



Speech by

**DESLEY BOYLE**

**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Hansard 7 October 2003

**COMMERCIAL AND CONSUMER TRIBUNAL REGULATION 2003**

**Ms BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (10.17 p.m.): I join the previous speaker in arguing against this disallowance motion. I really have tried to understand the opposition's objection and the basis for its disallowance motion, but I have to say that it is pretty weak. I think it really is political mischief-making. The problem is that the Beattie government has been putting bills through this House which the opposition has had no choice but to support because we have been doing such a good job. However, every now and then it feels that it is beholden upon it to argue with something or other. It has picked a fairly obscure point in this regulation and decided to argue against it tonight, and I must say not very strongly so.

The opposition's objection, as I understand it, is to performance management contracts. Heavens! All of us in this House would know that tribunals in their previous form prior to this minister and the reforms this parliament has made were not known for their efficiency, for their speed of operation, for their sparkling decisions that pleased constituents around Queensland. What we have done is modernise the whole system, and with this we have brought in—dare we!—performance contracts for those who are appointed as members as well as chairs of the tribunal. There is nothing at all improper about this. Rather, this is in fact good modern management.

I gather from my attempt to understand that their objection is that the chairs in particular will be responsible through their performance contract to the minister. We know well that on frequent occasions the opposition regards the minister, either for the department or the statutory authority, as the responsible person with whom the buck stops. Having a contract between the chairperson of a tribunal and the minister for performance, I would have thought, was a matter they should applaud. But that is not so. They imply that there might be some improper conflict of interest. I do not agree with them at all. I think it is an obscure point and that they are labouring the issue when, really, this regulation and the whole reform of the system initiated by this minister is a matter which this House and I have no doubt the consumers of Queensland will applaud. I argue against the disallowance motion.