




Speech By
Hon. Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cricket

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (10.12 am): It is another year and another great test victory at the Gabba. The Aussies delivered an emphatic eight-wicket victory over our oldest rivals in the second Ashes test, proving once again why the first test of the summer must be at the Gabba. Unlike in Perth, test cricket in Queensland lasted four days. Why? We like to do them slowly! Unsurprisingly, Queenslanders rose to the occasion to help deliver Australia's 2-0 series lead. Michael Nesar's five-fer was a match-winning contribution, with Marnus Labuschagne making an impact with the bat. The result maintains the phenomenal record that England has not won a test in Brisbane at the famous 'Gabbatoir' since 1986.

There is sad news: next year, for the first time in nearly 50 years, we will not have a test cricket match at the Gabba. Why is that the case? It is because of the games chaos and crisis of those opposite. It reminds me a lot of the Bazball panic. First, we had former premier Palaszczuk committing to upgrade the Gabba for a made-up figure of \$1 million.

Mr O'Connor: A billion dollars.

Mr MANDER: A billion dollars—I take that interjection. When asked about that figure and the business case in an estimates hearing, the then auditor-general said, 'All I could find was a media release.' Two years later the figure had ballooned out to \$2.7 billion. Under this farcical plan, the Brisbane Lions and the Queensland Bulls would have been displaced to the RNA, and that process would have put the future of test cricket in doubt. What is worse is that under Labor's plan cricket and AFL had to pay for the upgrade themselves.

What was the opposition's plan? It was to have a temporary stadium at QSAC—one of the most ridiculous ideas I have ever heard, and I think it is still their policy. No legacy for Queensland existed under the former Labor government. After 1,200 days of chaos, we put the games and the future of test cricket back on track. We took the advice of the independent experts and committed to build a brand new stadium at Victoria Park. What happened the very next day? Cricket Australia committed to the return of the Ashes test to Brisbane after the games.

Unlike those opposite, the Crisafulli government want the first test back in Queensland, and we will fight to bring it back. It was Labor's neglect that secured first test hosting rights for Perth until the 2027-28 series. The first test in Brisbane is more than a sporting event; it is a pilgrimage. It is the spiritual home of the first test in Australia, and that is why it should be in Brisbane. We know that the summer needs the first test to be back at the Gabba, and we are fighting hard for it. Only the Crisafulli government will deliver for the future of test cricket in Brisbane and will deliver an Olympic and Paralympic Games that Queenslanders deserve.