



Speech By  
**Tony Perrett**


**MEMBER FOR GYMPIE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2023

## **TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

### **Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.56 pm): I rise to speak on the examination of the Auditor-General's report No. 18 of 2020-21, *Enhancing government procurement*. Governments should always look at finding better ways to achieve value for money when we are using taxpayers' precious dollars. Projects and services should not be about meeting media management and political pointscoreing; they are about balancing the needs of communities, industries, preparing for the future, delivering projects within time frames and budgets, delivering the services and projects that are promised and needed and meeting the specifications that have been outlined. They require efficiency, accountability and transparency.

The Auditor-General examined the government's processes and systems for purchasing goods and services and looked at how more effective processes can deliver better value for money and savings across government. The QAO made five recommendations regarding collaboration across departments: creating a universal classification system; reporting processes and enhancing information and data sharing; streamlining processes; and developing an implementation plan outlining how the data strategy will be achieved. The report notes how good quality data can support enhanced savings and states—

Better data allows departments to analyse and understand what suppliers are charging other departments for similar goods and services. They can then use this to drive negotiations with suppliers and allow for more insightful procurement analysis and savings.

The government's commitment to open data and transparency and to information sharing is laughable. It relentlessly avoids sharing data and information with Queenslanders. Let us hope it has a better approach when dealing across departments. In response to the QAO, the Minister for Public Works and Procurement advised that the Auditor's recommendations align with the government's Buy Queensland approach. The minister said—

Buy Queensland has supported over 62,440 Queensland businesses through approximately \$42.24 billion in procurement investment. This includes approximately \$7.93 billion in goods and services supplied to the Queensland government by over 26,850 Queensland regional businesses.

One of those businesses is in my electorate. Drummond and Kindred is a manufacturer of personal protective clothing—the flame retardant overalls—for our rural firefighters. However, it cannot secure a contract to provide clothing for urban firefighters. The Queensland government uses a supplier from Victoria. Ironically, not only is the PPC made by Drummond and Kindred good enough for our rural fires but also has a contract to provide the Victorian government with PPC. When I asked the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services in May about whether the department had considered using Queensland manufactured clothing, the minister said that the government's Buy Queensland approach to procurement puts Queensland jobs as a first priority. I am not sure how that boast of putting Queensland jobs first matches the reality.

In response to my question, the minister said the current supply contract was undertaken in 2010, 13 years ago, and the successful vendor was selected in accordance with the Queensland procurement policies at that time. The minister also said—

I am advised by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) that to determine supply arrangements for uniform, personal protective equipment and equipment items, QFES conduct appropriate procurement processes within the Buy Queensland framework, to ensure a supplier is selected that can fulfil the services' requirements and provide the best overall value.

I note that the QAO found that departments engaged with approximately 22,300 distinct suppliers under the supplies and services financial note in the 2020-21 financial year. As a result, it recommended better monitoring because it found there was no way to see how individual departments used the current 466 whole-of-government arrangements. It also does not report on why some departments are engaging separately with the same suppliers.