



Speech by  
**Hon. NITA  
CUNNINGHAM**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG**

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Hansard 9 August 2001

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Suncorp Metway Stadium, FOI Application**

**Hon. N. I. CUNNINGHAM** (Bundaberg—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Planning) (10.16 a.m.), by leave: Last week in this House, the member for Robina asked me about a freedom of information application lodged with my department by the office of the Leader of the Liberal Party, seeking access to all documents in the possession of my director-general and senior planning officers relating to the impacts of the proposed redevelopment of Suncorp Metway Stadium.

I told the member for Robina in my answer that it was a very comprehensive request, a lot of information had been requested, and he would receive his response as quickly as possible. However, as a result of my inquiries regarding this question, I would like to outline to members here today just what this particular request entails and why it is taking longer than normal to process. The application in fact requested all material prepared for, or received by, the director-general, the general manager of planning services and/or the management of the south-east Queensland regional planning division in relation to the proposed super stadium at Lang Park since October 2000.

There have been two directors-general of the Department of Local Government and Planning in the time frame covered by this application. Obviously, the department takes its obligations under the FOI legislation very seriously, requiring examination of the records of both directors-general to ensure that all relevant documentation has been identified. So far, after sifting through a large number of documents—enough to fill a small room—to define those relevant to this request, about 65 files containing between 300 and 400 folios have been identified. As well, every person who, in the opinion of the FOI officer, would be materially disaffected by the release of these documents must be contacted to inform them of the FOI application in line with privacy provisions in the legislation.

My department is doing all it can to process the Liberal Leader's FOI application as quickly as possible. However, when someone is so obviously on a fishing trip and puts in such a broad application that requires the sifting of such a huge volume of documents, it is unrealistic to complain about the length of time it takes to be processed.

Again, I can assure the member for Robina that his application will be dealt with as quickly as possible. However, a great deal of time and effort—and expense—would be saved if some care were taken to ensure that applications are more specific. So far, a conservative estimate of the cost for this application is in the order of \$15,000, with one staff member working on this application for almost three months.

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