



Speech by

Hon. GORDON NUTTALL

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Hansard 18 September 2002

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Hawke Report; Enterprise Bargaining

Hon. G. R. NUTTALL (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.48 a.m.), by leave: The government and the trade union movement have agreed the current enterprise bargaining system in the public sector in Queensland is seriously out of date. We are currently faced with a system that rewards the squeakiest wheel and promotes confrontation, but, worse still, is impacting on the community's expectations of high quality and reliable public services.

As the Premier just outlined, the *Report of the Review of Enterprise Bargaining in the Queensland Public Sector* recommends a modified approach to enterprise bargaining that ensures that the interests of all parties, including the broader community, are taken into consideration. It recommends a more structured bargaining system that is complemented by a code of good faith bargaining and the establishment of a public sector panel within the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. It also recommends—

The government begins negotiations with public sector unions on the development of a "code of good faith negotiations"; and

A specialist public sector panel consisting of a maximum of five commissioners be established in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission to hear and determine public sector industrial matters.

The Hon. Bob Hawke—a former Australian Prime Minister and ACTU president—has also recommended more structured discussions between departments and the trade union movement.

The director-general of my department and senior officers would meet formally with the Queensland Council of Unions and the Australian Workers Union at least four times a year to discuss broad industrial issues affecting the Queensland public sector. In addition, the chief executives of each government agency and the secretaries of unions with coverage in that agency would also meet formally at least four times a year to consider issues specific to that agency.

As the Premier just said, the report will be forwarded to the major unions this morning for their consideration and consultation, and for the information of all honourable members of the House I now table the report. I believe that this report goes a long way to balancing the rights of unions with the expectations of the broader community and will produce fairer outcomes for all involved. I would like to thank the Hon. Bob Hawke for his efforts in preparing this report, and I look forward to updating the House on the outcomes of these recommendations in the near future.