




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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TOW TRUCK AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Tow Truck and Other Legislation Bill 2018. One of the key issues this bill seeks to address is the licensing and accreditation of the tow truck industry. We understand that many of the current operators conduct their business responsibly and lawfully. Like the member for Capalaba mentioned, my local towies do a great job. They also want the cowboys out of the industry.

However, in order to protect both members of the public and the responsible tow truck operators, this bill introduces clear guidelines for licensing and accreditation and is in response to community consultation. To obtain or continue to hold a tow truck licence or driver or assistant accreditation, the applicant must first be deemed to be an appropriate person.

An integral part of this assessment of appropriateness is a criminal history check. The current definition of criminal history in the Tow Truck Act and regulation creates some ambiguity about the operation of rehabilitation periods and the matters that could be included in a criminal history. The bill amends the definition of criminal history to clarify that the person's entire criminal history is able to be considered.

While the current provisions allow charges for offences under the Drugs Misuse Act 1986 or the Weapons Act 1990 to be taken into account, the amendment will allow all charges that have not been withdrawn or discontinued to also be included in the person's criminal history. The new definition is broadly consistent with the approach in passenger transport legislation which is applied when assessing applicants for driver authorisation or operator accreditation.

Towing operators and drivers sometimes find themselves in situations where a person is injured or vulnerable and so their appropriateness to act in these situations should be ensured by proper checks. This is in line with community expectations for any persons responsible for transportation under these circumstances.

The Palaszczuk government prides itself on being a consultative government. We are a government that listens to our community. When the minister announced an independent investigation into the tow truck industry it was only natural that community consultation would be comprehensive and would play an integral role.

The stakeholder groups involved in the consultation included local governments, towing operators, private property owners and occupiers, motorists, and community and industry representative organisations. Information was gathered from the community through the tow truck hotline established by the Department of Transport and Main Roads to receive complaints and feedback on the towing industry. The investigation also received written submissions and held meetings with a range of stakeholders. The investigation considered 368 records of complaint and feedback received via the hotline. They also considered 41 written submissions and feedback provided by a range of stakeholders during meetings.

The stakeholder consultation informed the recommendations presented by the independent investigation which have largely been reflected in the bill. Based on this extensive consultation, it is the view of this government that this bill strikes the correct balance between the rights and responsibilities of private landowners, the rights of vehicle owners and the interest of the tow truck industry itself.

Finally, I became a member of the former Public Works and Utilities Committee during the consultation period on this bill. I would like to acknowledge the great work of the chair of that committee, the member for Kurwongbah. He had a great leadership role and managed the committee very well. I would also like to acknowledge my fellow committee members at the time and the secretariat who did an outstanding job. I commend the bill to the House.