



Speech by

**Mr R. QUINN**

**MEMBER FOR ROBINA**

---

Hansard 16 April 2002

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET, RESOURCING**

**Mr QUINN** (Robina—Lib) (12.10 p.m.): Over the past four years since the ALP has come to government, we have seen a significant increase in the staffing levels in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, to the point now at which there are 883 people employed within that department, as revealed by the budget documents last year. When we look at the comparisons interstate, we see a stark discrepancy in terms of staffing numbers. All of these figures are taken from the relevant annual reports of the departments interstate and the budget documents in Queensland: the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet—363; Tasmania's Department of the Premier and Cabinet—361; Western Australia—511; South Australia—284; Victoria—376; New South Wales—395; and Queensland—883 full-time employees within the department. We have seen a Premier loading up his own department, putting in place a taxpayer-funded publicity machine to massage the image and the public relations of the government throughout the state.

Any rational person could not argue that the Premier of Queensland, with 883 staff in his department, has twice as much responsibility as the Prime Minister of Australia, twice as much responsibility as the Premier of Victoria or twice as much responsibility as the Premier of New South Wales. This is just a nonsense argument. Either one of two things is happening here: the Premier is loading up his PR machine within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet; or, if he is in fact taking on extra responsibilities from other departments, he has a bunch of incompetent ministers. That is the reality. It is one or the other. Which one is it? Members can choose which one they like, because that is what is happening here. There is no other alternative. If the Premier has a bunch of incompetent ministers, he ought to be sacking them and putting in place people who can deliver the government's program—not hiding behind a massive publicity machine within his department.

Whilst the Premier has increased his own staffing levels by 45 per cent over the past four years, police staffing levels have increased by only 8.6 per cent over that period. If we look at the teacher numbers, we find roughly the same figures. I will bet that the nursing staff levels are also the same. We have a Premier who is not committed to delivering additional services to the people of Queensland but, rather, through a publicity campaign, telling the people of Queensland how well he is going in this state. But there is no delivery. There is no substantial improvement in the quality of the services being offered here.

The so-called Smart State is more into producing glossy magazines and glossy brochures and holding plenty of public meetings around the state, but there has been no real improvement in services. We do not have money being directed to services or generating jobs in the state. We still have the highest unemployment rate in mainland Australia and have done for a lengthy period. But what does the Premier do with his money? He puts it into the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for his own publicity purposes. That is the priority of this government. It is not about delivering services; it is about delivering hype. As each day goes by, the people of Queensland are seeing more and more of it. As we dig into the record of this government, as we look at the facts and the figures behind the Smart State, as we see where IT jobs are being created and compare us with the other states in the biotechnology field, we see what is going on here. There is a huge effort in terms of public relations but no service delivery.

**Mr Lucas** interjected.

**Mr QUINN:** The minister should look at the ABS figures instead of believing his own hype. That is what this government is about—believing its own hype, believing its own publicity. But when we look at the facts and figures issued by independent authorities such as the ABS, we find a different story. It is about time the Premier realised his obligations and started to deliver for the people of Queensland rather than pumping money into hyping up the government.

---