



Speech By  
**Hon. Curtis Pitt**


**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 November 2016

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Red-Tape Reduction

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (2.11 pm): At the last election this government committed to consulting and working cooperatively with the private sector to grow and diversify our state's economy. That approach to implementing our economic plan is paying dividends, with hard data and a range of indicators showing economic growth is up, business and consumer confidence are up and unemployment is down. These are the results of having a comprehensive economic plan and implementing it in a careful, considered and cooperative manner over more than 18 months across two state budgets.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting and growing businesses of all sizes. Our government has implemented budgets which are business friendly and targeted at growing innovation, attracting investment and building infrastructure. These initiatives are focused on making it easier to do business in Queensland. These initiatives include: a \$40 million Business Development Fund; a payroll tax apprentice and trainee rebate to reduce the payroll tax liability for businesses—3,156 businesses claimed the rebate in 2015-16, worth \$11.745 million to those businesses; and establishing the Office of Small Business to deliver the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy with targeted programs and services to deliver growth and jobs.

Small business represents more than 97 per cent of all businesses in the state and accounts for about 40 per cent of all private sector workers. We recognise that inefficient regulation and the approach regulators take in engaging with small business have significant impacts on compliance and business costs. That is why the work of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council has been so important. Since being established in August 2015 the council has worked to identify opportunities to minimise the regulatory burden on small business.

Today, I table the Queensland government's response to the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council report tabled earlier by the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and, importantly, Minister for Small Business.

*Tabled paper:* Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council Report: Queensland Government Response and Action Plan, October 2016 [\[1968\]](#).

The council has consulted closely with small business stakeholders and its report makes 14 recommendations for reducing the regulatory burden on small business. The report examined three industry areas: cafes and restaurants in the hospitality industry; light metals in the manufacturing industry; and fruit growing in the agriculture industry. The government accepts or supports for further investigation all of the 14 recommendations. Today I will direct the independent Queensland Productivity Commission to undertake a program of work to provide detailed advice in relation to specific issues identified in the report. In accordance with the terms of reference, the commission will examine

regulation models that promote self-auditing and streamlined record keeping, a regulatory performance framework and provide advice on implementing targeted training programs for agencies with regulatory responsibilities.

The government's response includes an action plan outlining the responsibilities of key departments in implementing the response to each recommendation. Many individual departments have already implemented a broad range of reviews and reforms to address many of the key issues raised in the report. While the report focuses on three key industry sectors, the findings may help identify reform opportunities to deliver benefits more broadly to other sectors.

The Office of Small Business has reviewed the role of the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council and its Queensland Small Business Advisory Council with a view to improving performance and overall efficiencies. The establishment of the Better Regulation Taskforce, which will replace the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council, will ensure continued regulatory reform. It will undertake an ongoing examination of industry sectors.

To drive implementation, the government will provide a detailed progress report to the Better Regulation Taskforce every six months. The first of these reports is expected to be made available by April 2017. Of course red-tape reduction is linked to increasing productivity, and this will be a topic of discussion with the Commonwealth government and other state and territory treasurers early next month.

I welcome the report and acknowledge the very hard work of council members—in particular, the small business minister, Minister Enoch, as chair. I acknowledge the work of Minister Jones, who when small business minister established the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council—delivering on a promise we made as part of our Working Queensland election commitment in 2015.