




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 5 September 2017

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Queensland Courts, Infrastructure

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.05 am): The Palaszczuk government is ensuring our courts are equipped, up to date and have the resources they need to continue their vital work in administering justice in Queensland. In this financial year we will be investing \$90.7 million in capital projects across Queensland in our courts. This includes \$20.1 million to upgrade courthouses at Rockhampton, Beenleigh, Townsville and Kingaroy. Our courts do vital work in delivering day-to-day administration of justice. The Palaszczuk government also recognises that specialist courts have a role to play to cater for particular areas of the justice system. That is why we have re-established various specialist courts in Queensland after they were scrapped by the former government. We are re-establishing the drug court, which will be based in Brisbane, and court referral and support services will also be operating from Brisbane, Ipswich, Southport and Cairns and delivers on our commitment to implement specialist criminal justice responses to tackle drug and alcohol substance misuse.

The Palaszczuk government has also delivered on the commitment to reintroduce court diversionary processes and programs, including establishing the Queensland integrated court referrals program in five locations across Queensland. We also have rolled out the Murri Court to 14 locations. The Palaszczuk government has also committed \$69.5 million to make permanent the specialist domestic and family violence court at Southport and to roll it out to Beenleigh and Townsville, with circuits to Mount Isa and Palm Island. Of the \$69.5 million we are investing in this rollout, \$20 million will be for capital works projects. With construction comes jobs; this means jobs for Queenslanders. On top of this we have also invested an additional \$2.7 million to renovate the Southport Court House to establish dedicated spaces and services for court users who attend for domestic and family violence matters.

The Palaszczuk government recognises that, in order to reduce the number of cases that come before our courts, and in turn build safer communities, we need to look at evidence based approaches that help tackle criminal issues at root cause, and that is why we are investing in specialist approaches such as the drug court, Murri Court, court ordered youth justice conferencing and domestic and family violence specialist courts, which are so important. On top of this, we are also ensuring our regular courthouses are up to date and equipped to do their important work. At Rockhampton, the government is investing \$4.5 million to refurbish the courthouse including redesigning and replacing the roof structure, replacing the accessibility ramp for people with disability and upgrading the existing air-conditioning system. In Kingaroy, we are spending \$5.4 million to refurbish the courthouse. This work will include—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango who has publicly welcomed this but said it was fully funded under the LNP, except they funded \$2.15 million—not \$5.4 million. They were not getting an extra courtroom.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. The Attorney-General has the call.

Mrs D'ATH: The member for Nanango can say 'Thank you' to the Palaszczuk government for delivering on an improved courthouse which will mean an extra courtroom.

This will include constructing a ramp and lift to assist people with disability, refurbishing the existing courtroom and constructing a second court to meet demand and constructing a new conference room, holding cells and meeting rooms. These are just some of the examples of how the Palaszczuk government is investing in court infrastructure across Queensland and we will continue doing this into the future.