicated work on this important legislation. The report clearly articulates the rationale behind this reform, stating—

Every Queensland child has the right to be raised safely in their culture, connected to kin and Country.

One of the most sobering parts of the annual report is the work of the Child Death Review Board, which is hosted by the QFCC and is responsible for maintaining Queensland's Child Death Register. In 2023-24 the register recorded 422 child deaths. That number should give all of us pause, but it is not a statistic to be quietly filed away. The data in the register informs prevention work across agencies, whether that is improving risk indicators for drowning, addressing co-sleeping dangers or developing better suicide prevention measures. It is also shared with the Coroners Court and research bodies, because transparency and learning are essential if we are to do better.

Over the past year the QFCC has conducted major system reviews and studies into areas where our systems are most fragile, particularly around children absent from care and what the commission calls 'crossover kids'—that is, children involved in both the child protection and the youth justice

systems. These are some of our most vulnerable young people, and the commission's findings should be a wake-up call to every one of us in this House.

One key issue raised repeatedly throughout the report is the persistent barriers to information sharing. These barriers are real obstacles to delivering coordinated, effective services for children and families. If agencies cannot talk to each other, if they cannot share the right information at the right time, then children fall through the cracks and some never make it back.

In 2024 the QFCC launched the Principle Focus dashboard, an important digital tool to monitor and better understand the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in our child protection system. This is a significant contribution to transparency and policy reform. Also in 2024, following the release of their *Growing up in Queensland* report, the commission launched the Data Explorer, a tool that aggregates wellbeing data from over 8,200 young Queenslanders aged eight to 18. This tool represents a breakthrough. For too long, system design has occurred without hearing from the very people affected by it. Through the Data Explorer, young people now have a direct voice in shaping the services that are supposed to serve them. This data is available at both regional and state level, drawing on information from NGOs, researchers and government departments.

However, the commission have also issued a strong warning: poor quality data erodes accountability. In their risk management framework, the QFCC identified difficulty accessing high-quality data as a strategic risk to the system. Unfortunately, that risk is no longer theoretical. It is very real and it is being realised before our eyes with the Unify system rollout under the watch of this government. When child safety workers do not have access to case histories, when agencies cannot access timely and accurate information, when frontline decisions are made in the dark, it is not only a risk to vulnerable children; it is a risk to public confidence in our child protection system. Queenslanders should be able to expect more than vague reassurances from a minister.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICE, INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (3.17 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee Report No. 17, 58th Parliament, *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner*, tabled on 5 September 2025.

I rise as chair of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak on the committee's oversight responsibilities in relation to our tabled report to the House. The committee is charged under the Integrity Act 2009 with monitoring and reviewing the performance of the Integrity Commissioner, examining reports of the commissioner and reporting to this Assembly as required. Over the past year the committee has fulfilled these functions through a detailed examination of the Integrity Commissioner's 2023-24 annual report and by conducting a public hearing with the commissioner, the deputy commissioner and the manager of corporate services on 21 May this year.

The role of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner is a unique one in the Australian context. The commissioner's role is to: provide written advice to designated persons on ethics, integrity and conflicts of interest; maintain the state's lobbying register; deliver education and training on lobbying laws; and raise awareness of integrity issues across government. The annual report revealed a significant increase in demand for advice. In 2023-24 the office received 122 formal requests for advice, 56 more than in the previous year. Ministers and assistant ministers were the largest group of designated persons seeking guidance, followed by statutory office holders, directors-general and ministerial advisers. About 85 per cent of requests related to conflicts of interest, often concerning personal interests. Despite the increased workload, the office finalised 115 advices, with nearly 80 per cent completed within 10 business days.

I am sure that every member of this parliament appreciates the value of the Integrity Commissioner's role and the comfort that comes from having access to independent, confidential advice on matters of ethics, integrity and conflicts of interest. The availability of this service provides confidence to members as they carry out their duties and strengthens the integrity of this institution and the trust that Queenslanders place in their parliament.

The committee also examined the office's role in regulating lobbying activity. In 2023-24 the Integrity Commissioner maintained a register of 104 lobbying entities and 254 individual lobbyists and recorded 928 lobbying activities. There was also a marked increase in lobbying related inquiries largely due to legislative amendments requiring reregistration, which occurred in May 2024. The office reported 66 instances of noncompliance, most commonly failures to record lobbying activities or confusion around whether an activity qualified as lobbying. One show cause notice was issued during the period resulting in a formal warning. The commissioner has emphasised education as the preferred means of achieving compliance, supported by the introduction of mandatory training for lobbyists, which commenced this year.

A major focus in the year ahead will be the review of the lobbyists' code of conduct. The last substantial amendments to this code were in 2013. The code is being examined in consultation with stakeholders with the aim of clarifying values-based expectations of behaviour while shifting procedural matters into directives. This review is a critical step in ensuring that lobbying regulation keeps pace with community expectations. Queensland's model is unique nationally. Other jurisdictions split these functions across different agencies. None mirror the combined responsibilities of our Integrity Commissioner. The commissioner reaffirmed the importance of confidentiality in her advice process, noting that designated persons may choose to disclose that advice if they wish.

I want to conclude by thanking my fellow committee members for their commitment to this important oversight work and the committee secretariat for their professionalism and excellent support. I also thank the Commissioner, Linda Waugh; the Deputy Commissioner, Paxton Booth; and Manager, Corporate Services, Krystal Petersen for their attendance at our hearing, their cooperation in providing evidence to the committee and for their ongoing dedication to raising standards of transparency and accountability in Queensland. With the LNP's \$7.1 million boost to their budget this year, I think that will continue well.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (3.21 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report regarding the oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner. The Integrity Commissioner's role is clear, independent and enshrined in law. It is to provide impartial advice to designated persons on ethics, integrity and conflicts of interest, maintain the lobbying register and educate public office holders. Whilst the committee examined the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner's annual report 2023-24 tabled on 24 September 2024 pursuant to the Integrity Act 2009, I want to focus my contribution on the committee's oversight hearing where a number of topics were explored including confidentiality and disclosure advice. Let me quote directly from the committee's report. It states—

The Integrity Commissioner gave evidence about the importance of confidentiality with respect to the advice she provides, and the circumstances in which it might be disclosed. The confidentiality provisions of the Integrity Act apply to the Integrity Commissioner and her staff, not a designated person seeking advice. As such, that person is free to share any advice provided to them. However, the Integrity Commissioner noted that as a matter of practice, she would ask a person who does so to disclose her advice in full.

In other words, members and ministers can absolutely release advice provided to them by the Integrity Commissioner. In fact, I would imagine that if there was any question of a potential or perceived conflict, if there was media interest in a matter or if questions were raised in estimates let's say, a minister would willingly volunteer the advice provided to them so as to prove they had made all appropriate declarations and had adhered to the Ministerial Handbook and code of conduct. It would be a way, I imagine, to ensure transparency and avoid any doubt about their integrity.

The *Courier-Mail* reported on 17 July this year that ministers Camm and Mander had confirmed that they are in a relationship—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have been listening with great interest to a member of the former government—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): What is the point of order?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is in relation to a report that was tabled for the financial year 2023-24. The point of order is relevance. I note that the member was talking about a committee hearing, but now she is straying into matters that she would like to bring into this debate that are simply irrelevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. Member for Alger, can you advise the House how what you are talking about now is relevant? I was listening intently to the member quoting from evidence at the inquiry. You have just shifted past that. Can you explain that or come back to the report please?

Ms ENOCH: Certainly, Mr Deputy Speaker. The report has been tabled. It is very clear what the Integrity Commissioner has said about her role. The committee has made that clear in their report. There have been matters that have questioned the legitimacy of being able to share information from a minister and that is certainly why I believe this is relevant to the debate today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: One moment while I seek some advice. The advice I have received is that the advice of the Integrity Commissioner is very broad in regards to integrity issues. If you remain in line with the report and the review that will be very helpful.

Ms ENOCH: I am certainly intending to do that. As I have said, any relationship—congratulations. Love is love; there is no issue. The same report that we have just talked about, however, stated that their relationship was revealed to their ministerial colleagues just three days earlier, despite it being ‘understood that they had been seeing each other for quite some time’.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I apologise; I have to move to Mr Nicholls’s chair because my microphone will not work. The point of order is absolutely on relevance, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member who was on her feet is straying into extraordinary, disrespectful and disgraceful behaviour for a member of parliament.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, let’s stop the quarrelling across the chamber. Member for Algester, you need to come back to the committee’s report. You have moved away from that in making reflections on others. Please confine your contribution to the report.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. As was in the report, releasing advice about information provided by the Integrity Commissioner on the grounds of confidentiality, which of course the committee has reported, is not an argument whatsoever. As I said earlier, I would imagine that given the information the committee has reported on, if there was any question about any minister’s integrity, they would release that advice as par for the course. Like I said, there is no real issue about whether there are relationships or not. They would receive integrity advice around that. The issue is really around whether personal relationships are pre-existing or emerge in the context of a ministerial cabinet. If that happens they have to immediately require—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Algester—

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, Leader of the House, I had started to pull up the member for Algester. Member for Algester, the matters you are talking about now are not contained in the report and are circumstances that have continued after the report. If you continue in that vein and criticise members, I will sit you down.

Ms ENOCH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I appreciate that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The matter of whether a report is released or not is a matter for the member.

Ms ENOCH: The report itself and the quote that I used at the beginning of my contribution were very clear that the Integrity Commissioner has made it clear that those who receive that advice are able to release it. There is no issue of confidentiality. I will not mention any actual individuals, but if there are any perceived or actual conflicts they must be managed with a formal conflict plan so that the Queensland public can have faith and trust that the decisions being made by the government are not biased in any way, and I think that is pretty clear in the report. It is why the Ministerial Code of Conduct and the Ministerial Handbook exist, it is why the test of public interest or public perception is applied to such matters and it is why, as the committee reinforced, the role of the Integrity Commissioner is so important.

The committee outlined in its report that the role of the Integrity Commissioner includes giving written advice about ethics or integrity issues to designated persons, former designated persons and former ministerial advisers and meeting with and advising members of the Legislative Assembly, orally or in writing, about interests. The annual report also made clear that the Integrity Commissioner’s office is delivering on its responsibilities. I want to acknowledge the Integrity Commissioner for her incredible work. I know that we all rely on her a great deal to be able to provide that advice and then table that advice when necessary.

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (3.30 pm): Integrity is the bedrock of public confidence in this government or any government. It is what assures Queenslanders that decisions are made fairly, openly and in the best interests of the people we serve. Today I rise to speak on the Justice, Integrity and

Community Safety Committee's tabled report titled *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner*. The committee's work makes one thing abundantly clear: the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner has had a year of immense change and growing demand. In the 2023-24 year alone, the office received 122 formal requests for advice on integrity and ethics—an increase of more than 50 per cent on the year before. The majority of these concerned conflicts of interest, and I think that demonstrates something important: our ministers, office holders and senior public servants are actively seeking independent guidance when faced with challenging situations. This is a sign of a healthy culture—one where integrity is not an afterthought but a first instinct.

The commissioner's role in regulating lobbying has also grown. With the passage of the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024, we now have stronger rules around who may lobby, mandatory training for lobbyists and clearer reporting obligations. During the reporting year, the office recorded more than 900 lobbying activities and dealt with 66 cases of noncompliance. A review of the lobbying code of conduct—untouched since 2013—is now underway, and I welcome that work. Equally encouraging is the commissioner's focus on education. Some 33 training sessions and webinars were delivered across government and industry, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants. Some 95 per cent rated the sessions as highly relevant and well presented. This education-first approach is crucial. Compliance is not just about enforcement; it is about building a culture where integrity is understood, expected and lived out daily.

All of this work has placed new pressures on the office. The transition to statutory body status, the implementation of legislative change and the surge in demand have stretched staff and resources. The budget has grown to just over \$2 million, but the commissioner has made it clear that modest additional resourcing is needed if outreach and education are to keep pace with community expectations.

The committee commends the commissioner and her staff for their efforts through what has been a transformative year. We note the importance of ensuring the office is properly resourced and we support the commissioner's strong emphasis on education as the first tool of compliance. Our recommendation is simple: that the House notes the contents of this report. Integrity is not a box to be ticked; it is the foundation of public trust. The work of the Integrity Commissioner strengthens transparency, accountability and confidence in Queensland's democracy. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.33 pm): I rise to speak about the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner. The committee's report No. 17, tabled in July 2025, presents a detailed examination of the office's activities during the 2023-24 financial year, including evidence taken at the public hearing held on 21 May 2025. The Office of the Integrity Commissioner is a statutory body that performs a vital role in maintaining integrity, transparency and accountability across Queensland's public sector. Under the Integrity Act 2009, the commissioner provides independent advice on ethics and integrity matters, maintains the Queensland lobbyist register and delivers education and training to public officials and lobbyists alike.

It was the former Labor government that delivered key reforms through the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024—reforms that significantly strengthened the independence of the office by establishing it as a statutory body in its own right. Labor also provided the resources necessary for the office to fulfil its vital role. Labor's 2024-25 budget increased the office's funded full-time-equivalent positions from eight to 15, almost doubling its workforce and ensuring the commissioner had the tools needed to meet a rapidly expanding workload.

The committee's report makes clear just how important these reforms and investments were. During 2023-24 the office received 122 formal requests for advice—almost 50 per cent more than the year before—oversaw 104 lobbying entities and 254 registered lobbyists and recorded nearly a thousand lobbying contacts. The office also conducted 152 stakeholder meetings, delivered 33 training sessions and launched a webinar series to explain recent legislative changes—a clear indication of its proactive and education-first approach.

At the public hearing the Integrity Commissioner, Linda Waugh, spoke about the delicate balance her office must strike between education and enforcement. She explained that, while the advisory functions remain essential, the regulatory side of the office is evolving, moving toward a proactive compliance model that assists people to do the right thing but does not hesitate to act when they fail to meet their obligations. That is precisely the kind of measured, professional approach Queenslanders expect from an independent integrity office—one that supports voluntary compliance but has the strength and structures to hold people accountable when necessary.

Labor will continue to fight for an integrity system that is truly independent and properly resourced—a respected one that restores confidence and trust in government decision-making. Integrity is the foundation upon which democracy stands. In closing, I commend the Integrity Commissioner, her staff and my fellow committee members for their professionalism and dedication during a period of significant legislative and organisational change. Their work is a reminder of what the true Public Service looks like—impartial, principled and committed to public good.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise today as a member of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee to speak of our report No. 17, tabled in this House, on the oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner for the 2023-24 financial year. Integrity is crucial for effective governance, embodying unwavering honesty, ethical conduct and accountability that fosters public trust and ensures decisions serve the collective good rather than personal gain. In government, where power is wielded on behalf of the people, a lack of integrity can erode democratic institutions, breed corruption and undermine policy outcomes. This report defines the vital role that independent integrity bodies play in upholding the trust and accountability that Queenslanders rightly expect from their government.

As the member for Thuringowa, I know firsthand how important these processes are to communities across our state where people demand transparency in decision-making and ethical conduct from those who serve them. The committee's oversight process, as detailed in the report, involved a thorough examination of the Integrity Commissioner's annual report for 2023-24, which was tabled last September, and a public hearing on 21 May this year with Integrity Commissioner Linda Waugh, Deputy Commissioner Paxton Booth and Manager of Corporate Services Krystal Petersen.

I commend Commissioner Waugh and her team for their dedication during what was undoubtedly a demanding year. The office transition to a statutory body navigated significant amendments to the Integrity Act 2009 and ramped up education and training efforts, all while handling a surge in workload. Let me highlight some key achievements from the report. The office received 122 formal advice requests on ethics, integrity and interests issues—a 56 per cent increase from the previous year. Some of the demand would suggest the high number of new MPs who were ensuring they fulfilled their role with genuine integrity is a clear sign of growing awareness and reliance on this independent service. Ministers, statutory office holders, directors-general and advisors turned to the commissioner for guidance, with 85 per cent of requests focusing on conflicts of interest, particularly personal ones. Impressively, 77 per cent of these were finalised within 10 business days, although the report notes that complex cases and resource pressures, especially during the May 2024 lobbying reforms, extended some timelines. The office's proactive approach to streamlining processes is a positive step forward.

On lobbying regulation, the office managed 104 entities and 254 individuals on the register, recording 928 activities. Amendments to chapter 4 of the Integrity Act introduced mandatory training for lobbyists and new reporting requirements which the office implemented swiftly through webinars and resources. Feedback was encouraging, with 95 per cent of participants rating the content and delivery as good or excellent. During the hearing we covered instances of noncompliance with lobbyists and the commissioner explained common pitfalls like failing to log activities or confusion over what constitutes lobbying such as pro bono work or incidental meetings. Importantly, many alleged breaches did not meet the legal threshold but this highlights the need for clearer guidance.

We delved into enforcement, education, resourcing and comparisons. The commissioner's education-first approach is spot-on. With powers only a year old, prioritising training before escalation makes sense. She is reviewing the 2013 lobbying code of conduct, aiming to refocus it on values rather than procedures and clarifying the lobbying definition to reduce confusion.

Stakeholder engagement was robust with 152 meetings. The office delivered 33 presentations on topics like conflict management and public integrity, reaching public and private sectors alike.

Confidentiality remains a cornerstone, encouraging advice seeking without fear, although recipients can disclose fully if they choose. The commissioner wisely opposes her own disclosure powers, preserving trust. In Thuringowa and across our state integrity is not optional; it is essential. Let us ensure our institutions reflect that. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.42 pm): I rise today to speak to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's report No. 17, *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner*. The report summarises the committee's oversight into the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner for the 2023-24 financial year. I note the chair's acknowledgement for the volume of work that was conducted in this time period under the then Labor government.

For those who do not know here is what the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner does: it provides confidential advice on ethics and integrity issues to ministers, members of parliament, ministerial chiefs of staff, senior public servants and statutory officeholders; it provides advice to the Premier where requested on standards settings for ethics or integrity issues—I will come back to this point. The Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner maintains the Queensland Lobbying Register and has responsibility for registering lobbyists. It promotes public awareness on integrity issues and provides education and training to government representatives, opposition representatives and registered lobbyists about lobbying regulation in Queensland.

After a year in the job it does not seem like the Premier and his ministers have availed themselves much of the QIC's ability to provide advice on standard settings for ethics and integrity. If they had, perhaps I would not be hearing from concerned Queenslanders asking why they do not have cheaper energy, rego, groceries or petrol—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance in relation to the report that we are discussing in the chamber today.

Mr KING: I draw your attention to the Speaker's ruling in question time yesterday. The health minister's answer to the opposition minister was challenged but it was ruled in order because the minister was talking about a body; in that case I believe the Royal College of Surgeons was mentioned. I am talking about the body that is the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner, which is the subject of this report and their functions.

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to reinforce the point of order on relevance. I was the chair of the committee. The committee report does not deal with these subjects. Just because we mentioned the word integrity it does not open up a wide range of things for the opposition to talk about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): I will seek some advice. Member for Kurwongbah, despite the fact the report is on the Integrity Commissioner, if you can draw the parallel between your comments around something that occurred in question time to the report that would be helpful for the House.

Mr KING: I will move on. I have a professional interjector over there, the member for Nanango, so we will move on.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr KING: I am not taking your interjections by the way! Over its first year in respect of integrity, we have seen the LNP promise a top job to a hardworking doctor and then backflip on that commitment. Will we see that in the next report?

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. That is not in the report. He is deliberately being disorderly by straying into areas that have nothing to do with the inquiry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kurwongbah, once again, I ask you to remain relevant to the report. I have given you some latitude.

Mr KING: I will. I know it is difficult for the LNP to hear about integrity. They did talk a lot about it when they were in opposition. Hopefully they will learn something from the report about the functions of the office that is available to educate ministers and members about integrity, provide advice on how to put integrity first in the running of government, as well as how to restore and maintain public confidence in the government's integrity because the pub test is a real thing.

I will conclude with my thanks to everyone at the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner for the valuable work they did in 2023-24, the work they have done since and the work they will continue to do to keep integrity at the forefront of government. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.46 pm): I rise today to speak on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee's *Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner* report. I would like to start by thanking the Integrity Commissioner and her staff for the important work that they do in ensuring and supporting integrity and accountability in Queensland. Under the Miles Labor government, the capacity of the Integrity Commissioner's office was increased through key reforms via the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024. Labor also raised the budget of full-time workers in the office from eight to 15 in our 2024-25 budget. Thanks to Labor's reforms—

Mrs Frecklington: You forgot to fund them.

Ms McMILLAN: I will take the interjection from the member for Nanango. They are actually in government now. It is up to them to put forward the reforms—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): I have heard your point of order on relevance. I thank you for your point of order. Member for Mansfield, I will bring you back to being relevant to the report that is before the House.

Ms McMILLAN: Thanks to Labor's reforms, Queensland has one of the most comprehensive integrity systems in the nation. This is in comparison to the deterioration of integrity that we have seen under the David Crisafulli LNP government.

During the oversight hearing, a range of issues were covered including: compliance with lobbying requirements; the ongoing review of the lobbying code of conduct; the use of enforcement powers; the importance of education particularly around lobbying activities; and the resourcing and workload of the office. However, the most important issue covered during the hearing was about transparency. We all know that transparency in government is important.

According to section 3.6 of the committee report 'the confidentiality provisions of the Integrity Act only apply to the Integrity Commissioner and her staff'. Importantly, it is clearly stated in the report that a designated person seeking advice is not beholden to any confidentiality provisions and the commissioner said at the hearing that the advisee can share the information with whomever they like.

The Integrity Commissioner encouraged advisees to disclose the information in full. They did disclose it, and that is of absolute importance because throughout the estimates hearings ministers only gave variations of 'all appropriate declarations were made at appropriate times'. Well, if that is the case then share the information in full. Table it today. Show Queenslanders when the minister requested the advice, when the minister received the advice and when the minister actioned the advice.

Dr ROWAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance. I would submit to you that the member is straying from the elements that are covered with respect to the report before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Mansfield, I bring you back to relevance to the report before the House.

Ms McMILLAN: The Premier has committed the government to transparency and integrity, and that is expected of all premiers. He said—

My commitment is to make sure there is transparency in the way that information flows between government and Queenslanders. Well, either the government means to honour that statement or it is simply conjuring up an illusion that it thinks Queenslanders will find palatable, but on this side of the aisle—

Mr HUNT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance. As excellent as the Premier's words are, they are not in the report; they do not relate to the report. This is an examination of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have your point. Member for Mansfield, please be relevant to the report before the House.

Ms McMILLAN: On this side of the aisle, we know that words without action are meaningless. Every time the Crisafulli government talks about taking accountability, its actions show otherwise.



Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (3.51 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate of this report. I particularly thank the chair of the committee, the member for Nicklin, who is doing an excellent job in relation to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee. I rise to talk to the report we should be debating, which clearly and squarely covers 2023 and 2024 with respect to the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. Who was in government during those years? That was the Palaszczuk-Miles government. The rot that we have had—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member for Nanango, you will keep relevant to the report as we have been debating this afternoon. I do not want to hear any information about previous governments. You will stick to the report, thank you.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you. Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek clarification. The report refers only to the years 2023-24, so how do I talk to a report—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is correct, and the points of order that have been made this afternoon have been relevant to that report, 2023-24, so you will talk on that period.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will. Thank you very much for your guidance. That time period was when the Palaszczuk-Miles government was in power, not the Crisafulli government. It was a report into the time of a previous government.

I want to pay my respects to and thank the current Integrity Commissioner, Linda Waugh, who does a stellar job in a very difficult role. She was in that role during the time of this report and that is why she came before the committee. It is clear from the report that the Office of the Integrity Commissioner was grossly under-resourced during that period when the former government was in power. The committee notes that response times were impacted by resource constraints.

The committee report goes further and outlines how the commission was not in a position to do the job it was designed to do. Further, changes made to the lobbying register meant that throughout the financial year 2023-24, under the former Labor government, the Office of the Integrity Commissioner was not able to provide timely advice for other matters. For example, in May 2024 when the former government was in power, all resources of the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner were dedicated to managing the implementation of the lobbying regulation, meaning that the usual functions of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner were put on hold.

The report makes sobering reading in terms of the delays due to the former government's shortages of staff or staff not having the capacity to manage requests for information. The problem was so bad that the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner was forced—I had discussions with the Integrity Commissioner during that time—into triaging requests for advice in terms of urgency or capacity due to the fact that it did not have the resources necessary to do its job. It was impacted again by resourcing constraints.

Members of the former government have dared to stand up in this House and say that they provided the extra funding and staff for the Integrity Commissioner. It is simply not true. In fact, the Integrity Commissioner was forced into requesting a modest increase in resourcing just to ensure there were adequate staff members to do their work.

We know that former ministers have strayed into areas that I have taken points of order on, and I will respect your ruling in that regard, Mr Deputy Speaker. While the committee interrogated the Integrity Commissioner over lack of resources from the former government—remembering this was from 2023-24—it is important to note that the Crisafulli government has come in and provided an additional \$7.1 million and extra staff to the Integrity Commissioner because of the issues that were highlighted in that report.

This is an office that has effectively had to be set up and staffed and do the role because of a government that was involved in integrity scandal after integrity scandal. We know about the Coaldrake review. They muzzled the CCC. They did not resource the Office of the Integrity Commissioner properly. They did everything they could to avoid scrutiny around integrity. We now have interjections from former ministers who were labelled foolish by the CCC. These are the types of issues the Queensland people were subjected to under the former government. We are talking about a report into the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. The integrity of the former government was laid bare. The fact is that they did not resource the Office of the Integrity Commissioner properly, they did not staff the Office of the Integrity Commissioner properly and they certainly did not respect the Integrity Commissioner.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.56 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the committee report that looks at the oversighting of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. I want to put on record my thanks to the office and to the Integrity Commissioner herself, Linda Waugh, and to Paxton Booth, the Deputy Integrity Commissioner. I am rising to speak again because, as much as I love my time on the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee, I miss my time on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, where we did get to oversight the important work of the Integrity Commissioner. The work that it does is incredibly vital and plays such an important role for Queensland. It has been disappointing to see Queensland go backwards under this LNP government and integrity scandals hanging around their neck. We have seen this government ignore important expert advice and use this parliament as their political plaything, but I digress.

The committee did look at the oversighting of the office from 2023-24 and that report showed a couple of important things. Before I hop into that, I will touch on the funding issue. Obviously it is fantastic to hear about the funding uplift from the Attorney-General today, but that does not give the Attorney-General the opportunity to rewrite history. The reality is that there was a funding uplift under the Miles Labor government. We did invest heavily in that office. No amount of saying otherwise here will rewrite that history. It is wonderful that that investment has been put in by the current LNP government, but that does not erase what we have done. The Miles Labor government, along with previous Labor governments, invested in the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. It is that year-on-year investment that has enabled the office to do the important work they are doing and to respond to the uplift they have had.

In the 2023-24 year the office received 122 formal requests from a designated person for advice on ethics, integrity or interests issues; finalised 115 formal written advice requests; finalised eight urgent formal advice requests within one business day; and finalised 89 formal written advice requests within two weeks of the request. That represents a 56 per cent increase in that financial year and is a reflection of the significant reforms of the Miles Labor government—and the Palaszczuk government before that—around putting the emphasis on the importance of integrity here in Queensland. We all know the reforms that were implemented in that time. Notwithstanding that incredible uplift in demand, 77 per cent of requests were finalised within 10 days, which is a huge credit to the office and the work they are doing and to the Integrity Commissioner and her team.

Importantly, 85 per cent of the advice requests that were given in that period were related to a conflict of interest, which emphasises the importance of the functions of the Integrity Commissioner when it comes to dealing with conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest are really funny things. I worked in the Public Service for a really long time. It is not only about dealing with conflicts of interest; it is about dealing with perceived conflicts of interest. The reality is that we do know that there are integrity clouds hanging around this government and that there are ministers who sit here today who were shadow ministers at the time—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, the time is four o'clock. I ask that the debate be adjourned.

Ms BUSH: I was just getting started.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bush, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Conduct of Member for Pine Rivers

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, in question time this morning the Premier alleged that the member for Pine Rivers had acted inappropriately in the House by making an inappropriate hand gesture. My review of the tapes indicated this allegation to be correct. In private members' statements, the member for Pine Rivers apologised to the Premier and the House. In light of this apology, I will not be taking further action in respect to this matter and I note that my decision is consistent with previous precedents regarding apologies after inappropriate gestures. Whilst I note my decision is consistent with previous precedents, I remind all members to ensure that their actions uphold the dignity of this House.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Petition Responses and Answers to Questions on Notice, Due Dates

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, due to the Christmas shutdown period, in accordance with standing order 7, responses to petitions tabled on Thursday, 20 November 2025 under standing order 125 and answers to questions on notice asked on Thursday, 20 November 2025 under standing order 114 are due on Monday, 5 January 2026. The *Notice Paper* and the questions on notice and petitions databases reflect this due date and the Table Office will advise relevant departmental officers.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Report

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.01 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved that, pursuant to standing order 136, the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee report on the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 30 January 2026 and that the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee report on the Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 30 January 2026.

The committee has also resolved that, pursuant to standing order 194B, the Auditor-General's report No. 5: 2025-26—*Attracting and retaining teachers in regional and remote Queensland* be referred to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.02 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing orders 87 and 150 be suspended to allow the Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 3) 2025 and any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (4.02 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House at its rising do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 9 December 2025.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3787, on motion of Mr O'Connor—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr LEE (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.03 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. People are discovering the pristine and unadulterated natural beauty of the Fraser Coast including the whale-watching capital of Australia, Hervey Bay. Therefore, it is no surprise that as more people move to Hervey Bay the population is rapidly expanding and so too is the demand for housing. Over the next 20 years, in Hervey Bay the number of housing dwellings is projected to grow by 9,000 or 36 per cent and on the Fraser Coast it is projected to grow by over 21,000 dwellings.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission was established in 1991, pursuant to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, to regulate the building industry and manage the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. The QBCC is the primary building industry regulator and is the statutory body responsible for administering legislation, including the QBCC Act 1991, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018. A 2025 Queensland Productivity Commission interim report, *Opportunities to improve productivity of the construction industry*, highlights that Queensland's construction industry is facing significant challenges including rising levels of demand, a tight labour market, supply chain issues and declining productivity. The QPC report states that many stakeholders were 'dissatisfied with the performance of the QBCC, claiming it is not effectively and transparently managing its core regulatory functions.'

A Business Chamber Queensland submission to the Queensland Productivity Commission highlighted that 50 per cent of the respondents to an April 2025 efficient regulation survey considered that QBCC imposed a higher burden of regulatory compliance on businesses. Given that 21 per cent of Fraser Coast businesses are engaged in the construction industry, cutting Labor's red tape is critical to easing the burden on our construction businesses. Labor's CFMEU tax was costing Queenslanders \$17 billion a year. The QPC report states—

There is little evidence to support maintaining the BPICs in their current form. While Queensland Government has announced a pause on BPICs, there appears to be a strong case for permanently removing the policy.

This bill provides for amendments to the Building Act 1975, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. The Crisafulli government introduced the Building Regulation Renovation, known as the Building Reg Reno, to cut red tape, reduce unnecessary costs and support the building and construction industry in Queensland. Our Building Reg Reno is a staged and methodical reform that is targeted at improving productivity within the Queensland building and construction industry.

Tranches 1 and 2 of the Building Reg Reno reforms commenced with regulation amendments to pause the rollout of trust accounts and provide immediate regulatory relief for industry. These tranches included removing annual financial reporting requirements for certain QBCC licences and extending a range of licensing timeframes. This bill forms part of the tranche 3 reforms. The objectives of the bill are to modernise and contemporise the regulatory framework for the QBCC, support the QBCC's transition in delivering more services from a digital platform and streamline workplace safety in Queensland's building and construction industry through amending how industry reports serious safety matters.

There are essentially two substantive aspects to this bill: a QBCC transition into the digital age and improving the management and reporting of serious safety incidents on building sites. Firstly, this bill facilitates a measured transition into the digital age. It is about our tradies being able to optionally access their QBCC licences quickly, securely and online. The existing card-form process leads to unnecessary inefficiencies and regulatory burden. This bill will remove the requirement for licences to be issued in card form with hard-copy photographs and provide for licensees to optionally access their licence through the Queensland Digital Licence app. The bill does not require that licensees adopt a digital licence; rather, licensees are provided with an option to apply for a digital licence. Clauses 32 to 36 provide for some clarifying amendments in relation to digital QBCC licences to ensure that investigatory powers are exercised reasonably and proportionately. Clause 37 will amend the QBCC Act to provide for serving documents to be emailed to the person's email address last notified to the commission by that person for use under the act.

I now turn to the management and reporting of serious safety incidents on building sites. Section 54A was originally inserted into the QBCC Act following the tragic death of Jason Garrels in Clermont in 2012. Magistrate David O'Connell recommended, at paragraph 105 of his report following the coronial inquest into Jason's death—

... if the law does not already provide that the principal contractor, and building contractor are obliged to notify the QBCC of any death or serious injury on site, then the law needs to be amended to impose this obligation on them.

A footnote to the coroner's report stated that the collective submission from the parties was that the law did not provide for the principal contractor and building contractor to notify the QBCC. Instead, there was a memorandum of understanding between Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and the QBCC which put an obligation on Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to notify the QBCC of any such event. Accordingly, in 2017 the Queensland government inserted a new section 54A into the QBCC Act requiring QBCC licensees to make separate notifications to both the QBCC and the appropriate regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 or Electrical Safety Act 2002 about serious notifiable incidents.

The Minister for Housing and Public Works, Sam O'Connor, said in his introductory speech to the bill—

The double-reporting requirement introduced for QBCC licensees was fit for purpose at the time.

The minister then adds—

The current system requires some licensees to report the same incident twice: once to the workplace health and safety regulator and again to the QBCC. It creates confusion, can slow down response times and can risk key details being missed or delayed.

This bill is consistent with the intent of section 54A and the recommendation from Central Coroner, Magistrate O'Connell. This bill retains the two types of safety matters that are to be reported. However, instead of providing two reports to two regulators, a serious safety incident will now be reported through information-sharing arrangements between the QBCC and the regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act and the Electrical Safety Act.

Clause 26 of the bill preserves the two types of safety matters to be reported under section 54A of the QBCC Act. However, instead of QBCC licensees being required to provide separate notifications about a relevant safety matter to two different regulators, the bill seeks to amend section 54A. We are removing duplication, not responsibility. These changes do not weaken safety; they strengthen it. What changes is how regulators communicate, not what must be reported. This bill provides for section 54A to be amended to increase the maximum penalty for noncompliance from 80 penalty units to 100 penalty units. This amendment serves to underscore that the Crisafulli government takes work safety matters seriously.

In closing, the Crisafulli government is taking a careful and methodical approach to reforming the construction industry. These reforms come after a decade of Labor's jobs for CFMEU mates in the

construction industry. I commend the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to the House.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.12 pm): I rise to speak in relation to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill proposes amendments to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2017. Its stated objectives are threefold: to modernise the regulatory framework for the Queensland Building and Construction Commission; to support the Queensland Building and Construction Commission to deliver more services digitally; and to streamline workplace safety in Queensland's building and construction industry through changes to how industry reports serious safety matters.

These amendments represent the third tranche of the government's Building Reg Reno reforms—reforms which aim to make it easier to build in Queensland by cutting red tape, reducing unnecessary costs and ensuring the industry runs smoother while upholding appropriate building standards and regulatory oversight. The QBCC plays a central role in maintaining standards across one of Queensland's most important industries. It is the independent statutory body that administers the regulatory framework for building and construction under the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act, the Building Act and the Plumbing and Drainage Act.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission's responsibilities are broad and critically important. It provides a licensing framework for builders, oversees dispute resolution and rectification, manages review processes and administers the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. In 2023-24 alone, 118,762 licensees were regulated under these frameworks, collectively holding more than 220,000 licence classes. It is against this background that we must assess the proposed changes in this bill—changes that impact licensing, safety and the way Queenslanders interact with the Queensland Building and Construction Commission in the digital era.

The first major element of the bill is the proposal to enable the Queensland Building and Construction Commission to deliver more of its services digitally. The bill removes legislative barriers that currently restrict the Queensland Building and Construction Commission's ability to embrace modern technology. These amendments will allow: licences to be issued digitally, rather than exclusively as hard copy cards; documents to be served electronically; and licensees to access their licences through the Queensland Digital Licence app. Importantly, customers will retain choice. Those who prefer traditional service will still be able to communicate by post, opt out of electronic service or lodge documents in person at regional service centres. This is a sensible step forward.

Digitisation of government services has been underway across many sectors, and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission should be no exception. Digital transformation promises greater efficiency, convenience for licensees and improved customer service. The Queensland Labor opposition supports this element of the bill. We recognise that much of this work was already underway following the independent review of the QBCC in 2022 and initiatives commenced under the former Labor government. Nonetheless, we support further reforms that build on this foundation to ensure the Queensland Building and Construction Commission becomes a truly customer focused regulator.

The second major element of the bill—and the most contentious—concerns workplace safety notifications. Currently, Queensland Building and Construction Commission licensees are required to separately notify both the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the relevant regulator of serious safety incidents under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 or the Electrical Safety Act 2002. This dual notification requirement was deliberately introduced in 2017 following the tragic death of Mr Jason Garrels in 2012. The intent was clear: to ensure the Queensland Building and Construction Commission had direct, timely awareness of serious incidents and could take swift action against licensees if necessary. Since then, this dual notification framework has underpinned meaningful regulatory outcomes—from disciplinary actions to licence cancellations.

The bill before us seeks to remove the dual notification requirement. The government argues that improved information-sharing arrangements between the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the Office of Industrial Relations make dual reporting unnecessary and that streamlining the process will reduce the administrative burden for licensees. On the surface this may seem a reasonable proposition. When we look closer, the risks become apparent.

The opposition holds deep reservations about the removal of this safeguard. The modest administrative cost of dual reporting—a matter of minutes—is far outweighed by the potential consequences of a breakdown in communication between agencies. The government points to

administrative arrangements such as the memorandum of understanding between the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the Office of Industrial Relations as sufficient. We must ask: can a memorandum of understanding ever be a substitute for legislative certainty? The answer, quite clearly, is no. A memorandum of understanding can be allowed to lapse, ignored or torn up at any time. It has existed since 2013 and was re-executed in 2021 but has not undergone the kind of regular review that would provide genuine assurance. Unlike statutory obligations, administrative agreements carry no enforceability.

I note the powerful testimony provided to the committee by Mr Michael Garrels, father of Jason Garrels. He spoke with raw honesty and conviction about the need to retain legislated protections. He warned—

...the MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link so that that pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

Those words speak not only to the failings of the past but also to the risks of the future. They remind us of what is at stake: the lives of workers on construction sites across Queensland.

The 2017 reforms were born from tragedy. They were put in place precisely because existing administrative arrangements were not enough. They sought to ensure that lessons from Jason Garrels' death—and from other workplace tragedies—would never be forgotten, and that structural safeguards would be built into the system. Removing the dual notification requirement risks undoing that progress. It risks replacing legislative certainty with administrative convenience, and it risks leaving Queensland workers less safe.

The opposition supports reducing red tape where it is genuinely unnecessary. We support digital innovation and efficiency. But safety is not red tape. Reporting obligations that safeguard lives are not unnecessary costs. While we welcome the bill's reforms to digitisation, we cannot in good conscience support the removal of a proven safeguard that ensures regulators are equipped to respond swiftly to dangerous breaches.

In conclusion, this bill presents both opportunities and risks. We welcome the measures that will modernise the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, improve digital service delivery, and streamline customer interactions. These reforms build on work already underway and will provide tangible benefits to licensees and industry participants. However, we reject the removal of the dual notification requirement for serious safety incidents. The tragic events that led to its introduction demand that we retain, not dilute, legislated protections. Administrative arrangements can never provide the same certainty or enforceability.

The opposition, therefore, takes a balanced position. We support the digital transformation elements of the bill, but we caution against reforms that compromise worker safety for the sake of convenience. The cost of a few minutes of extra reporting is nothing compared to the price of a life lost on a worksite. For these reasons, while the Queensland Labor opposition supports elements of this bill, we cannot endorse the removal of safeguards that protect Queensland workers.

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (4.22 pm): It is with great enthusiasm that I rise to support the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I do so because it is yet another one of the Crisafulli LNP government's important productivity measures. I am passionate about productivity and it is not just because it makes economics enthusiasts happy—although I confess I might also be one—it matters because it is what feeds higher living standards for ordinary Queenslanders. It is what generates more housing supply, by making trades attractive as a career or a business, and it is what makes housing more affordable, having a place of your own to call home closer, particularly for young Queenslanders.

Ultimately, it is economic productivity that determines whether you feel like you are struggling or whether you feel like you are getting ahead. So, in the interests of building prosperity for Queenslanders of all walks of life, we should back it in as one of the many small but important changes that will be required to lighten the burden of government on you.

This bill speaks to many of the concerns that are raised with me by members of our Redlands community. I hear complaints about the QBCC from people who have had contracts to build or renovate that have not gone the way they had hoped, and I also hear them from small business trades who lament the time that they spend drained away from working and earning a dollar to doing mountains of paperwork and compliance. They grieve that the regulatory arrangements around the important issue of safety have become, instead of a mechanism to keep people safe, cumbersome and duplicative,

keeping no-one safer, but instead expanding the time and expense of the burden of doing the same thing over and over to multiple regulators.

This bill makes a difference by delivering long overdue updates to the QBCC's operations to make it more productive, to make it more user-friendly for licensed trades as well as for members of the public.

At the moment, the QBCC legislation is outdated and it is framed around a paper-based rather than a digital world. The bill removes the legislative barriers to digital service delivery, allowing but not forcing the QBCC to deliver electronic services. It clears the way for more adoption of digital services like digital licensing and online attendance in electronic communication. What that means is that licensees, for instance, can opt to have their licence in a digital form, but, if they want, they can still choose to have a physical version. Similarly, customers will have a choice. They can choose to interact with the QBCC electronically, but they will still have the option of doing so in writing by post or by going in, in person, to a regional service centre.

It streamlines, quite importantly in my view, workplace safety notifications, to remove duplications in those requirements without in any way reducing the obligations around safety or safety oversight. That is a really important adoption of the feedback that we have received from industry.

The laws around this were changed in 2017 to require licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations where there is a serious workplace incident. That was in response to the absolutely tragic death of a young man named Jason Garrels in 2012. It was a horrific situation. Labor changed those laws in response to require both agencies to be notified of serious safety incidents. At the time, that was no doubt well-intentioned, but, in the time since, the information-sharing arrangements in place between the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations have matured. They have come a long way and, indeed, the quality and reliability of digital communications tools has also progressed a long way.

No-one is kept safer by doing the same forms twice. No-one is kept safer at work by telling two regulators about an incident instead of one, especially when there are established and effective communication measures in place between those agencies. Any fair-minded person would say that the duplication no longer serves the important purpose of keeping workers safe. Yet, those opposite have said they intend to oppose section 26 of the act which is the provision that would end the duplication and streamline notification processes. You do not have to be a qualified trade to see that duplicating paperwork does not keep people safe at work. It just keeps the administration team run off their feet, draining away resources that could be used to hire more people, invest in new tools or even go to higher wages.

Here is the really crazy part: by their opposition to section 26, Labor are actually planning to vote against increasing penalties for those who fail to report a serious safety incident. Far from the scare campaign that they seem to be running in the speeches about safety standards, we are actually increasing the seriousness with which these safety matters are treated at law—with a higher penalty—yet they come in here with a straight face and say that they oppose section 26 in the name of safety. It does not make one jot of sense. You truly could not make this stuff up.

When I listened to the contribution made by the member for Kurwongbah, he explained his opposition to reducing this duplication in the strangest possible way. He said that safety paperwork should be duplicated between the agencies to protect against the risk that government departments will not communicate well. But is that not just the Labor way of thinking down to a T, deep in their DNA? Rather than expecting governments to perform, rather than expecting an agency to reliably do its job, they would rather just get you to do your work twice, if that is okay. Seriously, you could not make this stuff up, though perhaps it explains the intensity of the waste, delay and blowouts that characterised the last Labor government. Rather than getting the job of government right, they would just rather that small business did their work twice.

We can tell that they are not working with their own money. We can tell that they have never had a business of their own. They are very happy for the taxpayer, the tradie or the small business owner to carry the can of low expectations for their performance. It costs them over and over again. That is why we are prepared to act. We always put the safety of working people first. It is non-negotiable. It is possible to streamline services while increasing safety, and that is exactly what we are doing in this bill.

If we want a state that is productive, we need to act to make sure every corner of government is more efficient. We need to streamline and reduce over-regulation wherever we find it, not for its own sake but because it means Queenslanders will have more in their pockets, because it helps to deliver more housing supply, because it helps to tackle high prices and because it gives small businesses and

trades a future in which they can earn a good living and stay the course and teach the next generation their important skills.

I grew up around the plumbing, drainage and gasfitting industry. It feels like it was my first exposure to the world of work. If my sister and I ever played up, our punishment was to sort fittings. It is with sadness that I now hear my father lament that over the last decade the cumulative burden of regulations, fees, heavy taxation, rising costs and constraints introduced under the guise of safety, which did very little other than empower militant unions' penchant for bullying and intimidation, have affected everyone. I could go on.

