




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Toowoomba Courthouse, Renovations

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.04 am): The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has completed the final stage of renovations at the Toowoomba Courthouse, which started back in 2008. The department has completed approximately \$15.3 million of works at the courthouse in that time, which includes an internal lift installation, an air-conditioning upgrade, a dock upgrade, an internal refurbishment, CCTV installation and, most recently, a \$2.4 million external refurbishment.

The refurbishment was commissioned in April 2015 and concluded late in the year by FK Gardner and Sons, a local builder in Toowoomba. FK Gardner and Sons should be congratulated on generating employment for over 110 construction industry workers from 38 local firms. I want to congratulate them on choosing all local firms in all of the work they did during this refurbishment. These sorts of projects are a great example of how government can stimulate local economies, something we are constantly mindful of across all portfolios. This work completes the upgrade of this building and ensures that this thriving region will have modern facilities to provide contemporary justice services to its locals. As with the renovations in 2011, the upgrade was carried out progressively to ensure the courthouse continued to operate throughout the works. I am sure that any inconvenience caused is certainly justified by the end result.

Toowoomba Courthouse is multijurisdictional, hearing matters in the Supreme, District and Magistrates courts as well as the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Our courthouses are important hubs for the provision of justice in Queensland. That is why this government committed to undertaking a comprehensive audit of all Queensland courts and tribunals with the view to providing appropriate resourcing of our courthouses. I am advised that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has now completed the audit of all 85 courthouses. This audit was a commitment of the Palaszczuk government and it will help my department capture a comprehensive picture of our courthouse facilities to inform current and future needs. The results of the audit are currently being analysed by my department.

The government values the work done in the regions by devoted and hardworking people. Investing in providing first-class facilities to enable this work is the least we can do. It was a pleasure to travel to Toowoomba recently to rededicate the courthouse and to see it revitalised to continue to serve the city of Toowoomba for many years to come.