




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Blue Cards

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.59 am): The Palaszczuk government takes the safety of Queensland's children extremely seriously. Queensland was one of the first jurisdictions to introduce a working with children check scheme. A review of the blue card system by the Queensland Family and Child Commission found that Queensland's blue card system is one of the strongest in Australia and since 2001 has enhanced protection for children in regulated environments. We have made a commitment to further strengthen this system.

As the House is aware, this government is continuing with reforms to the blue card system, implementing recommendations from both the royal commission and the Queensland Family and Child Commission. We have allocated \$17 million over the next three years to implement a no-card no-start scheme and streamline the blue card application process. As I outlined at estimates, the implementation of this election commitment to blue card reforms includes introducing legislation this year to support the implementation of the no-card no-start scheme. This reform requires a dramatic overhaul of the blue card system, with close to one in six Queensland adults and over 32,000 organisations part of the current system.

We have previously committed to implementing recommendations from the QFCC and the royal commission about increasing the number of offences classified as automatic disqualifications, that is, without discretion, exception or review. This work is being done, in consultation with both internal stakeholders across government and external stakeholders, through the implementation team. In light of a QCAT decision published recently, consideration will also be given to what serious offences should be included in those reforms.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that we continue to lead the nation with strong laws to protect our children. We will do that in consultation with key industry stakeholders who work to keep our children safe each and every day.