




Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**

**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2022

**MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.05 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill and not some road bill that other members appear to be talking about.

**Ms Boyd:** Tell us about your sporting achievements.

**Mrs McMAHON:** I could tell you about my sporting achievements. If the member for Coomera feels that the Gold Coast's roads are not up to hosting any Olympic Games facilities, Logan will be more than happy to take all those sports off his hands.

**Mr CRANDON:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. That is not what the member for Coomera is saying. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Macalister, the member has found those comments offensive. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs McMAHON:** I withdraw.

**A government member:** Unreservedly.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Unreservedly.

**Mr Healy:** Thanks for your direction.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who said that: 'Thanks for your direction'? Member for Cairns, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs McMAHON:** Bear with me. I am a little bit dusty this afternoon after the contribution from the member for Everton. We understand that he had some previous role in sports administration of some type. We were just having a bit of an activity where anytime he said the word 'referee' we had a bit of a sip, so we are all a little dusty this afternoon.

As a member of the committee that considered the bill, I would like to thank those who contributed to the inquiry by attending the public briefing and thank the secretariat for their work and diligence, as always.

By way of background to the bill, in 2018 the responsible minister established a Stadium Taskforce to review the practices of Stadiums Queensland. The interim and final reports delivered that same year outlined a total of 53 recommendations. The bill represents the implementation of the final six recommendations that required legislative change: recommendation 1.3 of the interim report and recommendations 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.6 of the final report.

Stadiums Queensland is responsible for the current designated major sports facilities at the Gabba, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Suncorp Stadium, Metricon Stadium, QSAC, Queensland Tennis Centre, Cbus stadium at Robina, the Sleeman Sports Complex at Chandler and the Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville. I have had the pleasure to either play or view sports and entertainment at all of these stadiums with the exception of Country Bank Stadium. I do intend to rectify that at my earliest convenience.

**Ms Boyd:** Take us through it blow by blow.

**Mrs McMAHON:** No, there are no roads mentioned in this speech.

It is timely that this review of the running and governance of major sporting facilities through the board has been done as we prepare for the 2032 Olympic Games. We have seen many examples of Olympic host cities left with white elephant sports facilities. Ensuring that our facilities and governance structures are agile enough to make sure these stadiums are managed and generate revenue to sustain their ongoing use for large events as well as community use is important to Queensland.

The bill primarily addresses the capacity of Stadiums Queensland to increase the commercial opportunities available at these major sporting facilities. This is about using facilities that the Queensland taxpayer has funded to their fullest potential and offsetting this by increasing revenue opportunities, but it is important for this House to note that these commercial opportunities must demonstrate a compatible social or community benefit in order to be approved.

During the committee briefing the deputy director-general of the department outlined a current example at Metricon Stadium where an agreement has been made to open a commercial childcare facility on the site. While this does generate a revenue stream for the venue, it also caters to the needs of the staff who work on site, and there are a number of organisations that are permanently housed at Metricon.

When I asked the deputy director-general about whether this amendment would see an increase in competition on site for food and retailers catering at major sports events, the answer was yes. I am sure just about everyone in this House has had a gripe—or at least heard one—about the cost of food and other items at major events. I have been to many sporting venues across the world and can attest that more food vendors and competition and variety on site facilitates cheaper food prices at major events. I can specifically think of venues even in New South Wales where on stadium sites there were food trucks—food trucks as far as the eye could see, and what a lovely sight it was!

The other aspect of the bill I want to mention today is in relation to the governance of the board of Stadiums Queensland. Firstly with respect to remuneration, the amendment seeks to bring the pay structure of the board in line with other states with similar boards. Currently, the board of Stadiums Queensland manages 10 venues and a total of \$1.8 billion in assets. The chair is remunerated at \$30,000 a year and members at \$15,000 a year. For members comparatively, Venues NSW manages five venues at a total value of \$273 million—so only a fifth—but its chair is paid \$60,000 and its members \$30,000. VenuesWest has similar rates of pay. This amendment seeks to bring Stadiums Queensland's board members and chair into line with other states. I would hate to see Queenslanders worse off than other states, so I support this amendment.

The other aspect is in relation to the appointment of board members and their requirement for qualifications to sit on the board. I do not think it should be any contentious issue that when being selected to sit on this particular board qualifications such as areas of asset management, building and construction, commercial enterprise operations, event promotion, financial administration, sports administration or governance should be a key factor or a key skill in being appointed as a member of the board. This is in line with many of the other amendments we have made to other boards throughout Queensland in terms of the merit of the person or people sitting on the boards.

I have no more to add in relation to this bill. I could talk about roads, but I do not think that that would be overly relevant. Otherwise, I commend the bill to the House.