



Speech by

Robert Messenger

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Tuesday, 16 October 2007

QPRIME

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—NPA) (11.57 am): This government's bungled attempt to install and establish a new master police computer system, QPRIME, for the Queensland Police Service is in a \$100 million-plus mess. QPRIME is behind schedule and experiencing massive cost blow-outs. In practical terms, this means that front-line police officers are forced to spend many extra hours unnecessarily fighting government red tape while they could be on the street catching criminals, responding to 000 calls and protecting more Queensland families.

This message has come from a number of different expert sources, including the police themselves. Mark Ballin, executive member of the Queensland Police Union central region, stated in a Queensland Police Union journal in March 2007—

QPRIME has not helped one little bit and will push good officers over the edge ... Get the Police back on the streets where they are supposed to be and not sitting there for hours just to do their job.

I was recently approached by an IT expert and business analyst Rebecca Glover, who was employed by this government to work on QPRIME. Rebecca is in the gallery. I acknowledge her presence and her courage. Rebecca has come to me out of frustration and anger at a Labor government system which she alleges has failed to listen to her warnings and tried to make her cover up fraudulent behaviour by the management of the Queensland Police Service. She has blown the whistle in a folio of comprehensive technical documents and letters which I now table.

Tabled paper: Statement, dated 8 October 2007, by Rebecca Jayne Glover and other documents, relating to QPrime.

This morning I have referred the matter to the CMC, and I also table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 October 2007, from Mr Messenger to Mr Robert Needham, Chairperson, Crime and Misconduct Commission, and to Mr Glenn Poole, Auditor-General, relating to QPrime.

I asked the CMC to ensure that Rebecca's allegations and termination by a Queensland Police Service contractor be independently investigated. In my letter to the CMC—

Mr LEE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable gentleman has just indicated to the House that he has referred this matter to the CMC. I am not entirely sure of the standing orders, but I would imagine it is possibly not appropriate for him to be discussing it in the House if it is a matter for the CMC.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr English): No, that is not the case. However, we are making inquiries in relation to standing orders and issues to do with whistleblowers which the member may have breached. I will allow the member to continue at the moment while we make further inquiries.

Mr MESSENGER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. In my letter to the CMC I asked Mr Needham that he audit and investigate allegations involving the purchase, rollout and a subsequent cover-up by certain persons involved in the Queensland Police Service of the QPRIME system. The first allegation involves the process that was used to purchase the QPRIME system from Niche systems. It is alleged that, despite the system achieving poorly the desired outcomes needed to meet the Police Service outcomes, certain members of the Queensland police pushed through this purchase. An independent investigation into this process of purchase is required to ensure that public money was used to purchase the most appropriate system for the service's needs.

The second allegation rests with the fraudulent reporting of system rollouts and delivery of set phases. It is alleged that the required dates for the delivery of service were altered or not completed as stated on business plans. This is evident in the so-called split phrase rollout as it became clear that the system was incapable of delivering its original objective. Further allegations have arisen over the QPRIME unit's cover-up of major delays and faults in the system's rollout. When this was brought to her superior's attention, contracted business analyst Rebecca Glover's contract was terminated for speaking out although her work review indicated that her performance was satisfactory.

There is a need to investigate the state government's claims of overseas experience as a way of misleading the people of Queensland about the effectiveness of QPRIME. I also bring to the House's attention the fact that Niche systems were only ever meant to be used as an intelligence-gathering and coordinating system as used in Canada and parts of the UK. The vast array of systems that have been attempted in Queensland have not been attempted, nor could they be, anywhere else. It is also alleged that Niche systems has since cut off communications with the Queensland Police Service, stating that the outcomes expected by the service are not achievable without a substantial increase in cost.

Consequently, I believe the Crime and Misconduct Commission and the Auditor-General need to thoroughly investigate Ms Glover's allegations under the Whistleblowers Protection Act. Ms Glover has on a number of occasions brought her concerns to the attention of the police minister, who failed to investigate properly Ms Glover's serious allegations and take action to fix the horrible mess that QPRIME has become. It is now time for an independent investigation to uncover the truth. Why was QPRIME purchased in the first place? Is this system appropriate for Queensland police?

Time expired.