



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Torres Strait and Cape York Peninsula, Aeromedical Service; International Nurses Day

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.59 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering free, world-class health care to every Queenslanders, no matter where they live. In a decentralised and dispersed state like ours, that means investing in greater aeromedical capabilities—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** It is amazing how those opposite find this hilarious.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs D'ATH:** In a decentralised and dispersed state like ours, that means investing in greater aeromedical capabilities to ensure that people can be reached quickly and safely in their time of need. That is why, as the Premier said this morning, we are excited to announce that Babcock Mission Critical Services Australasia has been selected to deliver a new high-tech helicopter aeromedical service to the Torres Strait and northern Cape York Peninsula through a \$288 million partnership with the Queensland government. This partnership will see the delivery of two new Leonardo AW139 helicopters. These helicopters are state of the art, with the cabin being modified right here in Cairns to include roll-on roll-off stretchers as used by the Queensland Ambulance Service.

The Queensland Ambulance Service and the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service will provide 24/7 coverage of a doctor and paramedic dedicated to the aircraft, with Babcock providing pilots, aircrew and aircraft engineers. For the people of the Torres Strait and northern Cape York Peninsula region, this will mean 100 per cent emergency helicopter availability, and I know that the member for Cook is very excited about that. These new helicopters will be based out of Horn Island and I am pleased to confirm that our investment will fund major upgrades to the current helicopter base, including onsite accommodation for staff and a patient holding facility. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the clinicians, pilots, crew and engineers who help deliver aeromedical services in our state. They do an incredible life-saving job each and every day.

Last Friday we celebrated the International Day of the Midwife and tomorrow we will celebrate International Nurses Day. Our nurses and midwives play a crucial and trusted role in the delivery of health care in this state. That is why we have delivered more than 10,000 new nurses and midwives since we came to government. Not only do we employ more nurses; we provide nation-leading wages and conditions and our recent enterprise bargaining agreement delivered the largest wage increases in Australia and the Palaszczuk government proudly introduced nurse-to-patient ratios, which were opposed by those opposite.

We are fortunate to have a group of nurses and midwives in the gallery here today, and I welcome them, along with Acting Secretary of the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union, Kate Veach. Welcome. The nurses and midwives here today work across the public, private and aged-care sectors. Mr Acting Speaker, if you would allow me some indulgence from standing orders, I would like to direct my words directly to the nurses and midwives here. I want to thank you and all of your colleagues for the work that you do each and every day. You have led our state through the pandemic and you continue to be essential in delivering high-quality health care each and every day, not just in our public hospital system but across this state. From the Palaszczuk government, we say thank you.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr Bleijie:** Sorry you have a dud health minister!

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr Perrett** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members! I, too, acknowledge—

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Acting Speaker, I take personal offence and ask that the member withdraw.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order! Member, that language was unparliamentary and the minister has taken offence. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Acting Speaker, I believe the member for Gympie used unparliamentary language in referring to those in the gallery as a rent-a-crowd, and he should apologise.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will just take—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, Premier! The House will come to order! I will just take some advice. Member for Gympie, just resume your seat until I have—

**Mr PERRETT:** I withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. He has withdrawn. I was going to also extend an acknowledgement to my professional colleagues in the gallery.