



Speech By  
**Tim Mander**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2021


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

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#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Education, Employment and Training Committee, Report**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (4.48 pm): I rise to enter the debate as the shadow minister for racing. If we needed another example of the mismanagement of the racing industry, of course, we need look only to the Eagle Farm racetrack. Over the past seven years around \$14 million has been spent on the Eagle Farm racetrack. It was out of action for an extended period. Our iconic state-leading racecourse was not available because of the mismanagement of this Labor government. The track has been a nightmare since the Labor Party tried to upgrade it. There has been report after report and they are anecdotal reports because the industry is too afraid to speak out. They worry about repercussions. They worry that if they speak too heavily against the government it will affect their future funding. We hear anecdotal reports about their concerns about the safety of the track, the quality of the track, that interstate trainers do not want to bring their horses here and that local trainers do not want to do that either.

I asked questions of the minister about this and she proudly boasted about how fantastic the track is and how everybody comes up to her all the time and tells her how happy they are with the track. She must mix with a very limited group of people who have been commenting that way because, lo and behold, just a couple of weeks after these estimates hearings, where the minister said that everybody is happy with the track, that there are no problems with the track, stakeholders had a crisis meeting with Racing Queensland. They said the meeting was not bad; they said it was a pretty good meeting. Interestingly, Cameron Partington from the Australian Trainers Association said—

We are very pleased that Racing Queensland are finally acknowledged the track needs to be fixed.

They have finally acknowledged that. Despite what the minister says, the track needs to be fixed. Fortunately, it does not need to be dug up again, but it needs work on it. Racing Queensland have admitted that. It seems that that will happen over the next short period of time and hopefully we will get to the stage where this track can be returned to be the premier track in our state. There were a couple of other issues as well—

**Mr Stevens:** QRIC.

**Mr MANDER:** QRIC. I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach, a keen racing fan. QRIC is something that I do not think anybody in the industry thinks is going well. I think it is \$30 million that has been invested in QRIC. It is nearly double the investment in other states. Again,

the minister will defend QRIC and say how well the industry supports it. In the government's own papers, only 59 per cent of stakeholders have confidence in QRIC. Only 59 per cent of people have confidence in the body that is supposed to protect the integrity of the racing industry in this state. I do not regard that as a ringing endorsement—59 per cent. Nearly half of the stakeholders in the racing industry do not have confidence in QRIC's competence or integrity. That is another fail for the racing portfolio.

There is one last thing which I thought was very amusing. This is typical of any Labor government. I refer to the service standards, the effectiveness and efficiency measures. How do we measure the effectiveness of the vast investment that we make into the racing industry every year? There are two performance indicators. One of them is the 'percentage of country race meetings in the approved schedule that are conducted'. It is a process—not an outcome but a tick-the-box process. This government would not know what an outcome is. They would not know how to measure the effectiveness of taxpayer money in an industry that employs tens of thousands of people. That effectiveness measure is an embarrassment. How can anybody apply a KPI like that and expect the Queensland public to have some sort of confidence that their taxpayer money is being spent wisely?

I have travelled around many racetracks over the last few months, regional and metropolitan, and it is a great experience. I have yet to meet one person who says they support the Labor government. Of course, they have to keep their mouths shut because they want the money, but, I tell you what, they have zero confidence in the government and zero confidence in the minister.