




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Integrity in Government; Journalists, Shield Laws

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Transparency and integrity matter. In the third term this government has given up on openness and accountability. Seven years ago when this Premier was elected she was quoted as saying that she would be restoring integrity and accountability in government. I intend to inform this House today of what has happened in the past 12 months. I will not re-prosecute what happened in the first two terms, because there is a shopping list of misdemeanours, but just what has happened in the last 12 months.

We have had a raid on the Integrity Commissioner. That raid was issued because the Integrity Commissioner blew the whistle on lobbyists who operate out of 1 William Street with absolutely no sense whatsoever of decency and separation in this state. They use car parks and desks and treat them as though they are their own. The estimates process has been so trashed that the ability for ministers to be held to account is next to none.

Mr Power: It's because you're useless. I was fine as chair.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will take the interjection. Chairs are prepared to run a protection racket to stop ministers being held accountable. RTI officers openly discuss how much information they can withhold above what they should. Reviews are ordered to kill off issues and not to bring justice to brave victims of a health system where they have had their lives turned upside down but where it is ordered to do nothing more than come up with a political fix because this is a government that cares more about how things look than how they are.

In terms of the Office of the Independent Assessor—the local government hit squad—if people question vaccine rollout strategies in their community, if they look a little disinterested on a council floor or even if they might want to block someone from making a comment on their Facebook page, they can be hauled in front of the Office of the Independent Assessor. Councillors are scared and disempowered from doing their jobs. That is exactly what the government wants.

This is a government that does not like to be held accountable. We are seeing that with the fourth estate where the government finds every opportunity to demonise anyone in the media who dares question anything they do. The government is uncomfortable with accountability. The government would rather people get their news directly from them so that there is no form of critical analysis of what they do. If someone asks questions in this state they are rude. If someone does not accept the narrative they are an outsider who was not there yesterday. If the questions get a little heavy the response is, 'I've gotta go.' There is no respect for the rights of those who hold the government to account.

I have no intention of pre-empting debate on shield laws. I have seen the results of a cabinet that has torn itself apart. What I will not let slide is the opportunity to make some commentary on journalist F. I am not comfortable with our kids growing up in a state that is prepared to allow a journalist to go to jail for doing their job. More than ever it is important we have journalist F and others doing their job because Queensland Health is in crisis.

Where ambulance ramping reaches the point that people die in the arms of their loved ones, where elderly victims lie on the floor in agony waiting for an ambulance to turn up that simply cannot because they are on the end of a ramp, when elective surgery waiting lists spiral out of control and when botched surgeries get covered up, that is why we need journalist F. When infrastructure blowouts like on the M1 and Light Rail—where \$2.5 billion can become \$3.1 billion in the blink of an eye—that is why we need journalist F. When a youth crime crisis sees a tradie lose a week's work because her car with all of her tools got stolen and when kids lose sleep because their bedroom that was once a safe place is no longer, that is why we need journalist F doing their job. When the QBCC becomes the plaything of a minister, where ministerial intervention is the order of the day, when small businesses are thrown to the wolves for a deal for a mate and when home owners are not listened to, that is why we need journalist F.

It is our intention to bring sunlight to this parliament. We are going to keep talking about the economy and service delivery, but without transparency we are not able to bring those things. If we really want an economy for everyone—where those who aspire for more can get it, where those who need a leg up through social enterprise are given that opportunity, where people can work in the city and can work in the country—we need transparency and we need to drive change in the way that we share information. When service delivery matters, when we believe in the people of this state being able to achieve all they want for their family and for a government to serve them in their health system, in education, in providing infrastructure to open up opportunities for housing, we need economies and service delivery but we also need transparency.

The opposition will go to the next election and beyond with portfolios directly targeting openness and transparency. There will be a minister for open data who is chartered with the responsibility of making sure that if we have the information then Queenslanders have the information. That is how we drive change in government. That is how we enable the private sector to come forward with the opportunities using that data to be able to drive economic and social change. I know that at times that will be uncomfortable for us. I know at times we will quite rightly be pointed to failings, but that is a small price to pay for a society that requires openness and transparency.

There will be a minister for customer service who will change the way that government interacts with people—where the customer will be put front and centre of all we do to drive change for this state. There will be a minister for integrity who will set the tone and direction for the way we will respect people, the Public Service and everyone in this state who wants to make a contribution. At the time of the next election, this government will have been in office for a decade.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: They crow and the hubris sets in. When I talk about a health crisis and a youth crime crisis and I see housing affordability spiralling out of control it is because of an inability to plan properly and infrastructure blow-outs.

It reminds me of a time around 2011 when a former premier stood up and said, 'Queensland Health is a basket case,' when a government fell so far from its base it went to an election promising one thing and sold out its true believers a moment after, when a government had run out of ideas and when a government was given another term that was not warranted and so we had another three years of misery and turmoil. It feels like that all over again.

This government has given up on respecting the media. This government has given up on parliamentary scrutiny. This government has given up on independent agencies. This government has given up on its promise all those years ago to restore integrity and accountability to government in Queensland, and Queenslanders have given up on this government.