The result is that we have a jobs board at Tradelink that is crying out for skilled labour as experienced tradies have given up and left the industry because it all became too hard. We cannot get back that decade of wasted opportunity under the former Labor government that did not understand how to help trades thrive. Right now, by simplifying regulation and by focusing on the effectiveness of safety measures while ensuring there are heavy penalties for those who do wrong, we can make it easier for ordinary Queenslanders to, at last, get ahead.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (4.31 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill is not a bill, as some have described it, about paperwork; this bill that we are considering today is really about whether a young apprentice makes it home from work or ends up in a coffin. This LNP government want to tear up the very safeguard that could save lives. This government are coming in here and tearing up this safeguard, and they have conceded that they are doing it with no evidence. They have conceded that they are tearing up this safeguard with no modelling. They are tearing up this safeguard that holds those in control of construction workplaces accountable. They are doing it with no case, with no legitimate argument.

I start my contribution by acknowledging the presence of Michael Garrels in the gallery today. I know that this is a difficult debate for you to listen to, Michael. I want you to know that those on this side of the House will do everything we can to protect working Queenslanders—Queenslanders like your son Jason. In doing so, I want to speak in the strongest terms possible in support of Labor's statement of reservation. As I said, this is not about paperwork; it is about life and death. It is about whether we keep the safeguards that protect the lives of Queensland workers. That is what this is about.

The Labor members of the committee—and I acknowledge their work here—have made it clear that we support the digitisation of the regulator, but we reject the removal of a law that underpins dual reporting—a safeguard that is designed to save the lives of working Queenslanders. We reject it because the risk is too high. We reject it because the lessons that were learned and the responses to those lessons were too hard won in the end.

In 2017 we responded to the hard fight that Michael, who is in the gallery now, led. We introduced reforms that required licensees to report serious incidents to both the building regulator and the safety regulator. When we enacted those reforms in 2017, we said that the purpose of dual reporting was not paperwork for its own sake. We understood that we were imposing a requirement to inform both the workplace health and safety regulator and the building regulator. We did it because it ensures the regulator sees the most serious incidents immediately—sees the signs, sees the red flags—and it does not allow worksites to continue because of the risk of death or serious injury of workers. That allows it to act fast so it can protect lives.

These laws came after the tragic death of then 20-year-old Jason. The LNP opposed them then. They called it duplication. They called it red tape. They were wrong then and they are wrong now. The government say we no longer need dual reporting. They say that the Office of Industrial Relations will pass the information on to the building regulator. That is not cutting red tape; that is shifting and watering down the same responsibilities. They are taking the responsibilities that we imposed on the person in control of a workplace, the licensee, and giving them to someone else. The information is still required to be collected. The same processes still exist. The only change, they say, is that it will no longer be backed by law. Why take that away? They have no case, no evidence and no modelling. The bill waters down the protections to be backed by an MOU that can be changed or ignored at any time. They can be changed or ignored at any time.

In Jason's case, the person responsible was convicted and jailed for criminal manslaughter. The LNP ministers knew about the safety risks before that. They knew about the circumstances, but because these provisions did not exist the building regulator was not able to act. They talk about lightening the burden. They are lightening the burden of a small number of operators in the construction industry who operate unsafe workplaces. Why on earth would they do that?

On 12 February 2012, in Clermont, Jason was on his ninth day at work. He never made it to morning tea that day. He was killed, as we have heard, when a switchboard became live. The coronial inquest found safety systems failed him at every turn, as did the agencies. Michael told the committee—

... the MOU could be torn up at any time.

He was right when he said—

It should be a legislative link so that that pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

Michael fought for those 2017 reforms. They were protections written in law. I am advised that, since then, dual reporting has led to more than 1,100 incidents being reported. Michael told me just a few moments ago that those measures have been used responsibly. Only on five occasions has the building regulator sought to suspend a licence.

We know that construction is the third most dangerous industry in Queensland. Last year alone 248 safety matters involving licensees were investigated. These are not numbers; these are people—mothers, fathers, brothers, cousins, mates. They are injured workers. They are dead workers. They are families torn apart. We support the parts of the bill that modernise the building regulator. We support faster service and better efficiency, but these gains do not justify dismantling a core safety safeguard.

I turn to the so-called ‘productivity’ argument that we hear from those opposite. The committee heard this directly from the department, ‘No modelling has been done’—no modelling, no data, no proof, no evidence that this will cut costs to build. Their own department gave that testimony. Yet we hear those opposite say this is going to make housing more affordable. There is no evidence it will speed up projects. There is no evidence, no modelling and no case for that part of these reforms.

A government that respects the facts would have stopped there. It would keep those safeguards in place, but this government ploughed ahead. They ignored the caution, they ignored their own experts and they ignored the family of a deceased worker who continues to mourn. Why? Is it this government’s pathological hatred of workers? Is it an attack on vulnerable workers? Is it an attack on young apprentices who actually need stronger safeguards, not weaker ones? There is no evidence, no modelling and no case. That was the testimony of their department.

We do not remove guardrails on roads because they are not often crashed into. We do not remove airbags from cars because we did not have a car accident this morning. We do not take away a safeguard unless we know with evidence that it is safe to do so. Here there is no evidence, there is no modelling and there is no case. Labor’s position is simple: we support modernisation but keep the safeguards.

This parliament and everyone in it should honour Jason’s memory. It should honour it by keeping the protections his death taught us we needed. I submit to this House that we owe it to him.

(Time expired)

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.42 pm): Those on this side of the House, and by that I mean the government benches, are very interested in constructing homes, whereas those on the opposition side are interested in constructing straw man arguments against not only reforms that are sensible but reforms that will deliver meaningful safety improvements.

To counter the absurd argument prosecuted by those in the opposition, our legislation will increase the penalties for those doing the wrong thing and putting life in jeopardy on building sites. We have increased those penalties not only to ensure that there are consequences for actions but to ensure that we have the maximum deterrent available so that people do not take risks with young lives in the first place. That is a proposition that those opposite cannot stomach because they are so invested in the status quo, the status quo which had left the QBCC utterly stuck in the past and incapable of delivering modern services to a modern Queensland economy.

I am very proud of the bill that the responsible minister has brought before the House because not only does it deal with safety on worksites but it allows small businesses to invest more of their time into safety by removing the time that they must spend with paperwork. Although it was not captured as an interjection, I want to note that that point was made by the member for Townsville earlier, himself a tradie who has worked—

Mr Stevens: A good tradie.

Mr VORSTER: I take that interjection—a fine tradie who has seen it all on worksites. He knows, having built a business from the ground up and having been an apprentice, what paperwork does. It destroys the passion for the profession. It drowns you while you try to create not only a life for your

family but jobs and opportunity for others. It robs you of the time that you may commit to investing in better and safer work practices.

What I am most excited about with these reforms is that they are yet another signal to the mum-and-dad tradies out there that they finally have a government that has their back. I am greatly concerned by the corporatisation of construction in this state where only the very large, top tier, unionised businesses have the ability to bring homes up out of the ground. We have arrived at this situation because the former Labor government has made it so diabolically difficult for tradies, small mum-and-dad businesses, to back themselves and build the homes that Queenslanders actually want—the duplexes, the triplexes and the sixpack. That is the missing middle this state needs that would otherwise have been delivered by mum-and-dad businesses. It is not happening because Labor has made it too difficult for mum-and-dad builders and developers to deliver a product because their contractors have been so tied up.

I am glad that by introducing this legislation and securing its passage we can demonstrate to those builders, to those tradies still clinging on in this industry for dear life, that finally they have a government that not only understands their plight but will back them in so that they can get back to the business of building homes. That is in such contrast to the hollow arguments prosecuted by those opposite today who, by the way, have no credibility because just moments ago we heard a member opposite talk about safety on worksites as if they did not facilitate the CFMEU! The CFMEU, the greatest organised criminal gang that Queensland has ever seen—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Member, I will bring you back to relevance to the bill before us.

Mr VORSTER: Those opposite are very interested in workplace safety which goes to the heart of this bill. It is critically important that as a government we respond to workplace safety issues. When there are unscrupulous operators doing the wrong thing there must be consequences for action. I have been greatly concerned that there has not been a bipartisan approach to dealing with workplace safety issues, particularly when our government proposes consequences for action on worksites.

I always remember an interaction I had at the polling place at Palm Beach State School, where a young man on a pushbike approached me as he went to vote. He asked me: 'Why should I vote for you?' I looked him in the eye and I said, 'Would you like to own a home one day?' He grabbed my how-to-vote card and said, 'You have my vote.' While this is but a small step, this piece of legislation is one of many that cumulatively will ensure that we have the capacity to build homes in this state. We will not be able to build homes in the state if we have a regulatory system that crushes the ambition of those who want to build homes, crushes them with duplicate processes, duplicate paperwork and archaic ways of managing their licences and registration. Modernising our regulatory framework, making it fit for purpose and responsive to the needs of those participating in the industry will unlock productive potential in this state.

In closing, not only do I want to thank the Minister for Housing for his work in this space but I want to thank our Minister for Customer Services and Minister for Small and Family Business who recently visited my electorate and had an opportunity to chat with a local builder to demonstrate to that builder that we were prepared to modernise our licensing system so that he could get on with the job of building. He did not have to run to the glove box in his ute and grab paperwork. All he had to do was pull out his phone from his pocket and do what was required under the law to demonstrate that he was keeping his workers safe and doing the right thing by his customers.

This government collectively has a laser-like focus on unlocking housing. The housing minister is responsible for this legislation, the Minister for Customer Services is responsible for modernising Queensland systems, we have a Minister for Home Ownership and we have a cabinet subcommittee. We are doing everything we can.

In conclusion, I want to deliver a message to the young people of the Burleigh electorate. Your future is important to me. I want to give you a future where you have the opportunity to purchase a home, put down roots and have a permanent stake in your community. I feel passionately that you should have that opportunity because everybody—everybody—should aspire to the things they want. As long as we had a government that made it more difficult to build homes, we took that opportunity off the table. We are putting it back on the table. We are going to unleash construction across the state of Queensland. We are going to make it easier for mum-and-dad businesses to build the sorts of homes that you want to own and you want to live in, and we are doing that day in, day out. These thousands of decisions, these thousands of small steps we are taking, will add up to a future where you own it. I am really proud of that.

For those who are concerned about workplace safety, today you have a government that is prepared to reintroduce consequences for actions to ensure that those who are doing the wrong thing are held to account with harsher penalties. We are going to make sure that when concerns are raised they are raised very quickly through automated systems so that justice is done, and that is the difference.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (4.52 pm): I rise today to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill is a vital step forward in modernising our building and construction regulatory framework. I am pleased to see that the reforms envisaged by the Labor Party are finally being implemented, even if under a different banner.

At its core, this bill advances two priorities: the digitalisation of licensing and regulatory processes, which are greatly needed; and a recalibration of the safety notification regime for serious incidents. Both deserve careful consideration. While we welcome progress, we must remain vigilant to ensure protections are maintained for workers and consumers alike.

First, the bill's digital reforms mark an important advancement in how builders, contractors and consumers interact with the QBCC. By removing the requirement for physical licence cards and enabling digital access via the Queensland Digital Licence app, we are making licensing faster, easier and more accessible. The ability to serve documents electronically and the requirement for licensees to update contact details within 14 days demonstrates a commitment to efficiency and responsiveness. This has obviously been the feedback from a number in the industry. At the same time, the bill ensures that customers still have the option for physical communication or in-person service at regional centres, thereby preserving accessibility in rural and regional Queensland.

Labor proudly supports these reforms because they are reforms we initiated. Now, in government they are being rebranded from maroon to blue. However, the transition to digital licensing was a policy priority under the former Labor government designed to reduce administrative burdens and improve service delivery for licensees and consumers alike. By modernising the system we help contractors devote less time to paperwork and more time to building, and we give consumers faster certainty about whom they are dealing with when they invite a builder onto their property.

The second major component of the bill concerns the statutory safety notification regime. In 2017 the dual notification requirement was introduced so that serious safety incidents would be reported to both the Office of Industrial Relations and the QBCC. That measure was not symbolic. It recognises that when serious safety breaches occur both workplace safety regulators and building regulators have important roles to play. Over the past five years QBCC has acted on more than 900 safety notifications, 26 show cause notices were sought and five licences were cancelled due to serious safety breaches. These results demonstrate that the statutory notification system works to identify unsafe behaviour, intervening and protecting both workers and, most importantly, the public.

Under clause 26 of the bill, section 54A of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 is amended so that licensees will notify only the Office of Industrial Relations, with the information then being shared with the QBCC. In effect, the shared responsibility becomes a delegated administrative arrangement rather than a legislated obligation. While the system may operate in practice, the former Labor government warned against weakening statutory safeguards. Relying solely on a memorandum of understanding or administrative agreement is no substitute for a legal obligation. If information sharing between regulators fails, responsibility will rest squarely with the government that chose to remove the legislative requirement. Labor therefore supports the bill in principle, but we cannot support clause 26 in its current form for the reasons stated. It is incumbent on any government to maintain clear and enforceable safeguards that protect workers, consumers and industry integrity. Removing the dual notification imperative is a step in the wrong direction, and we caution the government to retain robust statutory protections.

It is worth emphasising the vital role the QBCC plays in our state's building and construction sector. Established under the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, the QBCC regulates and enforces standards that protect consumers, support contractors and underpin a vital industry. From licensing contractors for work over \$3,300, offering dispute resolution services, issuing directions to rectify defective work, managing the Home Warranty Scheme and monitoring product supply chains, the QBCC works to ensure home owners and industry operators alike can undertake building and renovation works with confidence. For contractors and the industry itself, the QBCC legitimises qualified operators, prevents undercutting by unlicensed operators, provides education and compliance support, monitors financial health and enforces integrity across the sector. With the building and construction sector contributing more than \$59 billion annually to Queensland's economy and

employing over 270,000 people, the role of the QBCC in fostering stability, trust and economic activity cannot be overstated.

Labor governments initiated the modern regulatory architecture for the industry by: establishing the licensing regime; embedding consumer protections; instituting the Home Warranty Scheme; strengthening product supply chain oversight; and embedding safety notifications. These initiatives laid the foundation for a safer, fairer and more professional industry. Under Labor there was a clear understanding that supporting builders and contractors required balancing regulation with service. Equally, protecting consumers required robust rights and recourse. These are the principles that enabled the QBCC to evolve into the regulatory body it is today.

By enabling digital licensing, the bill supports busy builders, regional operators and small business contractors and helps reduce red tape so industry can thrive. Fewer administrative obstacles means more time onsite, less time in the office and smoother interactions for licence holders and clients. For households and consumers, digital access boosts transparency. Licence status, contact details and other regulatory information will be more accessible and verifiable.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 represents an important step forward for Queensland's building and construction industry and for consumers alike. Labor supports the digitalisation reforms, as we have said. Although we support the bill in large measure, we must emphasise that statutory safety protections must remain robust. Clause 26, which is the removal of the dual notification requirement, is a weakening of a safeguard introduced for a reason following tragic circumstances. If regulators fail to share critical information, the consequences may be catastrophic and it is the government that will be accountable. We call on the government to honour the legacy of the reform it inherited so as to protect Queenslanders and to ensure, more importantly, that this bill delivers both an improved and modern service and unwavering safety standards.



Mr BAILLIE (Townsville—LNP) (5.00 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate and speak in support of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I know this industry. I have worked it and I have lived it. I also note that I am one of two electricians in this place and I believe the only refrigeration mechanic in this place. I hold an electrical fitter and electrical mechanic licence with the Electrical Safety Office and a mechanical services licence for air conditioning and refrigeration as well as plumbing with the QBCC.

Mr McDonald: Wow, aren't you a bright spark?

Mr BAILLIE: I take that interjection from the member for Lockyer. I have spent years on construction sites, in both residential and commercial jobs, and in roof spaces that are like saunas in the Townsville heat. It was while I was on the tools and working at my customers' houses or places of work that I was prompted to run as a candidate. While I was fixing one thing for my customer, they would often share what else was going on in their life and what else they thought needed fixing, and I would agree. They would say that something needed to be done about it, and I would agree. That prompted the next question: who was going to do something about all of the issues my customers and my community were raising? That is ultimately what prompted me to put my hand up and, as it happened, now be in the extremely fortunate position to be the member for Townsville and able to help fix some of those issues that my community were raising with me.

I have worked alongside chippies, plumbers, plasterers, blockies, builders and handymen. I know what keeps job sites moving and, just as importantly, what slows them down. I know how time poor anyone who runs a trade business is and how paperwork is often put aside or delayed, particularly if it is difficult or not convenient. Tradies would rather be out on the job building something new or fixing a problem than in the office doing paperwork. When it is difficult to do paperwork, it is less likely to get done.

Traditionally, trade contractors have been looked at as low technology adopters, but I can say that this has definitely changed in recent years. As technology continues to develop, more and more tradies are adopting new tools and applications to help them get their work done. These new tools offer more efficient documentation and transfer of documents, whether they are related to documents of business health, such as cashflow with quotes and invoices, or something more critical, such as workforce health and safety, through electronic versions and systems supporting SWMS and prestart checklists.

Safety should be the No. 1 priority on every worksite, and it is the No. 1 priority of our government. I will not attempt to put it as eloquently as the member for Burleigh did just moments ago, but I will summarise it by saying that corners are cut when there is a lack of time, and that is why these changes

are so important. Anyone who has ever had to deal with the QBCC knows that the system was built for another era. It is so good to see the Building Reg Reno being undertaken and the improvements to the system being made to support the industry. I have recently renewed my own QBCC licence, and it took several weeks to receive the new version in the mail.

Mrs Poole: You should have done it online.

Mr BAILLIE: I take that interjection from the member for Mundingburra. I recall how difficult it was to navigate the system when air conditioning and refrigeration were initially included in the QBCC. In addition to the national ARCTick licence for handling refrigerants, we were required to engage with the QBCC to get a QBCC licence. I remember how many days and weeks this process took, as well as the in-person visits to regional offices, while we navigated the outdated system. This bill addresses a great deal of those roadblocks that stopped the QBCC utilising digital technology, resulting in future communication being more streamlined and efficient.

I was at a barbecue last weekend talking about the ability to get an electronic QBCC licence with a fellow tradie who has many more years of experience in life than I have. He is in his late 60s and he had already signed up to the digital QBCC licence and he showed me that licence right there at the barbecue. As the minister knows, I have not yet got my digital licence but I look forward to downloading it in the very near future. In addition, making it possible for licence holders to receive communications electronically further streamlines communication with the QBCC.

I note that those opposite are concerned about safety, and I can assure them that we are also deeply concerned about safety—safety of our tradies and safety of our community. I understand the tragic circumstances that resulted in the passing of Jason Garrels, and I would like to place on record my sympathy to his father who I understand is here with us today. That tragic incident prompted tremendous improvements in the reporting of death or serious injuries that occur on job sites. On a job site, there is nothing more important than safety—nothing.

Under the existing system, if a serious incident occurs, a QBCC licensee has to report it twice—once to the Office of Industrial Relations and once to the QBCC. This bill does not remove the need to report, but it streamlines the reporting process for safety incidents. It utilises mature information-sharing arrangements to enable serious incidents to be reported to the OIR, and the QBCC will receive the necessary information if the submitter is a QBCC licence holder. To show we are serious about safety, the consequence for noncompliance has increased from 80 to 100 penalty points. These changes make it easier for QBCC licence holders to satisfy their reporting obligations when serious incidents occur on a job site and increase the penalties for those who do not.

With tranche 1 and 2 of the Building Reg Reno already delivered earlier this year, this bill further assists the industry and makes it easier for tradies and contractors to be productive, well informed and safe. We respect the people who build our homes, schools, hospitals, stadiums and job-creating projects. This bill gives our tradies and builders the modern, efficient, responsive regulator they deserve. As an electrician and refrigeration mechanic who spent years working side by side with North Queensland tradies, I am proud to support this bill and I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (5.07 pm): Labor will always support modernisation efforts, where smart reforms can contribute to greater government efficiency without impeding public safety. We support the digitisation amendments in the Queensland Building and Construction Commission bill to provide a faster and easier licensing process for both industry and consumers. It is good to see that Labor's great ideas continue to live on in some way under the Crisafulli LNP government, much like the 50-cent fares and smart ticketing on our state's public transport system. The progress made on digital reforms that make up the core of this bill also occurred under Labor.

It was our government that understood the need for a digital option to reflect the changing needs of the sector and began the implementation process. The proposed amendments to the bill remove the requirement for physical licence cards and allow for digital licences via the Queensland Digital Licence app. These changes will move us towards a more user-friendly model, meaning that industry professionals can navigate their work with their credentials safely stored on their phone. That means no return trips to the regulator to get a replacement card when you realise you have lost your physical licence. Removing these small layers of red tape supports the QBCC's mission to improve customer experience.

The real point of contention in the bill concerns the licensee's obligations to notify the QBCC of safety matters. The LNP's changes to amend section 54A of the act would remove the legislative requirement for licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations of the same safety incident. The bill would require licensees to notify just the OIR with the information which would

then be shared with the QBCC. We cannot support this clause and the changes that come from it. We emphatically advise against attempts to remove the current dual notification requirements for serious safety incidents, a safeguard adopted following Jason Garrels's devastating death and the tireless campaign of his father, Michael, for greater protections for workers in the industry. Eliminating existing reporting obligations without establishing alternative reporting provisions through legislation or regulation poses an unacceptable risk to the safety of workers and contractors. We cannot overstate the risks that follow on from a failure to share information in an appropriate and timely fashion between regulators.

Labor has a rich history of standing up for workers. We have always stood with workers to place their safety first and foremost. These apparently streamlined reporting processes and requirements just water down the responsibilities of licensees when faced with serious safety matters. Explicit legal requirements that shape the information-sharing relationship between the OIR and the QBCC should replace what is now established under a memorandum of understanding. These obligations should extend to relevant regulators being required to share appropriate details with the QBCC relative to notifiable incidents where a QBCC licence holder is involved within a reasonable timeframe. Above all, the QBCC must continue to receive relevant information about safety matters and the investigation outcomes involving licensees.

Let us be clear here that the implementation of streamlined processes should never come at the expense of workplace safety. Appearing before the committee that examined the bill which I was a member of, Michael Garrels, a father who has taken up the fight for stronger industry regulations in honour of his son, made his concerns abundantly clear. As a workplace health and safety advocate, Michael said that reporting serious safety events must remain a mandatory requirement. Those opposite argue that the dual notification process risks important details being missed or delays in reporting incidents. I just do not see their logic.

Changes to the bill in 2017 introduced dual notifications, ensuring the QBCC had direct awareness of serious safety incidents. The QBCC has acted on over 900 safety notifications it received over the last five years, demonstrating that those safety notifications do work. This government says they are pursuing these reforms to increase efficiency—and the LNP knows all about efficiency, of course, if you ask them. We know what can happen when important concerns are left to guidelines or recommendations rather than legal requirements. After hearing from the Department of Housing and Public Works staff at the public briefing, we know that there are no service-level agreements in place between the QBCC and other relevant regulators. The absence of established timeframes, responsibilities and pathways for the sharing of serious incident notifications is of great concern. Any breakdown in the information-sharing relationship between regulators and any harm that comes to workers will lie squarely at the feet of this LNP government.

