



Speech by

Hon. RUSSELL COOPER

MEMBER FOR CROWS NEST

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QLMA FEES, BUTCHERS

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Crows Nest—NPA) (10.28 a.m.): The Opposition is gravely concerned for the future of family butchers and small meat industry businesses under the Beattie Government. Members will recall last October when the Minister for Primary Industries sacked the QLMA and appointed his political and policy adviser Mr Bob McCarthy in its place. The warning that I gave at that time has transpired with the introduction of new fees. For example, a category A butcher paying \$300 a year will now be slugged with a bill for \$625, an increase of over 100%. The increases will hit those who can afford them the least: the small family-owned butchers and slaughterhouse operators.

The meat industry has led the way in this State in introducing the highest safety and hygiene standards. Its reputation for safety and hygiene standards is paramount. That achievement has come at a considerable cost to butchers, meat processors and slaughterhouse operators who have upgraded their facilities to Q-Safe requirements while struggling against the market power of the big three supermarket chains. What reward is the meat industry getting from the Beattie Government for those achievements? Increased fees! What incentive is the Government offering to other food industries? Again, it will be increased fees!
