Question on Notice
No. 586
Asked on 17 April 2008

MR. E MOORHEAD asked the Leader of the Liberal Party, Shadow Attorney-General and Shadow Minister for Justice and Fair Trading (MR. MCARDLE) -

QUESTION:

With respect to the Coroners (Reporting Arrangements) Amendment Bill—
Will he inform the House who, if anyone, was consulted about the Bill, including whether those persons or organisations were consulted before or after the Bill was placed before the House?

ANSWER:

I would like to thank the Member for Waterford for recognising the important role the Queensland Coalition is playing in providing a strong and united alternative government with policies worthy of his consideration and interest. This Question on Notice is also an extraordinary testimonial from a Government Member of Parliament who now chooses to direct important questions about policy to the alternative government. This in no small way reflects an underlying lack of confidence in the Bligh Government's ability to provide honest and reliable information about matters of public importance. It is also a view shared by the Queensland Coalition and the Queensland Auditor-General. As the Member is no doubt aware, the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No.1 for 2008 (Enhancing Accountability through Annual Reporting: A Performance Management System Audit) released on 17 April 2008 found: "Guidance provided by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Treasury Department is not sufficient to support accountability and promote a culture of performance management…[And] The information provided to the Parliament through departmental annual reports does not fully comply with legislation, is incomplete and ambiguous in the portrayal of agency accountability and performance."

I can advise the Member for Waterford that for the reasons outlined in answers to Questions on Notice from the Member for Algester, the Member for Kallangur and the Member for Mansfield, the Queensland Coalition remains committed to introducing the *Coroner's (Reporting Arrangements) Amendment Bill.*

As advised above, the current Queensland Government does not have a good track record on accountability and performance management. Indeed, the Auditor-General recently raised many serious concerns about compliance with legislation, accountability and reporting mechanisms. The Queensland Ombudsman (2006) has argued "the ability of the Queensland coronial system to prevent death and injury would be substantially improved by a requirement that public sector agencies respond to coronial recommendations that relate to legislation they administer. The arguments for this position are highly persuasive, while arguments against are not consistent with a best practice accountability framework." Indeed the Ombudsman also notes that public sector agencies believed they should respond to coronial recommendations directed to them as a matter of good administrative practice. For this reason, I encourage the Member for Waterford to support the *Coroner's (Reporting Arrangements) Amendment Bill* when it is debated in Queensland Parliament.

I refer the Honourable Member to Questions on Notice No. 553, No. 570 and No. 572 for more information.