




Speech By
Hon. Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2016

PUBLIC SAFETY BUSINESS AGENCY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (12.55 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Disaster Management Regulation 2014, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Service Administration Regulation 2016, the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014, the Public Service Act 2008, the State Buildings Protective Security Act 1983, the State Buildings Protective Security Regulation 2008 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 [\[757\]](#).

Tabled paper: Public Safety Business Agency and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [\[758\]](#).

The House would be aware that our government made an election commitment to review the Public Safety Business Agency. We delivered on that commitment earlier this year. I have previously tabled the Public Service Commission's review. This review outlined the challenges and frustrations that staff within the agency experienced under the former government's arrangements. The agency suffered from a lack of purpose and direction and insufficient integration with the core business of the other agencies in the public sector portfolio. I made it crystal clear in this House in the previous parliament my thoughts about the Keelty review that led to the formation of the Public Safety Business Agency under the former LNP government. The former government's agenda in creating this agency was to drive outsourcing and privatisation. We heard concerns from frontline workers, employees, unions and stakeholders. Those concerns were first raised prior to the Public Safety Business Agency even being set up and have continued unabated since. Those concerns could not be ignored.

I thank the Public Service Commission for their work in conducting the review. The review was comprehensive, inclusive and allowed relevant employees and stakeholders to have their say. The recommendations made by the review will revitalise and restore public safety support services and, more importantly, move appropriate services back where they belong. They will be returned to the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services so that these public safety agencies can effectively get on with the business of keeping Queenslanders safe.

As we well know, the Public Safety Business Agency was established by the previous Newman government as a result of the Police and Community Safety Review undertaken by Mick Keelty in 2012 and 2013. The Public Safety Business Agency was established in November 2013 and was formalised by the commencement of the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 in May 2014. Again, for the record, I did not support the original bill or the Public Safety Business Agency model. Indeed, the Keelty

review provided no sound reasoning or rationale to support the model. I had also seen firsthand how a similar shared services model had failed the Australian Department of Defence over the past two decades. In my speech to the House on the original bill during the last parliament, I said—

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

I also said in that speech—

... 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.


I stand here today to honour that commitment and those sentiments. The bill I am introducing today is all about picking up the pieces and repairing the damage caused by the previous government. It is about undoing the inefficiencies created by the current PSBA model and it is about returning control of relevant resources and processes to the Police Commissioner and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner.

The bill amends various legislation within the public safety portfolio in order to implement the key recommendations made by the Public Service Commission review. Firstly, the functions and purpose of the Public Safety Business Agency have been reduced so that certain resources and functions can be returned to the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. These include services such as operational functions, strategy, recruitment, education and training, local workplace health and safety, ethical standards, media services, right to information, ministerial services and cabinet legislation liaison. The Public Safety Business Agency will retain control of all ICT services, all financial services, all procurement services, all asset management services, some tactical human resource services, and advisory services on corporate service strategies.

The core purpose of the Public Safety Business Agency was to provide corporate and support services to portfolio agencies. Allowing the Public Safety Business Agency to take on operational functions worked against its core purpose. The review noted that the inclusion of operational functions may have contributed to the agency's identity crisis.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.30 pm.

Interruption.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.34 pm), continuing: As I said before the luncheon adjournment, the review also identified stakeholder agreements for transferring operational functions out of the Public Safety Business Agency. Consequently, as part of the realignment of the Public Safety Business Agency's functions two operational services will transfer out of the agency. Blue card services will transition to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The review found that because that department already issues licences to people working in certain industries, given the existing systems and processes for licensing that are already in place, the Department of Justice and Attorney General is best placed to undertake the blue card service. The State Government Protective Security Service will transition to the Queensland Police Service. The review identified a number of reasons why the protective security service would best fit within the Police Service, including the benefit of the police maintaining overall responsibility for public safety in Queensland and having the ability to easily coordinate responses and deployment in emergencies.

The review also recommended a substantial modification to the organisational structure of the Public Safety Business Agency, including the establishment of a board of management, and changes to the current position of the Public Safety Business Agency CEO. The board of management is to be established as the governing body and will consist of the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner, the Police Commissioner and an independent member. The functions of the board of management will include providing leadership and oversight to the Public Safety Business Agency and reviewing and monitoring the performance of its functions. The role of the CEO will transition to the chief operating officer. The chief operating officer's role is to help the board perform its functions and to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Public Safety Business Agency. I can assure the House that during the implementation of the new model and the transition of services people will come first.

Unlike the former government, we value our public servants and our emergency services officers. Although there will be some changes for staff, those changes will be undertaken in line with the Palaszczuk government's commitment to public sector employment security. Implementation teams have been formed in each agency and have been working hard to make the transition of staff as smooth as possible with no disruption to the services provided. Staff are being kept up to date on transition and

implementation activities. Relevant employee unions were also involved in the Public Service Commission review. In particular, the Queensland Police Union, the United Firefighters Union of Queensland and the Together union all provided substantial input into the review. These unions are also being kept up to date with implementation activities.

I acknowledge the important and hard work that the members of the Public Safety Business Agency have done over the last 2½ years, often in very difficult circumstances. There were fundamental flaws in the Public Safety Business Agency model and it is only through the professionalism, determination and resilience of its members that the Public Safety Business Agency was able to function at all. The review specifically noted the positive feedback that had been received from a range of stakeholders about the value and professionalism of the people employed in the Public Safety Business Agency. The review stated that 'staff in the partner agencies consistently identified that there are great people doing their best to serve their clients'. I am confident that the professionalism displayed by these workers, combined with the new PSBA organisational structure and working arrangements resulting from this bill, will lead to better outcomes for the whole public safety portfolio. I commend this bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. WS BYRNE (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.37 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.