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (5.11 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. As the member for Thuringowa representing the hardworking people of Townsville and North Queensland, I am acutely aware of the unique challenges our regional communities face in the building and construction sector. From the aftermath of devastating floods and cyclones to the pressing need for more housing and infrastructure for our growing population, this bill is welcomed and essential. It delivers practical reforms that will cut red tape, embrace digital innovation and put more time back into the hands of our tradies, allowing them to focus on what they do best: building stronger communities.

Let me begin by acknowledging the context of this legislation. This bill forms the third tranche of the Queensland government's Building Regulation Renovation, our comprehensive effort to modernise our regulatory framework and boost productivity in the building industry. In regional areas like Townsville, where our economy relies heavily on construction for jobs, housing and recovery from natural disasters, outdated processes have long been a barrier. Think back to the 2019 floods that ravaged our regions. Builders and tradies were out there day and night rebuilding homes and infrastructure but were bogged down by the cumbersome paperwork, mandatory hard copy licences and duplicate reporting requirements. Small family-run businesses, which form the backbone of our local industry, simply could not afford the loss of hours. This bill addresses these issues head-on, ensuring our regulatory system supports growth rather than stifling it.

One of the most transformative aspects of this bill is its push towards digital licensing and electronic services. No longer will QBCC licences be tied to outdated hard copy cards that get lost, damaged or delayed in the mail. Instead, the bill removes legislative barriers, allowing the QBCC to fully embrace digital platforms. Licensees will be able to access, renew and verify their credentials electronically from their phones or tablets on a job site. For a builder in Thuringowa rushing between

projects in suburbs like Kirwan or out to the rural fringes, this means less downtime waiting for paperwork and more time delivering quality work.

The bill also enables electronic service of documents via email and allows virtual attendance at investigative meetings using technology for real-time communication. These changes will significantly reduce administration burdens, particularly for regional operators, who already contend with long distances, unpredictable weather and supply chain challenges.

Safety on our building sites is paramount, and this bill strengthens that commitment without adding unnecessary complexity. Currently, licensees face duplicate reporting obligations for serious workplace incidents, having to notify multiple regulators for the same event. This bill streamlines the process: builders report once to the relevant authority under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act. That ensures faster disciplinary action where needed, protects workers and maintains industry standards.

To highlight the importance of compliance, I point out that the bill increases penalties for failing to report safety matters from 80 to 100 penalty points. Some may view this as tough, but in a region like ours where sites battle extreme heat, storms and isolation, stronger enforcement saves lives. It weeds out rogue operators, levels the playing field for honest tradies and ultimately lowers insurance costs while building client confidence. In Townsville, with our booming defence and housing sectors, safer sites mean more jobs and sustainable growth.

Furthermore, this bill aligns perfectly with our state's ambitious housing agenda. In Thuringowa and across North Queensland, where population growth and first home buyer demand are surging, these reforms will accelerate project delivery. Local firms in Townsville, from small subbies to local contractors, have long voiced frustrations about QBCC rigour. This legislation listens to that feedback, fostering a more responsive regulator that prioritises productivity over paperwork. As a lifelong North Queenslander who has lived and worked in Townsville for over 47 years, I know firsthand the resilience of our builders. I speak with them and those who advocate for them on a very regular basis. They have rebuilt after cyclones, supported our communities through tough times and driven economic recovery. This bill values that hard work by giving them the tools, literally and figuratively, to thrive. It reduces costs, enhances efficiency and creates a safer, more modern industry that benefits everyone: tradies, home owners and our regional economy.

In conclusion, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 is a lifeline for regional Queensland. I commend the bill to the House. I urge all members, particularly those representing our vast regional electorates, to support it. Please pardon the pun, but let's build a brighter, more efficient future for Townsville and beyond.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.17 pm): In rising to address this bill, I want to touch on the issue—I think it is clause 26—of dual reporting. I do so by acknowledging the presence in the gallery of Michael Garrels, who has done so much over the years to make sure the memory of his son Jason has been preserved and that what happened to him cannot happen to anyone else. The central underpinning principle that I am addressing today is making sure this does not happen again.

I want to commend the member for Springwood on his speech. I changed substantially what I was going to say after listening to him. I think he made a very measured, passionate but also very informative speech. I want to reiterate, as he did, that this particular clause is not just about paperwork. What this deals with can be about life and death. Dual reporting is designed to save lives in Queensland. It is an administrative requirement to make sure the building regulator and the safety regulator are informed immediately about an incident.

We have heard LNP members talking about some measures in this bill, and they may have been talking about dual reporting. They may call dual reporting red tape or they may call it duplication; I call it protection and I call it looking after Queensland workers. It is a reform, as we have heard, that many people have fought long and hard to bring in and I strongly believe it is something that cannot just be given up or surrendered. The failure of liaison between agencies has been one of the lessons that we learnt from Jason's death and we have already heard that dual reporting is one of those initiatives which has seen over 900 incidents reported over the last five years and five licences cancelled. These reporting requirements, including dual reporting, are the guardrails that Queensland has to ensure that construction workers come home every night.

I have talked a lot about construction workers in this place over the last 10 years and one of the reasons is the number of construction workers who live in my electorate. There are more steel fixers in Deception Bay than anywhere else in Queensland. I know these men and women. I hear their stories of what they are exposed to on sites, I have heard about their injuries and I have heard about their

fighters to ensure that they are on safe worksites. Therefore, I appeal to everyone here: let us keep this protection of dual reporting.

The LNP, as the member for Springwood has said, has offered no evidence, no modelling and no case to get rid of dual reporting. The learned member for Burleigh said that paperwork robs time. What I say is that inadequate protection robs lives. I want us here to honour Jason's memory, I want us to honour Michael's work and I would like us to keep this protection.

One thing that we have heard from LNP members is that with this bill we can rely on automation for reporting to be done and if not there are big penalties—80 to 100 penalty units—but tell me if that will prevent another death like Jason's and tell me if that will prevent another rogue operator from doing the right thing. There are many fine things in this bill but, like many members on this side, it more than irks me—it concerns me greatly—to see a protection like dual reporting taken away when we know that by keeping its presence in the legislative toolbox it can help prevent another death within Queensland.

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (5.22 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—a crucial piece of legislation that continues the Crisafulli government's work to modernise our building industry and unlock housing supply for Queenslanders. I want to thank the minister for including me in this really crucial work, as we both sit on BMAC that he chairs. We listen directly and we hear from industry—the plumbers, the electricians, and we even have the painters at that table. He is listening and with his team in the department they are not just listening; they are acting.

This bill represents the third tranche of the Building Regulation Renovation, or Building Reg Reno, and it is designed to cut red tape, improve efficiency and support productivity across the building and construction sector. By streamlining administrative processes, enabling greater digital services and clarifying licensing requirements, this legislation ensures that the QBCC can operate as a modern, responsive and user-friendly regulator.

The need for these reforms cannot be understated. Queensland's building and housing sector has been held back for too long by Labor's housing crisis legacy. Under its watch, housing approvals fell by 36 per cent even as Queensland's population grew at record rates. The result? Some 50,000 Queenslanders waiting on social housing, many families locked out of the property market and a construction sector constrained by outdated regulations and red tape.

Our government has committed to fixing the basics, because Queenslanders need more homes—affordable homes, homes that families can move into now, not years down the track. This includes standalone houses, unit complexes and the critical missing middle of medium-density development such as town houses, duplexes and low-rise apartments.

In my own electorate of Redlands, we are delivering on this commitment through the Southern Thornlands Priority Development Area, which will provide 8,000 new homes over the next 20 years alongside the necessary infrastructure and community services to support them. Projects like these are ambitious, but they are essential if we are going to meet the challenge of unlocking one million new homes across Queensland by 2044. This will include 53,500 social and community homes.

Increasing the supply is only part of the solution. Reforming how we build is just as important as where we build. That is why this bill is so critical. We have already delivered a fresh start for the QBCC with new leadership teams focused on transparency, accountability and genuine engagement with industry. I also want to acknowledge Greg and Angelo. Angelo spent a lot of time in the first almost six months that he has been with us also listening to industry. Tranches 1 and 2 of the Building Reg Reno reforms have already cut unnecessary red tape, including scrapping trust account requirements for small contractors and outdated financial reporting for over 50,000 licensees—a real shift to improve productivity in the construction sector. This third tranche builds on those achievements by modernising the QBCC's regulatory framework to allow greater digital engagement, streamlining workplace safety notifications and clarifying what constitutes a serious safety incident, ensuring obligations around returning licence cards only apply to physical cards and not electronic licences. Collectively, these reforms support industry productivity, strengthen safety, reduce costs and make it easier for tradies and consumers alike to navigate Queensland's building and construction landscape.

There is a critical part of this bill that cannot be ignored, and it is where Labor has made its position unmistakably clear. We have heard from members opposite today that they do not support tougher penalties for failing to report on safety incidents. In speech after speech they have opposed stronger penalties for licensees who do not report, all while claiming that they stand on the side of workers. Queenslanders expect integrity, they expect accountability and they expect that when something goes wrong on a worksite regulators know about it, quickly and clearly. This bill delivers that.

It creates a one source of truth reporting system, ensuring both the QBCC and Workplace Health and Safety receive consistent, accurate information, not two different reports, not two different versions and not the confusion that has cost lives in the past. No-one disputes the tragic circumstances of the passing of Jason Garrels. I want to acknowledge Jason's father. His loss is one that no parent should have to feel. Mr Garrels, we will honour Jason's legacy. You have our assurance.

The QBCC is Queensland's primary building regulator responsible for administering the QBCC Act, the Building Act and the Plumbing and Drainage Act. It oversees licensing for contractors, building certifiers, pool safety inspectors and plumbing and drainage professionals while also providing dispute resolution, building rectification, review processes and the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme.

By removing legislative impediments and enabling the QBCC to operate digitally, this bill ensures our regulatory framework is fit for the 21st century while continuing to uphold risk-based regulation and appropriate building standards. Consultation on this bill has been extensive and inclusive, with the QBCC and industry stakeholders providing broad support. It is a practical, forward-looking piece of legislation that addresses the challenges left by the previous government. It supports our building industry and ensures Queenslanders can access the homes they need. People in the Redlands want action they can actually feel. Safer builds, fairer rules and a market that works for everyday families—that is what this bill delivers.

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.30 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. At its core, this bill seeks to modernise licensing frameworks across Queensland's building and construction industry. One key reform is the removal of mandatory physical licence cards making way for digital licences accessed through the Queensland Digital Licence app. Let me be clear: this is not a novel idea from the LNP. In fact, this is a reform that was already well underway under the former Labor government. Labor initiated this digital transformation, Labor built this infrastructure and Labor set the vision for a more streamlined, accessible licensing system that works for both licensees and the public. The LNP is simply continuing the groundwork laid by the previous Labor government when it comes to digital licensing.

Since the statewide launch of the Queensland Digital Licence app in November 2023, over one million Queenslanders have taken up digital licensing. This is a tremendous milestone and it is proof that our state is ready to embrace digital reform when done properly. We support digitisation where it improves efficiency, transparency and ease of access for licence holders and consumers alike, we support it when it streamlines compliance processes and we support it when it makes government services more accessible, not less. That said, digitisation must be inclusive. It must consider those who, for various reasons, may not have reliable access to smartphones, stable internet or the technological literacy to navigate digital platforms confidently.

During the committee's inquiry into this bill, the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union raised a legitimate concern. They highlighted that a significant number of licence holders in Queensland may be disadvantaged if we shift exclusively to digital formats without providing adequate support and alternatives. They acknowledge that the bill does not mandate digital-only licensing and simply enabled digital formats to be used but warned this flexibility must be retained in implementation. The union stated that physical licences should remain available as an option because no-one in their industry should be excluded or penalised because they prefer or need a physical licence.

The committee also heard from the Fire Protection Association Australia, which supported the move towards digital delivery in principle but strongly recommended maintaining the option for physical licences. The association provided examples from the field. In correctional centres, in certain hospital settings and anywhere mobile phone use is prohibited, licensees may be unable to produce a digital licence when asked. These are not hypothetical scenarios; they are real-world operational constraints that must be considered. Their feedback was constructive: provide flexibility, ensure certainty around photo update requirements and consult closely with industry before implementing any major shift. This is common sense and I urge the government to listen.

While we broadly support the move towards digital licensing, we must draw a very firm line in the sand when it comes to clause 26 of this bill. Clause 26 proposes to amend section 54A of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. This amendment removes the legislative requirement for licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations of a serious safety incident. Instead it requires notification to the Office of Industrial Relations only, with information then expected to be passed on to the QBCC. This may seem like a harmless administrative change, but we on this side of the House know what is really at stake.

This dual notification requirement was introduced in 2017 for a very specific, very serious reason—after the tragic death of Jason Garrels, a young man just 20 years old who died on a construction site in Clermont. I offer my sincere condolences to Jason’s dad. That tragedy led to a comprehensive review of safety reporting procedures. The outcome was dual notification—a safeguard, a fail-safe to ensure the QBCC had direct access to serious incident reports, because we knew that relying on interagency information sharing alone posed a risk. What has that system delivered? In the past five years, the QBCC has received and acted on more than 900 safety notifications. Of those, 26 show cause notices were issued and five licences were cancelled due to serious safety breaches. That is not bureaucracy; that is life-saving oversight. That is regulatory action that protects lives.

To remove this requirement now on the assumption that agencies will share information is to weaken a system that is demonstrably working. If information fails to flow, if another tragedy occurs due to a missed report, it will be this government that bears responsibility. The opposition believe that safety in the Queensland construction industry should be strengthened, not watered down for administrative convenience.

In conclusion, while there are positive elements in this bill, particularly those initiated under Labor, there are also areas of grave concern and risk. We support the continued rollout of digital licensing—a vision set in motion under the former Labor government—but warn about weakening safety oversight and about removing the protections put in place after preventable tragedies.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (5.37 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Many members in this House might find it very interesting that in a seat like Glass House, which largely represents rural, residential and small communities—26 in all around the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay hinterlands—aside from roads, particularly state roads, which I continue to pester the Minister for Transport and Main Roads about because each of those communities is connected by a state road, the second most significant complaint I and my office receive is around the QBCC. I love the fact that this bill delivers long-overdue updates to the QBCC to make it a more productive, user-friendly and efficient regulator.

I want to mention a number of the constituents who have come to me, because their experience has been anything but productive or user-friendly and it certainly has not been efficient. I acknowledge that many of these individuals were dealing with the QBCC while it was operating under the previous government. Take, for example, Mr Lawson Katiza at Mount Mellum. In 2019 Mr Katiza and his partner purchased a property in Mount Mellum. They intended to build their permanent home and they signed a contract with a builder who commenced construction in May of that year, with an expected building completion date of December 2020. The contract stipulated a full design and construct solution including geotechnical reports. Mount Mellum is, of course, on a very slopey hillside on the way up to Maleny.

Unfortunately, the construction process was fraught with numerous omissions, errors and disputes. Significant defects began to emerge shortly after completion including significant oversights, severe erosion and leaking underground pipes. Despite notifying the builder, they failed to address these issues in the immediate four-week aftermath and subsequently denied responsibility for the rectification of most issues. Mr Katiza was forced to go to the QBCC in May 2022—a prerequisite before escalating it to QCAT. Unfortunately, the QBCC inspector’s report favoured the builder, dismissing the complaints and suggesting the builder had ample time to rectify the defects, despite the builder’s refusal to do so. Sadly, the matter has now sat before QCAT for four years and we are no closer to resolving the matter, despite my efforts to work with both Minister O’Connor and the Attorney-General around that.

We acknowledge we were operating within a flawed system and that is why this legislation is very important. Jayne Ball from Mount Mee raised a dispute with QBCC in early 2024 regarding dodgy work being carried out on a home she was building. Jayne felt the response times were dismal at best—again going to that user-friendly element that the minister is trying to address through this bill—and cases were not triaged appropriately, meaning the house continued to be built and fitted out whilst concerns about the structure and the frame were not addressed. She was advised that the QBCC could not get involved while the contract was afoot, but she read their policies carefully and discovered that they can. A third-party building inspector identified glaring defects. She took the matter to QCAT. She was told there was a 15-month wait. Ms Ball is working with QBCC to share her experiences. Those kinds of experiences are helping to inform the legislative agenda of this government. There is also the Voller family of Maleny who have been interacting with QBCC around impacts on their property from works being undertaken on a neighbouring property.

An element of this bill is to modernise and digitise the QBCC. It is about improving efficiency and customer experience—something that each of those individuals I have mentioned are looking for—through expanded digital service delivery. As others have said, the current legislation is largely focused on a paper-based process and does not adequately support the QBCC in providing digital services, including interacting electronically with licensees and other customers.

I think this is important because the other constant complaint we receive in Glass House is from individuals who have been misled into believing that operators doing work on their properties have the correct licence when clearly that is not the case. Take, for example, Ron Hewitt from Woodford who had some roof painting done by an operator who claimed to have a QBCC licence but did not. Having a digital licence would potentially clear that up and make it a lot easier for Mr Hewitt to confirm whether the operator had a licence or not. In this case Mr Hewitt lodged a complaint with QBCC, but they declined to issue a direction to rectify because the problem was non-structural and reported four years after the work. Unfortunately an internal review upheld that same decision which meant that they now face a \$40,000 cost to replace the entire roof. They too have ended up at QCAT.

Then there is Becky Vietheer, also of Woodford, who had work undertaken by someone she understood had a licence but was subsequently found out not to have one. Becky reported a range of defective work elements undertaken on her property. She reported it to QBCC, but it took eight months for the QBCC to reply and their response stated they were unable to assist. It is really sad that in that time this unlicensed company continued to operate locally and at least six other people were affected by similar defective work because they were not aware of the fact that this individual did not operate under a licence.

I love the fact that these amendments will remove any legislative barriers, allowing but not requiring the QBCC to deliver services electronically. For example, licensees may opt to receive their licence in digital form. Fantastic! Constituents like mine will be able to ask to see that digital licence and confirm that it is accurate while still being able to choose a physical version should they want. I would encourage everyone who possibly can to take a digital licence. It is great that, as you have heard from those cases I have read out, this will hopefully provide better customer service. Customers will have greater options in how they can interact with the QBCC, including electronically or by post or in person at a regional service centre.

I know this is just part of the reform agenda of my colleague, Minister O'Connor, in this space. Ultimately it is designed to ensure that we supercharge our local construction industry, we build those homes we are desperately trying to build for the many Queenslanders who need it, we build them more affordably but we do it in the right way the first time so that we do not have situations like those of Mr Katiza, Ms Ball, Ms Vietheer, the Voller family and the Hewitt family. I hope and look forward to the fact that there will be subsequent legislation brought forward, but in the meantime I will be working with the QBCC to continue to represent the concerns of the constituents of Glass House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.44 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. At the outset, the Queensland opposition supports the modernisation and digitisation of the QBCC. Of course, this work began under the former Labor government. We wanted a system that was faster, simpler and more accessible for builders and consumers and capable of operating in a modern digital environment. The move towards digital licences, electronic service of documents and improved online interaction with the QBCC is sound policy and I acknowledge that much of this work was initiated under Labor and is simply a rebranding by the Crisafulli government. However, this bill does far more than digitise licences and it is in those deeper changes, specifically the amendments to section 54A dealing with the reporting of serious safety incidents, where the opposition must sound a clear warning.

In 2012 a young man named Jason Garrels went off to work. He turned up to what should have been an ordinary day's work. It was his sixth day on the job. He was enthusiastic, hopeful and doing everything he could to build a future for himself. Instead, he died in an utterly preventable workplace incident, an incident that exposed catastrophic failures in communication between regulators and gaps in safety awareness onsite. Jason's father, Michael, has spent more than a decade channelling his grief into advocacy. I cannot imagine the pain that he and his family have gone through. He told the committee that removing legislated dual reporting creates real danger. His words were powerful and sobering at the committee hearing in July 2025—

...the MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link...By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

It was Jason's death and the failures identified by the coroner that led the former Labor government in 2017 to introduce dual notification. That safeguard ensures the QBCC receives direct statutory notification of serious safety incidents—not second-hand information, not delayed information and not information dependent on administrative goodwill. The government seeks to remove this safeguard on the basis that administrative arrangements and an MOU between QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations will be 'sufficient'.

The facts before the committee told a different story. Over the past five years the QBCC has acted on more than 900 safety notifications. They have issued 26 show cause notices and five licences were cancelled as a direct result of those notifications. These are not theoretical numbers. These were unsafe worksites and these are workers' lives that are being put at risk. These regulatory interventions only occurred because the QBCC received direct legislative notice, not because someone relied on an email or a flag or a promise in an MOU. This government's argument that dual reporting is an administrative burden rings hollow. I wonder how Jason's father Michael feels about that. The cost to a licensee is just a few minutes. The cost of getting this wrong is a life.

This bill removes the legislated obligation and replaces it with trust, hope and an administrative agreement that is not enforceable, it can be changed at any time, it will not be regularly reviewed and relies entirely on the cooperation of whichever government happens to be in office. I am so pleased to hear that you are still awake, member for Mermaid Beach.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Member for Lytton, that was uncalled for. If you could continue please.

Mr RYAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There was definitely an interjection from that corner, from a member not in their seat. I ask you to make a ruling accordingly.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): Member for Morayfield, I heard the conversation over there and it was not directed at the member for Lytton. I have made my call.

Ms PEASE: It relies entirely on the cooperation of whichever government happens to be in office. The opposition does not oppose digitisation. We oppose the dismantling of proven safety protections, especially when those protections were put in place after a young man died on his sixth day at work. The current Crisafulli government is choosing convenience over safety and if—or when—information sharing breaks down then responsibility for the consequences will rest solely and squarely with this government, not with the worker who pays the price.

Turning to the digital components of the bill, the opposition supports digitisation measures including the removal of mandatory physical licence cards, enabling digital licences through the Queensland Digital Licence app, digital communication pathways and updated requirements for licensees. However, we stress the importance of ensuring physical licences remain available, especially for workers in high-security or mobile restricted environments, as was raised by industry stakeholders during the committee process.

In conclusion, Labor supports modernising the QBCC. For the very reasons that we have heard the member for Glass House talking about, it is a really important piece of work that is going on. We support digital licensing. We support improved customer service because that is what we all want. However, we will never support removing a legislative safeguard that existed for one reason only: to prevent another tragedy like the death of Jason Garrels. This bill asks the parliament to trade away a proven safety mechanism for an administrative convenience. The opposition will not support clause 26. We will continue to fight for a safety framework worthy of Queensland workers because every worker deserves to come home at the end of the day, whether it is on their sixth day on the job or their 6,000th.

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (5.52 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. At the outset, I congratulate my colleague Minister Sam O'Connor and my own department for the work they did in relation to the new suite of QBCC digital licences. A couple of weeks ago we unveiled another nine licences that are part of the stack that includes the existing digital driver's licence and the marine licence. I will come back to that when I speak about an example of the new licence in action on the Gold Coast which the member for Burleigh alluded to in the speech that he made earlier this afternoon.

