




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2023

TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.32 pm): I would like to make a short comment on the examination of Auditor-General's report No. 18 titled *Enhancing government* procurement, tabled in December 2022. I am hoping some of these recommendations are already starting to be put in place because they did highlight some issues we need to be concerned about. Also we need to make sure we get the best performance when it comes to procuring for the Queensland government and Queensland taxpayers.

One of the things I would like to highlight is around strong collaboration. While the report notes some examples of effective collaboration between departments relating to procurement, it states that some departments are not taking advantage of the opportunity to get a better deal for goods and services by working collaboratively. Departments are often hesitant to share their expenditure data with other departments. That is concerning to me because I think we are one Queensland government and we should be sharing as much information as we can from department to department to make sure we get the best deal for Queensland taxpayers. I am hoping that in the time since this was tabled they have started to work on that.

Under 'Effective monitoring and reporting' the report states—

Whole-of-government arrangements have been established with pre-qualified, preferred suppliers and can help speed up the procurement process. To support whole-of-government savings and initiatives, the report notes that better monitoring and reporting is required on departmental achievements in this area.

I think we need that. We absolutely need that to make sure we are getting the best bang for our buck for the Queensland taxpayer. I note that all of the departments are big departments, but we have to make sure we have the best practices in place to get the most effective deals when it comes to procurement across all of our departments. Recommendation 1 states—

Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement (within the Department of Energy and Public Works) should monitor and report on how departments are collaborating to achieve whole-of-government procurement outcomes

This report recommended that Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement work together to develop performance measures and targets to monitor whether departments are collaborating on procurement. These should be designed to drive departmental collaboration to achieve increased efficiency, effectiveness and economy in procurement activity at a whole-of-government level. I absolutely endorse that recommendation. I think we need to make sure we have a better performance—KPIs—and we are collaborating together to make sure we get the best bang for buck. Recommendation 2 states—

Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement should engage with departments about the costs and benefits (at a whole-of-government level) of moving to a universal classification system for expenditure

They recommended Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement engage with departments to understand the costs and benefits of moving to a universal and consistent system of classifying expenditure such as the United Nations standard products and service code. The report states—

The introduction of new financial systems offers an opportunity to implement it, but it can also be used with existing financial systems.

Recommendation 3, which is very important, states—

Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement should enhance information and data sharing, between the 2 departments, to support strategic procurement decision-making

Basically, we have two departments that need to open up their books and make sure they are getting the best bang for the buck of the Queensland taxpayer. The report states—

We recommend Queensland Treasury and Queensland Government Procurement:

- identify opportunities to collaborate and share departmental expenditure data between the 2 agencies, to improve procurement outcomes and budget monitoring across government
- formalise the data sharing arrangement between the 2 agencies

That is not rocket science; that is good government practice. It is good business practice to make sure we have all of the information we need. We have to get away from these siloed departments that do not share information, whether it is the department of energy or any other department across the Queensland government. It is important that you have that lived experience with procurement that is shared with other departments so they do not go down a different road when there is a right road to take. I am hoping this is going to happen. This report was obviously tabled last year. We are now in October, so I am hoping that a lot of this is already underway in the department.

I would like to pay tribute to our public servants. They do a fantastic job. They really do work hard for Queenslanders. I would like to thank our committee—our chair and the committee members—who have done a lot of work this year. I look forward to continuing to work with the committee and the committee secretariat.