



Speech by

Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE D

Mr HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (4.25 pm): I welcome this opportunity to contribute to the consideration in detail of the report of Estimates Committee D. Indeed, I join other members of the committee in thanking the chair, the honourable member for Sandgate, my fellow committee members, the secretariat and Hansard for their able carrying out of the committee's business. I also commend the Minister for Mines and Energy for his appearance at the hearing and his patience, especially during his evidence to the committee about the funding of the Energy Ombudsman. I thought the minister was particularly patient with the line of questioning that was being followed in relation to that. He gave very good answers that outlined the settings and arrangements for the committee very well. Also, I would like to concur with the member for Hervey Bay, my fellow committee member, in his commentary on the pro forma statements of reservation that have been tabled by the members for Mirani and Charters Towers.

Turning to the Minister for Emergency Services, I congratulate him on his outstanding performance in the very trying context of jumping into the saddle, which I think was an analogy that was used during the estimates hearing.

Mr Mickel: He used to be a jockey.

Mr Bombolas: He is one of the tallest ones I have ever seen.

Mr Mickel: He used to wreck the horses because his legs would drag along the ground.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I take that interjection, because he certainly got into the saddle very comfortably at this hearing of the estimates committee. I acknowledge not only how competently he handled the process of the estimates committee but also the budget's commitment to a \$70.4 million state-of-the-art integrated communications and emergency operations centre at the Department of Emergency Services facility at Kedron Park in my electorate. That is very, very welcome.

In relation to that project, I thank the minister for his cooperation and his acknowledgement of the need to consult with key neighbours of the Department of Emergency Services at the Kedron Park campus—I am referring to Kedron State High School—on matters of design and construction of this major facility. I extend my appreciation to the minister and his department for their understanding of that important issue in relation to this major project.

At the other end of my electorate and in the context of referring to Emergency Services, I acknowledge the Chermide Fire and Rescue Station and the Chermide Ambulance Station which both provide outstanding service to our part of the northern suburbs of Brisbane. In particular, I note that the ambulance station at Chermide is indeed the busiest ambulance station in the state, and that is something that those of us who live nearby and hear the coming and goings from there would understand and appreciate. That is particularly heartwarming and reassuring for those of us who have had members of our family and friends who have needed the services of those outstanding ambulance officers and paramedics who perform a terrific service from that particular station.

In this context, I would ask the minister to pass on my wish to particularly note the outstanding service of ambulance officers David Williams and Andrew Cahill from the Chermside station who attended to my uncle in May. My uncle Cliff Reddy who lives with Down syndrome unfortunately had a medical emergency at my parents' home and was attended to in the early hours of the morning by those officers. In the context of a very challenging circumstance—with a distressed patient with very limited communication capability—they supported him very well. They also supported my parents who were very distressed as well.