




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Record of Proceedings, 28 March 2019

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (3.28 pm): I rise to speak on the committee report concerning the strategic review of the Ombudsman, report No. 25. I would like to thank Mr Clarke and his team for their update concerning the valuable service of the Ombudsman. I would also like to thank the committee and the secretariat for the work they have done over the previous reporting period.

In undertaking the strategic review, the reviewer took into consideration all aspects of the activities of the Ombudsman by reviewing all previous review documents and parliamentary committee reports. They conducted initial scoping reviews with the Ombudsman and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The 2018-19 report shows that out of 4,000-plus complaints, 99.1 per cent were finalised and there was an increase in complaints recorded of 16.5 per cent. Mr Clarke and his team are always facing issues of losing staff to other departments which have higher pay rates. This would lead us to understand that this department needs more funding to be able to deliver satisfactory results to a larger proportion of the people who need it.

This is a coalface where people deal directly with the government and its agencies. Denying access in any dispute is what leads to the mistrust of government that is so rampant today. Mr Green sees himself as the knot at the end of rope. This report asks the government to task the Ombudsman with more responsibilities. The government must fund this. If the government can spend half a million dollars renaming a hospital unnecessarily, then surely it can allocate the funds to help bolster the service of the Ombudsman for the very people who are paying for it. Service delayed is service denied.