For the benefit of the member for Ipswich West and the member for Lytton—this was also raised by other contributors to the debate tonight—I want to make clear a fundamental precept that those on this side of the chamber hold very dear. It is a sacred totem that the LNP holds dear—that is, choice. When it comes to personal freedoms, we will enable people to still have a plastic card if they choose to

use that. We would encourage people to make use of the new digital suite, particularly the QBCC licences, but, as the inaugural Minister for Customer Services and Open Data, I am very proud that we will make sure that the traditional licence card option is not removed. People will always have that choice.

It is also pertinent to make the point that anywhere from 60 to 70 per cent of Queensland lacks digital connectivity so this makes sense for a couple of reasons. The first is the technological reasons but another is one I mentioned at the outset. That is, one of the things that we on this side of the chamber hold dear is fundamental choice. Having said that, I want to acknowledge the genesis for these reforms that have continued over the years. I would be remiss if I did not mention the tragic passing of Jason Garrels in 2012. Even though years have passed since that tragic incident, I absolutely acknowledge the pain that must still cause his family and friends. I acknowledge them in my contribution.

I want to make sure that the House is aware of the fact that we are not going to roll out technology for the sake of it. We want to make sure it is there for a reason. We want to drive two facets. One of them is undoubtedly an improved customer service experience. The other thing I will always point out is that we want to drive productivity. We now have a range of digital licences in the digital suite and we would encourage all Queenslanders, regardless of the qualification they have, to seriously think about taking up that particular customer choice if it is offered digitally. One of the reasons for that is it makes available a range of options.

I will highlight that by explaining why I visited the member for Burleigh only a few weeks ago—in fact, it was on about 10 November, from memory. I caught up with some fantastic Clark Construction Group tradies. It was literally the day that we announced and unveiled the licence. I wanted to go onsite to meet a tradie and the member for Burleigh was very generous in making that arrangement. Using my digital ID on my phone, I was able to do an electronic ‘handshake’ in real time with the contractor who had already downloaded his QBCC licence. As was reflected in the contribution of the member for Glass House, that enabled me to verify digitally in real time that that gentleman indeed had a current and up-to-date licence. Let us think about that from a customer choice perspective: you have engaged a contractor to come onsite whom you have never laid eyes on before, so the first thing you want to do is establish his electronic bona fides. Now you can do that.

Without going into ISO encryption techniques et cetera, the standard that we have for electronic hand-off in relation to digital verification, security and safety is amongst the best in the world. That is something we are particularly proud of. I assure the House that this is merely the start. We have made it pretty clear that we are well and truly on a digital journey—I have said it once and I will say it again—for a better customer experience and also, as I am sure everyone in this chamber would agree, because we have to start driving productivity.

At the end of the day, nine QBCC licences have been added to the digital wallet. As a previous speaker mentioned, we have had a digital driver’s licence in play for nearly three years and about one million Queenslanders have taken up that option. That is roughly 22 to 25 per cent. We unashamedly want to drive up that figure because, particularly in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic Games, we want to give people a full digital experience. It has started now. In the coming months and years, we will continue to work with different agencies to add to that digital suite. This is all part and parcel of making Queensland a robust and modern 21st century economy.

Something that is completely related is that we will continue to work with the federal government wherever we can, literally hand in glove, to improve the technological coverage of Queensland. South-East Queensland is not too bad, although there will always be black spots. The coastline of Queensland is also not too bad. However, generally, the moment you travel 30 minutes inland from any coastal city, town or hamlet the five bars of coverage drops to four, then to three, then to two, then to one and then to no signal. We will work hand in glove to make sure digital licences are here not just for tomorrow but forever.

Again I take this opportunity to thank the staff from both departments who have worked together fantastically well on something we are particularly proud of. This is indeed good legislation. This is something that we on this side of the chamber wholeheartedly support. Digital licences are definitely the way of the future in Queensland. Again I thank Minister O’Connor and his department for working hand in glove with my department to make QBCC digital licences a reality.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (5.59 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the debate on the QBCC bill. I say from the start that we definitely support the amendments in this legislation that basically put into practice what we as a Labor government had been working on previously and what the

government elected in October 2024 has been working on. That is the digitisation and modernisation of the QBCC. You cannot wake up one day and decide to make a licence digital. You have to work on that. You have to set up the systems, you have to educate people and you have to make sure everything is in place for it. That homework started four years ago.

I think in his speech last night the minister reiterated that there was a review undertaken in 2022. We started on the recommendations. The work has been done. The departments have been working on starting to—

Mr O'Connor: On the safety notifications, that is. The safety notifications you are opposing. That was what was started.

Ms GRACE: I will get to that. I am talking about the digitisation of the licences. We already have about 7,000 digital licences. I think it was the member for Burnett who said that they already had one as well. This work was well and truly underway. It had been researched and we had been working on it. This is simply implementing the work that we had already done.

I want to address some of the changes that were brought in previously whereby the licensee had to notify of an incident not only the QBCC but also Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. There are very good reasons for that. I notice Michael Garrels is in the gallery this evening. He has been here the whole time. Those changes came about because of the advocacy of Lee and Michael Garrels. Michael Garrels chaired the family support group in Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. The accident involving his son Jason was horrific and tragic.

Michael and I have shared some moments about the accident. I remember his wife, Lee, saying she thought: who is this young man who is in the hospital. From memory, she was a nurse at the time. Her son was at the hospital where she was a nurse. Imagine the tragic circumstances for that family. This happened in 2012.

We worked on what we could do to send a message to licensees that you have to take responsibility for these things. There was a lot of discussion about how to do that. One of the reasons we made it that licensees had to notify both the QBCC and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland is that the mechanisms in place were not working very well. I know that the minister is saying that this has been refined now and nothing will go wrong. We did that so they had to take responsibility statutorily.

Let us not escape the fact that if you are a licensee you have dual responsibilities. There are two organisations that regulate you. As a licensee, the requirements you have under the occupational health and safety legislation are different to the requirements you have under the QBCC. They have different regulatory roles, but they are intertwined. If something horrific, like a death or a serious incident, occurs not only are your health and safety obligations and responsibilities very serious at that point in time but also there can be serious consequences in terms of maintaining your licence.

When we did that, it was about sending a message. Back then, if a licensee's licence was due to be renewed and the QBCC had not been informed that someone had been killed then the QBCC was renewing that licence without that information. The family support group said that that was unacceptable. Surely this needs to be taken into account. If my child or other family member is killed on a site that is a serious offence and it should be taken into account by the QBCC when they are determining whether that licensee has in place all the necessary requirements to obtain a licence in Queensland.

When we engage these people to build our homes, to build our apartments, to renovate our homes we want to be sure that they have a licence and they have a licence for all the right reasons. By the LNP taking that requirement away and saying that you only have to advise Workplace Health and Safety Queensland it takes away in your mind that your licence is just as important as your occupational health and safety requirements. That is the salient issue that we are objecting to.

I went onto the QBCC site and looked at how to report a safety issue or incident. You can phone them to let them know. You do not even have to fill out the paperwork. I have printed what they have on the website. It says that you can notify them by either calling them on 139333. A phone call is all you have to do or you can fill the form out online. There are prompts about the information they want.

It is hardly the incredible burden of paperwork that the member for Burleigh talked about. Somehow a kid in his electorate is going to afford to buy a house because they are removing this notification. That is absolute nonsense. Somehow houses are going to be cheaper because all of a sudden you do not have to inform the organisation you get your licence to operate from that someone has been killed on your site. That is what we are talking about.

That man in the gallery was a victim of a tragedy that was not necessary. It did not have to occur. You are saying that that licensee, who was convicted under our industrial manslaughter laws for what happened to his 20-year-old son, should not have to take one or two minutes to ring the QBCC and let them know. That is what you are removing.

Mr VORSTER: I rise to point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member's comments—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): No, what is your point of order?

Mr VORSTER: I take personal offence to the comments raised by the member and ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take advice.

Ms GRACE: I was not referring to you personally, but take offence. You are right, you should.

Mr Vorster interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is to be no cross-chamber quarrelling while I am taking advice. Member for Burleigh, there is no point of order. Member for McConnel, can you please direct your comments through the chair.

Ms GRACE: I will take your guidance on this. This is very emotional. I was intricately involved in this as the industrial relations minister. I delivered for a group who wanted changes in terms of what was happening in this space. We see this taken away when there is no modelling and there is absolutely no evidence to suggest it should be. It is not onerous. It is merely sending a message that you have a statutory obligation as a licensee to notify the organisation that licences you—you can even ring them—and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland that a serious incidents or a death has occurred on your site.

I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker, the rest of what has been said by those opposite is nonsense. It is not an onerous task for our licensees to do that. I do not see why that requirement has to be removed. Who is going to take responsibility when it does not happen? Who is going to take responsibility when one side forgets to give it to the other or something happens or there is a glitch? Who is ultimately responsible? You are taking away the responsibility from the licensee to notify the regulator—the QBCC—and notify Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and put the responsibility in an MOU between two organisations.

I am hoping that will occur, but I do not see any evidence. There are nonsense arguments: 'We need to build more houses. We are going to build more houses. This will remove red tape. A young person will be able to buy a house. All of a sudden they are going to become so cheap that I can go out and buy 10 of them,' or something like that. These are nonsense arguments. These are serious issues. This came out of tragic circumstances. You do not play with this. This reform set a clear statutory responsibility. I was very proud of it. I fought hard for it and delivered it along with the then minister and now Manager of Opposition Business.

The nonsense we are hearing about this is ridiculous. It is not onerous. It should stay the way it is. It should not be removed. Even though we did the review, we never for one minute contemplated removing the statutory responsibility of the licensee to notify QBCC and we will not be supporting that part of this bill.

 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise today to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. The Crisafulli LNP government is making it easier to build in Queensland. We are modernising Queensland's building and construction sector through a comprehensive and practical reform agenda—an agenda designed to position Queensland as the building capital of the nation.

The bill delivers long-overdue updates to the QBCC to make it a more productive, user-friendly and efficient regulator. It will remove outdated paper-based requirements and clears the way for digital licensing, online attendance and electronic communication. It will streamline workplace safety notifications, removing duplication without reducing safety obligations or oversight. These changes will strengthen safety, lift productivity and respond directly to industry feedback to make it easier to build within Queensland.

I am seeing an increase in tradespeople who are seeking support. They are brilliant at their jobs; however, the outdated rules of the QBCC leave them feeling frustrated and in despair just trying to complete the paperwork that the QBCC requires to update licences. A local tradesman I have been trying to assist in my electorate of Maryborough is Josh. He has been trying all year to complete the required paperwork to upskill for his builder's licence. He has completed years of practical experience,

but when it comes to deciphering what QBCC wants from him he is lost in a sea of fancy words and what appear to be strange requests. Last week he again met with me to inform me that QBCC had rejected his application. He has wasted time and money on an application that is just far too difficult to complete. This is not good enough. Josh is one of many tradespeople who have brilliant and creative minds but who are lost within the system, and he is on the verge of giving the building game away. Why? The current laws, which the former Labor government introduced, are failing him, with unnecessary paperwork that he just does not understand.

Labor allowed the QBCC to fall so far behind that the 2022 independent review had to call out the lack of digital transformation. The Labor Party did not modernise a thing. While the industry asked for practical reform, Labor delivered red tape, delay and confusion. The Labor Party's approach to building regulation was more forms, more hoops, more cost and less building. Ten years of neglect by the previous Labor government has placed Queensland in the mess it is in today—not enough homes for Queenslanders. This change cannot come quick enough, as the previous Labor government has set out to destroy our building industry with ridiculous rules and requirements. Change has finally arrived with the Crisafulli LNP government. By passing this QBCC legislation, Queensland is set to thrive and flourish once again. Support needs to be given to our building industry because we most certainly need it now.

The QBCC has been working to improve efficiency and customer experience including through expanded digital service delivery. However, current legislation is largely focused on paper-based processes and does not adequately support the QBCC in providing digital services, including interacting electronically with licensees and other customers. These proposed amendments remove these legislative barriers, allowing but not requiring the QBCC to deliver services electronically.

This bill will not weaken workplace safety. Safety, the most important aspect, will remain unchanged, penalties will be increased and the QBCC continues to receive all serious incident information via secure data sharing with OIR. The consequence for noncompliance has increased from eight to 100 penalty units, reflecting the seriousness of workplace safety matters. What changes is how regulators communicate, not what must be reported. This is a regulatory efficiency measure only and it does not reduce safety obligations or the visibility of incidents to the QBCC.

The department, working with relevant regulators, has been directed to review the operation of this after two years to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of these arrangements. The opposition's argument would have Queenslanders believe that duplicating paperwork somehow makes worksites safer. This simply is not true. What really keeps people safe is timely, accurate information to the right regulators at the right time, and that is exactly what this bill delivers.

It is frustrating to see competent tradespeople sitting in my office, frustrated with dealing with the bureaucracy of the former Labor government QBCC system. The experience of local tradesperson Josh is a prime example of how the former Labor government set out to complicate a system that should be straightforward to understand. Josh is just one of many skilled workers who want to see our community and our state thrive again in the building industry, but his hands are tied due to the complicated and confusing current system within the QBCC.

The review comes at the perfect time for Queensland. With the Residential Activation Fund kickstarting our building industry, there is no better moment for the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to be considered and passed by this parliament.

I would like to thank the Hon. Sam O'Connor, Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth, and the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee for examining and reviewing the current legislation. Also I want to thank the Crisafulli LNP government for realising there are major issues within the QBCC and for changing the legislation affecting the building industry. I commend the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to the House.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (6.18 pm): I rise to contribute to the QBCC and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I thank the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee for their examination of the bill. I particularly want to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of Mr Michael Garrels, whose tragic loss of his son Jason in a workplace accident that could have been prevented has led to so many reforms for the building industry that have made a difference. Michael obviously wanted Jason's death to matter and to save other families from having to suffer as he did. He has achieved that, and we thank him for his selflessness.

The explanatory notes state that the objectives of this bill are: modernising a regulatory framework for the QBCC; supporting the QBCC to deliver more services digitally; and streamlining workplace safety in Queensland's building and construction industry through ending how industry reports serious safety matters. The word 'streamlining' in that third objective is somewhat jarring because, while reducing red tape is important, it implies that somehow reducing red tape should be the ultimate consideration. On this occasion we believe that it has been considered at the expense of safety. I will talk a little bit more about that later.

We take no issue with the further implementation of digital services within the QBCC. I understand that they relate to the introduction of digital licensing, investigator powers, the digital serving of documents and the introduction of penalties for licensees who do not update their contact details within specified timeframes. It is important that we make licensing as easy and as efficient as possible for builders and consumers, which is why we initiated these reforms in the first place.

Like many of Labor's reforms, the LNP is now pretending these changes were their idea. They do say imitation is the greatest form of flattery. We are used to them taking credit for 50-cent fares, FairPlay vouchers, free kindy, new schools, and the list goes on. The important thing is that they are good reforms. We are very pleased to say that they have picked them up and run with them.

It is actually the reporting of serious safety incidents on building sites that we are very concerned about, and I urge the government to reconsider these amendments. I understand that their purpose is to simplify the process of reporting safety matters under the QBCC Act without changing the intent or outcomes of the existing legislative framework—that is what the explanatory notes say. Instead of licensees having to notify two regulators about a relevant matter—a practice which Labor introduced as a direct result of Michael's advocacy—the bill provides that the licensee must only notify the Office of Industrial Relations, which will then share the information with the QBCC on a daily basis by way of an automated report.

If red tape was the No. 1 priority, it sounds very good that people do not have to make two reports. We seem to have forgotten the reason we needed that dual reporting in the first place, and none could have put it more eloquently than the member for McConnel, who obviously went through the process herself and implemented those reforms. We appear to have forgotten the critical reason that dual reporting was introduced. We see in the committee report that one of the reasons that apparently it is so troubling to do dual reporting is—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Marr): There is a lot of chatter on both sides of the chamber. I can barely hear. Thank you.

Ms FARMER:—we want to make sure that two bodies receive one and the same report. I personally cannot understand why that could not be easily fixed by an administrative measure like having a uniform template, which would not be very hard to design, or some other measure so we could retain dual reporting. However, the most important consideration for us is that, while the new arrangements being proposed ensure the licensee must notify the regulator, they do not ensure the regulator notifies the QBCC. I understand that Michael voiced his very clear concerns to the committee about this through the inquiry process.

When it comes to safety, I do not understand how such an important communication can rely on an MOU, which can basically be up-ended without too much trouble at all and is vulnerable to human error and human frailty. I have heard members on the other side of the House say, 'We promise you, Michael, that we'll make sure that nothing happens with the MOU.' It is actually nonsensical and laughable if it were not so serious. I do not see how any member of the LNP government is going to be sitting beside somebody in the Office of Industrial Relations and personally making sure that reports are submitted on a daily basis. It just does not make sense, and it is not possible for any human being to guarantee that that will happen. It can only happen through legislative measures. I do not understand why the bill cannot impose that framework.

I want to refer to a couple of the digital initiatives this bill will legislate. This bill introduces a pathway for serving documents digitally. That was a good idea that we had. It was a practical idea. A pathway for serving documents digitally will be legislated, but we cannot legislate for double reporting or for a framework to ensure the right authorities are informed.

Then there is a requirement for licensees to advise the QBCC of a change in their residential address, email address or phone number within 14 days of the change. Again, it is a good idea of ours and it is important to deter noncompliance. That is to be legislated, but we cannot legislate for this important safety measure which saves lives.

My point is: if we can legislate for these things, which are basically housekeeping measures, why can we not legislate for safety measures, which are about life and death. They are about serious and other injuries and they should be the most important considerations for this parliament. What is the problem with going the extra mile and making sure that the communication between the regulator and the QBCC is covered by a legislative framework? Surely it is an extremely minor thing to achieve that in this legislation.

I understand that the government will take absolutely no notice of what we are saying about this amendment, so I will just say this: it was very concerning to read in the committee report that, despite doing away with this dual reporting, the department officials had not done any modelling at all around the reporting approach being proposed, about how they could ensure an MOU would achieve the same results that had been achieved by dual reporting. I sincerely hope that this will be addressed. The need for tightness and the need for vigilance when it comes to safety cannot be overstated.

The minister is virtually guaranteeing that by proposing this MOU arrangement it is actually going to occur, that vigilance will occur. We need to hold him to that. Every worker should go to work fully expecting to come home safe, and their families should expect that as well. It is fundamental to who we are. We express our support and our care for Jason's family. As we debate this bill, we honour Jason himself.

Sitting suspended from 6.27 pm to 7.30 pm.



Mrs KIRKLAND (Rockhampton—LNP) (7.30 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I applaud the swift action of the housing minister and his team in getting on and working with our construction industry to modernise what was archaic legislation—something those opposite were not able to do for 10 years. I congratulate the committee on their consideration of this bill, which details what is tranche 3 of a four-tranche rollout of construction industry reforms. The updates reflected in this bill provide long-overdue reforms that enable productivity by empowering the QBCC to be a more efficient and user-friendly regulator.

This bill is in direct response to industry and community calls for government to take action on legislative changes that under the previous Labor government had resulted in an over-regulated, complex, arduous and costly system—a system that was not only slowing productivity but, indeed, undermining small business viability. Our construction industry deserves a modern system that keeps up with technology as it evolves. With its implementation, this bill introduces digitisation, refines the system to a single notification point and streamlines workplace safety notifications, removing unnecessary duplication. It includes digital licensing, online attendance and electronic communication—all without compromising safety.

Contrary to what a number of those opposite have said, the bill does not weaken workplace safety, with all safety obligations remaining unchanged. The QBCC will continue to receive all serious information via secure data sharing with the Office of Industrial Relations. In fact, penalties have increased for industry licensees that fail to adhere to safety obligations. What does change is how regulators communicate, ensuring interagency notifications with the right information at the same time, not what is reported. Even with the implementation of digitisation it is important to note that, for those amazing construction industry workers who prefer to be paper-based, that will still also be available.

Just who are those amazing construction workers in our community? They are the plasterers, electricians, bricklayers, plumbers, roofers, painters, roofing and wall cladders, cabinet-makers, tilers, steel fixers, waterproofers, as well as termite managers, and fire protection and building design workers—real men and women who have families to support and who rely on a competent government to have their back, as the Crisafulli government has demonstrated in this bill, which lays the foundations for our next tranche of improvements for their industry, with tranche 4 again modernising legislation to further improve consistency across all QBCC licences.

Tranches 1 and 2 have already cut paperwork, reduced administrative burden and given industry the time it needs to adapt, paused the trust account rollout and reduced the administrative burden for more than 97 per cent of individual licensees. The Master Builders website shows results of a statewide survey they conducted during the 2024 election. It states—

Queensland builders have suffered an avalanche of regulatory changes over the past few years, costing time and money, in addition to challenging market conditions in the wake of COVID-19 and other international events. Queenslanders want these businesses better supported by government, so they can play their role in growing our state for the future.

This bill addresses safety and productivity, all in direct response to industry feedback such as this.

The Crisafulli government inherited the housing crisis of the previous government's making, where productivity had slowed due to lack of planning, lack of investment, lack of good governance and lack of listening to the industry we are relying on to deliver the construction needs of a growing state. Today this bill forms part of the multiple levers the Crisafulli government are moving to shift the dial on that housing crisis.

Construction industry representatives from across my electorate of Rockhampton have long been calling out for initiative to be taken by government to step up and provide regulatory relief and reform. They have shared how time is money and how the duplicitous, time-demanding and burdensome regulatory requirements were sucking away not only productivity but also money. Whilst off the tools, money is not being made. This bill gets industry back on the tools, getting the job done and opening up more work, along with financial sustainability.

I am honoured to have been able to represent my communities' construction industry concerns and to be part of the government that is actually willing to respond and implement measures that facilitate answers to their calls for help. Of course customers, too, will now have options on how they interact with the QBCC. They can opt to liaise electronically, by post or in person at a regional service centre.

Coming from regional Queensland, I welcome the inclusions within this bill that implement reviewing the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme's insurance threshold cover amounts, timeframes and the establishment of consistent implementation of timeframes for future National Construction Code updates.

In closing, I also wish to highlight that, whilst all of these data-sharing systems have been operating successfully between other regulators for some time, this bill directs the department to review operation of the construction industry system after two years—again, another responsible measure implemented by a responsible LNP Crisafulli-led government. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (7.37 pm): The construction industry is one of the largest employers in Queensland and is an industry where the regulatory settings that we put in place in this place have real consequences for workers, for licensees, for consumers and for the broader safety culture of the sector. This includes the thousands of local tradespeople and small contractors across my electorate of Nudgee who rely on the QBCC every day.

With respect to the digital reforms proposed in the bill, the bill removes the requirement for physical QBCC licence cards and authorises digital licences through the Queensland Digital Licence app. It modernises communication processes by allowing documents to be served electronically and it requires licensees to update their contact details within 14 days to ensure accuracy and communication.

