



Speech By  
**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2016

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Member for Surfers Paradise**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.30 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to address the comments made this morning by the member for Surfers Paradise in the House. A number of the statements made by the member were simply wrong. Earlier this morning I addressed the issue of the member's comments about the director-general of the Department of Health, Mr Michael Walsh. I will be writing to the Speaker about this matter. In the meantime, I ask the member for Surfers Paradise to consider his position ahead of that correspondence and I ask him to do the right thing—to come into this House and apologise to Mr Walsh.

The member also stated that as at 1 April 2012 there was a head count of 32,825 nurses and that by 21 December 2014 there were 34,100 nurses. The member then implied that these figures demonstrated that additional front-line nurses were delivered by the LNP. This is incorrect. The member for Surfers Paradise selectively chose 21 December 2014 as a reference date because it was the first date after the opening of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. It was the first time nurses previously employed by the Mater Children's Hospital were counted in Queensland Health staffing figures. I am advised this merger did not result in an increase in front-line nurses; it merely changed the way the figures were reported. If one properly accounts for the impact of the Mater Children's Hospital staff, there were fewer full-time equivalent nurses employed by Queensland Health under the LNP. I ask the member for Surfers Paradise to stop citing these misleading figures, and I call on the member for Surfers Paradise to correct the record.

The member for Surfers Paradise also made claims about the industrial conditions of nurses. The member for Surfers Paradise claimed that the LNP provided pay rises of 3.12 per cent to nurses. This is incorrect. I table a letter issued by the member for Southern Downs when he was the health minister dated 26 September 2015.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 26 September 2014, from then minister for health Hon. Lawrence Springborg, to nurses and midwives regarding a 2.2 per cent pay rise from 1 April 2015 [\[795\]](#).

That letter states in part, 'As a part of our strong plan for your profession, you will receive a 2.2 per cent wage increase from 1 April 2015.' It is a matter of public record—not in my words but in the words of the member for Southern Downs—that the core pay rise provided by the LNP at the end of their government was 2.2 per cent. Any suggestion that it was 3.12 per cent is incorrect.

The member for Surfers Paradise also suggested that we had been slow to conclude an agreement with nurses following the expiry of EB8 in March 2015. Again, this is incorrect. The agreement continued after its notional expiry of March 2015. That is because the LNP government delayed EB9 negotiations. It was the decision of the LNP government to delay EB9 and extend the

current arrangements for 12 months. It was a decision made, as usual, without any consultation with its workforce. I table an article from the January 2015 edition of *The Queensland nurse* referring to these details.

*Tabled paper.* Document, dated January 2015, titled 'EB9 negotiation delays a worrying sign for the future' [[796](#)].

I can assure the House that we will conclude an agreement with nurses in good faith and in good time. We will treat them with respect and dignity. I am confident we will reach an agreement that is mutually beneficial. In the future, I ask that the member for Surfers Paradise respect this place and ensure that his statements in the House are factual and not misleading.