




Speech By
Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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PUBLIC SAFETY BUSINESS AGENCY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The LNP were in government for three years and what a mess they made of so many things. Thank goodness this government came in to correct all those messes that the previous government made in Queensland.

This is just another example of the damage that the previous government caused to Queensland. If only they had listened to the member for Rockhampton, the current portfolio minister, when he spoke to the PSBA Bill in 2014. He stated—

Unfortunately, the true ramifications of this bill will only become evident over the medium term, when all the damage has been done. It will be difficult—very difficult—for a future government to repair the damage that is likely to occur. I do not have any confidence that this government—

the previous government—

understands the risks or ramifications or has given any real consideration to the eventual implications.

The member for Rockhampton went on—

... we want to let every Queensland Police Service officer, firefighter and emergency service worker and volunteer know that we respect their service, respect the culture that they have developed individually that will be trampled on by this bill and stand ready to pick up the pieces and repair the damage that is likely to be done when the LNP implements this legislation.

That legislation was the PSBA Bill in 2014. If only the previous government had listened to the member for Rockhampton. If only they had also listened to key stakeholders. We see that of the two submissions that were received in respect of the 2014 PSBA Bill one was from the Queensland Police Union. What did they say? They said—

In general terms the QPU is not supportive of the Bill before the House.

What did the other submission, which was from the Queensland Police Commissioned Officers' Union, say? They stated—

The first and most important issue relates to serious concerns the QPCOU has with the proposed amendment to the ... Act ... We believe that this will erode the current safeguards in place and we support the assertion that this amendment would not give the appropriate due regard to the institution of Parliament.

They go on in that submission to express further concerns. If only the previous government had properly consulted we would not have to fix this mess that we are fixing today. As is always the case with Labor governments, we come in to provide good government for the people of Queensland and we make sure that the legislation not only reflects a proper consultation process and is in the best interests of Queensland but is also good legislation.

When the PSBA Bill 2014 was enacted it was at a point in time when police and fire and emergency services officers' morale hit rock bottom. Those officers who were transferred to the PSBA were taken from their respective service and sent to work in a silo. In light of that and the concerns that were mentioned by the member for Rockhampton in 2014, we went to the 2015 election and made a commitment to conduct an official review of the Public Safety Business Agency. We met this commitment, and the Public Service Commission was tasked to conduct a review overseen by a cross-agency steering committee. Just as we said we would at the 2015 election, we conducted that review. As the minister has noted in his contribution to this debate, while the review found that the PSBA had some moderate successes, these were outweighed by concerns and frustrations within the existing arrangements.

I note that the review concluded that there were some serious problems with the PSBA in that there was a lack of 'clearly articulated and communicated vision of the agency'; there was a lack of a 'clearly defined identity as a support agency'; there was a lack of 'jointly developed approach to service and supported service culture'; there was a 'lack of effective change management during the implementation of the PSBA'; and there was a lack of 'visible leadership across the PSBA, particularly in regional areas'. The review concluded that—

In the absence of these fundamental building blocks, employees have been attempting to do the best they can in the circumstances to deliver services.

The PSBA review process involved undertaking extensive engagement and consultation with employees within the public safety portfolio, including their unions and external stakeholders. I understand that the consultation continued with these stakeholders during the implementation process. I am very, very proud to be part of a government that consults, that listens and that acts in the best interests of Queenslanders. As I said in my opening remarks, if only the LNP when in government had consulted before establishing the Public Safety Business Agency, I doubt that it would have even got off the ground. This bill has been examined very thoroughly by the committee, and I acknowledge the committee's hard work in that respect. I also acknowledge the hard work of the chair and all committee members in respect of this review process. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage all members to support it.