These changes matter to local contractors, to local tradespeople. For carpenters, plumbers, electricians, tilers, roofers and small building companies, having a licence accessible on their phone, receiving documents electronically and cutting down on paperwork will make day-to-day compliance faster and easier. For many contractors, particularly in small businesses, these efficiencies make a practical difference to how they manage their workload.

Importantly, individuals who prefer or who rely on in-person services, particularly in regional Queensland who may have connectivity issues or just a preference, will continue to have those options available. This ensures that those without consistent digital access and workers on sites where phones are restricted are not disadvantaged.

The opposition supports these reforms because digitisation makes licensing faster and easier for builders and consumers. We of course also support digital reforms as they build directly on work initiated under our former Labor government when we commenced the transition to digital licences and the supporting ICT and regulatory work. These reforms are therefore a continuation of the modernisation program Labor began, and we are pleased to see this work being followed through with.

The second component of this bill concerns amendments to the safety notification requirements under section 54A of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act. In 2017 dual notification requirements were introduced following the coronial investigation into the tragic death of young worker Jason Garrels. The coroner identified gaps in communication between agencies and recommended direct statutory notification to ensure the QBCC was made aware of serious safety incidents that may indicate risks associated with particular work practices or license holders.

The dual notification requirement meant that licensees were required to notify both the Office of Industrial Relations and the QBCC. This ensured that the QBCC received the information it needed to perform its compliance and disciplinary functions in a timely manner. The bill removes this requirement.

Under clause 26, licensees would notify only the Office of Industrial Relations with the expectation that relevant information would then be shared with the QBCC through administrative arrangements rather than through a legislated mechanism.

The Labor opposition will not support the removal of this safeguard. In the past five years the QBCC has acted on more than 900 safety notifications. This has resulted in 26 show cause notices and five license cancellations for serious safety breaches. These outcomes demonstrate that direct notification of the QBCC has supported appropriate regulatory action. The dual notification requirement was introduced for a clear reason, informed by a coronial investigation, and based on the principle that multiple pathways improve regulatory visibility. Relying solely on administrative arrangements such as a memorandum of understanding is not the same as having a legislated obligation. Administrative arrangements can vary over time and do not carry the same level of certainty or clarity as a statutory requirement.

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the presence of Michael Garrels at parliament today. He has been in the gallery all day and has taken a short break over dinner. I want to acknowledge the tragic loss that he and his wife Lee and their family experienced as a result of a totally preventable workplace incident.

The opposition acknowledges that some stakeholders argued for reducing duplication in reporting processes while others emphasised the importance of maintaining statutory reporting obligations to ensure direct regulatory oversight. We of course considered these views in forming our opinion on the bill as an opposition. However, given the history of this provision and the clear regulatory outcomes that have resulted from dual notification, Labor's position is resolutely that this safeguard should be retained.

I note the comments of many government members in this House during this debate, labelling the removal of these statutory obligations to notify of particular safety measures as 'inefficient' 'red tape' and 'duplication'. I acknowledge that, for many of the government members who have used these terms, they will have come from speaking notes. We understand this; we have been in government. We understand that ministers respectfully provide speaking notes to assist their members. We understand that. It is also important to understand the realities behind the amendments that are being made, the previous positions that are being changed and the stories. This amendment, which was introduced under our government, came from a coronial investigation. It came from an avoidable loss on a worksite. Clause 26 is amending 54A. If any of you have looked at it, what an individual licensee is required to do is incredibly simple. Section 54A(1) states—

This section applies if a licensee becomes aware of either of the following

It then goes into the threshold. 54A(3) states—

The notice must be given in the fastest way possible in the circumstances—

- (a) by telephone; or
- b) in writing.

It goes on to clarify that you could give details of the safety matter by an email. This is not red tape or inefficiency. It could take 10 minutes of someone's day to do this in order to continue to give effect and honour what was a coronial investigation recommendation. It is not an inefficiency and it is not red tape. A father who has grieved the loss of his son has become a workplace safety advocate, sat on multiple committees, and informed a former government that this very easy additional safety notification was a very real way to ensure that an incident like that does not occur again. It is as easy, Minister, as listening to his calls. We can say what we like in here. You can ignore all of them; however, many of us have also been ministers and would also speak to the fact that we have listened. We actually listen. We are not standing here because we like the sound of our own voices. We are standing here—

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Ms LINARD: I am not taking your interjections because again the minister is not listening.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): Member for Bonney, the member for Nudgee is not taking your interjections.

Ms LINARD: The minister is still not listening. With regard to omitting this requirement to also directly notify the regulator, the QBCC, it would be so simple for the minister to say, 'I heard you.' Don't listen to us; listen to Michael. 'I heard you. You have raised a valid concern.' It is not only the father of

this young man who lost his life but there were also coronial recommendations. Then just don't admit it, but do not try and muddy the waters, Minister—through you, Madam Deputy Speaker—that we are arguing against tougher penalties and protections. We are talking about the dual reporting requirement contained in the QBCC Act under section 54A to also notify the QBCC as well as the workplace health and safety officer. That is what we are here arguing. That is what all of us have argued. It is simple. All you need to do is change your current clause 26 and give honour to a man who lost his son, to a family who lost their son, and to prevent that from happening again.

Dual notification, as I said, has delivered tangible results. It remains an important statutory protection within the building and construction regulatory framework. While we support the other amendments in here such as digitalisation—they make sense for industry—but the omission of this existing requirement makes absolutely no sense. The opposition rightfully will stand with Michael and people on worksites to keep them safe.

 **Ms DOOLEY** (Redcliffe—LNP) (7.46 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, a crucial part of the Crisafulli government's commitment to making it easier, safer and faster to build in Queensland. This bill is built on a simple but powerful principle. When we modernise regulation, cut duplication and strengthen safety oversight we create a construction sector that supports workers, protects consumers and delivers the homes and infrastructure our communities need.

For too long Queensland's building and construction laws have lagged behind the needs of industry and the expectations of the community. Labor spent a decade building a system of overlapping, paper-heavy, outdated rules that tied up the QBCC in knots. This bill is about reversing that legacy. Through the Building Reg Reno agenda we are modernising the QBCC so it can deliver services efficiently, consistently and, importantly, digitally. This includes allowing licensees to opt for digital licenses, digital communication, online attendance and streamlined interaction with the regulator, bringing it into the 21st century. For those who prefer traditional methods, physical licences and postal communication do remain available. That is about choice, not compulsion or mandatory requirements.

As the proud mum of a tradie, a shout-out to my eldest son Josiah Dooley on launching his own private building business in the past year, providing quality renovations and maintenance carpentry. We are a family of builders. My grandfather Sid Turnbull started Turnbull Constructions in Toowoomba in the 1940s. After moving to Redcliffe it is in its third generation, with my cousin Tony Turnbull and his son Matt Turnbull still building quality homes on the peninsula and beyond.

In an electorate like mine of Redcliffe—where we have thousands of tradies, subcontractors, small building businesses and home owners navigating the QBCC system every year—this matters. Whether you are a carpenter from Margate, a tiler from Clontarf or a young apprentice from the trade college in Scarborough just getting your first licence, these reforms make dealing with the QBCC faster, simpler and less frustrating. Most importantly, it means the QBCC can focus its energy where it should: supporting high standards, safe worksites and a strong industry, not shuffling paperwork.

A key part of this bill is the reform of workplace safety incident reporting. In 2017 changes required licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations about serious incidents—a duplication which was introduced to address the tragic death of Mr Jason Garrels, and I acknowledge his father in the gallery tonight. Those interventions were honourable, but today mature information-sharing arrangements now exist between regulators so this bill removes the requirements for double reporting while maintaining all safety obligations and all oversight.

Let's be very clear: this bill does not reduce safety; it strengthens it. The requirement to report serious incidents remains unchanged. The penalty for failing to report increases from 80 to 100 penalty units, reflecting the seriousness of workplace safety. The QBCC will continue receiving the same information through secure, automated data sharing rather than duplicative forms.

In Redcliffe this is not an abstract policy change. Safety on construction sites is a real and ongoing concern. On the peninsula, construction is booming, with new housing, medium-density development, renovations and upgrades to small businesses. Every day, workers in Redcliffe climb scaffolding, handle heavy machinery and operate in high-risk environments. What keeps them safe is clear, timely information sent to the right regulator at the right time, not filling out the same form in duplicate. Removing duplication means incidents can be investigated faster. It means employers can act sooner. It means regulators have a clearer picture of what is going on. This is how we protect our workers, this is how we honour the memory of those who have tragically been lost and this is how we prevent future tragedies.

Our local builders and tradies tell me regularly that what they want is for government to get out of the way and let them get on with the job, while still ensuring the highest safety standards. This bill delivers exactly that. Through our earlier Building Reg Reno reforms—tranches 1 and 2—we have already: scrapped annual financial reporting for around 50,000 licensees; paused the trust account rollout for smaller private projects; reduced administrative burden; extended deadlines for fire protection workers to meet their training requirements; and cut red tape for plumbers undertaking certain fire protection work. In Redcliffe, where most construction companies are small, locally owned, family operated businesses, these reforms represent thousands of dollars in savings and dozens of hours freed up each year—time that can be spent employing apprentices, completing jobs and supporting building projects.

Tranche 4 will continue this transformation by: reviewing licensing thresholds; improving dispute resolution; harmonising processes for National Construction Code updates; and ensuring the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme remains fit for purpose. These reforms will provide certainty to home owners and builders alike, and this is very important for our growing peninsula community, where housing supply remains a key priority.

Some have argued that safety reporting amendments could weaken accountability. That argument is simply inaccurate. What we are doing is ensuring regulators communicate effectively without unnecessary duplication and delays. Information will not be lost, incidents will not go unnoticed, safety standards will not be diminished and the arrangements will be reviewed after two years to ensure they are delivering exactly what they should.

In conclusion, this bill protects workers, empowers industry and will help build Queensland's future—the houses we need in Redcliffe, the Moreton Bay Youth Foyer and the Olympic and Paralympic Games infrastructure we need. The Crisafulli government is committed to making Queensland the building capital of the nation and to do that safely, efficiently and responsibly. For Redcliffe, this bill means: safer construction sites, including the Redcliffe Hospital expansion plan; more homes, including social, affordable and supportive housing; faster regulatory processes; less red tape for tradies; more efficient investigations of incidents; and better outcomes for home owners and consumers.

We are modernising the QBCC, embracing digital service delivery and streamlining safety reporting, without compromising worker protections. This is a practical, commonsense bill. It reflects what industry has asked for, and it strengthens safety. I thank Minister O'Connor and his team for their work on this bill and for introducing it to the House. It makes sense and it makes it easier to build in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (7.55 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. There is an aspect of this bill which again confirms what we told everyone at the last election—that is, we cannot trust the Liberal National Party in Queensland when it comes to protecting people's rights at work and keeping workplaces safe. We saw in previous sittings the respect at work legislation be paused, undermining important employment protections, and we see in this bill a winding back of a protection when it comes to workplace health and safety. We just cannot trust the LNP when it comes to workers' rights and keeping workplaces safe.

The provision that is being wound back here by the government follows advocacy from a tragedy and advocacy following considered review of evidence-based approaches to enhancing safety in workplaces and recommendations from numerous bodies. It also relates to a legacy and the loss of a young person, Jason Garrels. I want to acknowledge his family, particularly his father, Michael Garrels, who fought for this provision that is now being wound back as a result of the amendment bill we have before us today. As members of the opposition have articulated, we will not support wiping that legacy from the statute books. We will not support undermining that advocacy that was intended to enhance safety in workplaces and followed an evidence-based approach.

There are, however, aspects of the bill that the opposition do support, such as the reforms to digital licences, the electronic service of documents, the ability of licensees to update details online and information sharing. We support those because it follows reforms and initiatives which were commenced by the Labor Party in government previously. This is just the next step in that reform process and the next step on the journey around enhancing efficiency and productivity when it comes to the digitisation of certain services and products in Queensland. The Labor Party was very committed to that journey; as I said, we started that journey. However, we are concerned with clause 26, which repeals the dual notification requirement that this parliament introduced in a direct response to the tragic loss of Jason Garrels, a young Queensland, and the findings of numerous bodies.

To understand why this requirement exists, it is important to note that there was a considered approach and an identification that gaps existed, and the dual notification requirement closed those gaps. It required that those serious incidents be reported to both the Office of Industrial Relations and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. It was important to have that. Since those reforms we have seen hundreds of safety notifications and dozens of show cause notices and licences cancelled. It is not red tape for the sake of inefficiency; it is red tape that saves lives. Sometimes the proposition that gets put out there that you have to cut red tape to improve things does not ring true when it comes to the safety of people, when it comes to the livelihood of people. Sometimes red tape is a good thing if it means protecting someone, if it means keeping them alive. This dual notification requirement is the type of reform that is designed to help keep people safe at work. It is the type of reform that follows not only advocacy from a tragedy but an evidence-based consideration of what can be done to close a gap to prevent harm in the workplace.

The committee examining the bill heard from numerous stakeholders. Numerous stakeholders have been very vocal about their views in respect of this bill. Some stakeholders have said that dual reporting is a small price to pay for safety. Others argued that streamlining should never come at the expense of worker protection, and organisations responsible for enforcing safety have said they value direct reporting. This parliament should listen to those stakeholders, yet we see with the amendments brought by the government that they are ignoring that advocacy; they are ignoring that advice. They have failed particularly to justify why this legislative requirement no longer matters given that it is effective.

I want to be very clear. The opposition supports the dual notification requirement and we oppose the government's proposal to wind that back. If information sharing fails, if a serious incident does not reach a regulatory body, if dangerous contractors slip through the cracks, if workers are injured or worse—we must ensure we have the best possible systems in place to prevent that.

I want to return to the Garrels family and I want to particularly acknowledge Michael's advocacy and Lee's advocacy, the family of Jason. They fought for years so that lessons from Jason's death would not be forgotten. Their advocacy led to meaningful reform, reform that has made Queensland worksites safer. Today they continue to show courage by being present in parliament to hear the debate. I want all Queenslanders to know that we have heard the Garrels family—the opposition has heard the Garrels family—and we stand with them and we honour the legacy of the reforms that they have advocated for by opposing this roll back proposed by the government. Sometimes process is important; sometimes safety has to be paramount ahead of the efficiencies proposed by the government.

This bill before the House has a provision in it that obviously the opposition is concerned about—clause 26, the roll back of the dual notification requirement. The opposition supports the other aspects in the bill. We are proud of our record when it comes to supporting the safety of workers in the workplace. We are proud of our record when it comes to hearing the advocacy of people like Michael Garrels and the Garrels family. I encourage all members of the House to reflect on the journey that this bill will reverse in respect of the dual notification requirement.

I otherwise commend the bill to the House, but I encourage all members to reflect on this debate and the advocacy of those who have gone before us.



Miss DOOLAN (Pumicestone—LNP) (8.04 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. It is a bill that goes to the heart of what Queenslanders expect from the homes they live in and the buildings they work in: confidence, competence and accountability. It is a bill with very real consequences for families building their first home in Bellara, retirees renovating in Banksia Beach or small builders working hard across Bribie Island, Ningi, and Sandstone Point. Across my electorate, I hear one message loud and clear: people want a building and construction sector that is reliable, transparent and fair. This bill moves us decisively in that direction.

The Crisafulli government is making it easier to build in Queensland. Through our Building Reg Reno agenda, we are modernising a sector that was left to stagnate under Labor. This bill delivers long overdue updates to the QBCC to make it a more productive, user-friendly and efficient regulator. It clears away outdated, paper-based requirements and opens the door to digital licensing, online attendance and electronic communication—things industry has been asking for and which modern Queenslanders deserve.

These reforms strengthen oversight of certifiers, simplify pathways for licensing and ensure the QBCC has clearer powers to act when things go wrong. That matters in communities like mine, where

the dream of home ownership can quickly become a nightmare when workmanship fails or disputes drag on. Let's be honest. When someone in Pumicestone calls the QBCC, it is not because they are having a fabulous day. They are stressed, disappointed and desperate for help. This bill helps ensure that when they make that call, the system responds swiftly, decisively and in a way that restores confidence.

On Bribie Island, families have raised growing concerns about construction quality, delays and inconsistent certification, particularly as more homes go up around Bellara, Banksia Beach and Bongaree and as upgrade works progress across Bribie Island Road. In Sandstone Point and Ningi, new estates off Bestmann Road and the expansion of the Godwin Beach corridor have placed added pressure on builders and certifiers. When things go wrong—a slab poured incorrectly, electrical work not up to code or certifications delayed—it is homeowners who wear the stress. I want Queenslanders, especially our young Queenslanders who have the dream of home ownership, to be able to build their first home easily and stress free.

These reforms strengthen the QBCC's ability to intervene earlier, act faster and protect Queenslanders in exactly these situations. For our local tradies—the carpenters, plumbers, sparkies and contractors—who do the right thing, this bill delivers fairness. Good builders should not have to compete with those cutting corners. This bill supports them not by adding more red tape, but by creating a regulatory environment that rewards quality, integrity and professional standards.

Right now, the QBCC is constrained by legislation that still assumes paper forms, postal communication and physical attendance. The bill modernises those outdated rules. Importantly, it expands choice: licensees can choose digital licences, but physical versions still remain available. Home owners and tradies can choose to engage electronically, by post or in person at regional service centres. This is about flexibility, meeting Queenslanders where they are, particularly in fast-growing communities like mine.

This reform was requested by industry, backed by stakeholders and supported through submissions to the parliamentary committee. Some have tried to suggest that this bill hides or weakens safety reporting. That is wrong. Currently, builders must report serious incidents twice, once to the QBCC and once to the Office of Industrial Relations. That duplication does not improve safety; it creates unnecessary administrative burden. Under this bill licensees will continue to report all serious incidents to OIR. OIR will then share the information directly with the QBCC through secure, automated data sharing. The penalty for failing to report will increase from 80 to 100 penalty units, reflecting the seriousness of workplace safety.

Safety obligations remain unchanged. What will change is how regulators communicate, not what must be reported. The opposition's claim that duplicating paperwork makes worksites safer is nonsense. What keeps people safe is timely, accurate information—sent once, properly captured and shared efficiently between regulators. This is exactly what this bill delivers. This bill builds on the successful tranches 1 and 2 of our Building Reg Reno reforms, which have already delivered real results: cutting paperwork, scrapping excessive financial reporting for 50,000 licensees and giving fire protection workers more time to upskill, removing duplicative occupational licensing costs, providing flexibility for certifiers and specialist license holders.

Tranche 4 will continue our work to make building easier, faster and more consistent across Queensland. This includes reviewing licensing thresholds, the Home Warranty Scheme, internal review processes and the timeframes for National Construction Code updates. This is practical reform, not political theatre. Labor spent a decade making it harder, slower and more expensive to build in Queensland. It created overlapping, paper-heavy rules that tied the QBCC in knots and frustrated every builder, tradesman and home owner. It allowed the QBCC to fall so far behind that the 2022 independent review had to call out the lack of digital transformation. While industry asked for modern, practical reforms, Labor delivered red tape, delay and confusion. Its building approach was more forms, more hoops and more costs but less building.

Today's reforms stand in stark contrast. This bill helps deliver good homes built to a standard Queenslanders expect; good tradespeople who are supported, not burdened; and a good regulator that is modern, responsive and effective. As our region continues to grow and as major projects like the Bribie Island Road duplication progress, these reforms are essential to protect both consumers and honest tradespeople. We will be building fast, but we must also build well. This bill strengthens the foundation of Queensland's building and construction sector. It improves safety, modernises systems, supports tradies, protects consumers and actually makes it easier to build in Queensland. For

communities like Pumicestone where growth is rapid, expectations are high and families deserve certainty, this bill delivers exactly that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AJ PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (8.10 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill aims to modernise the regulatory framework for the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, the QBCC, through a comprehensive, practical reform agenda to make Queensland the building capital of Australia. It will allow more services to be delivered digitally and streamline safety in the building and construction industry by amending how industry reports serious safety matters. We are bringing the QBCC—our state building industry regulator—into the 21st century. It will make it a more customer-friendly organisation by enabling user-friendly electronic services for online attendance and electronic communications, including supporting digital licensing for QBCC licensees. Licensees can choose whether they want a digital licence or a physical one. It is optional.

Among other measures, it streamlines workplace safety notifications by removing duplication without reducing safety obligations or oversight. Arguments from those opposite that this will somehow make worksites more unsafe are wrong. Duplicating paperwork does not improve safety. People are kept safe when timely, accurate information is given to the right regulators at the right time. I want to emphasise that responsibility is not being removed, only duplication. In 2017 laws were changed to make licensees notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations about serious workplace incidents. Now that the information is being shared between the QBCC and the OIR, duplication can be removed to create a single, streamlined process. The obligation to report serious safety incidents remains unchanged. In fact, the penalty for failing to report increases from 80 to 100 penalty units. The change is how regulators communicate, not what must be reported. The changes do not weaken safety; they strengthen it.

These amendments are long overdue. They represent the third tranche of the Crisafulli government's Building Reg Reno reforms. Earlier this year through tranches 1 and 2 the Crisafulli government has already cut paperwork, reduced administrative burdens and given industry the time it needs to adapt. Less paperwork for small operators means faster builds and a building and construction system that works for anyone building or renovating a home. For tradies it means more time on the tools and safer worksites, which help lift productivity.

These changes respond directly to feedback from stakeholders to make it easier to build in Queensland. Queensland's property industry generates \$4 billion towards gross state product and \$34.3 billion in employee incomes and employs 290,330 Queenslanders. The Property Council of Australia's submission said that reforms represent a positive step toward a more efficient and streamlined approach to regulating construction in Queensland. It said—

Reducing red tape by simplifying interactions with the QBCC through enhanced online and electronic licensing systems allows industry to focus their resources more effectively and improves productivity. Additionally addressing duplicative safety reporting requirements ... removes unnecessary and cumbersome processes, without compromising on safety.

The Strata Community Association welcomed the changes, saying—

We are pleased to see the Government is moving in the direction of substantial reform in the building sector ...

The Master Plumbers Association of Queensland commended the Crisafulli government for its extensive consultation with industry stakeholders to identify key issues as well as prompt action in addressing them.

The contrast with the last decade could not be greater. The former Labor government gave Queenslanders a housing crisis. It made it harder to build; it hamstrung the construction industry with red tape through overlapping, paper-heavy, outdated rules; it frustrated every builder, tradie and home owner; and it undermined our timber industry, which grows the timber to build the homes we need. The Crisafulli government promised Queenslanders it would deliver a place to call home. We are making it easier, safer and faster to get homes and infrastructure built in Queensland. This government is about using common sense, ensuring clarity and consistency with regulations. It is about reducing red tape and unnecessary fees. It is about having the right balance between regulation and productivity, between oversight and efficiency, between protecting consumers and supporting businesses to succeed. I support the bill.

