



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Thursday, 12 November 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Annual Reports

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.09 am): Mr Speaker, I lay on the table of the House the following annual reports: the Department of Justice and Attorney-General Annual Report 2008-09—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, resume your seat. I will wait for the House to come to order. I found it impossible to hear what you were saying.

Mr DICK: I am laying on the table of the House the Department of Justice and Attorney-General Annual Report 2008-09—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, resume your seat. I will wait again for the House to come to order.

Mr DICK:—the Crime and Misconduct Commission Annual Report 2008-09, the Electoral Commission Queensland Annual Report 2008-09, the Public Trustee Annual Report 2008-09, and the WorkCover Queensland Annual Report 2008-09, including the WorkCover Statement of Corporate Intent.

Tabled paper: Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Annual Report 2008-09 [[1337](#)].

Tabled paper: Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Financial Report 2008-09 [[1338](#)].

Tabled paper: WorkCover Queensland—Annual Report 2008-09 [[1339](#)].

Tabled paper: WorkCover Queensland—Statement of Corporate Intent 2009-10 [[1340](#)].

Tabled paper: Crime and Misconduct Commission—Annual Report 2008-09 [[1341](#)].

Tabled paper: Electoral Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2008-09 [[1342](#)].

Tabled paper: The Public Trustee—Annual Report 2008-09 [[1343](#)].

The tabling of these five reports follows my tabling yesterday of four other annual reports. Combined, they represent about half the total number of annual reports due to be tabled from my portfolio this month.

I would like to point out some of the main points raised in some of these reports. Firstly, I would refer members to the annual report for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. Queensland's courts continue to achieve impressive clearance rates in the criminal and civil jurisdictions, with the report showing combined clearance rates of more than 100 per cent. The annual report also outlines the success of our e-trials pilot scheme, which has been lauded by court officials in Australia and overseas and could increase efficiency by up to 20 per cent.

Next, I would like to draw members' attention to the CMC annual report. The CMC has again proved to be a powerful agent in protecting Queenslanders from crime and for promoting a trustworthy public sector. In particular, the proceeds of crime team restrained property valued at more than \$24 million, forfeited property valued at \$3.304 million and obtained two proceeds assessment orders totalling \$1.7 million.

Finally, I would like to make mention of WorkCover Queensland's annual report. Queensland has, and continues to have, the most stable workers compensation scheme in the nation. Unfortunately, like many organisations across the world over the past year, WorkCover Queensland's revenue has suffered a massive hit from the global financial crisis, with the report outlining an operating deficit of \$567 million in 2008-09. The negative investment returns brought about by the GFC were the main reason for this loss, along with higher claims costs and increased provisions for outstanding claims liability.

While this result presents challenges for the WorkCover board and the government, I want to reassure the House that our workers compensation scheme is both safe and solvent and continues to cover its liabilities. Our premiums are the lowest in Australia and we have a funding ratio of 127 per cent—well above the legislated level of 100 per cent. Furthermore, our position compares very favourably with other jurisdictions, which have also been affected by the GFC. For example, Victoria's workers compensation scheme has a ratio of 97 per cent and has posted a \$1.2 billion deficit for 2008-09, South Australia's unfunded liabilities have grown to \$1.059 billion and New South Wales has reported a deficit of \$1.77 billion for the first half of the 2008-09 financial year with a funding ratio of 87 per cent.

To ensure that WorkCover continues to remain fully funded, the WorkCover board is investigating options to protect the scheme's financial position. A review is currently underway and the government will consider the board's recommendations once they are received. We have the most robust workers compensation scheme in Australia and we are determined to maintain this status.

We acknowledge, however, that down the track we may need to make some important decisions to ensure that we continue to have a scheme that provides the necessary support to injured Queensland workers. At the end of the day, that is what it is all about.