 **Mr G KELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (8.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill is an important one for my electorate with its small communities that rely heavily on doing things with your hands rather than working in an office. A lot of the kids in the schools in my electorate will be people who go off into the trades that build and create things and will help become part of our construction industry when they

finish their schooling. I have always said that I am not here for myself; I am here for the next generation. Not only will this bill help those already in the construction industry; the benefits will flow on for that next generation. By modernising our licensing systems for the construction industry, we reduce the regulatory burden on our builders, meaning they will have more time to do what they do best—that is, building things—rather than having to navigate stacks of paperwork.

Removing paper-based requirements and digitalising QBCC services makes it easier for our builders to perform their relevant compliance checks. We are moving forward with reducing the red tape that has strangled our construction industry and contributed to the massive increases in housing prices that have made the dream of owning a home unreachable for a lot of our younger generations. Digitalising services means that a tradie living somewhere like Sarina will be able to apply online rather than have to find time during their day to drive to the post office to post the paperwork. Having online submissions means that renewals and approvals can be processed faster, rather than having the cumbersome process of waiting for a back and forth via post, as well as removing the risk of a renewal getting lost somewhere in the postal system.

Governments should be making it easier for young people to get their own home, not making it harder. We have already been doing that through our Residential Activation Fund, unlocking development sites for thousands of homes across the state. We did that through earlier tranches by eliminating annual financial reports for 97 per cent of QBCC licensees. That is roughly 50,000 small contractors, helping free them from even more of a paperwork burden. Many of these would be small builders. By lightening the load on the smallest operators, we are making sure they can focus on what they do best—that is, building homes and training new apprentices to ensure we have the next generation of builders coming through. Providing options for how people interact with the QBCC will enable people to use the way that best works for them. For those who may not be as proficient with computers, there will still be options to deal with it by post or through regional service centres.

We are streamlining reporting requirements for workplace safety notifications. Since 2017, licensees were required to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations about serious workplace incidents on a building site. With the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations now having mutual data-sharing arrangements in place, this duplication of reporting will now be removed without compromising safety. These notifications are important to help protect workers but having to fill out two reports is needless additional paperwork. Removing this—but still requiring they notify the Office of Industrial Relations if they are a QBCC licensee—will simplify this process. It means that safety incidents are still reported but it removes additional unnecessary paperwork through the QBCC receiving the necessary information through interagency data sharing.

We are getting on with making sure that our builders are able to do more of what they do best—building the homes for tomorrow instead of filling out multiple copies of the same paperwork. We are increasing the penalty of non-compliance from 80 penalty units to 100 penalty units, ensuring workplace safety is taken seriously, but we are not just setting and forgetting. The department will be required to review the operations to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of these arrangements and look after safety on our work sites.

I take worker safety seriously. A lot of my constituents work in jobs where they face risks every day on their job site. I know they would be concerned about the impact of this bill on safety but by removing duplication, we can remove regulatory burden without impacting worker safety. For our next generation, for the young families in Mirani, ensuring we bring down the cost of building is one of the biggest issues. Having a place to live was becoming harder in this state as those opposite is pushed up the regulatory compliance in our industry. Forcing builders to fill out forms means more labour is being spent filling out forms instead of being on the tools. We are committed to making sure the dream of home ownership becomes more achievable for younger families. The cost of housing has far outpaced the increase in incomes. While these reforms may not have monumental effects, in conjunction with what we have already done, it will still have an impact on bringing down those costs. Every dollar counts when it comes to buying your first home.

As a sixth generation farmer, I know firsthand how regulatory compliance can make things harder and how you lose time and productivity filling in the forms rather than doing what you would like to be doing at the time; that is, being out in the paddock working hard. I know how much difference a small change can make. Often these compliance measures are designed by people who have not worked in the industry. They have not been informed by a lived experience of having to navigate paperwork that is often well-intentioned. It can make no sense to those on the ground actually doing the hard work and the day-to-day chores. The Crisafulli government is committed to improving productivity in our construction industry—not hampering it. This bill does that by modernising our compliance systems, by

digitalising services and reducing the duplication of paperwork. This all translates into more houses for the people of Queensland in the electorate of Mirani. My constituents in Mirani come first and I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (8.23 pm): In communities like mine in Mundingburra, building and construction it is more than just industry; it is the heartbeat of local jobs, apprenticeships, small businesses and it is the livelihood of families. When the building sector is strong, our whole community benefits. When government systems get in the way the impact is felt immediately on work sites, in homes waiting to be built and across local supply chains. That is why the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 is so important. This bill will deliver practical, commonsense reforms that let our tradies do what they do best—build Queensland.

For too long the QBCC has been held back by outdated processes. Builders and home owners have had to navigate paper-driven manual and often duplicated steps that belong in another era. After a decade under Labor, Queensland became the least productive state in delivering new projects. We will not as a government continue down that path.

This bill brings the QBCC into the modern world. It enables digital licensing, online attendance and electronic communication without taking away any of the traditional options. Tradies who want a physical licence can still get one. People who prefer to deal with the QBCC in person or by post can continue to do so. This is flexibility in action. It gives our licensees more choice—not less—and for regional Queensland where connectivity, distance and workload shape how our tradies operate, this flexibility is absolutely essential.

This bill also tackles one of the sector's biggest frustrations—duplicate safety reporting. At present, licensees must report the same serious incident twice, once to the Office of Industrial Relations and once to the QBCC. Duplicating reports does not make work sites safer. What keeps people safe is accurate information reaching the right regulators quickly and reliably. Under this bill, licensees will continue to report serious incidents to the OIR. The QBCC will automatically receive that information through secure tested data-sharing systems. I want to be really clear: safety obligations do not change. Penalties will increase, reporting still happens and oversight remains strong. This is about improving the process and not about reducing responsibility.

I want to clarify a few questions that have been raised in the chamber today. Does the bill weaken workplace safety? No, absolutely not. Rules stay the same, penalties increase and the QBCC still receives every serious incident report. Why change the 2017 system? Because duplicating reports is unnecessary when regulators can securely share data automatically. Can people still use physical licences or postal communication? Yes, absolutely they can, if that is their choice. Digital tools are an option; they are not mandatory.

These reforms build on earlier stages of the building regulation renovation which have already cut red tape. They have paused unnecessary trust account requirements and reduced financial reporting burdens and it has given our tradies more certainty. For Mundingburra and for all of North Queensland, this bill means greater efficiency. It means more clarity and more time for tradies to focus on what they do best—their work, not forms. It supports our apprentices, our small contractors, our subcontractors and every local business that is connected to the building sector. It strengthens safety, it modernises systems and it lays the foundation for faster, more confident building across our state. I would like to thank the Minister for Housing and Public Works for listening to communities like mine in the regions.

Mr CRANDON: Isn't he great?

Mrs POOLE: Absolutely. I take that interjection; he is a great Minister for Housing and Public Works. For visiting Mundingburra, thank you, and for fighting to deliver these reforms, thank you so very much. This bill is practical, it is sensible and it is long overdue. It fixes Labor's outdated, paper-heavy system. It removes unnecessary duplication and it supports our local tradies and businesses. It will help Queensland, including regional communities like mine, build better and build safer. For the majority of my working life I have been in the business of safety—of keeping our community safe—and I now continue that role as the member for Mundingburra. Everything this government does is about making our communities safer. That is what this bill does. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I am very impressed by what some of the speakers before me have said, in particular the member for Mundingburra. If I could steal some of her words, this bill is as a result of listening and it is bringing the legislation into current

times. That is important because if we want to have a productive, fair and transparent building and construction industry we need to have legislation that is up to date and enables it. It is another step—it is a third step—in the Building Reg Reno of the Crisafulli government. It is, quite simply, making it easier to build and construct in Queensland. I emphasise that this does not entail any reductions in safety.

As the member for Mundingburra and many before have said, there are no changes to safety obligations. In fact, penalties are going up. What has changed is that an outdated, paper-based system is being brought into the 21st century with digital licensing and the ability to conform to obligations to do with safety such as safety incident reporting on the part of licensees—to have a one-stop shop for reporting rather than having to report under two different acts to two different regulators. I have heard the Labor opposition say that the LNP is handing in their homework. That was said by the Labor Party when we pointed out that the LNP had saved the Queensland College of Wine Tourism after about a week or two of us arriving in government and finding that, contrary to prior assurances, no money had been left behind and the place was set for closure. I take it with a grain of salt anytime the Labor opposition say we are handing in their homework.

The QBCC has for a long time had a reputation of being difficult to deal with. That is not entirely its own fault. It can only work with the legislation it is provided with. I note that the composition of the board has changed. I was delighted to see that Minister O'Connor has rid the board of Jade Ingham, who is quite infamous at the moment. I wonder what purpose the former government put him on the board to serve. I think anything could appeal to our lurid imaginations in light of the revelations we have seen in the royal commission.

I would like to speak a little bit about the building and construction industry. Each of us has our experience based on our electorates. In my electorate of Southern Downs we are short of capacity in building and construction. You have to queue up to get a builder to build a house or a commercial premises. They are just so busy. Anything we can do to improve efficiency and keep the hardworking participants in the building and construction industry on the tools rather than conforming to administrivia is a great thing. The participants in the industry, the tradies and those who work hands-on, are time poor. They are trying to keep up with great demand and the last thing they want to do is be using paper-based systems. I noted that the member for Townsville said that it had taken quite some time for him to renew his paper-based licence. The member for Burnett said that as a builder he was able to renew his through the new digital licence pretty much on the spot and it also incorporated his heavy vehicle licence and his boat licence. That is great.

I have heard a lot said by the other side about safety incident reporting. All that is changing is that there is less effort required to achieve the same thing. I think it is a shame that that has been criticised. I see this as being another part of the legislative reforms of the Crisafulli government to make life easier for Queenslanders and to take government out of the lives of people to the greatest extent possible whilst achieving the aims of having a safe and efficient building and construction industry.

I thank the Crisafulli government and in particular the minister, Hon. Sam O'Connor, for this bill. I also acknowledge the committee that considered the bill. Last of all, I note that in the gallery for all of today has been Mr Garrels, the father of the late Jason Garrels. I pay my respects to him and acknowledge the loss of his son in 2012. I commend the bill to the House.



Hon. ST O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (8.35 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill is simple in purpose but significant in its impact. It is all about making it easier and safer to build in Queensland. This is tranche 3 of our Building Reg Reno, our commonsense overhaul that modernises outdated regulation, aims to lift productivity and ensures the QBCC has the laws it needs to become the customer focused, 21st century building regulator that Queensland tradies deserve.

It builds on the reforms already delivered by the Crisafulli government and complements the major transformation underway inside the QBCC thanks to its new leadership. We do not just want Queensland to be the building capital of the nation. With our need for homes and record infrastructure pipeline, we have no choice but to make our state the best place to build in Australia. That requires an industry that is productive, efficient and able to help deliver things in a timely way. This bill supports these aims by making sensible amendments to support the QBCC in delivering services electronically and making the notification process for workplace safety incidents on building sites faster. I want to again thank both the parliamentary committee and all stakeholders who contributed to the committee's examination of the bill.

I will now address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the debate. Several members opposite attempted to rewrite history today, but Queensland builders, tradies and home owners remember what the QBCC was like under Labor. For a decade, the QBCC was in steep decline. It became slow, reactive, inconsistent and bogged down in red tape. Tradies waited months for simple answers. Home owners were often left in the lurch. Staff vacancies went unfilled. Digital systems were not implemented despite years of talk. Labor commissioned review after review, including their own 2022 governance review, but they never delivered the transformation this essential regulator needed. They knew the problems and they accepted the recommendations, but they left behind the task of transformational change. Now they are walking away from recommendations they accepted and were implementing just over 12 months ago. While the industry was crying out for reform, Labor simply looked the other way and ignored them. Only driving regulations in one direction has added to the housing crisis we are experiencing.

Contrast that with what the Crisafulli government has been able to achieve in the last year. We have appointed a reform focused commissioner and CEO in Angelo Lambrinos, supported by Greg Chemello as board chair, to deliver a modern, digital, customer-friendly regulator that supports productivity and protects consumers. Our new leadership team at the QBCC are listening and taking action to make it easier to do business with this regulator. This means an uplift in capability, finally recruiting to fill vacancies to manage workloads and be more responsive, driving a change in culture so staff stay and delivering digital transformation to bring the QBCC into the 21st century.

I have just been in Townsville, in Toowoomba and in my own community on the Gold Coast at a series of forums with the commissioner to talk to builders and tradies about our Building Reg Reno and to listen to their ideas about the next steps they would like us to take. I want to thank the commissioner, who is driving this change to make it easier to do business with the QBCC. He is committed to simplifying the way they work and getting back to what he calls the 'brilliant basics'. That includes modernising, streamlining and optimising how the QBCC works and uses technology. It is about having a laser-like focus on customers and outcomes. Members opposite now want to claim this transformation. They had a decade to do it themselves and they failed. None of them can be proud of the state in which they left the QBCC. We have acted to turn things around.

I turn to the issue on which most members contributed, that is, workplace safety. Frankly, Labor has tried to run a disgraceful scare campaign today. As I mentioned in my introductory speech, the current section 54A of the QBCC Act originally resulted from a tragic situation, the death of Mr Jason Garrels on a building site in Clermont in 2012. I acknowledge Michael Garrels for his strong advocacy for change to ensure that everything possible is being done to prevent what happened to his son from happening to anyone else and to hold the people responsible to account.

The double-reporting requirement introduced for QBCC licensees was fit for purpose at the time. I have said that before and I will say it again. However, this bill brings our legislation in line with how the process now works between the two regulators. It will create a faster and more accurate system. We are removing duplication, not responsibility. I reject the assertion that this is not paperwork. It is paperwork. It is paperwork for a serious safety incident. The claims that we heard from those opposite that these forms take just a few minutes to fill out are completely ridiculous. I would be concerned if a licensee was taking just a few minutes to fill out a form about a serious safety incident that should not have happened in the first place. Frankly, safety onsite is everyone's responsibility. No-one in this House is walking away from that commitment. What ultimately saves lives and prevents injury is effective workplace health and safety practices. The opposition is deliberately misconstruing the amendment before the House today.

Licensees report a serious safety incident to the workplace regulator. In the same form, licensees are required to advise whether they are a QBCC licensee. The workplace regulator then provides that information to the building regulator. That form is already in place. With our reforms, the penalty will in fact be stronger if licensees fail to report. The memory of Jason and of other workers tragically lost is honoured. In fact, you can see that in the improvements OIR have made in their systems and processes over the past decade. That truly is the legacy of such a tragedy.

It is because of these improvements that the former government's own QBCC governance review was able to recommend reduced duplication in the reporting of health and safety risks. That recommendation, which Labor accepted and I will table for the House, was to—

Implement streamlined processes across regulatory agencies to reduce duplication in reporting and supports a customer focus, e.g., reporting of health and safety risks.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland Building and Construction Commission Governance Review—Implementation Report (as at 31 December 2023), page 6.

The streamlining of existing reporting requirements does not change the policy intent of those requirements. Members opposite claim responsibility for the digitisation reforms within the QBCC that they did not implement, but they will not commit to their own recommendation, which they accepted from the QBCC's governance review and which they supported at the time and for several years since—until today. That recommendation, which was accepted in full, again was about streamlining these processes to reduce duplication and they accepted it when they were in government.

In December 2023, their status update regarding this action recognised that work was underway to enable information sharing and improved processes. Further, there was work ongoing under the member for McConnell's own Work Health and Safety Board. In 2024, when the member for McConnell was in charge, an agency meeting record states—

Members discussed dual incident reporting requirements for the same incident under the WHS Act and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act. The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) advised it will be investigating a non-legislative solution.

At the Work Health and Safety Board meeting on 27 November 2024, barely 20-odd days into this government when it was still very much the organisation that the member for McConnell had very recently run, it is recorded that—

Members noted progress by the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) on a non-legislative dual incident notification process with the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, including in-principle agreement by both Regulators and further consideration of operational matters.

That was the member for McConnell before the last election and we hear a very different member for McConnell now that the LNP is in government. I will table that for the benefit of the House, with some helpfully highlighted sections for the member.

Tabled paper: Extract from the WorkSafe Queensland web page containing summaries of Work Health and Safety Board meetings held in 2024.

The member for McConnell, who was the minister for industrial relations and had oversight of the OIR and workplace health and safety, is now doing a complete backflip. Is it because she does not trust the Office of Industrial Relations to honour the MOU with the QBCC that the former government put in place? Again, it is the MOU of the member for McConnell and the member for Springwood that they are now criticising.

This is not just about relying on a MOU. The QBCC and the OIR have been committed to improving outcomes related to safety notifications for some time. In mid-2022 they started discussions about the best option to achieve streamlined reporting and the outcome was then identified by the former government in their 90-day action plan associated with that QBCC review. Again, subsequent implementation reports as at December 2023—

Ms Bush: It is not about us. It is about you. You are the minister. Take responsibility.

Mr O'CONNOR: Who was that? This is December 2023 when you were in government, member for Cooper. Subsequent implementation reports as at December 2023 and December 2024, barely a month after the LNP came in, provide progress updates on the information-sharing arrangements, including the effective integration of QBCC requirements in the ORI's new platforms. The systems and processes have been developed with careful consideration, mostly by the Labor Party. Extensive testing has also occurred to ensure those systems and processes work.

Today, members opposite have claimed the bill removes a legislative obligation to report. Let me be clear: the requirement to report remains a legislative obligation for each and every licensee. All that is changing is the reporting pathway and our changes make that reporting faster. Today, Labor will be voting against clause 26. As I have indicated in my interjections throughout the day, clause 26 includes higher penalties for licensees who do not report. Tonight, Labor will be voting against higher penalties for licensees who do the wrong thing.

Under our changes, reporting will become simpler and faster with one source of truth instead of two. Duplicating paperwork does not keep workers safe. What keeps workers safe is compliance in the first place. When things go badly wrong, this change makes it easier and faster to get a single source of truth to the regulators that need it to take decisive action. The Labor Party are claiming that they are on the side of workers, but tonight they will be opposing stronger penalties for non-reporting of people who do the wrong thing by workers.

The member for Kurwongbah said he supports duplicated reporting and suggested it is as simple as sending an extra email. Again, duplicate reporting is not fast and easy. It takes time. It forces people to recount multiple times what can be difficult circumstances. In contrast, this bill is delivering one report

that is shared between two regulators. It removes an extra duplicated step—a step that is now no longer required due to the improved information-sharing requirements that I have credited the Labor Party with introducing. What did not exist in 2012 was this automated daily information-sharing system between the OIR and the QBCC. The regulators are more sophisticated now and the information is shared regularly and reliably. The legacy of the change born of that tragedy is secure, thanks to that. Had these systems been in place 13 years ago, we would not be debating these changes today.

These amendments do not rely on individuals submitting two separate reports for the same incident, which reduces the risk of someone failing to submit both reports. Instead, a single report will be required under law with a legislative requirement for licensees to disclose. Before proposing these amendments, we made sure that there was a strong and effective notification system between the regulators.

Some of the members opposite have suggested that the sharing of safety notifications between the OIR and QBCC should be legislated. Since the tragic circumstances in 2012 that we have spoken about, it has become the expectation that these regulators share information as part of their core business. This is not unusual or novel. It has been occurring for some time. In fact, hundreds of processes across government happen every single day without the need for legislation.

The opposition have the opportunity to move an amendment during consideration in detail but they will not be. I will leave it up to members to judge how serious they are about the claims they have made today or whether they are just playing politics and trying to run a disgraceful scare campaign.

In relation to the member for Springwood's contribution, I am not going to be lectured to by the architect of BPIC. Protections are still in law and stronger penalties are proposed by the LNP government.

I will turn to the matters on which all members agreed. This bill delivers long overdue updates to the QBCC to make it a more productive, user friendly and efficient regulator. We are proud to be implementing what Labor did not do in their decade of decline.

In conclusion, this bill is a practical, sensible reform. Every bit of regulatory reform counts. It all adds up. If we are not willing to change anything then we will be stuck experiencing this housing crisis we inherited. We have to drive change and we have to move the needle. This bill strengthens safety, it removes duplication, it modernises outdated legislation and it helps create the kind of building regulator that Queenslanders expect—one that is responsive, transparent and focused on helping tradies do their work and not drown in paperwork.

I acknowledge and thank all those who discussed and made submissions to the bill. I acknowledge our committee chair, the outstanding member for Lockyer. I extend my thanks to the various officers of the public works part of my department and my ministerial team for their hard work on these changes. From the department there is Ainslie Barron, the Assistant Director-General, Building Policy; Michelle Hill, Executive Director, Building Policy; and Sarah, Alaster and Beth. I thank Christien from my office. I also thank our broader building policy team in the department. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Clause 26—

 **Ms MULLEN** (8.52 pm): I rise to speak to clause 26 which amends section 54A in respect of the notification of particular safety matters. It removes the requirement for licensees to notify both the QBCC and the Office of Industrial Relations when a serious safety incident occurs. This may sound like a small change. Some may say it is a scare campaign, but it is not.

While the government suggests reporting will continue through an administrative MOU, the Queensland Labor opposition believes this must remain a legislative requirement. This safeguard should not be removed lightly. The dual notification requirement is a legal obligation. It is clear. It is binding. It cannot be ignored, forgotten or replaced with an MOU that can be torn up at any time by any government.

MOUs have their place, but they do not carry the weight of the law. They can lapse. They can change with a signature. They can be applied inconsistently. They do not provide the certainty that workers, families and the community deserve. The commissioner of the QBCC told the committee that over the last five years the QBCC has been notified of more than 1,100 incidents. In response, the QBCC took disciplinary action in over 900 cases. These actions included reprimands, conditions on licences and updates to safe systems of work. Show cause notices were issued in 26 cases. Five licences were cancelled. That record shows the system works. It works because information is captured early, consistently and reliably. The burden on licensees is small. It is not onerous. The consequences of failing to report properly can be catastrophic.

As my colleague the member for Springwood said in his contribution, where is the evidence of why this needs to change? Where is the modelling? The department itself admitted that none of this has been done. This amendment will not build one extra house, but it may save a life.

I wish to thank Mr Michael Garrels, the father of Jason Garrels, who joined us in the gallery during the debate on this bill. Michael Garrels experienced the worst thing that could happen to any parent—the loss of a child. Jason Garrels was killed on a construction site and in the aftermath his family fought for this legislative safeguard. As he said, ‘The MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link so that the pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU, I think this is going to be a flawed system.’ Those words matter. Those come from lived experience. They come from loss. We owe it to Mr Garrels, to Jason’s memory and to every construction worker in Queensland not to weaken safety laws. We should strengthen them, we should respect them and we should keep dual notification in legislation. For these reasons the opposition cannot support clause 26.

Mr O’CONNOR: I well ventilated this in my contribution. We have seen the ultimate scare campaign from the Labor Party. Seriously—a government tearing up an MOU. This is the ultimate scare campaign. What government would tear up an MOU between these two organisations?

The member for Jordan asked for the basis for this. I want to acknowledge the member for Springwood’s QBCC governance review which recommended this. It is a recommendation that was accepted. I thank the member for McConnel for the MOU that we are operating under. Thank you for putting that in, member for McConnel. I thank the member for McConnel for what she said in August 2024—I think you were still the minister then—

Members discussed dual incident reporting requirements for the same incident under the Workplace Health and Safety Act and the QBCC Act. The OIR advised it will investigate a non-legislative solution.

Thank you for your work on that to help us get this reform in place.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr O’CONNOR: It is your regulator, member for McConnel.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Bonney, please direct your comments through the chair.

Mr O’CONNOR: If the Labor Party vote against clause 26 tonight they will voting against tougher penalties for licensees who do not report.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr O’CONNOR: It is in the bill, member for McConnel. We are putting in stronger penalties for noncompliance. We are on the side of the workers who could be on the wrong side of this. I acknowledge the changes that have been made over the last decade. I thank the Labor Party for the changes they have made over the last decade. They have got the regulators to this point. That is why we are able to move forward with this reform to have a faster process and to get action taken against those who do the wrong thing. I am very proud to move this in the House. I encourage all members to support tougher penalties for licensees who do not conform. That is what this does. It is a faster process that will help make sure action is taken more smoothly.

Division: Question put—That clause 26, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 49:

LNP, 49—Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Field, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Hutton, Hunt, B. James, T. James, Janetzki, G. Kelly, Kempton, Kirkland, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Lister, Mander, Marr, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Nicholls, O’Connor, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Stevens, Stoker, Vorster, Young.

NOES, 29:

ALP, 29—Asif, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Furner, Grace, Healy, Howard, King, Linard, Martin, McCallum, McMillan, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Shea, Pease, Power, Pugh, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Smith, Whiting.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 26, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 27 to 40, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (9.03 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (9.04 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.04 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Woodridge Electorate

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.04 pm): I rise in the House this evening to speak up for the people of Woodridge and to speak out against the disrespect and disregard shown to them by the Crisafulli LNP government. In April this year, I wrote to the LNP transport minister, Brent Mickelberg, making representations on behalf of constituents who were adversely affected by a new bus route that runs through the suburb of Berrinba. I was just so delighted to have delivered funding for the new 547 bus route for Berrinba when I was treasurer to ensure this much needed bus service could commence. Like any new piece of infrastructure or any new service, government needs to properly consult with and listen to the community to get it right, but not the LNP government.

A number of constituents, including shiftworkers, contacted me to express their concerns about the location of bus stops. In April I wrote to the LNP's transport minister seeking his assistance. I asked that he promptly consult with residents about the location of the bus stops, the bus route and the frequency of services. On 30 October I finally received a reply—that is right: not six days later, not six weeks later but more than six months after I first wrote to the minister.

To add insult to injury, the minister's response, in my view, said absolutely nothing of substance to address the legitimate concerns of my constituents. It was no more than meaningless bureaucratic lip-service. The minister even had the gall to open his letter by saying that he apologised for the delay in responding. I do not believe that the minister and Director-General Sally Stannard are so grossly incompetent that it took them over six months to provide a reply on what is the core business of the department of transport. I believe this was a deliberate attempt by the minister to frustrate my constituents and to deny them a proper and timely response to their concerns. It is obvious that the transport minister had absolutely no intention of replying to my constituents until the bus stops were installed and the bus service was up and running.

'Delivering for Queensland'—that is what the Premier says about this government over and over. I do not think so. Minister, my community does not accept your apology, and I do not accept your apology either. One thing is certain, though: if my constituents had been LNP mates or donors they would have got a reply in six hours, not six months. If this is the so-called fresh start that Premier

Crisafulli and the LNP government promised Queensland then the people of Woodridge want none of it. I will keep fighting every day until the next election to ensure the people of Woodridge are treated with the dignity and the respect they deserve.

Gold Coast, Development

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (9.07 pm): I rise with good news from the Gold Coast. After years of me haranguing the Gold Coast City council about this prime piece of real estate, the council has finally agreed to put in place planning and development processes for the area known as the canelands in the northern part of the Gold Coast. It will have 40,000 new housing lots, providing 50,000 to 90,000 residents a home on the fabulous Gold Coast in the years to come, and will prevent the coastal stretch of the linear Gold Coast City from becoming the sardine city many residents in my constituency fear as the alternative development model because of the lack of greenfield development sites.

I congratulate Mayor Tom Tate and the majority of the council for their vision and foresight in putting this plan in place, and I look forward to a magnificent outcome when this super suburb comes to fruition. I was the mayor of the Albert shire when we turned degraded cow paddocks with flood-susceptible drainage into the fabulous area now known as Hope Island, which is prime Gold Coast real estate and where the Premier of Queensland and his family proudly call home.

I was on that great council when Sanctuary Cove came into being. What an outstanding development that housing estate has become, being amongst the most sought after lifestyle communities on the Gold Coast with direct access to the beautiful Moreton Bay. The canelands, done properly, will join these fantastic suburbs as iconic residential properties and will ease the considerable traffic, parking and people congestion that would have been thrust upon communities should the council have been forced to overburden the coastal strip with crippling density.

Paradise Waters, Sanctuary Cove, Hope Island, Runaway Bay, Huntington Harbour, Isle of Capri, Mermaid Waters, Burleigh Waters and Chevron Island are all brilliant examples of developer funded infrastructure. I have no doubt the council will ensure the developers make their fair, justifiable and reasonable contribution to this new waterway wonderland to house the great Gold Coast migration from interstate. Just think of the enormous increase in rates money that will be earned by the council over many years to come.

As with all of the rural industries in the south-east corner of Queensland such as arrowroot, cotton, dairy and now cane, the insatiable demand for the unbeatable lifestyle created by perfect climate and incomparable geography far outweighs the retention of rural industries that are best placed in other parts of the state. Perhaps we could call it 'Sugar Town', as it will be amongst the sweetest places to live, work and play on the Gold Coast over the next few decades to come—

Mr Vorster: 'Stevens'!

Mr STEVENS: I like 'Stevens'; I hear you—and will satisfy the never-ending migration from the southern states seeking utopia in the Sunshine State.

Ipswich, Bus Services

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (9.10 pm): This week we saw stage 1 of the \$70 million Ipswich bus improvement plan come to fruition with the first four new bus routes getting underway. This was Labor's plan, announced in September 2024, and followed a comprehensive review of public transport and detailed consultation with our communities through the Ipswich City Transport and Mobility Study—again, funded and delivered by Labor.

For the first time we have a direct bus service from Springfield to Ipswich, the new 501 service—something that was long overdue. From Springfield Central station to Bell Street, Ipswich, this service will be a vital connection for many of my residents, especially for those who work in the Ipswich CBD and the Ipswich Hospital. We also have two new bus services that will benefit the commuters of Augustine Heights—again, something I have been advocating for for a number of years. Over the next two years, stage 2 and stage 3 will also roll out including expanded services for Spring Mountain and Springfield—again, supported, fought for and funded by the former Labor government.

Of course, the Crisafulli LNP government has tried to once again take credit for all of Labor's work, issuing a media release a day after services actually started, for goodness sake, and of course with glowing comments from their chief spruiker, the LNP mayor for Ipswich. There was no mention that

the stage 1 rollout was delayed by many months or the fact that 15-minute peak services have all but disappeared.

I have a lot of time for Translink. In fact, I worked at Translink before I was sacked by Campbell Newman—me and 14,000 of my good mates. Poor Translink are just trying to do their job, but the government's communication on the rollout of these services has been nothing but ordinary. I get that the LNP government was not going to share this non-political, non-controversial information with local Labor MPs, but what about sharing this information properly with our communities?

I found the timetables on Journey Planner as soon as they became available so I could share with them with my community, including our elderly residents who are not on social media and certainly not on Translink's Journey Planner. I let Translink know that they missed a few already-constructed and ready-to-activate bus stops along the bus routes. If they had briefed me, it would have saved them having to go back and add stops to the timetable. I also let them know that their lack of proper communication regarding changes to some of our existing routes because of these new services has led to confusion and angst for families in my community who suddenly found their bus services no longer showing up. These are important new routes instigated because people in our community spoke to their need. Our community deserved to be better informed about their rollout from this hapless LNP government.

Toowoomba South Electorate

 **Hon. DC JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership) (9.13 pm): I want to spend a few moments talking about some wonderful things that are happening in my local community in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. Firstly, I want to give a shout-out to Denise Statham, who has been running the bakery at Wyalla Plaza for 21 years. For 21 years Denise has been at it—19 staff, over 3,000 customers a week.

Mr Stevens: That's a lot of bread.

Mr JANETZKI: That is a lot of bread. I take the interjection from the honourable member. Denise and her husband, Mick, have owned their bakery for that 21-year period. They are legends in our town. I want to give Denise a shout-out. I got to know her very well, sadly, because she had been targeted by youth crime on a number of occasions. I think about the strong actions we have taken on Adult Crime, Adult Time, properly resourcing the police and focusing on early intervention and rehabilitation. When I think about the strength in our youth crime laws and returning consequences for actions, I know that the small business community of Toowoomba and my region back in those actions, too.

I also want to acknowledge the progress that is being made on the Toowoomba Hospital: 538 beds, 118 new beds. I recently visited with the CEO of our HHS, Annette, to see the work that is ongoing there and to see the progress that is being made. It is an outstanding piece of engineering that is being done on the Baillie Henderson site. It is a pleasure that we are able to deliver the hospital we were originally promised all those years ago by the former government and which they then abandoned.

We are delivering a one-campus solution in Toowoomba at the Baillie Henderson site. As we were promised, that will save \$400 million every year in operational costs. That is an important investment into our region's future as a hub for health services: to our west to the territory border, to the south to New South Wales, and to the north-west as well. I also want to congratulate new Toowoomba Hospital Foundation CEO Jude and chair Jacqui on their continuing efforts in our community to provide hospital and health services right across South-West Queensland with the facilities and services they need to be doing their job, no matter where they are.

I also want to acknowledge Mr Saxton and the school leaders from Glenvale State School who visited me in Parliament House. They are an understanding young group of young boys and girls who are getting ready to next year attend high school. One is going to Joey's, one to Rosewood, another to Glennie and also Harristown State High School. As those kids move on to their next adventure, I wish them all the very best.

Finally, I want to congratulate Eve, who recently won a secondary school citizenship award. I have known Eve for most of her life. She is an outstanding young woman with outstanding parents who have made an extraordinary contribution to our community. Eve is preparing to leave high school. I wish her all the very best in her future endeavours as she sets out to become a schoolteacher.

Logan Electorate, Bus Services



Mr POWER (Logan—ALP) (9.16 pm): It is with great regret that I have to let the people of Logan know of yet another broken LNP promise. At the last election the LNP promised they would match our commitment of two new bus services for the fast-growing Park Ridge area. The community and I worked with the last government to do a community survey of the destinations bus users wanted and suggested stops and routes. That is why in the 2024 budget there were both details of the two services and investment for them to start. The press releases were available for that budgeted commitment we took to the last election.

The first route would have run from Logan Village through to Loganlea, connecting the Yarrabilba 587 via Chambers Flat Road, the new high school being built by Labor, the Logan Village shops, and the Logan Reserve to the new Logan Hospital and station at Loganlea. The second route would run from Grand Plaza through Park Ridge shops and schools along Park Ridge Road, then north to Chambers Flat Road to Loganlea station. I table the maps.

Tabled paper: Maps of two new bus routes committed to in the 2024 Queensland Budget, from Logan Village to Loganlea via Chambers Flat Road and from Browns Plains (Grand Plaza) to Loganlea via Park Ridge Road.

These two routes are vital to our growing area. They help our kids get to school, parents to work and seniors—really everyone—visit doctors and shops. It is also a vital link to the express buses to the CBD and train services to the city and the coast.

The new LNP minister has gone silent. He seems to think he can break his promise to the people of Logan by saying nothing. It is more than a year since the initial plans and routes were released but nothing has happened—no updates, no timelines, no explanations, nothing. I am telling this minister for the people of Logan that it is not good enough. You are not going to get away with it. I am listening to the needs of the Park Ridge area and I am fighting to restore these two bus services from the LNP's cuts and broken promises.

When I do this I think of the families of Park Ridge. One friend of my daughter has to walk a long way to get to the Logan Reserve Dominos restaurant. Another, a refugee mother who works as a teacher aide at St Clare's, would be able to get to St Clare's by the new Logan Village service and then do her shopping on the way home at the Logan Reserve shops. Now the community wants to get involved. That is why I am calling on the Logan community to sign my petition and come along to my 'save our buses' rally. To sign the petition scan your phone on the QR code that appears just here or click on the link below. The Logan community is tired of the LNP's silence on their cuts. We will not let them get away with it. Stand up with me and send them a message.

Nicklin Electorate, School Achievements



Mr HUNT (Nicklin—LNP) (9.19 pm): As we approach the end of the school year, I rise to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our students, teachers and school communities across the Nicklin electorate. I know we all like to think that our local schools are the best, but I am here to make the case that Nicklin might have everyone else beat this year. Just wait to hear what our local kids have achieved.

At Nambour State College, a select group of creative arts students from years 7 to 12 recently showcased their work at the Old Ambo in Nambour. Their artwork was nothing short of exceptional—thought-provoking, imaginative and a credit to the teachers who nurture their creative confidence. Events like these highlight the extraordinary artistic talent emerging from our local classrooms.

Cooroy State School also has reason to celebrate. Their year 6 debating team took out first place in the interschool debating competition in mid-November. This is a fantastic achievement. These young debaters demonstrated not only intellect and teamwork but also the courage to stand up, speak clearly and engage thoughtfully—skills that will serve them for years to come.

At Nambour State College, year 12 student Luke de Prinse has added to the school's proud record of excellence, earning third place in the 2025 Buy Smart Competition. Luke has already been accepted to study a Bachelor of Business Administration and Japanese at the University of the Sunshine Coast next year—an impressive pathway that reflects both his dedication and his bright future ahead. Another outstanding Nambour State College student, Talitha Watt, has been selected for the Australian Youth Aerospace Forum at the end of the year. Talitha is one of only 47 students chosen nationally—an extraordinary achievement that speaks to her passion for aerospace and her potential to contribute to one of Australia's most exciting industries.

I am particularly excited about this next one. From Palmwoods State School we celebrate a truly stellar achievement. The grade 5 team of Charli, Bodhi, Theo and Oliver were crowned Kids in Space Queensland state champions and recently travelled to Adelaide to present their space junk collectors project at the Australian Space Discovery Centre. Not only did they represent Queensland proudly, they

won the national title. A big thank you goes to Makers Empire and the Andy Thomas Space Foundation for supporting the Kids in Space program—and of course to Mrs Griffiths, Mrs Hutton and the dedicated parents who backed these young innovators every step of the way.

These achievements reflect the heart of Nicklin—hardworking, creative and full of potential. I congratulate all our students and school communities for a wonderful year. I look forward to seeing what they accomplish next.

Women and Girls, Sport

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (9.22 pm): Today Queensland finds itself at a crossroad for girls and women in sport. We know the barriers that girls are facing because they tell us every day: uniforms that do not fit because they are not designed for girls; games scheduled late at night because they are the only times that clubs can squeeze them in; being asked to rope in partners, family or volunteers to coach because clubs will not fund professional coaches; match officials not turning up; getting changed behind trees; being discouraged from boards; and enduring sexism and a culture that says, 'You're not welcome here.'

These are the real barriers, especially for girls in regional Queensland. They add up to the heartbreaking truth that the number of girls in sport halves when they reach puberty and they never recover. Girls and women remain underrepresented in sport, despite the fact that they out-medal men three to one. Women give more and we achieve more, yet we receive less investment, less visibility and fewer opportunities. Despite all this, I stand here profoundly hopeful because we are also standing in the middle of one of the most exciting revolutions in sport. Women's sport is surging. Viewership is up, crowds are up and participation is rising wherever investment and visibility meet. The evidence is clear: when we invest in women and girls, performance and participation follows.

This afternoon I welcomed a roomful of leaders in sport to Queensland parliament. They spoke with honesty and ambition. They told me what is working and what is possible—and what is possible is extraordinary. I see a future where girls are supported seamlessly from grassroots through to elite pathways; where female coaches, match officials and board members reflect the talent of those on the field; where clubs invest in fit-for-purpose uniforms; where every club has a female change room; where girls games are scheduled at times that fit families; and where professional coaching is a standard, not a luxury.

Imagine girls saying confidently, 'I can see a future for me here.' Picture Queensland as a national leader in girls sport: stronger communities, healthier young woman, more elite athletes and more role models in every town and suburb. Picture the ripple effect: new jobs in coaching, sports science, administration and officiating, and greater economic security for women and girls. That is the future we can build if we can act now. However, we cannot ignore the moment that we are in. The sports minister promised during estimates that Queensland's sports strategy would be released in November. Today is 20 November and we are still waiting. We are also watching carefully to see whether this strategy rises to meet this moment. The cost of inaction is high, but the potential from action and the potential from investing in our girls is limitless.

Southport Electorate, Awards

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (9.25 pm): I rise to speak on the sensational Southport electorate and two very notable events that I have attended since the last sitting week. Last week I joined our generous Gold Coast community of HOTA for the Everything is Possible Thank You Celebration hosted by the Perry Cross foundation. It was an uplifting evening, bringing together donors, volunteers and supporters to reflect on an extraordinary year. A highlight was hearing from founder Perry Cross and Professor James St John from Griffith University, who shared updates on their groundbreaking work to restore movement and sensation for people with spinal cord injuries.

This year their team reached a major milestone with commencement of Australia's first human clinical trial using advanced nasal cell nerve regeneration techniques developed right here on the Gold Coast. Their progress from early research to now world-leading clinical work offers real hope for thousands of Australians living with spinal cord injuries. It also helps advance the vision for ReNue at the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct, a future centre of excellence in neuro-wellness and spinal cord advancements that will benefit people across Queensland recovering from strokes, brain injuries and spinal cord injuries.

I also had the privilege of attending the *Gold Coast Bulletin* Women of the Year Awards last Friday evening where our city celebrated the extraordinary women who strengthen and inspire our

community. This year's top honour went to Dr Robyn Cameron, who achieved an incredible trifecta, winning the People's Choice Award, Angels Among Us and the prestigious Woman of the Year Award. Over more than two decades Dr Cameron has raised vital funds and awareness for breast cancer research, growing the Pink Ribbon Cup Raceday into Australia's largest community fundraiser for the National Breast Cancer Foundation and helping establish the Gold Coast Mother's Day Classic.

The awards also recognised 17-year-old Benowa State High School student Charlotte Stent as Young Woman of the Year. A voice actor on the international hit series *Bluey*, Charlotte also serves as AACTA's youth ambassador, excels academically, undertakes university studies and will captain her school's cohort in 2026. Her achievements are made even more remarkable given the significant family health challenges she has faced including her father's spinal surgeries following military service and her mother's melanoma diagnosis. Her resilience and leadership make her a truly inspiring young Gold Coaster.

From world-class medical breakthroughs to inspiring community leaders, Southport continues to shine. I want to give a quick shout-out to Preston Williams from AB Paterson College, who was surprised the other night to win the Special Principal's Award for contributions to the school and the community.

Stafford Electorate, Schools; Elmore, Mr P

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—Ind) (9.28 pm): I will start by associating myself with the great contribution of the member for Cooper. That is something I have seen with our family firsthand and I appreciate the articulate way that she set that out. I thank her for that.

It is a privilege and a joy to continue working hard for my local schools. Anyone who knows me knows how passionate I am about education. It is such a transformative role in our society to give kids a good start in life and the opportunity to grow, build a career and contribute to our community.

I want to thank the teachers, leadership teams and support staff for their dedication. To our students and parents: this is a time of year to reflect on the hours of homework, the number of uniforms washed, the number of lunches made, the number of drop-offs and pick-ups, training sessions, music lessons and weekend sport. I give special thanks to the parents who do the hard work behind the scenes through P&Cs and P&Fs.

I try to support all schools in my electorate and usually would not single anyone out, but I have to make an exception this evening. Peter Elmore has announced that he is moving on from his role as college rector or principal at Padua College in Kedron. After a significant stint, he is moving on to a senior role at Catholic Education, where he will continue to contribute to education. He has served with distinction and provided leadership to the staff, to the students and to the community more broadly. It was a lovely tribute to him at Padua's feast day mass. While we wish him well, he will be missed. It has been great to work with him on infrastructure projects and other projects and plans along with associated Franciscans on the Hill schools. On a personal note, the culture he helped build on and the teaching quality he attracted and inspired has benefited my family, with my son thriving in year 7. As Peter would say, peace and all good. Best of luck.

Lindsay, Ms K; Hawkins, Mr A

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (9.31 pm): Tonight I rise to honour the remarkable career of an extraordinary educator and school leader, Karen Lindsay. For 38 years Karen has dedicated herself to Queensland education, leaving an enduring mark on the lives of countless students and the communities that she has served. Her journey began in 1987 at Rockhampton State High School, where she quickly established herself as an enthusiastic health and physical education teacher. Karen's dedication to learning and physical wellbeing laid the foundations for a career that spanned multiple schools and leadership roles. Throughout her distinguished career Karen held various positions—from teaching at Bribie Island State High School to serving as head of department and deputy principal at Mountain Creek State High School. Her leadership skills shone brightly as she served as the principal at several schools, including Bribie Island State High School and Meridian State College.

In 2010 Karen embarked on a new chapter at Upper Coomera State College, where I met her many years ago, where she also took on regional leadership. Her influence and commitment to education excellence certainly knew no bounds as she was so passionate about helping students who were falling behind by picking them up and pushing them forward. She eventually became the principal of Helensvale State High School in the electorate of Theodore and has held that position since 2017. After 38 years of unwavering education excellence, Karen is hanging up her education boots. On behalf

of a grateful community I say: we will greatly miss you, Karen, but we hope that your retirement will be full of new adventures and new challenges.

Before I finish, I want to wish our Sergeant-at-Arms, Andrew Hawkins, the very best on his new career. You did an outstanding job in the Queensland parliament and you are a good, amazing individual—a true gentleman. I will say this: you may take the mace one last time. Thank you for everything you have done. We will certainly be sad to see you go, so thank you, Andrew.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Theodore, it was a little presumptuous of you to give the Sergeant-at-Arms the ability to take the mace. I will do that job for you. Before we do that, thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms, for your service here. As the Speaker noted this morning, we very much appreciate it.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.34 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Asif, Bailey, Baillie, Barounis, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Bourne, Boyd, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Dalton, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Dillon, Doolan, Dooley, Enoch, Farmer, Field, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Grace, Head, Healy, Howard, Hunt, Hutton, James B, James T, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly G, Kelly J, Kempton, King, Kirkland, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lee, Linard, Lister, Mander, Marr, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Morton, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Shea, Pease, Perrett, Poole, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Scanlon, Simpson, Smith, Stevens, Stoker, Sullivan, Vorster, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Young